

WHITTIER

ROCKHOUNDER
GEM & MINERAL
SOCIETY

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Note Meeting Date: November 18
Marcia's World Famous Trivia Quiz



Chris Kyte demonstrates his technique for reducing a small boulder of agate into slab saw-sized chunks during the club field trip.

ROCKHOUNDER

THE PREZ SEZ:

Congratulations All!!! The Whittier Gem & Mineral Society 2010 Show is over and everyone needs to give themselves a pat on the back for a very successful job. At the last general meeting, our Treasurer, Izzie Burns, reported that the show earned the club a significant amount of money. This has not happened for several years. We can all take a moment to take a deep breath, relax, enjoy the holidays and start thinking about 2011.

As usual, the December meeting will be a Christmas party at our house. The actual date has not been finalized yet, but we're thinking about a Sunday, late afternoon/early evening. We want to accommodate as many people's schedules as possible. Christmas is always a busy season and there are lots of demands on everyone's time.

As soon as the holiday season is over, it will be time for Quartzsite. I know that you old-timers are already planning the trip, but for the newcomers to the hobby, you absolutely HAVE to take in Quartzsite! This little community on the way from Blythe to Tucson blossoms into a huge mass of humanity attending the biggest darn yard sale/swap meet that you will ever see. Most of the merchandise is rockhound oriented, but you can find a bit of everything. Dealers come from all over the country and even from Australia. Go there, pick up some beautiful material that you can't find locally, and then, hopefully, you will have six months to turn some of that material into an extraordinary donation for the upcoming 2011 Gem Show. Hey, did you notice how I worked that unabashed plug in for next year's show?

Enough said! Have a wonderful Holiday Season. I'll see you at the next meeting.

Jerry

WGMS General Meeting

Thursday, November 18, 2010

at 7:30 PM

TRIVIA!!!

Once a year, the Pasadena Lapidary Society presents an entertaining (and educational) trivia game on the subjects of rocks and geology, lapidary, jewelry, and club member's knowledge of their club.

Marcia Goetz is planning to present this program for our enjoyment and edification at the Whittier Gem & Mineral Society's November 18 General Meeting. You will be tested on a variety of rock and club related subjects, and the "winner" will receive a prize.

Marcia Goetz

Show Roundup

The WGMS Annual Gem Show is over for another year. It was a good show as always. We came together and carried out the necessary tasks and produced another fine show. And thanks to the diligent work of Kathy Turner we came out ahead financially for the first time in several years. Thanks for all of your hard work and dedication.

Jay Valle, 2010 Show Chairman

Seen Under a Refrigerator Magnet

Criticism isn't always all bad. If it is unjustified, ignore it. If it's ignorant, laugh it off. If you suspect there might be a grain of truth there - learn from it.

Original Source Unknown, from a refrigerator, via Flo Piechota

**Field Trip Report
Whittier Club Claim 2010**

The Whittier Gem & Mineral Society hosted their annual field trip to the Club honey onyx claim over the weekend of November 6-7. As always, the outing was well attended, with 15 members from the Whittier, Pasadena & La Habra Clubs represented and 2 guest 'houncers from the Victorville Club. This field trip is somewhat unique in that most of the participants stay at the Oak Tree Inn at the Ghost Town Road exit of I-15 and we hold our Saturday night potluck at Peggy Sue's 50's Diner.

The weekend began with a group of "early birds" going out on Friday to scout a nearby dry lake bed for meteorites. Though no space debris was collected, the metal detector crowd each found something to show including bullet fragments and 1 pop top from an old soda can. The "dry" lake bed was a little soggy in places due to recent rains in the area so we had to pay attention to where we drove our small convoy of vehicles while on the playa. Returning to base (hotel) we enjoyed our evening repast at a local purveyor of fine dining. After dinner a campfire was enjoyed by the rockhounds who camped, in fact the only campfire enjoyed during the entire weekend due to too high winds in the early evenings. Not to imply that winds were a problem during our field trip. They were not. The weather was rockhound ideal, cool but not uncomfortably so.

Saturday morning found our rock seekers in search of agate east of the Calico Mountains. Rock was had by all who looked. The highlight of the day was watching Chris Kyte reduce a large agate boulder to more manageable and slabbable chunks (see cover picture). Our potluck that night was at Peggy Sue's and it was GOOD (always is).

Sunday began with a visit to a local previously unexplored area found by one of the Whittier club members. Though the location had obviously been collected on by other persons unknown, nice red moss agate and multicolored jasper was found and taken. Most of the field trippers left after lunch and a small group consisting of 4 vehicles and occupants made a foray into the Calico Mountains in search of the elusive Calico sagenite. Some of this special inclusional gemstone was collected and we returned to camp for a traditional potluck dinner and it was GOOD (always is).

The weekend was highlighted by beautiful, comfortable days, star filled nights with a little wind (the tent trailer survived so it must have been little) and more that the usual wild life sightings including tarantulas and a baby speckled rattlesnake. It was GOOD (always is).

Jay Valle

**ENHANCED, TREATED, HEATED, DYED,
STABILIZED, CREATED, AND IRRADIATED – FAKE?
by Deborah Pfianz**

Gemstones and semi-precious stones have been fiddled with for centuries to make them ‘more’: colorful, more eye-catching, and easier to work. This does not make them ‘fake’, however one should know what some of those terms and treatments mean.

Heat Treated: this is the most common treatment and is as old as fire. Humans heated agate and jasper so as to be able to knap the stones for tools. Humans also heat gem materials to enhance, clarify or create color in a stone. Amethyst is heated for citrine and ametrine. Zircon is heated to clarify the stone to clear white. Sapphires are heated to get the most amazing pinks and blues. Tigereye is turned blue or red. Carnelian turns orange. Aquamarine may go from green-blue to blue. Rubies may lose a purplish tint. Iolite may be turned a deep blue. It is also used to enhance the ‘color change’ gems such as tanzanite.

Dyed: this is also a very common practice. Agate is dyed to get fancy pinks, purples, orange and blues – eye catching and very saleable. Chalcendony is often dyed; black is sold as onyx and green is sold as chrysoprase. Howlite is often dyed to look like turquoise, lapis, sodalite and charite. Turquoise and jadeite are often dyed to enhance the natural color. Alabaster, coral, banded calcite, and marble are dyed to enhance their color or to imitate other semiprecious stones.

Irradiation: while topaz is currently the most commonly irradiated gemstone (to get various shades and tones of blue) this is also how one gets those fabulously colored diamonds. In fact diamond was the first gemstone color treated with radiation.

Stabilized: Opals are often stabilized – either by filling such as with Opticon resin (or similar agent) or by capping either as a doublet or triplet. Emerald has a long history of fracture filling due to its popularity and its tendency to be highly included and fractured. While natural oils have traditionally been used for fillings and stabilization, modern synthetic resins are now being used, such as Opticon, which are more permanent than the natural oils were. Turquoise and coral are also

stabilized in such a manner so as to make them a bit more durable.

Created: this is a touchy subject. Much like farmed pearls are real with a center of plastic or mother of pearl rather than sand. Still real, still a pearl just helped to grow by a human. Laboratory grown crystals of ruby, sapphire, diamond, emerald, and star sapphire are real semiprecious stones. They just weren't grown in the earth. So what is the answer: Real or Fake? This 'real vs fake' can be argued with all sides being technically correct. That is not the most important information one can have. The really important bit about this from a lapidary or jeweler's point of view is disclosure. Does one know up front that the stone you are getting has been 'helped along' by the human touch? Do you as a lapidary artist, gem-smith, jeweler or craftsperson know what you are using? The beauty and art that we create with these stones is being helped along by our touch, much as it was to first get our attention. There is beauty in the knowing - be sure to share with those around you.

From The Conglomerate, Oxford County Geological Society, Woodstock, Ontario, Canada. Via Rock Chipper 6/01; via CentrILL Gems 10/07; via RockCollector 12/07, via Lithogram 9/10

Bucketite

This is a type of rock that forms in buckets, milk crates, boxes and other containers in the backyards and garages of long-time rockhounds. Its properties vary widely; any color, texture or hardness may be found in these deposits. Often the best material is found in small pieces at the bottom of the container, great patience is needed to sift through a typical deposit. These deposits are typically pretty filthy, though the stones are easily removed and cleaned. Beware of spiders and other vermin, especially in larger deposits and in hotter climates. On the other hand, the material is quite often pre-slabbed, and the slabs will occasionally already have cabochon outlines marked on them. How can you tell if a piece of rock is bucketite? If you can't tell what it is and someone asks you, just tell them it's bucketite. For more information or to see some bucketite, contact a long-time rockhound. (Also known as "backyardite".)

From SMS News 11/02 via The Pegmatite 02/03, Orecuts 10/10

**Wiley's Well Annual Thanksgiving
Rockhound Round-up
By Adam Dean and Robert Sankovich**

This trip is open to all CFMS Affiliated Society Members and their guests that agree to abide by the AFMS Code of Ethics, the directions of the field trip leader, and practice safe rockhounding. A Consent and Assumption of Risk Waiver of Liability form must be signed upon arriving at the campsite.

TRIP LOCATION: The Wiley Well District is 10 miles southwest of Blythe, CA and is one of the most popular collecting areas on the Colorado Desert.

WHEN: Thanksgiving Weekend, November 25-28, 2010. There will be folks camping all week.

SPONSORS: CFMS Field Trip South Co-Chairs, and OBMS.

LEADERS: Adam Dean and Robert Sankovich. Please notify us, if you plan on attending. Feel free to email or call us if you have any questions or need more information:

Adam Dean: Ph: (909) 489-4899 e-mail: theagatehunter@verizon.net
Robert Sankovich Ph: (805) 494-7734 e-mail: rmsorca@adelphia.net

DIRECTIONS TO CAMPSITE: From the 10 Freeway, exit on Wiley Well Road and turn south from the freeway, 14 miles to camp. Around a mile or two down the road, the pavement will turn towards the right. Don't follow that road; stay straight onto the dirt road. Stay on this dirt road past Fire Agate Mine and the Coon Hollow Rd. You will see a sign for the Imperial County Line. The camp will be just past this sign on the right-hand side. I will have OBMS (Orange Belt Mineralogical Society) Field Trip signs along the way to the camp ground. If you get lost, call Adam at (909) 489-4899.

COLLECTING TRIPS: November 25th, 26th, and 27th. Open to all CFMS affiliated society members and their guests. Each day we will leave camp at 8:00 am and return in the late afternoon except on Thanksgiving Day when we will be back in time for our Feast at 2:00 pm. Be sure to carry your lunch and water when we go to the collecting sites, we will not come back to camp during the day.

25th – Petrified Bay Laurel-Iron Wood by Colorado River, AZ
26th – Fire Agate/Chalcedony. Pebble Terrace, Paisley Agates
27th – Geode and Nodules Beds

VEHICLES: On the 26th, a 4-wheel drive vehicle “is” necessary to get to Fire Agate. We will make arrangements for those without a 4-wheel drive to ride with those who do. On the 27th trip, a 4-wheel drive vehicle is not a “must” for this trip, but is highly recommended. No low clearance vehicles advised. These sites are remote, so bring food, water and all required supplies. The nearest stores are in Blythe, California.

CAMPGROUNDS & FACILITIES: This is a dry camping area, no water, no services, no hookups, no toilets. There is a dump station at the rest stop at the Wiley Well exit off I-10; however, there is no potable water. Blythe has a free dump station and good water 2-blocks south of I-10 at the Lovkin Ave. exit. Blythe is also good place to get food, supplies, ice and gasoline. It is approximately 25 miles from Blythe to the campsite. There are numerous good motels in Blythe with a wide range of rates. The closest town to the campsite is Palo Verde, approximately 16 miles through Coon Hollow and over the Mule Mtns. There is a convenience store (food, etc.), gasoline, a couple of restaurants and rock shop in Palo Verde, the road is okay for 4-wheel drive vehicles but not 2-wheel drive vehicle.

SAFETY CONCERNS: Do not lick the rocks, use sun screen, when needed, stay away from rattlesnakes, use bug spray, be aware of flash floods, be extra careful, team up with a buddy and don't get lost.

CLIMATE & WEATHER: We are planning on nice weather—sunny days; cool, clear, star filled nights. But remember it can rain this time of year so be prepared and plan ahead.

MATERIAL TO COLLECT: Fire agate, geodes and a large variety of miscellaneous fossils, limestone, jasper, petrified wood, agates and very old Stromatolites. Also, we plan to search for the Paisley Agate Beds, Geodes and nodules.

COLLECTING MATERIALS: There will be surface collecting and the use of sturdy bags will be all you need. However, if you plan on digging fire agates, you need hard rock tools, safety glasses, and a hand sledge and gloves. It may be wise to carry a first aid kit. If you plan on digging for geodes, you need hard rock tools, as well as, picks, shovels, and I recommend a dust mask, as the volcanic ash may irritate your lungs.

TOOLS: Sturdy bags, hard rock tools, safety glasses and gloves. It may be wise to carry a first-aid kit. I also recommend a dust mask as the volcanic ash may irritate your lungs.

(Continued on page 10)

Rockhound Round-up

(Continued from page 9)

CLOTHING: Wear clothing in layers as it can be very warm during the day and extremely cold at night. Bring extra jackets and blankets.

DINNER: Thanksgiving - 3:00 pm; O.B.M.S. and C.F.M.S. will host a pot-luck dinner for all those willing to contribute. Please bring your own plates, utensils, drinks and chair. We welcome everyone.

If you plan to join us for dinner, here is the guideline to follow:

- If your last name starts with A, E, I, M, Q or - please bring a main dish.
- If your last name starts with B, F, J, N, R or V - please bring a starch.
- If your last name starts with C, G, K, O, S, W or X - please bring a vegetable or salad.
- If your last name starts with D, H, L, P, T, Y or Z - please bring a dessert.

REMINDER: Please help preserve our deserts and pack out what you pack in. Let's leave it clean for future Rockhounds.

All those attending the collecting trips will be required to fill out a Liability Waiver form.

- Robert & Adam

Coprolite, or This Dung is for You
by Brett Whitenack

This article deals with a subject some people find offensive and vulgar. Others find it quite amusing. There are a few people who find it extremely fascinating and worthy of study. What could exhibit so many varied reactions? I'm speaking of petrified poop, Dina doo, fossilized er, ah , pardon me. I don't wish to offend anyone reading this article. I'm talking of the much maligned, the lowly, the humble, coprolite.

"What is coprolite?" I'm glad you asked. Coprolites are fossilized feces, dung, scat! Yes, ladies and gentlemen, coprolites are the extruded remains that prehistoric animals deposited.

"But how can these be fossils?" The oldest coprolites date some 400 million years ago from the Silurian Period and are from fish. The most recent coprolites are from Ice Age animals and may contain much original organic matter-a fact your nose may discover if the coprolite gets wet! Coprolites form just like any other fossil. They must have been buried rapidly in fine grain sed-

iment and kept away from biological agents that could destroy them, such as scavengers or the environment. Ground water percolating through a potential fossil must be of a correct nature, not too acidic, full of minerals that can replace the soft materials. Of course, these requirements only pertain to those coprolites that are petrified. Some younger coprolites have been found desiccated in southwest caves and date from the last Ice Age.

Being of a soft nature, dung doesn't preserve as readily as bones, teeth or scales. However, coprolites aren't exceedingly rare by any means and you too can easily own a piece of this most interesting geologic wonder. Given its detached nature, a coprolite can't be identified with the exact species of animal that left it. In some instances, coprolites from sharks can be determined from the grooves and markings on them, as sharks have distinctive spirals valves in their intestines. By studying the makeup of a coprolite, one can tell if the animal was a carnivore (meat eater) or herbivore (plant eater). It is interesting to note that carnivorous coprolites are more readily preserved due to their higher mineral content from the bones the animal ate.

Other things that can be told by studying coprolites are such things as the paleoenvironment where the animal lived, other organisms that were associated with it, and how this animal interacted with its surroundings.

The name coprolite has two sources as to how they were named: one fact, the other fiction. During the great "bone wars" of Professor O.C. Marsh and Professor Edward Drinker Cope during the latter years of the last century, Professor Cope's men apparently stole an allosaur skeleton from a quarry of Professor Marsh's. This incensed Professor Marsh, and to "immortalize" Professor Cope, Professor Marsh named the fossilized fecal remains "coprolites" to get even with his archenemy. A quaint legend, but entirely untrue.

The name coprolite has more humble and mundane origins. The English geologist, William Buckland, deduced their true nature and named them from the Greek "kopros" dung and "lithos" stone literally dungstone. Buckland thought they would be important in agriculture as a source of fertilizer due to their high calcium phosphate content. In addition to the information they can tell us, coprolites have become fashionable as a cutting material. Believe it or not, some coprolites exhibit beautiful colors when cut and polished. It has been said that the reds are from the meat the animal ate, brown from the nuts and seeds, green from plant material, and black from the juices of blackberries. Actually these colors come from the minerals deposited by ground water that percolated through them as they were fossilized.

From The Stone Chipper 8/03, via Stoney Statements 1/04, The Southwest Gem 2/04, The Backbender Gazette 4/04 and Rocky Tales 11/10

Fecund Feces

By David Tenenbaum

From the Why ? Files – The Science Behind the News

Posted 3 May 2001

You wouldn't think feces would fossilize. In fact, you'd admit you don't think much about feces at all. Same way around here: We Why Filers are pretty much a flush-and-forget crew.

But Karen Chin thinks so much about fossil feces that she can even pronounce the phrase. In fact, the Stanford University post-doc waxes wistful about waste. Fossilized excrement, she says, "can tell us a lot about population, health, distribution and diet."

Like anyone who studies repulsive stuff, Chin has a ready rationale. "There's a certain intrigue about going out to dig up ancient animals, but some people don't think what I study is all that romantic. But fossil feces can be just as interesting as the study of animals."

Wildlife biologists, she notes, make no apology for studying scats -- the feces of live animals. Similarly, coprolites, as archeologists term fossilized feces, convey information about the lifestyles of the dead and buried.

Scat that had nine lives

How does something as soft and ephemeral as a turd even become a hard fossil? Before getting fossilized, feces can be eaten, digested by microbes, or washed or blown away. In fact, Chin lists nine separate perils that can prevent a scat from becoming a fossil.

Most feces do disappear before fossilization, which is probably a good thing, when you think about it. But if even a small percentage of feces gets fossilized, that's enough to leave a substantial record. After all, Chin says, "an animal only dies once." But it's gotta go every day of its life...

When sliced into thin sections and examined under a microscope, coprolites may contain seeds, leaves, wood, mollusks, bones or teeth.

The list, obviously, includes lots of the indigestible crud that carnivores devour.

Carnivore dung is also chemically conducive to fossilization, Chin adds. Bones contain calcium, which can combine to form calcium phosphate, the major chemical that, through the process of permineralization, turns soft feces into hard fossils.

The presence of both calcium phosphate and partly digested food remains are diagnostic for coprolites, which generally have that sausage shape characteristic of extrusion. That's the technical term for "squoze out."

Chin says the absence of calcium phosphate and indigestible crud reveal that many "coprolites" sold at rock and gem shows are bogus.

Caveat excrement emptor.

As one of the world's few experts on coprolites, Chin was called in to examine a titanic turd (more than 2.4 liters in volume) deposited in Saskatchewan near the end of the dinosaur age. The scat contained the bones of a young, herbivorous dino -- an itchy-bitsy critter no bigger than a cow. Although carnivorous dinos didn't masticate their food as mammals do (their teeth did not mesh well enough for that), the immense crushing pressure of a Tyrannosaurus rex jaw could have busted the bones, explaining the bone chunks.

Who dung it?

Identifying what Chin calls the "poopetrator" is probably the most difficult part of studying coprolites. While Chin observes that you can never know for sure, the giant T. rex poop shows that guesses are based on the fossil context, and on the size and contents of the coprolite itself.

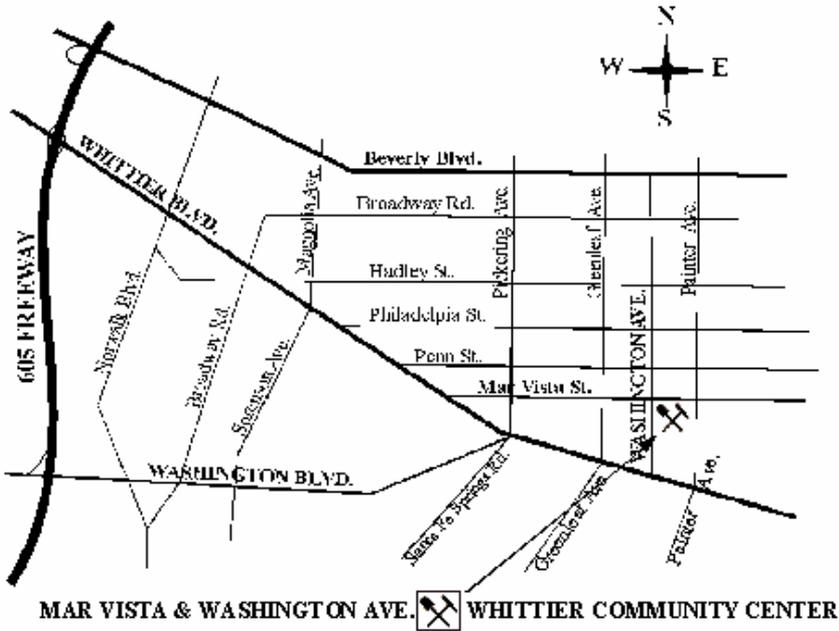
Having read this far, do you now promise to focus more fervently on fossilized feces? If so, you'll know the right answer when Chin (a putrid punster whose quips have been purposely perpetuated previously) asks: "Does fecal matter?"

From <http://whyfiles.org/> via The Rollin' Rock 11-10

Upcoming CFMS Gem Shows

- Nov 20-21 Oxnard, CA.** Oxnard Gem & Mineral Society
Oxnard Performing Arts Center, 800 Hobson Way
Hours: Sat. 9-5 Sun. 10-5
- Jan 15-16 Exeter, CA.** Tule Gem & Mineral Society
Exter Memorial Bldg., 324 N Kaweah (Hwy 65)
Hours: Sat. 10 - 5, Sun. 10-4
- Jan 28-30 Redlands, CA.** Mineralogical Society of Southern California
Micromounters Symposium
San Bernardino County Museum, 2024 Orange Tree
Hours: Fri. 5pm - 10pm; Sat. 9am - 10pm
Sun. Field trip time to be set
- Feb 18-27 Indio, CA.** San Gorgonio Mineral & Gem Society
Riverside County Fair & National Date Festival
Gem & Mineral Building Bldg #1, 46-350 Arabia Street
Hours: 10 am - 10 pm
- Feb 25-26 Northridge, CA.** Del-Air Rockhounds
Northridge United Methodist Church, 9650 Reseda Blvd.
Hours: Fri. 3:00 pm to 9:00 pm - Sat. 10:00 am to 5:00 pm
- Mar 5-6 Arcadia, CA.** Monrovia Rockhounds, Inc.
Los Angles Co. Arboretum & Botanic Gardens
301 Baldwin Ave.
Hours: Sat. & Sun. 9-4:30
- Mar 5-6 Ventura, CA.** Ventura Gem & Mineral Society
Seaside Park, Ventura Co. Fairgrounds, 10 W. harbor Blvd.
Hours: Sat. 10-5; Sun. 10-4
- Mar 12-13 Salinas, CA.** Salinas Valley Rock & Gem Club
Veteran's Hall Spreckels, CA, 5th & Llano Streets
Hours: Sat. 10-5 daily
- Mar 19-20 Bakersfield, CA.** San Joaquin Valley Lapidary Society
Kern County Shrine Club, 700 south P. Street (P & Bell Terrace)
Hours: 9-5 daily

WGMS MEETING LOCATION!
Whittier Community Center
7630 Washington Ave. Whittier



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Affiliations



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(See page 4 & 15 for info & map)