

Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club



Rock Talk



September, 2014

Message from the President

Rich Simcsak

We have confirmation from the Nature Center we are locked in for the Showplace arena for our 25th Silver Anniversary Mineral, Jewelry, and Fossil Show for 14 February 2015. This September meeting we will discuss many topics concerning the show. Yes we are behind schedule in getting alot started. But with the teamwork we have shown before in the club, we will have an outstanding show.

This month, if not already done, we will have a nomination committee nominate new officers for next year's club officers. Now I hope people will not be shy in volunteering for positions in excelling the club to new heights. Many members have already led and worked for this club to expand and be a shining star for PG County. Please everyone, seriously think of serving in one of the many positions offered.

Did I mention we have a lock-in for 14 February in the showplace Arena for our show?? Farmer's Almanac does not call for snow that weekend.

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Next Meeting:

September 26, 2014@7:00 PM

Program

Rhodochrosite Red Treasure of the Rockies." (Part 1)

Clearwater Nature Center, 11000 Thrift Road, Clinton, MD.

August Meeting Summary

No formal meeting for August, no minutes taken. Present and Vice President were away and auction started around 7 PM. No resolution yet regarding the Rock Show. Informal comments were that we might consider going it alone at the Showplace Arena. Potluck picnic food was delicious and abundant. About 40% of attendees were from lapidary club. Bob did a great job setting up with lots of help from the Lapidary Club.

Photos of the August Pot Luck Dinner and Auction
(taken by Laurence O'Callaghan)







Upcoming Shows and Events

September 27-28: 50th Atlantic Coast Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show hosted by the Gem Cutters Guild of Baltimore. Howard Co. Fairgrounds, 2210 Fairgrounds Road; West Friendship, MD 21794 (MD 32 just off I-70).

October 10-12: 58th Annual Paul Desautels Micromount Symposium Baltimore, MD, sponsored by the Baltimore Mineral Society.

October 18-19: 41st Annual Jewelry, Gem, Mineral, and Fossil Show sponsored by the Kanawha Rock and Gem Club. So. Charleston Community Center, So. Charleston, WV

October 25 "ULTRAVIOLATION" 25th Anniversary, Fluorescent Minerals Only Show! Sponsored by the Rock & Mineral Club of Lower Bucks County, First United Methodist Church, 840 Trenton Road, Fairless Hills, PA

October 25-26: 45th Annual Rochester Gem, Mineral, Jewelry, and Fossil Show sponsored by the Rochester Lapidary Society. Main Street Armory, 900 E. Main St., Rochester, NY

November 8: 23rd annual Richmond Gem and Mineral Society Rock Sale and Swap. Ridge Baptist Church Meeting Hall, 1515 East Ridge Road, Richmond, VA 23229.

Field Trip Report: Vulcan Manassas Quarry

Timothy Foard

On September 13, 2014 a few members of the SMRMC and the NOVA met at the parking lot of the Vulcan Quarry in Manassas, Virginia. The forecast called for rain, and it looked like it may sometime today. After the safety briefing we proceeded down into the quarry. We were initially excited after being informed that there was blasting the day before and about being the first to collect in the area. The excitement was short-lived, for the freshly blasted area was located in homogeneous diabase which is ideal for the quarry owners but not from collector's point of view. There were no seams which may reveal the presence of vugs that will contain minerals. After spending some time there we proceeded to other areas of the quarry which were not off limits to us.



The pickings were quite slim for all of us. I walked down to the lower levels and saw signs of previous collecting activity. One of the better finds of the day was a small cavity containing a greenish mineral resembling chloritoid. It was collected by Casper of the NOVA Club. One unexpected find was blocks of crumbling diabase which, when broken, revealed thousands of eggs of deer ticks. I recognized them as such because next to them were the dried remains of adult ticks. In addition I found small calcite-lined

cavities as well as some unusual growths of massive calcite. I drove up to the upper level to search for vesicular basalt. After only a couple of minutes there I found 1 piece and then the rain came. That was our cue to call it a day. It was also getting late at that time. We thanked the owners for another opportunity to collect in the quarry.

EFMLS/AFMS NEWS by Timothy Foard



The EFMLS Newsletter for August/September has an excellent article on oxalic acid with safety tips on its usage. There is also an article on after school clubs, on the results of the editor/author competition, the AFMS code of ethics and information on the 2015 EFMLS convention in Hickory, NC.

For more information, visit www.amfed.org.efmls



The September newsletter of the AFMS recognizes the rockhounds of the year for the various federation regions. Also in the newsletter are the announcement of new editor inductees, the results of the 2014 web design contest, and the competitive exhibit results, editor contest results and upcoming regional federation conventions.

For these and other information, visit www.amfed.org

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Upcoming Field Trips

Combined (with a number of area clubs) field trip to the Willis Mountain, on Saturday, September 27, from 8:30AM to 1PM. The address is 30 Willis Mt. Plant Ln., Dillwyn, Virginia 23936. Because of changes effective this year, I felt it was important to copy the email sent by Jim White to members on August 6th outlining the changes:

“Safety Equipment- Hard hats (LESS than 5 years old, check the date stamped into the hard hat), Steel-toed boots, Safety glasses, gloves, and LONG pants. Chocks for your vehicle (EVERY time you park you MUST shut off the engine, put your vehicle in park, apply the parking brake and chock it. I'm told that home-made chocks or even a rock is sufficient, just be sure to USE them).

There are NO age restrictions on this trip, but all minors MUST be accompanied and SUPERVISED by an adult.

The quarry may be operating, this will limit the areas which we have to collect in and make awareness of your surroundings, and those of anyone under your supervision, that much more important.

One other significant change to note. There are several clubs attending this event, each club's field trip leader MUST act as Safety Observer for the members of their club. This means that you will have to stay together as a group, no wandering off to "do your own thing". I expect to be away so I need someone to volunteer for this, unless my plans change.

If you're interested let me know (whitejs1@verizon.net) and I will provide details and directions.”

Ticked Off!

Timothy Foard



Adult Deer Tick (bugguide.net)

Anyone who spent a few hours outdoors in the Mid-Atlantic area probably had encountered ticks of one type or another. Sometimes during my commute home I sometimes make a side trip to a nearby streamside site to look for any unusual rock or fossil specimens for about one or two hours. To access the stream, I have to cross brushy or weedy zone and often it is here where I encounter the ticks. Finding a few ticks on me after trekking through the brush is expected; there were times, however, when I found thousands of them on my clothes—so many that my trousers took on a mottled pattern. When this occurs I usually abort whatever I was doing and leave the area. Now I keep a couple of cans of permethrin in the trunk of my car and spray myself before venturing out into areas where I know or suspect ticks to occur. On the latest field trip to the Vulcan Quarry in Manassas, Virginia, at the bottom of the quarry I broke open blocks of diabase and saw thousands of eggs (and a few dried corpses) of deer ticks. I would had expected the environment in the middle of an active rock quarry to be unsuitable to ticks, but the tiny cracks in the base rock apparently

provided an idea microhabitat for egg development.



Viable eggs and dried remains of deer ticks inside exposed crack in diabase (Vulcan Quarry, VA)

The tiny bright red eggs were on the verge of hatching; I saw one hatched tick. Even in an unlikely place like an open quarry is the risk of contact with ticks a probability.

Ticks are not insects, but are 8-legged arthropods related to spiders and mites. There are about 900 species of ticks known. All species feed on blood, and many are specific to a particular species of mammal, bird, or reptile. The tick life cycle consists of egg, larva, nymph, and adult. The egg-to-adult life cycle may take two years to complete. After hatching, in order for the tick to move from one stage to the next, a blood meal is required. The tick will leave its host, molt into the next stage, and search for another host. It is during these transitions that people will pick up ticks on their clothing.

As with any blood-sucking organisms, the potential for disease-transmission by ticks is great. In the Mid-Atlantic region there are at least 3 species of ticks known to transmit disease to humans: Deer Tick, *Ixodes scapularis* (Lyme disease); Lone Star Tick, *Amblyomma americanum* (Ehrlichiosis); and American Dog Tick, *Dermacentor variabilis* (Rocky Mountain spotted fever). In this area only the deer tick transmits Lyme disease, which is caused by a

bacterium, *Borrelia burgdorferi*. The tick becomes infected after feeding on mice or other rodents that harbor the pathogen. Deer do not carry the bacterium. Also, not all ticks harbor the bacterium. Unlike mosquitoes, which can transmit disease within several minutes of feeding, it takes at least 24 hours of feeding for a deer tick to transmit the causative agent for Lyme disease. It is the most common disease transmitted by ticks in this area. Symptoms of Lyme disease include a reddish rash appearing about 3 days following a bite. Sometimes, but not always, the rash resembles a bull's eye and expand slowly. Additional symptoms include headache, fever, chills, fatigue, muscle and joint pains. If untreated, the infection will spread to other parts of the body and after several months can be severe with arthritis and chronic neurologic damage. Many of the initial symptoms for Lyme disease are also characteristic of other tick-borne diseases.

If you find a tick attached to you, use a pair of fine-tipped forceps (if you have them) or your fingers, grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible, and pull it out. Do not use nail polish or heat to remove them—these methods generally do not work. Before venturing into tick infested areas tucking pant legs into socks and shirts into pants will make it harder for ticks to find exposed skin. I cannot stress the importance of regular tick checks—remember that the longer an infected tick remain attached to a person, the greater the chances of a person contracting a disease. Shortly after each field trip check yourself thoroughly, and conduct another check later that same day. Sometimes the second check will find recently attached ticks that the first check missed. DEET, an insect repellent, also exhibits repellent activity on ticks. The higher the concentration, the longer the activity: 20% DEET lasts about 4 hours; 30%, about 5 hours. Permethrin, an insecticide available either as pre-treated clothing (somewhat expensive), or as an aerosol, offers excellent protection against ticks. If the spray is used it is not applied to the skin, only to clothing. If after

removing an attached tick you observed a rash or experienced symptoms listed above, contact a physician immediately. Early detection makes tick-transmitted diseases treatable.

For more information visit
www.MarylandTickOff.org and
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fightthebite.

Member's Finds

Photo is a mudstone specimen containing a partial footprint of a theropod dinosaur. This specimen was collected from a Cretaceous stream deposit in Baltimore County, Maryland. Also at this site were abundant silicified pseudomorphs (only external shapes preserved) of fossil logs. This specimen was collected by Timothy Foard.



Collected any interesting specimens? Send a photo or two to the editor at bmorebugman@yahoo.com for inclusion in the next issue of Rock Talk.



The Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club

Meetings take place on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm

Clearwater Nature Center, 11000 Thrift Road, Clinton, MD.

For More information, call:

(301) 297-4575

We're on the web:

SMRMC.org