

# MT. BAKER ROCKHOUND NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE MT. BAKER ROCK & GEM CLUB

## Club Happenings

- **General Meeting** - March 16, 2026, 7:00 PM, Pioneer Pavilion Community Center, 2007 Cherry St, Ferndale, Washington.  
*Show and tell: Green rocks*
- **64th Annual Gem and Mineral Show** - March 28-29, 2026, Pioneer Pavilion Community Center, Saturday 10-6, Sunday 10-5.
- **Lapidary Arts** - Thursdays, 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM (cleanup starts at 8 PM), lapidary room is open to members of MBRGC qualified to use the equipment. Sign up and prepay for classes/sessions at the club's store (Bellis Fair Mall, Space 424). See page 6.

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## GEM AND MINERAL SHOW

Our 64th ANNUAL SHOW

March 28-29, 2026 (Saturday 10 - 6, Sunday 10 - 5)

ROCKS, MINERALS, FOSSILS, GEMS, JEWELRY, DEMOS, DEALERS, EXHIBITS, DOOR PRIZES, RAFFLE, ON-GOING SILENT AUCTION, CLUB SALES, FOOD SERVICE, ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS, AND MORE!

**FREE ADMISSION! FREE PARKING!**

Pioneer Pavilion Community Center  
2007 Cherry Street, Ferndale WA  
Cross the bridge into downtown and turn left on First Street

[www.mtbakerrockclub.org](http://www.mtbakerrockclub.org)



## Field Trips

If you are interested in leading a guided club field trip in the future, please contact Michael Langley.

WSMC Field Trips for 2026 happening. Check out page 4 for a list of all their guided field trips, to interesting collecting sites, for a variety of minerals.

# FUNNY FOSSILS

What do you call an  
Irish gem that's a  
fake?

A sham rock.

# Rockhound *Storytime*

## Tucson Gem and Mineral Show

By Tawnya Crowe

The Tucson Gem and Mineral Show, located in Tucson, Arizona and surrounding areas, is a wonder to behold, and an absolute Mecca that must be traveled to at least once by any rock hounding enthusiast or collector. The show usually takes place for several weeks in January and February.

The “Tucson Rock Show” as it is often called, is made up of thousands of vendors from all over the world, bringing their wares and specimens to over 60 different shows. This isn't just one show, it is a conglomeration of various shows all over the city and neighboring towns, all running on different dates within the “Rock Show” timeframe. Some shows are only a week long, and some run for the entire duration of the big show. There isn't just one location either, they are literally all over the city. There is a veritable tent city at the Kino Sports Complex (think numerous football field sized tents clumped together side-by-side), or the main avenue mineral and fossil show with the dinosaurs! There is a fabulous Mineral Exhibit that takes place for a week at the Westin Oro Valley with amazing museum quality pieces! Conversely, there is a Old Miner's Exhibit which takes place every year in the Motel 6 parking lot off the main highway in Tucson. The point is that there isn't just one show... there are over 60, taking place all over the area. There is one thing to be careful of while you are running from show to show... parking! You could end up spending \$20-30 on parking if you jump between shows. Another thing to watch for is that some of the shows require a wholesale license to attend, so be sure to do your research and download or get your hands on one of the numerous show maps which give all of that sort of information.

My favorite show was the Fossil Show on Main Avenue. They had some amazing specimens on exhibit and also ones for sale. There were museum quality specimens, from plant life to actual mummified cave cubs retrieved from melting glaciers! All the vendors were knowledgeable and friendly. I also greatly enjoyed the Old Miner's Show. It's my favorite every year. It's basically a bunch of old miners who bring their motor homes, put out their rocks for sale, and then sit and shoot the breeze with each other and the people walking around. It's the best place to get great deals, and the hands-on knowledge about the specimens from the people who took them out of the ground.



Perusing bins of rough rocks at the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show.



Checking out the small tent area of vendors at the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show.

There are inexpensive flights available on Allegiant Airlines from Bellingham, WA to Mesa AZ, which is only about 2 ½ hour car ride to Tucson. A quick drive will get you to Tucson, however when you are planning the trip, it is best to make your reservations ahead of time, as the hotels and Airbnb's fill up fast. This is due to not only this massive event, but also because it is peak season in Arizona for snowbirds.

(See *Rockhound Storytime*, page 3)

# Mineral of the Month: *Diopside*

**D**ioptase is a rare, vibrant emerald-to-bluish-green copper cyclosilicate mineral ( $\text{CuSi}_2(\text{OH})_2$ ) highly prized by collectors for its intense color, glass-like luster, and prismatic crystals. Primarily found in arid, oxidized copper deposits (notably Tsumeb, Namibia), it is fragile (Mohs 5) and mainly used for display specimens, metaphysical healing, and occasionally as a pigment.

**Color & Appearance:** Vivid emerald green to dark bluish-green, ranging from transparent to translucent.

**Formation:** It is a secondary mineral that forms in the oxidized zones of copper ore deposits.

**Uses:** Primarily a high-value collector's mineral specimen. It is used in metaphysical practices for heart chakra healing, emotional detoxification, and overcoming past trauma. Rarely, it is used in, or as a source for, pigments.

**Care & Handling:** Due to its fragility and perfect cleavage, diopside is easily damaged. It should be cleaned only with mild soap and water, avoiding acid, and handled with extreme care.

**Locations:** Famous for the Tsumeb Mine in Namibia. Other significant localities include the Altyn-Tyube deposit in Kazakhstan, and various mines in Arizona, USA, and the Congo.



Diopside specimen from the Congo. From the collection of Jonathan Syltje.

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## Rockhound Storytime...

*From page 2*

If you have trouble finding a place to stay, check out the southern towns of Sahuarita and Green Valley. They are only about a 15 minute drive away (plus there are some excellent rockhounding trails below the active Copper mine...which also gives tours).

For more information about the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show, go to the website at: <https://tucsongemshows.info/>



More small tents with vendors at the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show.



The Madagascar Treasures tent at the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show.

# 2026 WSMC Sponsored Field Trips

The Washington state mineral council plans guided field trips to collecting sites. Open to member clubs. Most trips are free. Included are the Pow-Wow trips (You must join POW to go on these trips. Dues \$7.50 or \$15 a family. They supply two free breakfasts on trips). Host clubs and contact person will be set up as I gather info. For updated info, go to the mineralcouncil.org. or contact Nique Wicks at nwhopyfrog41@gmail.com (509) 670-0630.

Date	Host	Site	Material	Tools
01/31	MVL	Western WA University	Tour	Camera, notepad, pen/pencil
02/28	MVL	Walker Valley	Agate	Digging tools, chisel, bar 3# hammer
3/22	MVL	Skykomish	Picture Jasper	Rock hammer, wading boots
4/18-19	POW	Saddle Mountain	Petrified Wood	Shovel, small pick, hammer (surface collection)
5/09	MVL	Finney Creek	Listwanite	Digging tools, hard rock chisel, pry bar, sledge-
5/23-24	MVL	Kettle Falls	Fossils	Rock hammer
		Wild Turkey Mine	Noble Serpentine	Hard rock or surface collection – Fee Dig
6/13	MVL	Saddle Mountain	Petrified Wood	Shovel, small pick, rock hammer
		Diatom Pit	Common Opal	Rock hammer, buckets w/lids (dust)
7/18-19	MVL	Lake Wenatchee	Garnet	Shovel screen, container for Garnets
			Talc	Hand saw
8/15-16	Puy	Greenwater	Agate, Jasper, Opal	Digging tools, chisel, small pry bar, rock hammer
9/12-13	POW	Red Top	Agate, Jasper, Geodes	Digging tools, chisel, small pry bar, rock hammer
9/19	Puy	Little Naches	Lily Pad Jasper, Fossils, Thunder Eggs	Digging tools, hard rock chisels, pry bars, 3# hammer, rock hammer
10/11	MVL	Walt Bailey	Rainbow Chert	Hard rock chisels, rock hammers, pry bars
11/7	MVL	Blanchard Hill	Stilpnomelane	Hard rock – flat chisels, hammers, pry bars

**100 % of map booklet sales goes to Walker Valley lease, insurance for access to private property and general operation of WSMC**

**Many trips need Discover America the Beautiful Pass. Ask when you inquire about trip**

**ALWAYS contact host for updated info a week before trip !!!**

#### HOST CLUB CONTACT INFO

MVL - Marysville Rock & Gem Club	Nique Wicks	nwhopyfrog41@gmail.com	(509) 670-0630
POW - All Rockhounds Pow Wow	Larry Vess	vessel3755@gmail.com	(253) 473-3908
PUY - Puyallup Rock & Gem Club	Paul Haak	pvhaak@gmail.com	(253) 312-1743

Keep updated on <http://www.mineralcouncil.org> Land management changes, and roads close regularly. There is a area on web page with tool category in pictures and names of tools.

Always have proper cloths and gear for conditions. Be prepared with safety, first aid, food and drink.

Try to be at the meeting site 30 minutes before trip time for details and instructions with a full tank of gas. Use code of ethics, keep our lands open to rockhounding.

# Washington Rock & Gem Show Dates

## March 2026

**7-8—ISSAQUAH, WASHINGTON:** Annual show; East KingCo Rock & Gem Club; Pickering Barn 1730 - 10th Ave. NW, Issaquah, WA; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; Admission: \$1 for adults, free for kids 12 and under; 30 Gem, Jewelry and Mineral Dealers, Gem and Mineral Displays, Stone Sculpture Exhibit, What's My Rock - Bring your rocks to identify, Door Prizes, Silent Auction, Kids' Activities; Email: eastkingco@gmail.com; Website: www.eastkingco.org

**14-15—SEATTLE, WASHINGTON:** Annual show; North Seattle Lapidary & Mineral Club; Crown Hill Center, 9250 14th Ave NE, Seattle, WA; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; Free; Displays, junior activities, dealers, demonstrations, door prizes; contact Susan Gardner; Email: sgardner3@mindspring.com; Website: www.northseattlerockclub.org

**20-22—PUYALLUP, WASHINGTON:** Wholesale and retail show; Gem Faire; Washington State Fair Event Center, 110 9th Ave. SW; Fri. 12-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; General admission \$7, Free admission for children under 12 years old; Fine jewelry, precious & semi-precious gemstones, millions of beads, crystals, gold & silver, unique gifts from around the world & much more at manufacturer's prices. Buy directly from the importers & wholesalers. Jewelry repair & cleaning while you shop. Free parking; contact Yooy Nelson, (503) 252-8300; Email: info@gemfaire.com; Website: www.gemfaire.com

**28-29—FERNDALE, WASHINGTON:** 64th Annual show; Mount Baker Rock & Gem Club; Pioneer Pavillion Community Center, 2007 Cherry Street, Ferndale, WA; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; Rocks, minerals, fossils, gems, jewelry, demos, dealers, exhibits, door prizes, raffle, on-going silent auction, club sales, food service, activities for kids, and more! Website: www.mtbakerrockclub.org

## April 2026

**24-26—YAKIMA, WASHINGTON:** 63rd Parade of Gems; Yakima Rock & Mineral Club; Central Washington-State Fair Park, Modern Living Building, 1301 South Fair Avenue, Yakima, WA; Fri. 10-4, Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; Admission: Adult 7\$, Student \$2, Under 12 free; Vendors, raffle, door prizes, silent auction, kid activities, demonstrations, gold panning; Website: www.yakimarockclub.com

**25-26—SEATTLE, WASHINGTON:** 58th Annual show; West Seattle Rock Club; Alki Masonic Temple, 4736 40th Ave. SW, Seattle, WA; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; Free; Vendors, Demonstrators, silent auction, activities for kids; Website: www.westseattlerockclub.org

## May 2026

**2-3—MONROE, WASHINGTON:** Annual show; Everett Rock & Gem Club; Evergreen State Fairgrounds, 14405 179th Ave SE, Weikel Event Center; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; All ages welcome. Free admission, free parking; Rocks, gems, jewelry, Displays, kids activities, demonstrations, silent auction; contact Candra Burkhardt, (425) 772-3326; Email: Secretary@everetrockclub.com; Website: www.everetrockclub.com

## June 2026

**5-7—BONNEY LAKE, WASHINGTON:** Annual show; The Puyallup Valley Gem & Mineral Club; Swiss Park, 9205 198th Ave. E; Fri. 12-5, Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-3; No Admission Fee; Vendors inside and outside. Choose from crystals, minerals, fossils, beads, findings, lapidary equipment, cabochons, geodes, and jewelry. Inside, watch demonstrators see displays presented by PVG&MC members; contact Jillian Higgins, (253) 987-6751; Email: PVG&MC@gmail.com; Website: www.puyallupvalleygemandmineralclub.com/shows

**27-28—KENT, WASHINGTON:** Annual show; Cascade Mineralogical Society; Kent Commons, 525 4th Ave N; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; Free; Vendors from all over the Pacific Northwest, activities for kids, door prizes, silent auction, and raffle for amazing prizes. Demonstrations, mineral specimens, rough rock, cabochons, jewelry, beads, and metaphysical specimens. Something for everyone; contact Noelle Barnes, (206) 914-0514; Email: noelleb@outlook.com; Website: www.cascademineralsociety.org

# Mt. Baker Rock & Gem Club Information

The Mt. Baker Rock & Gem Club is a member of the Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies and the Washington State Mineral Council. We are affiliated with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies.

**Purpose Statement:** The purpose of this organization is to promote education and interest in the earth sciences (geology, rocks, minerals, gems), lapidary and related jewelry arts, and the joining together of people who share these interests. The Mt. Baker Rockhound News is the official club publication. The contents of this newsletter may be reprinted if credit is given.

**Club meetings are held the third Monday of each month of the year 7:00 pm, at Pioneer Pavilion Community Center in Ferndale, Washington. The exceptions are October being the club auction and December being the Christmas party.** Our annual show is held the last full weekend in March at the Pioneer Pavilion Community Center in Ferndale. Field trips are scheduled on a regular basis throughout the year, including bus trips to local shows, museums, and special exhibits. Annual Membership Dues are \$20.00 per household, payable in October to the treasurer, or dues can be sent to: Mt. Baker Rock & Gem Club, PO Box 30324, Bellingham, WA 98228.

**VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!**

## MBRGC Officers and Volunteer Positions

### 2025 Elected Officers

<b>President</b>	<b>Michael Langley</b>
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Harold VanAlsburg</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Ralph Sisco</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Tawnya Soine-Crowe</b>
<b>Federation</b>	<b>Mike Marsh</b>
<b>Director</b>	<b>Bruce Wickler</b>
<b>Director</b>	<b>Jonathan Syltie</b>
<b>Past President</b>	<b>Candi Gerard</b>

### Volunteer Positions

<b>Show Chairman</b>	<b>Candi Gerard</b>
<b>Webmaster</b>	<b>Todd Folsom</b>
<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	<b>Jonathan Syltie</b>
<b>Social Media</b>	<b>Tawnya Soine-Crowe</b>
<b>Publicity</b>	<b>Mike Marsh</b>
<b>Mall Shop</b>	<b>Candi Gerard</b>
<b>Lapidary</b>	<b>Bruce Wickler</b>
<b>Kitchen</b>	<b>Kathy Mayock</b>
<b>Kitchen</b>	<b>Kevin Mayock</b>
<b>Scholarship</b>	<b>Todd Folsom</b>
<b>Mineral Council</b>	<b>Michael Langley</b>
<b>RRR</b>	<b>Ralph Sisco</b>
<b>RRR</b>	<b>Mike Marsh</b>

## *Lapidary Arts*

Club members of MBRGC may use the lapidary room after taking the lapidary introduction class (\$30 per person). Members will learn to use the equipment safely and also get basic instruction on how to make a cabochon. The lapidary room is open on Thursdays, from 6-8:30 PM (cleanup at 8 PM, out by 8:30 PM) at Space 424 of the Bellis Fair Mall in Bellingham.

You must sign up and pre-pay for classes and sessions at the club's store (Bellis Fair Mall, Space 424). The fee is \$10 for 3 hours of use. There will be only four people allowed each session, so when you go to sign up it will be "first paid, first date available".

There will be a waiting list for prepaid members. If you do not show up for the time you selected, you will forfeit your \$10. The club's insurance requires that users of the lapidary room must be club members and at least 18 years old.

Large cuts on the saws will be done by one of the monitors. The class fee may include one slab cut. Other cuts will be done for a fee when time allows. Bring your own safety glasses and hearing protection.

A class on how to use a tumbler for polishing stones is held depending on interest. If you are interested in taking a tumbler class, please attend one of our meetings or send email with your name and phone number to the club's email address: [admin@mtbakerrockclub.org](mailto:admin@mtbakerrockclub.org)