The Sierra Pelonagram



. Member of the California Federation of Mineralogical Society Inc.

The Sierra Pelona Rock Club is a non-profit organization founded in 1959 with the objective to sponsor activities and promote interest and education in: mineralogy, lapidary, geology, paleontology and related subjects.



A Very Brief History of Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day is a time to celebrate love and friendship and the joy of having other people in your life. It's a day of flowers, candy and cards decorated with hearts. This special day's origin, though, is not so rosy.

There are many theories on how Valentine's Day began, but the most noted one begins in Rome in the year 268. Emperor Claudius II wanted a fierce team of young men to fight in his armies. He found that when young men are in love or sharing their lives with a wife and children, they tended to be more cautious.

To insure large numbers of soldiers for his armies, Claudius outlawed marriage for those young men.

Young men and women still fell in love and wanted to become couples in the eyes of the church. A brave priest named Valentine thought the law was horribly unjust.

Putting his life in danger, Valentine continued performing marriage ceremonies, doing so in secret and hidden from the eyes of authorities.

Still, word of Valentine's secret ceremonies made its way back to Claudius. The priest was found and put to death on February 14th. Centuries later, the Catholic Church made that kindly priest a saint, one of three saints named "Valentine."

No one knows exactly when St. Valentine's Day was first celebrated, but there is a poem in existence that is considered to be the first ever written Valentine's Day card. It was sent from a prisoner in the Tower of London to his wife in the year 1415.

My very gentle Valentine, Since for me you were born too soon, And I for you was born too late. God forgives him who has estranged Me from you for the whole year. I am already sick of love, My very gentle Valentine.

Today, greeting card companies estimate that over a billion cards of love and affection are sent each St. Valentine's Day.

Birthdays

February Adam Hamilton Brigitte Mazourek Alan Pollack John Wheeler Tina White March Richard Carlson Ruth Hidalgo Linda Jenkins Ed Learn Bruce Velie Bill Webber

Dues are Due

If you haven't paid your dues, please do so as soon as possible. February 28 is the drop deadline. Thank you.



Officers:

President – Bill Webber Vice-President – Julie Tinoco Secretary: Heidi Webber Treasurer –Shana Brunes-Ruiz Federation Director (CFMS/AFMS) --Ron Rackliffe

Chairpersons:

Claim--Linda Jenkins Donation Rock Table--Akiko Strathmann Equipment--Bill Webber Field Trips – Julie Tinoco Historian -Open Hospitality – Ron Rackliffe Membership – Heidi Webber Website-- Larry Holt Pelonagram Publisher, Editor – Heidi Webber Programs –Tina White Publicity –Open Sunshine--Brigitte Mazourek

The Sierra Pelona Rock Club, is a member of the California and American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc. (CFMS/AFMS). The general club meetings (Open to the public) are at 7:30 PM, on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at:

The Clubhouse of the Greenbrier Mobile Estates EAST 21301 Soledad Canyon Rd Canyon Country, CA 91351

Contact the Club or the Sierra Pelonagram Editor at:

Sierra Pelona Rock Club P.O. Box 221256 Newhall, Ca. 91322 Or e-mail: <u>hwebber@pacbell.net</u> Visit the SPRC website <u>www.sierrapelona.com</u>



President's Message

Here we are, another month that we really can't do anything club-wise other than the Zoom meetings. So that means there isn't much going on. With the vaccine becoming marginally more readily available, hopefully we will be able to resume normal club activities soon.

There are still several club members who haven't paid their dues yet. Please take care of that if you are one of them. We still have some bills that don't go away, like insurance, website expenses and payments to our parent organization, the CFMS. The dues cost is quite minimal this year, so please get those payments in. February 28 is the deadline to continue membership unless special arrangements have been made. Thanks for your understanding and cooperation on this.

So with nothing happening, there isn't anything more to say.

Have a great February and I hope to see many of you at the Zoom general meeting next week. Heidi will resend the link. It is the same one we've been using.

Bill Webber



The meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm. In attendance were Bill and Heidi Webber, Tina White, Julie Tinoco and Ron Rackliffe.

Shana Brunes-Ruiz wasn't in attendance but submitted by email the last 3 months of treasury reports.

The minutes of the January board meeting were approved as submitted. Ron/Julie.

Heidi said there were still 25 members who haven't paid dues. She will contact them again. Unpaid dues members will be dropped from the club at the end of February.

Tina will give a talk of soil-oriented illnesses (and toxic rocks) for the February presentation.

Lise Meyers and Golden and Ashton Crockett were voted in as new members. Welcome!

With business concluded, Ron motioned to adjourn. Heidi seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Heidi S Webber, Secretary, SPRC



Sierra Pelona Rock Club General Meeting January 19, 2021 Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 7 pm. There were 9 people in attendance. Lise Meyers attended as a guest.

There really was no business conducted the previous month. Shana was in a serious car accident but is mending well. Because of the accident and recovery, she hasn't processed dues checks yet (she has since this meeting).

Tina White was unable to give her presentation as Greenbriar Estates where she lives had their electricity turned off for an Edison PSPS high wind event. (and a neighbor's shingles blew through a window so was in the process of getting it boarded up).

After some chat, the meeting ended at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Heidi S Webber, Secretary, SPRC

What Are Lost Continents, and Why Are We Discovering So Many?



For most people, continents are Earth's seven main large landmasses.

But geoscientists have a different take on this. They look at the type of rock a feature is made of, rather than how much of its surface is above sea level.

In the past few years, we've seen an increase in the discovery of lost continents. Most of these have been plateaus or mountains made of continental crust hidden from our view, below sea level.

One example is Zealandia, the world's eighth continent that extends underwater from New Zealand.

Several smaller lost continents, called microcontinents, have also recently been discovered submerged in the eastern and western Indian Ocean.

But why, with so much geographical knowledge at our fingertips, are we still discovering lost continents in the 21st century?

We May Have Found Another

In August, we undertook a 28-day voyage on the research vessel RV Investigator to explore a possible lost continent in a remote part of the Coral Sea. The area is home to a large underwater plateau off Queensland, called the Louisiade Plateau, which represents a major gap in our knowledge of Australia's geology.

On one hand, it could be a lost continent that broke away from Queensland about 60 million years ago. Or it could have formed as a result of a massive volcanic eruption taking place around the same time. We're not sure, because nobody had recovered rocks from there before - until now.

We spent about two weeks collecting rocks from this feature, and recovered a wide variety of rock types from parts of the seafloor as deep as 4,500m.

Most were formed through volcanic eruptions, but some show hints that continental rocks are hiding beneath. Lab work over the next couple of years will give us more certain answers.

Down to the Details

There are many mountains and plateaus below sea level scattered across the oceans, and these have been mapped from space. They are the lighter blue areas you can see on Google Maps.

However, not all submerged features qualify as lost continents. Most are made of materials quite distinct from what we traditionally think of as continental rock, and are instead formed by massive outpourings of magma.

A good example is Iceland which, despite being roughly the size of New Zealand's North Island, is not considered continental in geolog-

ical terms. It's made up mainly of volcanic rocks deposited over the past 18 million years, meaning it's relatively young in geological terms. The only foolproof way to tell the difference between massive submarine volcanoes and lost continents is to collect rock samples from the deep ocean.

Finding the right samples is challenging, to say the least. Much of the seafloor is covered in soft, gloopy sediment that obscures the solid rock beneath.

We use a sophisticated mapping system to search for steep slopes on the seafloor, that are more likely to be free of sediment. We then send a metal rock-collecting bucket to grab samples.

The more we explore and sample the depths of the oceans, the more likely we'll be to discover more lost continents.

The Ultimate Lost Continent

Perhaps the best-known example of a lost continent is Zealandia. While the geology of New Zealand and New Caledonia have been known for some time, it's only recently their common heritage as part of a much larger continent (which is 95% underwater) has been accepted.

This acceptance has been the culmination of years of painstaking research, and exploration of the geology of deep oceans through sample collection and geophysical surveys.

New Discoveries Continue to be Made

During a 2011 expedition, we discovered two lost continental fragments more than 1,000km west of Perth.

The granite lying in the middle of the deep ocean there looked similar to what you would find around Cape Leeuwin, in Western Australia.

Other Lost Continents

However, not all lost continents are found hidden beneath the oceans.

Some existed only in the geological past, millions to billions of years ago, and later collided with other continents as a result of plate tectonic motions.

Their only modern-day remnants are small slivers of rock, usually squished up in mountain chains such as the Himalayas. One example is Greater Adria, an ancient continent now embedded in the mountain ranges across Europe.

Due to the perpetual motion of tectonic plates, it's the fate of all continents to ultimately reconnect with another, and form a supercontinent.

But the fascinating life and death cycle of continents is the topic of another story.

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Lapis Lazuli: Composition and Color

Lapis lazuli is a blue metamorphic rock that has been used by people as a gemstone, sculpting material, and ornamental material for thousands of years.

The most important mineral component of lapis lazuli is lazurite, a feldspathoid silicate mineral. Most lapis lazuli also contains calcite (white), sodalite (blue), and pyrite (metallic yellow). Some samples of lapis lazuli contain augite; diopside; enstatite; mica; hauynite; hornblende, nosean, and sulfur-rich löllingite geyerite.

Lapis lazuli usually occurs in crystalline marble as a result of contact metamorphism.

Lazurite is a tectosilicate mineral with sulfate, sulfur and chloride. It is a feldspathoid and a member of the sodalite group. Lazurite crystallizes in the isometric system although well-formed crystals are rare. It is usually massive and forms the bulk of the gemstone lapis lazuli. The intense blue color is due to the presence of the trisulfur radical anion in the crystal.

Lapis takes an excellent polish and can be made into jewelry, carvings, boxes, mosaics, ornaments, small statues, and vases. During the Renaissance, lapis was ground and processed to make the pigment ultramarine for use in frescoes and oil painting. Its usage as a pigment in oil paint largely ended in the early 19th century when a chemically identical synthetic variety became available.

High-quality lapis lazuli has been used as a mineral pigment for over 1,000 years. Bright blue pieces of lapis are trimmed of impurities and ground to a fine powder; the powder can then be mixed with oil or another vehicle for use as a paint.

Where is Lapis Lazuli Found?

Lapis lazuli was discovered around 6,000 years ago in the West Hindu-Kush Mountains of present-day Afghanistan. Today, Afghanistan continues to be the leading producer of the gem. Other countries involved in production include Angola, Argentina, Canada, Chile, India, Italy, Myanmar, Pakistan, the United States, and Russia.

Ultramarine

Ultramarine is a deep blue color pigment which was originally made by grinding lapis lazuli into a powder. The name comes from the Latin ultramarinus, literally "beyond the sea", because the pigment was imported into Europe from mines in Afghanistan.

Reference: Geology/Rocks FaceBook





Polished Lapis. Photo: New Moon Beginnings

Ultramarine Pigment

Rough lapis. Photo: Arsaa Gems and Minerals