

June/July 2025 Volume 65 Issue 5

SKAGIT GEMS

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

Next Meeting:

June 7, 2025 10:00 a.m. @ Mount Vernon Senior Center

Rock, Gem, Mineral of the Month: *Fossils!*

Refreshments: Feel Free To Bring Snacks or Refreshments

Note: There will be no July Meeting!

We will email details on July Swap/Potluck Picnic soon.

July Swap Potluck/Picnic

We are still working on the details for our July upcoming Potluck Picnic/Swap.

When we have the date, time, and location, we will send out a group email with all the details.

If you don't have email and are interested in going, give one of us a call, our numbers are on page 5 under Officers and Board Members.

As usual it will be a great time to get together, share stories and most of all, share your cool and unique rock and mineral collections!

Stay tuned and watch for upcoming email!

Fun Things to Do

Sandy has coordinated with the Skagit Garden and Art Fair for our club to host a table at the fairgrounds to reach out to the public and promote our club on June 21 and 22nd from 9 AM to 4 PM both days. There is still time and space available, should you wish to show up, join in and represent our club!

Bruce mentioned the Walker Valley quarry has been deepened, so there are a lot more exposed surfaces to explore. This is close by and would be great to get a group together to check out, or to just head up there with a friend or two, if you have some free time!

Also, Peggy reminded me of the upcoming Rock, Gem, Mineral, and Jewelry Sale at the Skagit Valley Grange on Cook Road, July 5th and 6th!

Something for Everyone!

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Swift Creek

If a rock hunting trip's success is measured by lots of fun and laughter, great stories, perfect weather, topped off by a delightful lunch at a brewery and collecting a few rocks, the trip to Swift Creek was a smashing success.

On May 5th Rick Van Pelt led a trip up to Swift Creek looking for blue agate, red Jasper and anything else interesting. Five club members signed up to go with scheduled met up at 10AM in parking lot of Birdsvie Brewery on Hwy 20. Giving a grace period of 15 minutes for late arrivals, Rick, Julie Curry and Peggy Peterson, with her 2 walking poles, set out driving for the trailhead down to Swift Creek.

In glorious sunshine, warm weather and a shallow creek area, with rocks of all sizes, we walked the area in our knee high water-proof boots looking for smaller pieces of the jasper or agate that had broken free from the host material.

After 2-1/2 hrs. of turning/picking up leaverites, and a bit of success, all of us headed back up the trail to the car and the treat of a lunch at Birdsvie Brewery.

Notes:

It's trips like these that make rock hounding memories and rocking such a wonderful a hobby. Sign up for the next trip that appeals to you. Ask questions of trip leader or someone who has been there. You'll never know how much fun it can be if you don't go. Always research the trip before going and keep in mind your physical abilities.

If you sign up for a trip, please call the leader if you are going to be late or if you aren't able to make trip. It's the courteous thing to do.



Article contributed by Peggy Peterson

Our President and Vice President with Swift Creek to the right.

Back view of Mount Baker from Swift Creek.

Photos courtesy of Julie Curry and Peggy Peterson



Membership Information

Skagit Rock & Gem Club's yearly dues are due in September. Your yearly dues cover membership privileges from September 1st through August 31st.

If you would like to continue your membership and receive the newsletter, you must be current with your dues. Membership dues must also be paid to use the club shop.

New Membership Forms are available at every meeting. Invite your "rockhound" friends to be a guest at our next meeting. They can become a member after attending three meetings.

Dues are \$20.00 for single membership, \$30.00 for family, and \$25.00 for single, plus kid(s) under age 16.

Payment can be made by cash or check at a meeting.

If you are renewing your membership, you can mail in your payment to the address below:

Dave Britten

PO Box 244

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

2025 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@zoho.com or contact Nique Wicks at nwhoppyfrog41@gmail.com (509) 670-0630 or Ed Lehman at wsmced2@outlook.com (425) 334-6282

The Council Reporter

Date	Host	Site	Material	Meet Time/Place	Tools
01/18	MSVL	Walker Valley	Blue agate	9am Big Lake Store	Dig & light hard rock tools
02/22	MSVL	Cedar Ponds	Jasper & fossils	9am Sultan Park 1 mile hike on road	Dig & light hard rock tools
03/08	MSVL	Cherry Creek	Jasper	9am Park & North end of Duvall Wading in creek, bushy	Rock hammer light hard rock tools
04/12	Pow-Wow	Saddle Mt	Petrified wood	8am Boat launch SW of Mattawa	Dig & Light hard rock tools or just pick up smaller pieces
05/10	MSVL	Racehorse Creek	Leaf fossils, morel mushrooms	9am 1-5 exit 240 Mini Mart	Shovel & rock splitting tools
05/24	MSVL	Wild Turkey mine	Noble serpentine	9am @ 3515 Waitts Lk Rd. Valley, WA Pay dig	Hard rock or surface picking
05/31	MSVL	Walt Bailey Trail	Rainbow chert	9am Verlot Ranger Station Collecting along roadside	Hard rock tools
06/21	WSMC	Saddle Mt	Petrified wood & opal	9am Harvest Foods, Mattawa	Dig & Light hard rock tools or surface picking
07/26	MSVL	Lake Wenatchee	Garnets	9am @ rest stop just West of Lake Wenatchee Hwy 2	Shovel, screen container for Garnets
08/16-17	Puyl	Greenwater	Agate, jasper, opal	9am Ranger Station in Enumclaw	Dig & Hard rock tools
09/06-07	Pow-Wow	Red Top	Agate, jasper, geodes	8am Teanaway Camp Ground	Dig & Hardrock tools
09/20	Puyl	Little Naches	Thunder eggs, fossils, lily-pad jasper	10am @ intersection of Hwy 410 & FR 92	Shovel, small bar
10/01	MSVL	Index	Picture jasper	9am @ Index	Rock hammer
11/08	MSVL	Blanchard Hill	Stilpnomelane (Dalmation stone)	9am @ 1-5 exit 240 Mini Mart Collecting on road shoulder	Hard rock tools

Many trips need Discover Pass, Trailhead Pass & Forest Pass.

Ask when you inquire about trip.

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

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

HOST CLUB CONTACT INFO

Msvl - Nique Wicks nwhoppyfrog41@gmail.com Or (509) 670-0630

Pow Wow -Larry Vess vessel3755@gmail.com or (253)473-3908

Puyl Nate White (206)349-7054 nate.white77@gmail.com

Keep updated on <http://www.mineralcouncil.zoho.com> 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.

A week before trips I (Ed Lehman) will have a pdf file with map and info for that trip I can send you on request. I will do the same for trip host.

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.

Skagit Rock and Gem Club Meeting Minutes May 3, 2025

Meeting called to order at 10:05 by club president Rick Van Pelt.

Board Members present: Rick Van Pelt, Peggy Peterson, David Britten, Jennifer Ross, Charlene Rhodes, Bruce Hurley

Attendance: 16 members and 4 guests, Emily McQuarrie, Gilberto Sanchez, Michelle Milbreth and Ryan Milbreth

Minutes of last meeting were approved and seconded.

Treasurer report as given by David Britten was accepted and seconded.

Old Business

Name tags for those members who purchased them were distributed.

The donation bucket for rocks for the show will be at each meeting.

As discussed, Sandy Hansen has arranged a table at the Skagit Garden and Art Fair for the club as reach out to the public and promote the club. The event will be held at the Skagit County fairgrounds on 6/21 and 6/22, from 9 AM to 4 PM both days. Members are needed to staff the table, two for each shift.

Mary Jane Heller showed the final versions of the poster and quarter sheet cards. There was a discussion about how many to get printed. The design and an initial printing run of 75 posters and 200 quarter size cards was approved with an upper spending limit of \$150. Multiple members expressed interest in distributing the cards at events. Mary Jane will have copies available at the June meeting.

Please contact Dave Britten or Rick Van Pelt to schedule time in the rock shop. They need 24 hours notice but are available most days. There is a \$ 5.00 fee. At this time members are supervised in the shop until they demonstrate proficiency and safety with the machines.

New Business

Mary Jane Heller provided an educational program to a group of Cub Scouts and their parents at the Burlington Library. She reports it was well received and she plans on holding it yearly. Mary Jane is also talking to the Mount Vernon Library about having a display there.

A suggestion was made to have business cards printed. Brad Raspet agreed to look into this and report back to the club.

Announcements

Rick Van Pelt planned a trip to Swift Creek on Tuesday 5/6 and invited anyone else who wanted to accompany him.

Peggy Peterson reminded the membership and guests that a suggestion box is available for any ideas.

Bruce Hurley reported that the quarry at Walker Valley has been deepened, providing new surfaces to explore.

Program

Micah Hanley presented a detail description of gem faceting. He brought in faceting equipment, raw and faceted gemstones and prepared a handout.

Show and Tell

The theme for Show and Tell was foliated rocks. A variety of rock were presented, including soapstone, pegmatite and mica.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00.

Submitted by Club Secretary, Jennifer Ross

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!



Meetings are on the **FIRST Saturday** of the month
(except for Jan, July and Dec) **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 \$20.00 for single membership, \$30.00 for family, and \$25.00 for single, plus kid(s) under age 16.

Visit our website: skagitrockandgem.com

Email: skagitrockandgem@gmail.com

Mailing address: PO BOX 244, Mount Vernon WA 98273



2025 Officers & Board Members

President	• Rick Van Pelt 360-708-2737
Vice President	• Peggy Peterson 425-299-4123
Treasurer	• David Britten 360-755-0741
Secretary	• Jennifer Ross 360-610-1227
Fed. Director	• Open
Past President	• Eric Self 360-366-6118
Bulletin Editor	• Charlene Rhodes 360-333-2156



Committees

Annual Show Chair	Eric Self
Facilities/Field Trips	Dave Britten
Greeter	Peggy Peterson
Scholarship	Kim Kellems and Shelley Van Pelt
Publicity	Open
Sunshine	Open
Swap	Vandenberg's

Dinosaur National Monument

Morrison Formation



The Morrison Formation spur is filled with unexcavated dinosaur fossils.

NPS Photo/Dan Johnson

AMENITIES

Each step leads you through rock layers with different colors, textures, and fossils. Sometimes these differences are subtle, sometimes striking. Most of the Morrison Formation is mudstone and clay, but watch for the trail spur that follows a sandstone cliff. This part of the Morrison Formation is made up of river-deposited sand and gravel. Based on radiometric

dating from volcanic ash, in older and younger layers on either side of the sandstone wall, this layer is estimated to be about 151 million years old. Fossil fragments of dinosaurs are embedded in the cliff along with impressions of freshwater clams. The Morrison Formation trail spur follows the same sandstone layer that is exposed in the Quarry Exhibit Hall. However, this cliff has not been worked on by paleontologists to make the bones easier to see. The first fossils along the spur are fragments that are shiny and dark orange in color. Some have a spongy-looking interior which contained bone marrow. Their texture is generally smooth and their size ranges from 1/2 inch to 10 inches in diameter.

As you hike along the cliff, the quality and size of the fossil bones increases. Just past the mid-point of the spur, the trail dips a few feet. From here, look up about 10 feet on the cliff face to see eight vertebrae. At the very end of the spur, a large femur rests in the rock. Sharp eyes can find more bones, depending on the angle of the sun. More than eleven species of dinosaurs have been discovered in the Morrison Formation within the monument. They range in size from about seven inches to nearly 100 feet, with some sauropods exceeding 50,000 pounds. New research on non-dinosaur fossils such as small animals, plant remains, pollen, and insect trackways tell us more about the environment in which these animals lived. Based on this research, scientists believe that around 150 million years ago, the area was semi-arid and warm, with year-round streams. Ferns dominated the plant life, along with conifers, ginkgo trees, tree ferns and horsetail rushes. When you return to the main trail, you return to the mudstone and clay layers of the Morrison Formation. Soon you will leave the Jurassic period and enter the Cretaceous, marked by a brown sandstone in the Cedar Mountain Formation. A species of sauropod named *Abydosaurus mcintoshii* was found during the 1990s in this formation in the monument, proving that paleontologists still have much left to discover.

<https://www.nps.gov/places/morrison-formation.htm>

Quarry Exhibit Hall

The Quarry Exhibit Hall is built into the side of the Morrison Rock Formation, which contains numerous dinosaur fossils from the Late Jurassic Period.

NPS / Jake Holgerson



Dinosaur National Monument

150 million years ago, dinosaurs roamed here. Their fossils are still embedded in the rocks. Today, mountains, desert, and rivers flowing in canyons support a variety of life. Petroglyphs reveal the lives and connections of Indigenous people to this land. Homesteaders and outlaws found refuge here. Whether your passion is science, adventure, history, or scenery, Dinosaur offers much to explore.

The Quarry Exhibit Hall allows visitors to view the wall of approximately 1,500 dinosaur bones in a refurbished, comfortable space. Here, you can gaze upon the remains of numerous different species of dinosaurs from the Late Jurassic period, including [Allosaurus](#), [Apatosaurus](#), [Camarasaurus](#), [Diplodocus](#), and [Stegosaurus](#), along with several others. There are even several places where you can touch real 150 million year old dinosaur fossils! Rangers are available to answer questions, help kids complete their Junior Ranger booklets, and occasionally provide talks on different topics related to the quarry or dinosaurs during the summer.



A lighted exhibit in front of a brownish gray wall filled with fossilized bones



Large bones resembling legs, ribs and vertebrae protrude from grayish brown rock

The skull of a dinosaur with teeth still visible protrudes from rock

Photos courtesy of the National Park Service

The Morrison Formation is divided into several "members," or subunits that share similar characteristics that distinguish them from surrounding rocks and each other. The Carnegie Quarry was found in the Brushy Basin member of the Morrison Formation, which was home to a large flat floodplain during the Late Jurassic Period. Most of the Brushy Basin member is comprised of mudstones that range from reddish, to greenish gray, and even maroon purple in color. These mudstones contain large amounts of bentonite, a kind of clay that contains volcanic ash. Bentonite expands and contracts with moisture, turning slick when wet and popcorn-textured when dry. The ash component of the bentonite came from volcanoes that are thought to have existed to the south and west of the Morrison Floodplain. It's thanks to this volcanic ash and the crystals preserved inside it that scientists were able to date the Quarry fossils to the Late Jurassic period using radiometric dating. The mudstones themselves represent the flatter parts of the floodplain, while the sandstones and limestones came from rivers, braided streams, and small lakes that dotted the landscape. Almost all of the fossils from the Brushy Basin member are found in sandstones, including the bones of the Quarry Exhibit Hall. This is because the water continuously depositing sediments quickly buries bones before they have the chance to decay. The water also brings bacteria and dissolved minerals into the bones' pores, which solidify and fossilize the bones.

<https://www.nps.gov/dino/learn/nature/morrison-formation.htm>

2025 Calendar of Gem, Mineral, Fossil and Jewelry Shows

Name	Start	End	Location
Puyallup Valley Gem & Mineral Club Annual Show	06/06/25	06/08/25	Swiss Park, 9205 198th Ave. E., Bonney Lake, WA 98391
Cascade Gem and Mineral Show	06/29/25	06/30/25	Kent Commons, 525 4th Ave N, Kent, Washington 98032
Darrington Rock & Gem Show	July 2025 TBD		Mansford Grange, 1265 Railroad Avenue, Darrington, WA 98241
Washington Agate & Mineral Society Rock & Gem Rendezvous	07/25/25	07/27/25	Tenino City Park, 300 Park Ave. W., Tenino, WA 98589
Darrington Jade Festival*	08/01/25	08/03/25	Darrington Community Center 570 Sauk Ave, Darrington, WA
Port Townsend Rock & Gem Show	08/08/25	08/10/25	Jefferson County Fairgrounds, 4907 Landers Street, Port Townsend, Washington 98368
Puyallup Valley Gem & Mineral Club Show in the Trees	08/08/25	08/10/25	Tacoma Sportsmans Club, 16409 Canyon Rd E., Puyallup, Washington 98375
Maplewood Rock & Gem Club November Show	08/16/25	08/17/25	Maplewood Rock & Gem Clubhouse, 8802 196th St., Edmonds, WA 98026
Shelton Rock & Mineral Society Tailgate Rock Sale & Swap	08/16/25	08/16/25	Mason Area Recreation Park, 2100 E Johns Prairie Road, Shelton, Washington 98584
Seattle Mineral Market November	November 2025 TBD		Everett Mall, 1402 SE Everett Mall Way, Everett, Washington 98115
Skagit Rock & Gem Club Show	11/08/25	11/09/25	Sedro Woolley Community Center 703 Pacific St. Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284

Source: <https://xpopress.com/show/state/Washington>

*Source: <https://www.rockandmineralshows.com/location/mineral-shows/washington>

The Puyallup Valley 2025 Gem & Mineral Show - The Valley of Gems Show

June 6th 12pm to 5pm, 7th 10am to 5pm, & 8th 10am to 3pm

Swiss Park, 9205 198th Ave. East, Bonney Lake, WA

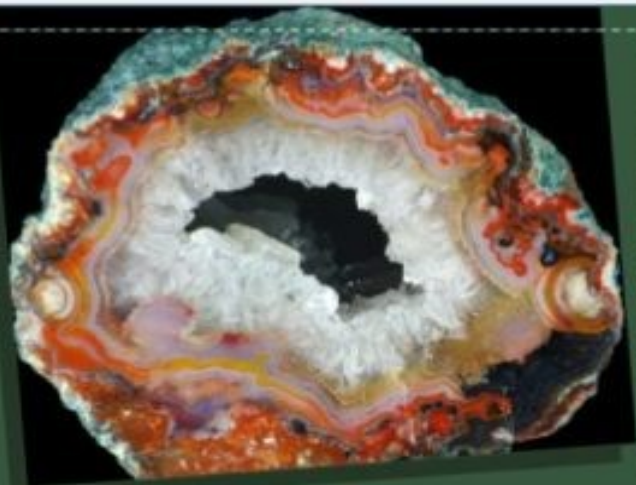
With vendors both inside and outside you'll find a vast selection of rough and finished "treasures" on display. Choose from crystals, minerals, fossils, beads, findings, lapidary equipment, cabochons, geodes, and jewelry, just to name a few things to add to your collection. Inside, watch demonstrators show you "how it's done" and see the many displays presented by PVG&MC members.

There is no admission fee, convenient parking, and disabled access. There is an adjacent covered picnic area for picnicking, walking trails through the trees and a play area for the younger rockhounds. If you don't picnic, food is available from the kitchen in the building. Also inside, visit the kids mine on the stage, and check out the silent auction and club sales area. Take a chance in our 3pm Sunday raffle which includes 2 - \$50 bills, rock tumblers, many pieces of jewelry and rock specimens donated by the vendors, and you don't have to be present to win.



Admission \$2 ea Person Over 18
Free Parking

All kinds of rocks from
rough to polished.
Incredible cabochons,
jewelry, beads, slabs,
& metaphysical specimens.
Vendors from all over
the PNW.
Raffle, door prizes,
silent auction.



Cascade Gem & Mineral Show

June 28 & 29, 2025
Kent Commons - Kent Station
525 4th Ave N, Kent, WA 98030
Sat & Sun - 10 am to 5 pm

Rock, Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Sale

Sat, 05 Jul, 2025 at 10:00 am -
Sun, 06 Jul, 2025 at 05:00 pm

Skagit Valley Grange
21273 Cook Rd
Sedro-Woolley, Washington

Rock, Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Sale

Rock, Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Sale!! No entrance fee!!
Free to get in.

Two day Free event - Saturday & Sunday 10-5
We will have multiple Vendors with everything from
Agates, Fossils, Geodes, Minerals of all kinds, Carvings,
Gems, Jewelry,
Specimens, Lapidary, beads and much more to find the
perfect things to purchase for your collection or gifts
for another.



You may also like the following [events from Kim Villines](#):

This July, 27th July, 05:00 pm, [Make your own Beaded tree - class 4 \(beginning class\) in Snoqualmie](#)



U.S. Department of the Interior

Mark Your Calendars! Fee Free Days in 2025

June 19 (Juneteenth National Independence Day)

Enjoy Bureau of Land Management's wilderness areas, national conservation lands, national monuments, etc.
Visit Fish and Wildlife Service's wildlife refuges, marine national monuments, wetlands, etc.

Find your national park, historic site or monument managed by the National Park Service.

July 16 (Bureau of Land Management's birthday)

Enjoy Bureau of Land Management's wilderness areas, national conservation lands, national monuments, etc.

August 4 (Great American Outdoors Day)

Find your national park, historic site or monument managed by the National Park Service.

September 27 (National Public Lands Day)

Enjoy Bureau of Land Management's wilderness areas, national conservation lands, national monuments, etc.
Visit Fish and Wildlife Service's wildlife refuges, marine national monuments, wetlands, etc.

Find your national park, historic site or monument managed by the National Park Service.

October 12 (first Sunday of National Wildlife Refuge Week)

Visit Fish and Wildlife Service's wildlife refuges, marine national monuments, wetlands, etc.

November 11 (Veterans Day)

Enjoy Bureau of Land Management's wilderness areas, national conservation lands, national monuments, etc.
Visit Fish and Wildlife Service's wildlife refuges, marine national monuments, wetlands, etc.

Find your national park, historic site or monument managed by the National Park Service.



Skagit Rock and Gem Club
Charlene Rhodes—Editor
PO BOX 244
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

