

# SKAGIT GEMS

Official Publication of the Skagit Rock and Gem Club  
Serving Skagit County WA Since 1961

March 2020  
Volume 60, Issue 2

Next Meeting: March 7th 10am  
Gem of the Month: Green stones & Fossils  
Refreshments: Open



### North Seattle Lapidary & Mineral Club 66th Annual Rock and Gem Show

March 6th 10am -5pm                      7th 10am -5pm                      8th 10am -5pm

Crown Hill Center

9250 14th Ave NW

Seattle, WA 98117

### Mt. Baker Rock & Gem Club 59th Annual Rock and Gem Show

March 28th 10am -6pm                      March 29th 10am -5pm

Bloedel-Donovan Park

2214 Electric Ave.

Bellingham WA

## 2020 WSMC SPONSORED FIELD TRIPS

The WA St. Mineral Council plans guided fieldtrips to collecting sites. Open to member clubs, and the general public. Most trips are free. Included are the Pow Wow trips (must join to go on trips). Host clubs and contact persons will be set up as I gather info.

For updated info, go to [mineralcouncil.wordpress.com](http://mineralcouncil.wordpress.com) or contact Ed Lehman at [wsmced@hotmail.com](mailto:wsmced@hotmail.com) or h ph# (425) 334-6282 Cell# (425) 760-2786.

Date	Host	Site	Meeting Place and Time	Material	Tools
03/21 MSVL	Beaver Vly	Beaver Valley Rd	Info Center	Geodes, Zeolites & Calcite	Hard Rock
04/04 DARR	Racehorse Creek	Hwy 542 @ Round About	10 m I-5 9am	Fossils & Morell mushrooms	Dig & Lt Hard
04/18-19 POW	Saddle Mt	Mattawa Boat Launch	8am	Petrified Wood	Dig & Hard Rock
Contact: Larry Vess <a href="mailto:vessel3755@gmail.com">vessel3755@gmail.com</a> or (253)473-3908					
05/09 DARR	Cascade River	Marblemount @ 9am	left turn	Talc, Listwonite etc (small fee)	Hardrock
05/23 DARR	Red Bridge	Verlot Ranger Station	9am	Rainbow Chert, Concretions	Light Hardrock



## What Is a Fossil?



The word fossil refers to the remains or traces of ancient living things. For a plant or animal to become a fossil it has to be buried and preserved in sediments, safe from forces that would destroy it if it were left exposed on the surface.

The oldest known fossils are algae—one-celled plants—about 3.5 billion years old. The well-known trilobites are found in rocks that are hundreds of millions of years old. Fossils are also found in rock, sand, or clay that may be only tens of millions, or hundreds of thousands, of years old. Just how old must a plant or animal be to be called a fossil? One rule of thumb, used in this book, is that if the animal or plant lived more than 11,000 years ago, it is a fossil. But for some scientists, the remains of creatures that became extinct only 50 or 100 years ago are also fossils.

## Fossil Traces



Not only are the actual remains of animals and plants fossils, but so are any traces they have left behind. As animals move across the sea floor, they may leave tracks or trails on the mud. These impressions may be preserved in the rocks. Worms burrowing through loose sediments often leave a tube, which may become filled with fine silt after the worm is gone. Plants such as grasses may bend over and sway in the breeze and leave grooves in the sand. The sap of trees may dry up and be preserved as amber.

Petroleum and natural gas are products of the decay of living things, and are called fossil fuels.

Most fossils clearly look like plants or animals. Some are preserved intact, but most are only fragments of the ancient plant or animal. Usually just the hard parts or skeletons survive as fossils; only rarely are the soft parts of organisms preserved.

## Chemical Changes



Over the ages, most fossils are altered chemically. The original crystal structure of the fossil may change, without a gain or loss of material. Or the original material may be replaced by another substance. In soft-bodied plants and animals, gases like oxygen, hydrogen, and nitrogen may evaporate as the organism decays, leaving only a film of carbon. A skeleton may be dissolved away by water, leaving a cavity called a mold in the sediment. The surface of the cavity bears the impression of the organism. Often the mold is then filled with new material and the filling is called a cast. Fossils are commonly found as casts or molds, without any of the original organic material left.



## Skagit Rock and Gem Club

### Board Meeting Minutes

February 1st, 2020

Call to order by Vice President Greg Hochmuht presiding with David Britten Treasurer, with Frank Isca Publicity Chair, acting as Secretary for the minutes.

We Welcome guests Steve Mishler with Dianne Kelley, and Debbie Cummings to our club meeting today and Frank asked what their interests were to joining in today. Individually, they all spoke with the same interests of finding more about where to go rock hounding, with groups, locally and nationally, to digs across our great United States. Most importantly, they also were most interested in the understanding of the minerals, crystals and gems. David Britten gifted our guests.

We continued the meeting with a video on the gemstone Jade, the microcrystalline structure that creates the stones toughness and beauty and how for centuries it has been revered as a gemstone of protection for the wearer. Also, the second part of the video was on the Lightning Ridge Opal Claim in Australia, referencing once again the microcrystalline nature of silica different than Jade. Whereas, Opal has more of a prismatic diffraction in display of color of white, grey, red, orange, yellow, green, blue, magenta, rose, pink, slate, olive, brown and black. David commented on the best location nearby of Northern Oregon for finding Opal.

We continued with a refreshment break, with wonderful offerings from members, Kevin and Violet, Peggy, Greg, David and Frank. If I forgot anyone, I do apologize, I was enjoying the food and conversation.

David led the discussion of the mineral display table brought by members of some of our favorite rocks. David brought some Crystal Quartz from Spruce Ridge, Snoqualmie County, Amethyst with Goshenite and Quartz Crystal. What a lucky find David! Member Gem, brought her Mookite from Australia that she utilizes in her Reiki Practice! She also brought a Shell from Oona Beach, Oregon. David continued with various Nephrite Jade and Separtine pieces he has found. He know where to find it! Greg brought the most amazing collection of Arrowhead knapped points in an array of from colors of Obsidian and other beautiful Agate or Jasper Silicates. Wow! Talented!

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Eric brought his major hunk of slab blue Agate polished edges with Quartz Crystal top. What a find Eric, Thanks. New member Jim Dewey brought Green Schist from Burlington Hill, and had a real geologic story. Thanks for the story Jim! Frank brought a specimen from a collection with Selenite crystals, Fluorite crystals, and hints of Rhodochrosite near the base. Mary Orff brought in a specimen of Apophyllite, and also a specimen of Stilbite with Quartz. Lovely, Thanks Mary! Violet brought some gorgeous wire wrap jewelry of her's with a black Agate Eye in the Octopus! Nicely done Violet! Peggy brought a treasure from her collection that was a Actinolite crystal formation. Wow, Peggy! You sure find beautiful minerals for display from the shows you visited! Kevin brought a piece of Dragon Stone and Stoney Creek Fossil Coral from Alaska! Those were very cool indeed Kevin! Thanks for sharing!

---Submitted by Frank Isca

# Submit your photos

Are you going on a Mineral Council field trip? Or just out rock hunting on your own? Feel free to take some photos and share them with the club. Not everyone can make it to the field trips or get out as much as they would like so its nice to see photos! Send them to [newmoon2323@gmail.com](mailto:newmoon2323@gmail.com) and tell me where they were taken.



Skagit River- Marblemount. A piece of Jordan Creek rock.

# **The Federations Need You !**

by Beth Heesacker, NFMS 1st VP

We currently need AFMS-certified Judges to evaluate and critique the competitive display cases at our annual shows. This is an important function that enables us both to continue support for our members and to improve their skills as exhibitors. It also seems that most of the other regional Federations desperately need more certified judges.



Plans are in the works to hold AFMS-certified training classes in conjunction with the Golden Spike Gem and Mineral Society Show and NFMS meetings next year in Ogden, Utah. The training takes 3-4 days and would start before the Ogden show and continue throughout the show. The tentative dates are April 9- 12, 2020. There will probably be a small fee for attending the classes to cover the cost of the lunch during training, but the AFMS instructors will be free. Attendees' room costs are not finalized yet and travel costs will, of course, vary. Those costs--or a portion of them for each attendee--should be paid by their respective federation.

We need to get some idea of how many people are interested, and which Federations are interested in supporting their members who are willing to attend. If you are interested in being trained for this vital position, or if you are a Federation interested in participating, please email Beth Heesacker, NFMS 1st VP at [heesacker@coho.net](mailto:heesacker@coho.net) and let me know.

If you have questions, please email also. As details come together, I will keep you posted and forward the registration form to you. Thank you so much for considering serving in this very important capacity.



## VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!

Meetings are on the FIRST Saturday of the month (except for Jan, July and Dec)  
at 10:00 am at the  
Mount Vernon Community (Senior) Center  
1401 Cleveland St. Mount Vernon WA 98273



- The purpose of this non-profit earth society shall be to stimulate interest in the study of geology, lapidary, and the collection of geological specimens
- We are 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.
- Dues are \$15.00 per year for adults and \$7.50 for those under age 16
- Visit our website: [skagitrockandgem.com](http://skagitrockandgem.com)
- Email: [skagitrockandgem@gmail.com](mailto:skagitrockandgem@gmail.com)
- Mailing address: PO BOX 244 Mt. Vernon 98273

### 2020 Officers

President	• Wes Frank 360-757-6276
Vice President	• Greg Hochmuht 360-630-7893
Treasurer	• David Britten 360-755-0741
Secretary	• Linda Keltz 360-424-6525
Fed. Director	• Virgil Keltz 360-424-6525
Bulletin Editor	• Debbie Frank 360-853-6883
Past President	• Eric Self 360-840-8342



### Committees

Annual Show Chair-Eric Self

Facilities/Field Trips- Dave Britten

Scholarship-Noni Avery & Linda Keltz

Stamps-Virgil Keltz

Sunshine- Noni Avery

Swap-Vandenburs

Greeter-Linda Keltz

Publicity-Frank Isca



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Welcome Spring!

