



The Mineral Newsletter

Meeting: April 26 Time: 7:45 p.m.

The meeting will be remote due to the coronavirus pandemic. Details to come.



Prehnite

From Southbury, Connecticut

Source: Wikipedia; photo: Ivar Leidus.

Deadline for Submissions

April 20

Please make your submission by the 20th of the month! Submissions received later might go into a later newsletter.

Volume 62, No. 4

April 2021

Explore our [website!](#)

April meeting program:

XXX

(details on page X)

In this issue ...

Mineral of the month: **Prehnite**..... p. 4

April program details..... p.

President's collected thoughts..... p.

Bank manager finds diamond..... p.

Bench Tip: Depth gauge for drilling..... p.

Agate in fossil..... p.

AFMS: Code of Ethics p.

EFMLS: Wildacres canceled..... p.

EFMLS: In evident turmoil..... p.

Upcoming events..... p.



Mineral of the Month Prehnite

by Sue Marcus

Prehnite is our Mineral of the Month for April. Some of us have found it in Virginia, and more of us can seek it when we return to field collecting. Although prehnite is relatively common, we will learn some little-known facts about this mineral.

The first prehnite to be described as a mineral came from South Africa. Abraham Gottlieb Werner, who named many minerals, named this one in 1788 for Colonel Hendrik von Prehn, a commander of Dutch forces in South Africa's Cape Colony. Prehn found the original specimens near his post at the Cape of Good Hope in 1774. Prehn was a mineral collector, and he brought the unknown material with him when he returned to Europe. Prehnite is purportedly the first mineral named for a person and the first to be described from South Africa.

Although prehnite is not a zeolite, it is commonly associated with the group of zeolite minerals. Prehnite forms in mafic rocks—rocks like diabase or basalt that are dark because they are rich in minerals bearing manganese and iron (“ma” for manganese and “fic” for iron (which has the symbol Fe).

Prehnite occurs in a couple of different geologic environments, one of which is much more interesting to collectors. That's when it forms in the amygdules (gas bubbles that later filled with minerals) in mafic rocks. Zeolites also form in this setting, so prehnite specimens can have zeolite minerals with them. Amygdaloidal rocks (basalts) are common worldwide, so it's impossible to mention every prehnite locality or even all that have produced nice specimens.

The other geologic environment for the occurrence of prehnite is in low-grade metamorphic settings. Under these geologic conditions, prehnite seldom forms specimens of interest to collectors. It is an important mineral geologically in these settings because it is characteristic for the temperature and pressure conditions under which it and the rock around it formed, thus giving geologists information about the geologic history of the area.

Botryoidal (grapelike) mounds or crusts of compacted radial crystals are the most common form of prehnite;

Happy Easter!



Northern Virginia Mineral Club members,

No in-person social events for now!



Prehnite, O&G Southbury Quarry, Southbury, New Haven County, CT. Photo: Bob Cooke.

the specimens shown above and on the cover are botryoidal. Single crystals or crystals with distinguishable faces are rare; needles and blades are more common.

Let's start with a rare locality where single crystals of prehnite have been found, the famous Jeffrey Mine in Asbestos, Quebec, Canada. I found well-crystalized prehnite specimens from this locality for sale online for \$1,450, although I also found a specimen listed for slightly more than \$100.

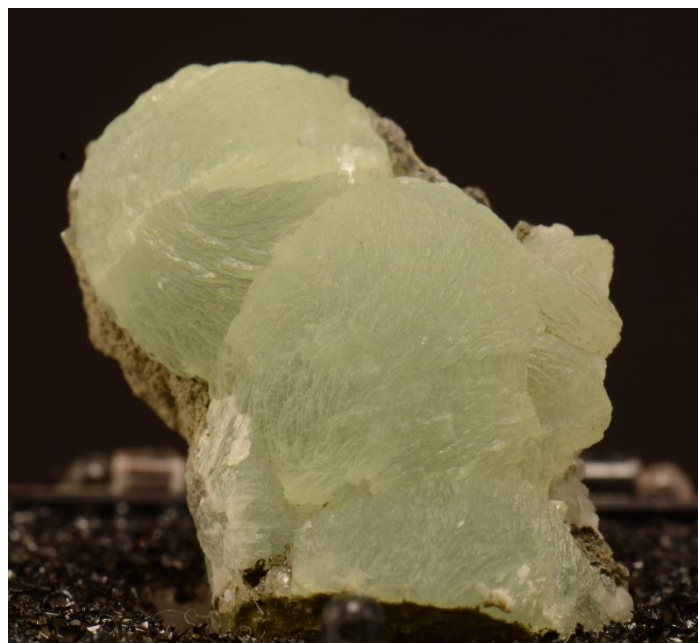


*Rare prehnite crystals, Jeffrey Mine, Asbestos, Quebec, Canada.
Photo: Bob Cooke.*

The first discovery of prehnite in North America may have been in Southbury, CT, where botryoidal prehnite was noted along roadsides. Later, in local quarries, nice green plates of up to more than 9 inches were found. Prehnite also occurs here as clear botryoidal coatings attractively covering other minerals. It also forms epimorphs after calcite, datolite, or analcine. (An epimorph grows when one mineral coats another mineral, which then dissolves, leaving a shell or cast that gives clues as to what it was.) Mindat shows a pretty white bowtie of prehnite, micromount in size.

Quarries in the Southbury area sound like the ones near us. Mined for traprock, they were open to collecting until someone violated the rules—or else the companies decided that it was easier not to permit collecting. Some people might still be able to enter with special permission. The latest collecting date I saw for specimens from Southbury was 2008.

Staying in North America, we'll move to another classic prehnite locality, this one in Paterson, NJ. Spheres and aggregates of spheres, stalactitic forms, and epimorphs after anhydrite were collected from several deposits and quarries. Colors range from almost white to yellow-green through many shades of green. The Upper New Street Quarry was active from 1893 to 1925, although specimens were found when houses were built there in the 1980s, and beautiful, lustrous pieces were found at least as late as 2013.



Top: Prehnite, Prospect Park Quarry, Paterson, NJ.
Bottom: Prehnite with babingtonite, Roncari Quarry, East Granby, Hartford County, CT. Photo: Bob Cooke.

Now we get to the prehnite close to home. Fine botryoidal prehnite has been found at the Bull Run, Centreville, Chantilly, and Manassas Quarries. Some of us have been lucky enough to collect at all or some of these sites. Sadly, even before the pandemic, most local quarries had closed to collecting, with the notable exception of Vulcan's Manassas Quarry. That quarry, as with all the quarries in this area, excavates traprock, an informal name used for impermeable rock that can be crushed for road building and construction purposes. Unfortunately, the Manassas Quarry had not cut

through a zone of prehnite or zeolites (such as apophyllite) in more than a year before closing to public access by February 2020. Although club members and others were able to collect in the quarry when it was open, the last main mineral of collectible interest was stellerite. I'm unaware of beautiful prehnite specimens being brought out of any of the local quarries in almost a decade.

The other quarries in our area—the Chantilly Crushed Stone Quarry (also called the Virginia Crushed Stone Quarry) on the north side of U.S. Route 50 near South Riding; the Bull Run Quarry (Luck Stone Bull Run Plant) near Carpathian; and the Centreville Quarry (confusingly called the Fairfax Quarry by Mindat)—have not allowed collecting in decades, although they were once noted for lovely prehnite and apophyllite specimens. I was told that collecting was not allowed for liability reasons. However, because the Manassas Quarry allows collecting trips by Scouts and even by my senior ladies Ret Hat group, that seems like an easy way to just say no.

By the way, my Ret Hatters were thrilled to go deep into the quarry, a first for everyone but me, and take home a rock! Some people who have belonged to the club for a while might recall club auctions where flats of prehnite and apophyllite were bid up and sold for more than \$100 per flat. Let's hope that we get into the Manassas Quarry again and they hit a streak of nice prehnite for us.



Prehnite, O&G Southbury Quarry, Southbury, New Haven County, CT. Photo: Bob Cooke.



Prehnite on fluorapatite, O&G Southbury Quarry, Southbury, New Haven County, CT. Photo: Bob Cooke.

The Keweenaw Peninsula in Michigan has zeolites in the amygdules of the ancient basalts there (1.1 billion years old). Botryoidal green prehnite occurs, although the unique type of prehnite from this area is the massive pink variety; informally called patricianite, it can look like thomsonite. Clear and yellow botryoidal prehnite has been found in these basalts too.

Spain is not the first thought when we consider prehnite localities, though that is why you read these columns and why I write them. The Oficarsa Quarry in Carchelejo, Spain, has produced some lovely specimens, including rosettes of prehnite crystal blades. These blades form contorted balls, like a glob that was stretched, then knotted in on itself. Specimens range from almost white to deeper green, and the best are translucent. The quarry might now be closed, with many specimens extracted in 2002–06.

Prehnite is associated with zeolites, and where is the world's most famous locality for those minerals? The Deccan Traps (or Flood Basalts) in India are world renowned for zeolites—and prehnite. In the Indian locations, prehnite is not as abundant as other minerals. It most often forms pseudomorphs (maybe epimorphs), reportedly after laumontite, in elongated, light green jackstraws.



*Prehnite on epidote, Kayes Region, Mali.
Photo: Bob Cooke.*

China is a large country hosting many minerals, including prehnite. At the Hongquizhen Quarry in Sichuan Province, lustrous green prehnite balls contrast nicely with much smaller chrysocolla spheres. Less common are specimens that show needlelike prehnite crystals; others have associated epidote. Collectible botryoidal prehnite with babingtonite occurs in Qiaojia County, Yunnan Province, China.

An African locality known best for prehnite with associated epidote is the Kayes Region of Mali. Spheres of translucent pea green prehnite with linear, dark green (almost black) glossy epidote form aesthetic specimens with contrasting shades and textures. Specimens are available online for about \$5 and up, although one with nice spheres and contrasting epidote can cost closer to \$50.

Moving to Tanzania, where many collectors and gem lovers think of beautiful tanzanite (a variety of zoisite) or tsavoite garnets, we will focus on prehnite from the Merelani Hills. The deposits in these hills host a rare color for garnet (green) in rare, gem-quality specimens. Zoisite is usually opaque green or brown; here, it is transparent yellow or deep violet-blue (sometimes heat treated). Prehnite from Merelani also comes in unusual colors, whether yellow or blue; both colors come in well-crystallized specimens. The original sedimentary rocks included limestone and carbon-rich mud-

stones containing barium, zinc, nickel, and (most notably) vanadium. Prehnite formed after high-grade metamorphism followed by lower grade metamorphism. The elements in the original sediments, combined with the later availability of water from metamorphic events, might have contributed to the unusual colors in the Merelani deposits. Whatever the geologic cause, the result, for those who seek prehnite crystals, is another source with color choices.

The N'Chwaning II Mine, part of the Kalahari Manganese Fields of South Africa, is a famous locality for a variety of beautifully crystalized minerals, like gemmy scalenohedral (pointy), deep red rhodochrosite crystals. It is also the only known place where *orange* prehnite has been discovered. Although I've collected minerals for 6 decades, I'd never heard of nor seen orange prehnite until I began research for this article. Apparently, the whole "pocket" (amygdale?) was only about 1.5 feet long. It was found and mined out in 2000. The color of prehnite at the N'Chwaning II Mine is probably due to the presence of manganese in the mineralizing fluids in higher-than-normal concentrations.

Australian prehnite, from Wave Hill Station, is usually found as massive "nodules," which might be eroded amygdules. The prehnite here, when translucent, can be carved or used in jewelry. Rarely, well-formed needlelike crystals were recovered in nodules that might have had a hard outer rim, perhaps of chalcedony, protecting the delicate crystals within the open interior.



*Prehnite on calcite, Bombay, Maharashtra, India.
Photo: Bob Cooke.*

Prehnite is an unusual gemstone. Although it is faceted and can be carved, it is usually translucent, not transparent. Jewelers and buyers prefer transparent gems. Most of the cut stones appear chartreuse to me. Cabochons, beads, small carved pieces, and faceted stones are readily available, some with interesting inclusions. As a novelty, a bowl 10.5 by 8.0 centimeters (4.1 by 3.1 inches) in size was offered for sale on Etsy.

Prehnite comes in many unusual forms. A collector specializing in prehnite alone could amass a diverse collection from around the world.

Technical Details

Chemical formula $\text{Ca}_2\text{Al}(\text{AlSi}_3\text{O}_{10})(\text{OH})_2$

Crystal form Orthorhombic

Hardness 6–6.5

Density 2.8–2.95 g/cm³ (measured); 2.9 g/cm³ (Calculated)

Color Usually shades of green; mostly commonly pastel green; also yellow-green, yellow, white, blue

Streak White

Cleavage 1 good on {001}

Fracture Uneven

Luster Pearly, vitreous

Sources

Cairncross, B.; Tsikos, H.; Harris, C. 2000. [Prehnite from the Kalahari manganese field, South Africa, and its possible implications](#). South African Journal of Geology 103: 231–236.

Earth Science Australia. N.d. (no date). [Metamorphic petrology](#).

Gemdat. N.d. [Prehnite](#).

Learning Geology. N.d. [What is prehnite?](#)

Mindat. N.d. [Bull Run Quarry](#).

Mindat. N.d. [D-Block Mine, Merelani Hills](#).

Mindat. N.d. [Djouga diggings, Mali](#).

Mindat. N.d. [Fairfax Co., Virginia, USA](#).

Mindat. N.d. [Fairfax Quarry](#).

Mindat. N.d. [Hongquizhen Quarry, China](#).

Mindat. N.d. [Houghton County, MI](#).

Mindat. N.d. [Kayes Region, Mali](#).

Mindat. N.d. [Merelani Hills, Tanzania](#).



*Prehnite, Djouga Bufaulabe Circle, Kayes Region, Mali.
Photo: Bob Cooke.*

Mindat. N.d. [N'Chwaning II Mine, South Africa](#).

Mindat. N.d. [O&G Southbury Quarry](#).

Mindat. N.d. [Oficarsa Quarry, Spain](#).

Mindat. N.d. [Qiaojia County, China](#).

Mindat. N.d. [Patricianite](#).

Mindat. N.d. [Prehnite](#).

Mindat. N.d. [Southbury, CT](#).

Mindat. N.d. [Virginia Crushed Rock Quarry](#).

Mindat. N.d. [Wave Hill Station, Australia](#).

Minerals.net. N.d. [Prehnite](#).

Olivier, B. 2006. The geology and petrology of the Merelani tanzanite deposit, NE Tanzania.

University of Stellenbosch. Ph.D. Diss. 453 p.

Plug, C. 2020. [Hendrik von Prehn](#). S2A3 Biographical Database of Southern African Science.

Wikipedia. N.d. [Prehnite](#).





President's Collected Thoughts

by Tom Kim

Surely, one of the strengths of our club is the spectrum of interests and experience within our ranks. For an avocation that seems so essentially acquisitive, I've been struck by the generosity and graciousness of our members. Newcomers are not only welcomed but regularly gifted with bits of knowledge, advice on rockhounding, and items for their growing collections. What might start as a fascination with gemstones could very likely expand into explorations of fluorescent minerals, lapidary art, unusual geological geographies, micromineralogy, or old mines and quarries.

Rockhounding, in fact, has gotten so interesting in so many ways that it's sometimes difficult to know where to go next. That's why I'd like to begin collecting questions from members that they'd like to pose to the club in general. Is it kosher, for example, to pick up rocks from a public park? What do I look for in a tumbler? What is "Mindat"? How does one go from being a collector to a dealer? How do you find storage space for all those rocks?

If you have a question along these lines, send it to me at president@novamineral.club; no question is too basic, arcane, embarrassing, or generic. I'd love to compile a bunch of them and then find a way to address them, either in the newsletter or at a club meeting. Thanks! 🐉

Tom

Rock Formation That Looks Like Cookie Monster

by Bonnie Burton

Editor's note: The article is from CNet (24 January 2021). Thanks to Sue Marcus for the reference!

The inside of this volcanic agate rock looks a lot like a beloved blue Muppet. And it could end up being quite valuable.

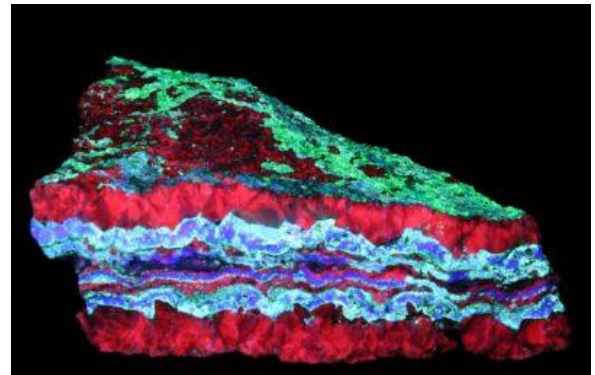
Unusual rocks and minerals are fun to collect, but when you stumble upon a rock formation that looks like a Muppet, that's extra special. Check out this blue agate. When split in half, it looks a lot like

John Smith Fluorescent Minerals April 26 Program

Fluorescent minerals are sometimes described as "nature's rainbows." Join us on April 26 when John Smith informs us how that rainbow happens.

John won't take away the magical beauty of fluorescent minerals—he'll just help us understand it better while showing us some lovely examples. He will share tips on where to collect, the types of lights or lamps best suited to our collecting situations, and how to connect with other fluorescent mineral collectors.

Some of our members have great fluorescent Zoom backgrounds: this meeting will be the time to show them off. 🐉



Willemite, calcite, fluorite



the Sesame Street character Cookie Monster. ... [Read more](#).

Bank Manager Finds 9.07-Carat Diamond in Arkansas State Park

Editor's note: The article is adapted from Stony Statements (newsletter of the Clear Lake Gem and Mineral Society in Houston, TX), October 2020, pp. 3–4; it was originally an AP story on 24 September 2020.

Kevin Kinard of Maumelle, AR, found the second-largest diamond in the 48-year history of Crater of Diamonds State Park on Labor Day. Kinard noted that he's been visiting Crater of Diamonds regularly since he was a kid but had never stumbled upon a diamond until September 7, 2020.

"I only wet sifted for about 10 minutes before I started walking up and down the plowed rows," he said. "Anything that looked like a crystal, I picked it up and put it in my bag."

While searching in the southeastern portion of the 37.5-acre diamond search area, Kinard scooped up a marble-sized crystal that had a rounded, dimpled shape.

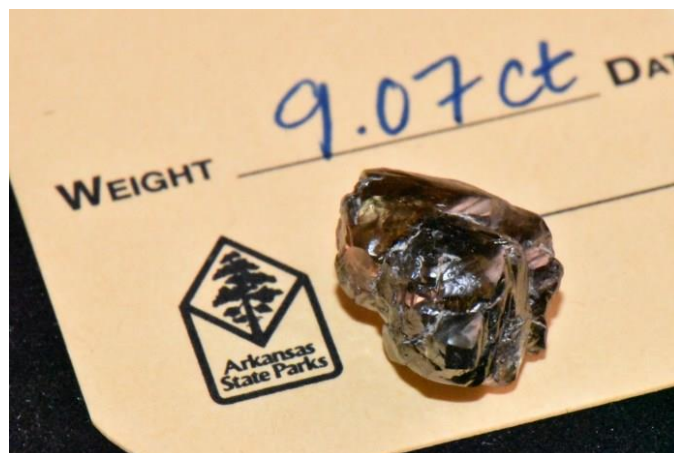
"It kind of looked interesting and shiny, so I put it in my bag and kept searching," Kinard said. "I just thought it might've been glass."

Several hours later, Kinard and his comrades stopped by the park's Diamond Discovery Center, where park workers identify visitor findings and register diamonds. Upon having his finds assessed, an employee informed Kinard he had discovered a diamond.

Assistant Superintendent Dru Edmonds noted that conditions were ideal for Kinard to spot the gem.

"Park staff plowed the search area on August 20, just a few days before Tropical Storm Laura dropped more than 2 inches of rain in the park," he said. "The sun was out when Mr. Kinard visited, and he walked just the right path to notice the sunlight reflecting off his diamond."

As of Wednesday, 246 diamonds have been registered at Crater of Diamonds State Park this year, weighing a total of 59.25 carats. On average, people find one or two diamonds there daily. ➤



Bench Tip Depth Gauge for Drilling

Brad Smith

Sometimes, you need to drill a number of holes all to the same depth. One quick and easy way is to wind some tape around the drill bit so that the tape just touches the part surface when the hole is deep enough.

You can set the depth either by measuring from the tip of the drill to the tape or by drilling to the correct depth, leaving the bit in the hole, and wrapping tape around the bit at the surface level.

A little extra tape left free on the end will blow away debris from the drilling.

See Brad's jewelry books at
amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith





The Rocks Beneath Our Feet **Agate in Fossil: The Story of American Dinosaur “Gem Bone”**

by Alan Meltzer

Editor’s note: The article is adapted from *The Rockhound* (newsletter of Gem & Mineral Society of Palm Beaches, Inc., West Palm Beach, FL), Oct/Nov/Dec 2020, pp. 8–11. All specimens are from the author’s personal collection.

Admission: I LOVE “GEM BONE”!

I’m fascinated by its stunning, brilliant aesthetic qualities and its amazing story. As an agate collector, I’m also drawn to the uniqueness of agate in fossil. There are fossils and there are agates, usually distinct in the rock-related and lapidary world. Yet there’s an amazing intersection of the two on a charmed sliver of land called the Colorado Plateau in the Four Corners area out West (fig. 1).

The Colorado Plateau is a mountainous region that overlaps with the Morrison Formation, which is rich in dinosaur fossils. The volcanic activity that created the Colorado Plateau deposited reservoirs of silica, setting the stage for one of the more remarkable transformations of Jurassic fossils into gem-grade material.

Let’s discuss what “gem bone” is and how it formed.

The colorful, hard dinosaur bone familiar to most folks in the lapidary world is trabecular bone (fig 2). If you cut open a large bone, even in contemporary mammals, the inner part should have a honeycomb structure. The

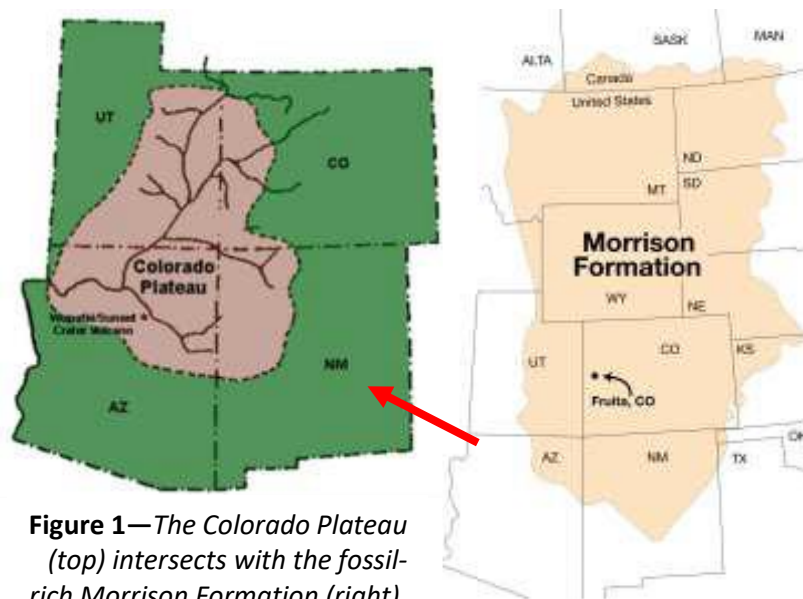


Figure 1—*The Colorado Plateau (top) intersects with the fossil-rich Morrison Formation (right).*

walls of the honeycomb are called “trabeculae.” When an animal is alive, those spaces are filled with marrow consisting of fatty tissue, blood, and other fluids. Post-mortem, the marrow degenerates and dries out, leaving voids (fig. 2).

In the silica-rich Colorado Plateau, Jurassic dinosaur bones didn’t always decompose quickly. The soft tissues decayed relatively quickly, but some bones stayed whole long enough to be buried by flash floods or by volcanic ash, creating an anaerobic environment that slowed further decomposition and kept out the small bugs and bacteria that feed on bone.



Figure 2—*Fossilized trabecular bones in cross-section, showing distinct hollows later filled by minerals.*

How did those boring old honeycombed bones transform into Technicolor images of meticulously preserved bone anatomy frozen forever in stone?

Oxygen couldn't get to the fossils but water could. Water percolated down through the sediments, carrying silica with it. The silica slowly deposited in the honeycomb voids, eventually filling them in a slow process that is not completely understood; agate genesis is an unsettled area of research. But we know that, bit by bit, silica in solution filled the voids in the honeycomb spaces of the trabecular bone, creating the durable, solid fossil that would resist 100 million years or more of geologic and climate stresses, letting us find it today.

But what about the color? How did these fossils develop the brilliant, eye-popping colors in them?

The colors were simply the mineral contaminants in the nearby ground, picked up by the water and silica in solution on its way to the bone. The bone is sometimes uniform in color, sometimes multicolored; the richness and variety of the minerals in the ground determined what ended up in the bone.

Trabecular “gem bone” is the most common but not the only kind. As an agate collector, I have a particular interest in banded agates in fossils; there are rare and special circumstances where stunning banded agates form in dinosaur bones too (fig. 3). All you need is a void and the right conditions (like on the Colorado Plateau) and voila, you have banded agates in bone!

Let's explore that a bit more.

Sometimes, trabecular bone partially decomposed, usually in the center, where the bone was least dense and strong. The decomposition left large voids, and those voids filled with combinations of banded agate, jasper, quartz, and calcite. In fact, the most highly agatized dino bone was the most decomposed before silica was deposited because decomposition created more opportunity for agate deposition.

The banded agates in trabecular bone can be stunning and colorful, but they are usually irregular in shape because the voids they filled were irregular (fig. 3).

But there's another, more interesting habit in dino bone where agate forms: theropod cores (fig. 4). There were two categories of dinosaurs: sauropods and theropods. Theropods were predators and sauropods prey. Sauropods outnumbered theropods because prey outnumbers predators in any sustainable ecosystem (that's



Figure 3—*Banded agate in fossilized dinosaur bone.*

why trabecular “gem bone” is the most common kind found). Sauropods, generally larger and slower, had solid bones. Theropods developed lighter, more hollow bones to give them more of the speed a predator needs.

Theropods had “cortical” bone for strength. Cortical bone is denser and stronger than trabecular, so it can



Figure 4—Theropod core agates. Note the density of the surrounding fossilized bone material (no honeycombing).

also be hollow; this was a marvel of biomechanical engineering akin to contemporary structural steel tubing—denser but lighter and stronger than a solid bone.

The hollow “cores” in the middle of these bones were the perfect vessels to fill with agate, quartz, and calcite (fig. 4). Just like thundereggs and amygdaloidal agate formation, there was a void waiting for the right conditions of silica in solution to slowly deposit beautiful banded agate.

These theropod “cores” have some of the most gorgeous banding of agate in dino bone. The agates in theropod cores are nearly perfectly round and have very smooth edges because those were the shapes of the voids that the silica filled. These sturdy agate cores are sometimes found with the bone attached but often without host bone because the softer bone weathered away long before.

The smoothness and shapes of the cores are telltale signs that they’re theropod agate cores (fig. 4). Near perfect roundness distinguishes these from most other agates found on the Colorado Plateau. You don’t see the “cells” because they are much smaller and more tightly packed in cortical bone than in trabecular bone.

Another prized kind of agate in dino bone is “peacock” vertebrae. Vertebrae of some theropods, notably allosauruses, had a semicircular pattern of voids; on rare occasions, those voids filled with brightly colored agate reminiscent of peacock tails (fig. 5).

**Figure 5—
Peacock vertebra
agates.**

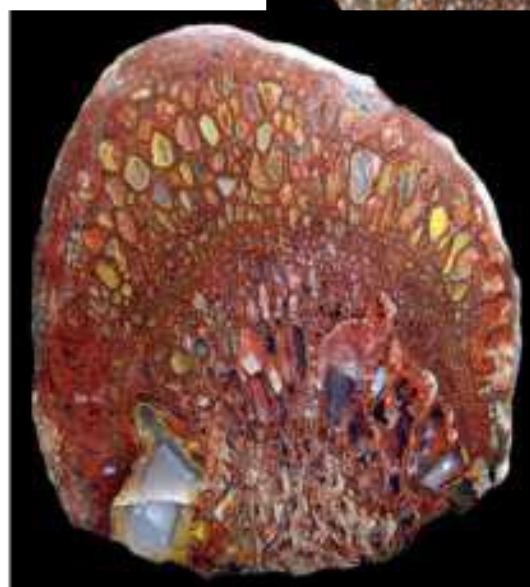
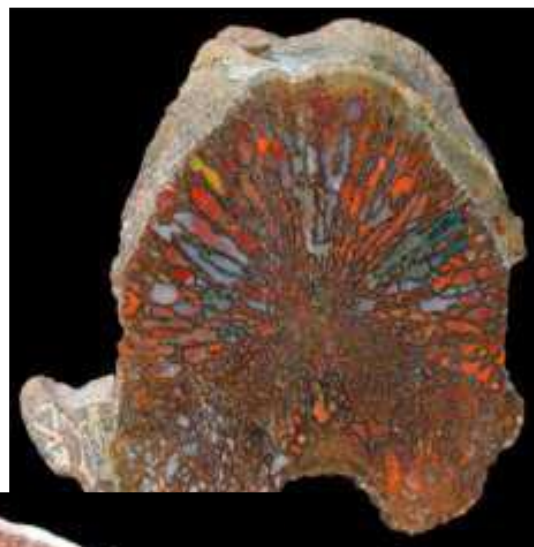




Figure 6—Examples of lapidary work with gem-grade dinosaur bone.

Peacock vertebra agates are among the most coveted types of “gem bone” for collectors, and they are (theoretically) the most common because vertebrae are the most common bone in the body.

Gem-grade dino bone has a small, strong collectors’ market; but it’s most widely known among lapidarists as a rare, high-end gemstone for jewelry. As with any gemstone, the best of it is exceedingly rare and costly; topnotch bone often sells by the gram but is rarely traded on open markets. Figure 6 shows examples of high-quality dino “gem bone” in jewelry.

Access to the best material is gained through years of relationship building because very little new high-quality material comes to market. The “easy pickins” from 50 years ago are gone. Since 1978, it’s been illegal to collect vertebrate fossils without permission on public lands (the vast majority of the lands on the Colorado Plateau are under the jurisdiction of the federal Bureau of Land Management), so most “gem bone” comes from old collections. ↗

Video

Ore to More (The History of Copper)

by Vérité, Inc.

Editor’s note: The source is YouTube, August 21, 2009.
Thanks to Mike Kaas for the reference!

This video showcases the importance of copper in our society. It walks the viewer, step by step, through the entire refining process. This video was developed for Rio Tinto and has won multiple national awards. Verite is proud of this production and would like to thank everyone involved. ... [Watch the video \(6 minutes\)](#). ↗

WILDACRES SPRING SESSION CANCELLED

The EFMLS Wildacres Workshop Committee has regrettably announced that the spring session of Wildacres (May 17–23) has been canceled due to the uncertainty surrounding the COVID virus.

The fall session (September 6–12) has not been canceled. EFMLS has promised to notify clubs as soon as more is known.



AFMS Code of Ethics

I will respect both private and public property and will do no collecting on privately owned land without the owner's permission.

I will keep informed of all laws and regulations governing collecting on public lands and will observe them.

I will, to the best of my ability, ascertain the boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.

I will use no firearms or blasting material in collecting areas.

I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind—fences, signs, buildings.

I will leave all gates as found.

I will build fires in designated or safe places only and will be certain they are completely extinguished before leaving the area.

I will discard no burning material—matches, cigarettes, etc.

I will fill all excavated holes that may be dangerous to livestock.

I will not contaminate wells, creeks, or other water supplies.

I will cause no willful damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.

I will practice conservation and undertake to utilize fully and well the materials I have collected and will recycle my surplus for the pleasure and benefit of others.

I will support the rockhound project H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.

I will cooperate with field trip leaders and those in designated authority in all collecting areas.

I will report to my club or Federation officers, the Bureau of Land Management, or other authorities any deposit of petrified wood or other materials on public lands, which should be protected for the enjoyment of future generations for public educational and scientific purposes.

I will appreciate and protect our heritage of natural resources.

I will observe the Golden Rule, use “Good Outdoor Manners,” and conduct myself in a manner that will add to the stature and public image of rockhounds everywhere. ➤

You Can't Make This Stuff Up!



As editor of The Mineral Newsletter, I often peruse the EFMLS newsletter in search of articles to reprint. To my surprise, I recently found the newsletter suspended, apparently while EFMLS leaders settle a dispute. An alternative newsletter, EFMLS Forward, started in March 2021 with editorials from various clubs, along with an account of the dispute, adapted here (to remove bias). Curiouser and curiouser!

To help you understand what's going on, I've summarized my take on it in the sidebar below. It is based entirely on the storyline here, so caveat emptor!

You might be wondering what the heck is going on in the EFMLS, with all the conflicting information flying around. Below is a timeline of events.

May 2020: EFMLS President David Nock names a new Bylaws Committee with Cochairs Larry Heath and Andy Celmer, along with 10 other committee members from around the Federation.

July 2020: David Nock sends a blanket email to office holders responsible for EFMLS records/documentation asking them to submit the materials to Historian Alan Holmes for archival/reference purposes. They do not do so.

August 19, 2020: David Nock announces a vote on bylaws amendments to be held on October 21.

September 9, 2020: The Bylaws Committee holds the first of three roundtable discussions regarding the proposed bylaws amendments.

September 10, 2020: First Vice President (and prospective next President) Ellery Borow calls a meeting of the “Executive Board” for the purpose of taking control of the EFMLS website, Zoom account, Facebook page, LinkedIn, and Breaking Rock News. Meeting attendees include Laura Simmons (Second Vice President), Beverly Eisenacher (Secretary), Gary Bergholdt (Treasurer), Walter Priest (Assistant Treasurer), Mary Bateman (Editor), Cheryl Neary (Auction Committee Chair), Carrie Meyers (Regional

Vice President, Region 3), Bill Stephens (Conservation and Legislation Chair), Michelle Renee (Regional Vice President, Region 8), Larry Huffman (Show Chair), and Barbara Ringhiser (Immediate Past President). Eight other EFMLS officials, past and present, attend as guests. After a roll call, Secretary Beverly Eisenacher announces a quorum. Steve Weinberger acts as parliamentarian.

September 23, 2020: The Bylaws Committee holds the second of three roundtable discussions on proposed amendments to EFMLS bylaws.

October 7, 2020: The Bylaws Committee holds the third of three roundtable discussions on proposed amendments to EFMLS bylaws.

October 21, 2020: The Bylaws Committee passes the bylaws amendments by a 2-to-1 margin.

October 23, 2020: President David Nock convenes an annual meeting to elect EFMLS officers, but the election can't proceed due to the newly amended bylaws and the meeting is postponed. The budget has not been finalized, and new candidates who can meet the bylaws requirements need to be located.

December 30, 2020: Cheryl Neary, as "Election Administrator," sends out a ballot for voting on the candidates who were nominated in March 2020. She does not consult with Treasurer Gary Bergholdt and does not follow the newly amended bylaws. She asks that the ballots be returned within 2 days (violating EFMLS bylaws). Most of the candidates are not eligible to hold positions under the amended bylaws.

January 16, 2021: EFMLS Historian Alan Holmes sends 30 certified letters to people responsible for holding EFMLS records/documentation asking them to submit the materials to him for archival/reference purposes. Several refuse; some letters are sent back and most are ignored.

February 1, 2021: Editor Mary Bateman distributes an EFMLS newsletter declaring the election over, with ineligible candidates named as new EFMLS officers. Ellery Borow is named President, Bill Stephens First Vice President, Larry Huffman Second Vice President, and Gary Bergholdt Treasurer.

February 3, 2021: Mad House Graphics registers efmls.com through the hosting company Go Daddy.

February 15, 2021: David Nock thanks(?) Heather Shields for her service as webmaster and website administrator.

February 15, 2021: EFMLS.org—notification of new administrative user, traced back to Mad House Graphics.

February 18, 2021: EFMLS.org—notification of administrator email change, traced back to Mad House Graphics.

February 19, 2021: David Nock sends all EFMLS members a letter from EFMLS legal counsel Gary Schuster declaring the election to be null and void. The EFMLS newsletter is suspended.

February 19, 2021: EFMLS legal counsel Gary Schuster says that if efmls.com is launched as a competitor, a "cease-and-desist" letter is imminent.

March 2, 2021: Bill Stephens sends and Treasurer Gary Bergholdt receives a "cease-and-desist" letter from the officer overseeing the election. The letter accuses the Treasurer of potential fraud, embezzlement of funds, and other crimes.

Clear as mud?

What Is Going On?

1. *Officer elections issue:* Candidates nominated for office in March 2020 were ineligible under new EFMLS bylaws adopted in October. Rather than taking time to find new candidates, some decided to proceed with elections; others disagreed and are trying to invalidate the results.
2. *Historical records issue:* For what appear to be archival reasons, the EFMLS Historian tried to get Federation records. For unclear reasons, EFMLS officers refused to share the records.
3. *Media control issue:* Opposing parties appear to be trying to gain control of the website as well as the newsletter. The parties might be factions in the officer elections dispute.

Bottom line: Seems like compromises could have been struck, but such conflicts often boil down to conflicting egos and miscommunication. Positions tend to harden.

April 2021—Upcoming Events in Our Area/Region (see details below)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 Good Friday	3
4 Easter	5	6	7 MSDC mtg	8	9	10
11	12 GLMSMC mtg	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22 Earth Day	23	24
25	26 NVMC mtg	27	28 MNCA mtg	29	30	

Event Details

7: Mineralogical Society of the District of Columbia—meetings via Zoom until further notice; info: <http://www.mineralogicalsocietyofdc.org/>.

12: Gem, Lapidary, and Mineral Society of Montgomery County—meetings via Zoom until further notice; info: <https://www.glmsmc.com/>.

26: Northern Virginia Mineral Club—meetings via Zoom until further notice; info: <https://www.novamineralclub.org/>.

28: Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area—meetings via Zoom until further notice; info: <http://www.dcmicrominerals.org/>.

Disclaimer

All meetings/shows are tentative during the coronavirus pandemic, and club meetings might well be remote. Check the website for each organization for more information.



Prehnite with babingtonite and calcite, Roncari Quarry, East Granby, Hartford County, CT. Photo: Bob Cooke.



**Mineral of
the Month:
Prehnite**

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:
<http://www.novamineralclub>

2021 Club Officers

President: Tom Kim
president@novamineral.club
Vice President: Sue Marcus
vicepresident@novamineral.club
Secretary: David MacLean
secretary@novamineral.club
Treasurer: Roger Haskins
treasurer@novamineral.club
Communications: Ti Meredith
communications@novamineral.club
Editor: Hutch Brown
editor@novamineral.club
Field Trip Chair: Vacant
Greeter/Door Prizes: Ti Meredith
greeter@novamineral.club
Historian: Kathy Hrechka
historian@novamineral.club
Show Chair: Tom Taaffe
show@novamineral.club
Tech Support: Tom Burke
tech@novamineral.club
Webmaster: Casper Voogt
webmaster@novamineral.club

The Northern Virginia Mineral Club

Visitors are always welcome at our club meetings!

Please send your newsletter articles to:
hutchbrown41@gmail.com

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

SEND YOUR DUES TO:

Roger Haskins, Treasurer, NVMC
4411 Marsala Glen Way, Fairfax, VA 22033-3136

Dues: Due by January 1 of each year;
\$20 individual, \$25 family, \$6 junior (under 16,
sponsored by an adult member).

This publication may contain copyrighted material for the noncommercial purpose of advancing the understanding of subjects related to our hobby. This "fair use" of copyrighted material accords with section 107 of the U.S. Copyright Law.

Purpose: To encourage interest in and learning about geology, mineralogy, lapidary arts, and related sciences. The club is a member of the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies (EFMLS—at <http://www.amfed.org/efmls>) and the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS—at <http://www.amfed.org>).

You may reprint NVMC materials in this newsletter.

Meetings: At 7:45 p.m. on the fourth Monday of each month (except May and December)* at **Long Branch Nature Center**, 625 Carlin Springs Road, Arlington, VA 22204. (No meeting in July or August.)

**Changes are announced in the newsletter; we follow the snow schedule of Arlington County schools.*

You may reprint the materials in this newsletter, but if you use copyrighted material for purposes beyond "fair use," you must get permission from the copyright owner.