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The Mojave Desert Gem and Mineral Society (MDGMS) is a nonprofit organization. The objectives of the society are:

- * To collect and study minerals and rocks.
- * To disseminate a general knowledge of the science of mineralogy and allied subjects.
- * To provide opportunity for the exhibition and exchange of specimens.

Meetings / Workshops

Meetings: 1st Friday (7:00 P.M.)
Workshop: 3rd Friday (6:30 P.M.)
Location: 25647 W. Main Street
Barstow, CA 92311

September 2nd Meeting

Theme: Local Materials
Hostess:
Door Prizes:

Annual Membership Dues

PAYABLE IN JANUARY

Adults: \$20.00
Juniors: \$10.00 (10 to 18 years)



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BIRTHDAYS



Sept. 3rd Janet Wentz
Sept. 17th Steve Depue

DESERT DIGGINS
MOJAVE DESERT GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

Sapphire

Sapphire is the blue sister of ruby. Ruby and sapphire are the same material, the mineral corundum, an aluminum oxide, and the second hardest gemstone after diamond. Red corundum is known as ruby, while all other colors are referred to as sapphire. While blue is the classic sapphire color, sapphire is actually found in a wide range of colors.

With blue sapphire, the intensity of blue is the most important factor. If the color is a washed-out, weak blue, the value of the stone will be lower. Look for a stone that has an intense, rich blue without being dark or inky. Overall, sapphires that are too dark or too light in color are valued less.

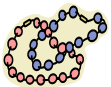
Sapphire tends to be cleaner than ruby. Look for stones that are eye clean. This means no inclusions that are visible to the naked eye. Extremely fine silk throughout the stone can enhance the value of some stones. The famous sapphires from Kashmir have a velvety blue color that is caused by this fine silk.

A star sapphire is a type of sapphire that exhibits a star-like phenomenon known as asterism. Star sapphires contain intersecting needle-like inclusions that cause the appearance of a six-rayed “star” shaped pattern when viewed with a single overhead light source.

Sapphires may be treated by several methods to enhance and improve their clarity and color. It is common practice to heat natural sapphires to improve or enhance the color. Upon heating, the stone becomes a more blue in color but loses some of the rutile inclusions (silk).

Treating stones with surface diffusion (beryllium added with high heat) is frowned upon in the gem world. It is unethical to sell beryllium-treated sapphires without disclosure, and the price should be much lower than natural gemstones. Sapphires can also be created synthetically.

Via GemSelect.com



BIRTH- STONES



January....Garnet	August.....Peridot
February...Amethyst	September..Sapphire
March.....Aquamarine	October...Tourmaline/ Opal
April.....Diamond	November....Topaz/ Citrine
May.....Emerald	December...Turquoise
June..... Moonstone	
July.....Ruby	

NOTICE

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBMIT
AN ARTICLE FOR THIS NEWSLETTER,
IT IS DUE TO THE EDITOR BY THE
2ND FRIDAY OF THE MONTH!**

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SHOW DATES

SEPTEMBER

10-11 DOWNEY, CA
Delvers Gem & Mineral Society
Women's Club of Downey
9813 Paramount Blvd.
Hours: Sat. 10am to 6pm
Sun. 10am to 4pm

23-25 SAN BERNARDINO, CA
Orange Belt Mineralogical Society
Western Regional Little League Park
6707 Little League Dr.
Hours: 9am to dusk daily
<http://obmsrocks.yolasite.com>

OCT. 2 FALLBROOK, CA
Fallbrook Gem & Mineral Facility
123 W. Alvarado St., Ste. B
Hours: 10am to 4pm
www.fgms.org

Vinegar, Not Just for Salads

One way to remove carbonates such as calcite from quartz and amethyst is to cover the specimen with fresh vinegar and allow to stand overnight. Repeat if necessary. Wash and then place crystals in washing type ammonia for 8-12 hours. Remove, rinse thoroughly, wipe and air dry.

For the gloss finish on tiger-eye, polish once, dry the stone, then put a drop of vinegar on it. Let it stand for a few minutes, then give it a second polish.

When using chrome oxide for polishing Jade, mix it with a solution of 1/2 water and 1/2 vinegar.

If you have sore hands from hard rock mining, soak your hands in warm vinegar water and the swelling and soreness will disappear.

Via MOROKS



FIELDTRIPS



Sept. 17, Opal Mtn., Hinkley (MDGMS)
(all trips are tentative: subject to change)

Oct. 1, North Cady's (AV)

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Cleaning Rock and Mineral Specimens

GEODES

First inspect the inside of the geode looking for microscopic minerals that are very tiny and easy to overlook. Small crystal inclusions will be damaged by these cleaning processes.

Easy Method: Wash geodes in plain water with a bit of laundry detergent or dish soap. Then soak them, completely covered, in a tub of water with 1/4 cup of ordinary household bleach for 2 days. This removes most of the heavy grit. Next use a toothbrush and ordinary denture cleaner to brush away the remaining grit. Make sure to cover all the crevices with the denture cleaner and carefully brush until all the grit is removed and the crystals are clean and bright. Wash with warm water to remove any remaining bleach solution and allow to dry.

Oxalic Acid Method: This method is more effective if there is iron staining in your geode. Be aware that oxalic acid can harm calcite crystals and carbonates. Oxalic acid is toxic. Make sure to wear eye protection, gloves, and an approved respirator and follow all safety precautions and instructions on the box. Do not use this method in metal containers as it is corrosive and will eat through metal containers.

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Preparing Oxalic Acid Solution

1. Purchase a one pound box of oxalic acid.
 2. Fill a plastic container 3/4 full with distilled water.
 3. Pour in the oxalic acid crystals being careful not to inhale the powder.
 4. Stir for five minutes until the crystals are dissolved.
 5. Add remaining water to create a full gallon.
-

Precautions to take when working with any acids include:

1. Only use clearly labeled chemicals and store them in a secure area.
2. Keep a large container of clear water handy to wash off any chemical spills.
3. ALWAYS wear safety goggles & rubber gloves.
4. NEVER pour water into acid—always add acid to water.
5. Don't work alone.
6. Work carefully to avoid splattering. Protect your work area.
7. Keep an ample supply of baking soda handy for acid spills.
8. Keep an ample supply of vinegar for alkali spills.
9. Rinse specimens well.
10. Dispose of all left over solutions properly.

Rinse the geodes using a high pressure spray, removing all mud and dirt. Place your specimens in a plastic container and add enough of the oxalic acid solution to cover them and soak. The amount of time depends on the degree of staining. You may need to only soak them for a few hours or up to several days. When they are clean, remove them from the oxalic bath and wash thoroughly with warm water. For geodes containing calcite or carbonate crystals, you can brush on some diluted solution and as soon as it is clean wash and soak with warm water.

DESERT DIGGINS

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ROCK & MINERAL TERMINOLOGY

Definitions that you can use - Part Four

slab - thick slice cut out of a solid mineral.

slate - a fine-grained, foliated metamorphic rock that develops from shale and tends to break into thin, flat sheets.

stalactite - an icicle-like mineral formation that hangs from the ceiling of a cave and is usually made up of travertine, which precipitates as water rich in dissolved limestone drips down from the cave's ceiling.

stalagmite - a cone-shaped mineral deposit that forms on the floor of a cave and is usually made up of travertine, which precipitates as water rich in dissolved limestone drips down from the cave ceiling.

termination - the end of a crystal face, usually referring to its base.

triplet - gem composed of three cross-sections pasted together. The top portion, which is the portion that is visible, consists of a naturally occurring, valuable gem, while the bottom two portions are low-grade material, such as glass or rock crystal.

tufa - mineral deposit formed by mineral-rich spring water which comes to the surface and loses its capacity to withhold the dissolved mineral, thereby depositing it and forming a growing mound.

tuff - porous igneous rock composed of volcanic ash compacted together.

vein - a long, thin section of a mineral, usually in fibrous form, embedded in rock, called the surrounding rock. Usually caused by the filling in of the mineral in open spaces or cracks in the rock.

vitreous luster - luster describing minerals with reflective properties similar to that of glass.

vug - cavity in rock that is lined with long, slender crystals. A vug forms when air pockets form in cooling magma and allow crystals to form in the hollow area.

A Guide to Opal Care

Cleaning Your Opal: Solid opals are very easy to clean. They should be immersed in warm water with a mild detergent and cleaned with a soft toothbrush or cloth, do not use anything else, bleach, chemicals, and cleaners should be avoided as should ultrasonic cleaners, they vibrate quite violently and may cause cracking. Once cleaned, the opal should simply be rinsed under running water and dried with a soft cloth. Doublets and triplets can be wiped with a damp soft cloth but should not be soaked as they can be damaged beyond repair. Triplets and doublets have a very short life even under the best of care...the only opals that do NOT LIKE WATER!!!

Opals in Water: Water does not harm solid opals. There are different opinions associated with solid opals. Some say it is good for the opal to be immersed in water overnight to maintain water content. Whether you place the opal overnight in water or not, it will not harm the opal. Doublets and triplets are another matter. They should never be placed in water as the glue which is usually a 2 part epoxy resin holding the layers together may break down leaving behind a ruined doublet or triplet. This is where the old wives tale of "opal going white" came from. Excessive water or heat can destroy the resin sending it white. Uncut opal should NEVER be stored in oil, glycerin, etc.

Via MLMS Ghost Sheet

Desert Diggings



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