



May 2009

# The Rockhound's Bark

## May News

### ABOUT THE SOCIETY

Meetings are held the last Saturday of each month, September-November and January-May, 7:30 - 10:00 p.m. in the auditorium (Lower Level) of the N.S. Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer St., Halifax.  
Dues are \$20/year, payable in January of each year.

### SOCIETY'S MAILING ADDRESS

The Nova Scotia Mineral and Gem Society  
c/o NS Museum of Natural History  
1747 Summer Street,  
Halifax, N.S.,  
B3H 3A6

### MEMBERSHIP FEES

Membership fees were due in January. Please bring application form to a meeting or mail it to Terry along with \$20. We would like to be sure we have your most current information.

Fred Walsh will give a presentation on Fossils at the May meeting. (See below)

The Kids Section starts in this issue. Still need all Junior Rockhounds to write your stories. Don't worry about spelling and grammar, we will fix it up for you.

If anyone has pictures of specimens or sites that you would like to share, forward them to me in jpeg format and I will put them in the Bark for other members to enjoy.

Check out the websites list in this issue and forward any new ones you find and we will add them.

## BRACHIOPOD, PELECYPODS, GRAPTOLITES ???

Come to the next meeting and find out what these are, along with where to find them as well as other strange and wonderful fossils to be found that just happen to be millions of years old. Just a sample below, guess what they are!!



## ABOUT MINERALS IDENTIFICATION (BY C.E. JOHNSON)

Basically, identifying minerals is just a “process of elimination”, using the following well-established standard features:

**COLOR** (Of course, color alone is never enough to identify minerals, but along with a few other features, it can be decisive)(some minerals can occur in more than one color).

**LUSTER** (appearance of a mineral’s surface as it reflects daylight)(glassy, waxy, pearly, dull, metallic, adamantine like diamonds, etc)

**DIAPHANEITY** (transparent, translucent, or opaque)

**WEIGHT** (In practical terms, this means comparing it with the same amount of Quartz, which has a weight of 3 on a scale of about 2 to 21)(Gold is 19, many gemstones are 4 to 5). (Most metals are 4 to 7).

**FORM** (its crystal type, or particular shape, or non-descriptive, etc.)

**HARDNESS** (its degree of resistance to scratching by minerals in a “hardness-kit” according to “Mohs scale of hardness” from 1-10), or a set of metal “hardness-points” of the same scale (also, a pen-knife point is a little over 5, ordinary window glass is 5 ½, fingernails are between 2 - 2 ½).

**STREAK** (color of minerals powder when scratched in the hardness test, or when scratched across a “streak-plate” or a piece of unglazed porcelain)(some minerals “streak” is not the same as its actual mineral color).

**TENACITY** (brittle, malleable, flexible, elastic, sectile, etc.).

**CLEAVAGE** (refers to the way a mineral “cleaves” when broken without shattering). Its number of angles and degrees and quality of its natural cleavage planes helps identify it)

If your mineral sample has a metallic luster, there’s bad news and good news. The bad news is that you would need to consider about 90 different minerals at this point, but the good news is this rules out about 230 which don’t have a metallic luster.

If the sample’s luster is metallic & yellow, that’s much easier because there are only 8 metallic-looking minerals that are yellow. Since it’s a metallic mineral, we should next determine whether the sample is brittle or malleable (that’s the TENACITY feature). If it’s malleable, it would already be identified. There is only one yellow, malleable, metallic-looking mineral, and that is ---- anyone want to guess? Right, it’s GOLD. That was easy, wasn’t it? but let’s go back--- If that sample was not a malleable one, but was brittle, you need to continue checking. There are 7 possibilities left now.

Next in this case, we want to determine the HARDNESS. Let’s say it’s 6. Now we have a sample that looks like a metal, it’s yellow and it’s brittle, and has a hardness of 6. What is it? It must be Pyrite.

Of course they are not all that simple, often it’s necessary to go further and check out some of the remaining features, but as you proceed, you’re eliminating more minerals from consideration.

If the sample did not have a metallic luster, which would leave about 230 minerals that do not have a metallic luster.

In that group, a large part of them have a “glassy” luster, and these are of the most interest to rockhounds.

In the glassy category, forget about the color for the time being, and test it for its’ HARDNESS first, which may eliminate 1/3 to 1/2 already. Then go to the STREAK test, which could eliminate many more. Some glassy minerals have a colored streak, but most don’t. After the streak test reduces the possibilities, the COLOR of the mineral sample itself then becomes more important, and also the WEIGHT and FORM. In addition, the way the mineral has occurred (its “environment” of origin) helps to identify it.

As you gain experience, and become more familiar with more minerals and the ENVIRONMENTS they occur in, you can make some “short cuts”, and eventually you will be able to recognize many minerals with few tests. More about “shortcuts” and clues later.

Have fun!

## REQUESTS RECEIVED

### IF ANYONE CAN ASSIST WITH THESE REQUESTS JUST LET ME KNOW

#### Wanted: Beautiful Nova Scotia Stones!

My name is Emily Seaboyer. I own and operate Locusart Jewellery Designs in Union Corner, Nova Scotia. I am a graduate of NSCAD University, and have been making jewellery professionally for four years.

The jewellery that I create is always organic in nature- from those that are quite literal such as the "Silver Shell Collection" (2006) where each of the shells used have been found on the beaches of Nova Scotia, to my latest series of work "Into the Fire" (2008/2009) where pieces have the impressed texture of lava stone. I am particularly interested in experiences that can be conveyed through touch, and enjoy working with materials and processes that are tactile in nature. Texture, organic materials and innovative approaches to design are very important in my work, and because of this I am interested in purchasing organically shaped cabochons of Nova Scotia stones (*agate, basalt, and varieties of quartz are ideal*) that have been cut by hand- or whole stones that have been made into beads.

If anyone has specimens for sale that may be appropriate for my work, please contact me at the address listed below. I would appreciate choosing stones that have been carefully cut or drilled- in order to keep materials local, and the touch of the hand evident from start to finish.

Thanks!

Emily Seaboyer

[locusartjewellerydesigns@gmail.com](mailto:locusartjewellerydesigns@gmail.com)

[locusartjewellerydesigns.blogspot.com](http://locusartjewellerydesigns.blogspot.com)

#### Mystery Rock

I was also wondering if you could circulate the attached photos, or put it in the next newsletter, I have of a mystery rock, that was given to me as a gift. The colors are beautiful, but I have no idea what it is.

Cheers

Karen Negus



## INTERESTING WEBSITES & PICTURES

<http://nsminerals.atspace.com>

<http://museum.gov.ns.ca/fossils/>

<http://www.mindat.org>

<http://vuprocks.com>

<http://gis3.natr.gov.ns.ca/MODB/>

<http://gis.wvdep.org/convert/>

<http://www.bayoffundytourism.com/tides/times/>

<http://www.rockngem.com/>

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/MEB/pdf/ic66.htm>

<http://www.rockhounds.com/rockshop/nssites.html>

<http://www.42explore.com/rocks2.htm>

<http://www.allaboutgemstones.com/>

<http://www.rockhoundkids.com>

<http://mineralcollecting.org/>

<http://www.galleries.com/>

<http://www.minerals.net/>



**Events**

**June 20-Field Trip  
Ross Creek  
12:30PM  
Bill Blinn**

**Deadline for the June Newsletter is June 15**

**Send submissions to driscoll@allstream.net**

**2009 EXECUTIVE**

**President:**  
William Blinn  
**Vice President:**  
Fred Walsh  
**Secretary/Bark Editor:**  
Arlene Driscoll  
**Treasurer:**  
Terry Collett  
**Librarian:**  
Herb Malle

**MINUTES OF APRIL MEETING**

By Arlene Driscoll

**Old Business:**

New bank account has been set up and awaiting Bill's signature to activate.

May 3 field trip with Bill Harrington will meet at the Tim Hortons in Windsor at 1PM or at Sackville Canadian Tire at noon. June 20 field trip with Bill Blinn will also meet at the Sackville Canadian Tire at 11AM. Email or call Bill to confirm who will meet here or who will go directly to the site.

There are some hats left if anyone wants one-\$10. Bill is looking at getting a quote for crests and will let everyone know when he has a price.

The website is still not available. Ken is out of town so no date available for it to

be up and running

Herb has the library organized. The books are numbered and should be signed out when borrowed. Sign out on the page assigned to the book you are borrowing or if it is a mineralogical record, there is a separate sign out sheet.

Parrsboro Gem and Mineral show is August 14-16. Bill will arrange to borrow minerals for display. Volunteers will be needed to staff the booth. We will have a brochure to pass out with a membership application.

Bill Blinn demonstrated how to build a display for your collection and discussed some useful websites for members to make use of.

**KIDS SECTION**

We still need the junior members to do stories for this section of the newsletter. Please help out by just trying to write a small article for the next issue.

**Nova Scotia Rocks & Minerals**  
Arlene Driscoll

Some of the rocks and minerals found in Nova Scotia

T	T	L	R	E	T	E	T	D	I	M	M	O	Q	
H	O	S	E	L	E	N	I	T	E	E	A	E	T	Z
E	D	E	T	I	L	W	O	H	P	L	G	E	Q	L
C	L	G	R	M	T	S	T	E	L	U	A	E	U	A
M	O	R	D	E	N	I	T	E	I	I	T	G	A	M
Q	G	A	E	S	C	I	T	R	I	N	E	N	R	R
A	L	N	L	T	L	A	M	E	T	H	Y	S	T	T
E	T	I	G	O	I	R	E	A	N	P	E	W	Z	T
M	G	T	S	N	R	B	R	U	O	G	Y	E	S	S
I	D	E	Z	E	T	I	L	O	R	T	A	N	E	T
A	M	E	P	R	T	I	Q	L	I	L	I	M	T	A
A	T	S	T	T	S	I	R	O	I	E	E	T	L	A
T	A	G	N	G	S	R	C	T	L	T	A	E	E	E
J	O	P	E	H	N	A	E	T	A	L	S	N	G	G
R	O	T	N	M	U	S	P	Y	G	O	T	R	I	S

agate  
amethyst  
citrine  
coal  
gold  
granite  
gypsum  
howlite  
iron  
jasper  
limestone  
magnetite  
mesolite  
mordenite  
natrolite  
quartz  
selenite  
slate  
stillbite  
zealites