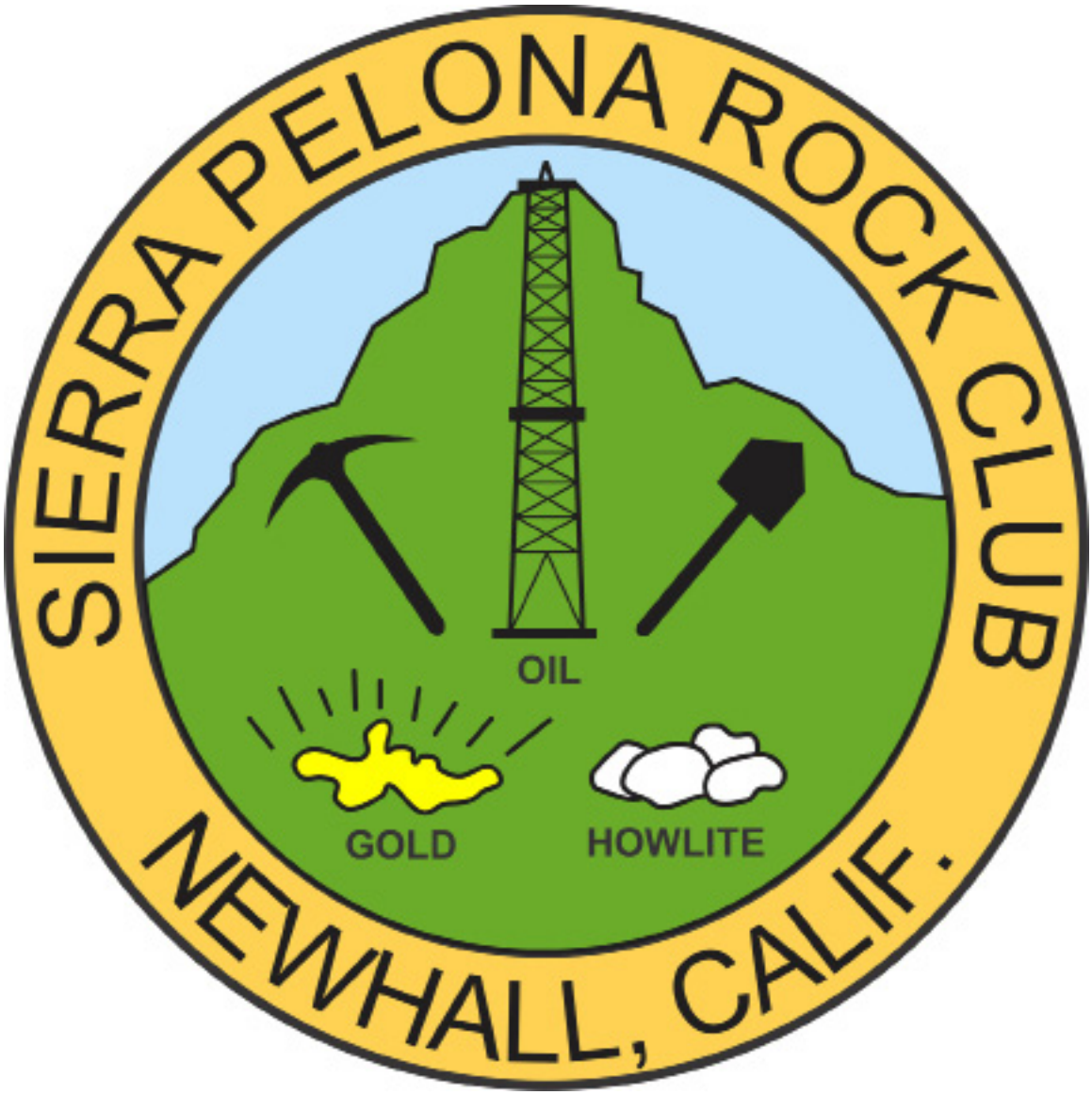
The Sierra Pelonagram



June 2025

... 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.

SPCRs ~

Summer officially starts in less than 2 weeks, so the Club won't be holding any meetings or monthly field trips until September - it's too darn hot in most of our favorite spots to collect.

A few folks are talking about a quick trip to our travertine claim this week; I wish them luck and functional air conditioning.

Less daunting, Julie is working on a July day trip to the beach to collect and relax. And on August 9th we'll gather together for an early dinner; location TBA. We realize many of our member travel during the summer months so these aren't "official" events, but we do hope to see you if you can join us. Details on both will follow via email and our Facebook page!

Going back in time, yesterday (June 7th) was our annual picnic. We had a great turnout, delicious food, and an amazing array of auctionable items offered up by our efficient and amusing auctioneer, Greg. I do believe a good time was had by all!

Enjoy your summer wherever you go & whatever you do ~ and don't forget to bring a few rocks back from anywhere & everywhere!

~ Tina White

Sierra Pelona Rock Club
Board Meeting
June 3, 2025
via Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 7:07pm. In attendance were Tina White, Greg Mazourek, Julie Tinoco, Heidi Webber and Jo Lasky. Ed Learn was absent.

Tina spoke about the upcoming End of Season Picnic for Saturday June 7.

Julie discussed the upcoming Pala Tourmaline paid field trip on June 21. She has already emailed information and will email more detailed information as the date comes closer. She will suggest that people may want to get a motel for the night before as the day starts fairly early and to be closer to the mine.

Ruth's Rock Sale is Saturday and Sunday June 7-8. Some of our members went early at her invitation and bought some nice stuff. Dianne Wohlleben bought some things for the rock table and asked to be reimbursed $30. It was decided to reimburse her.

Tina has a neighbor who has a rock collection and has invited us to see it.

Tina suggested we publish and make official our claim collection policy.

Greg reported on the Federation Show of May 10. The Board of Directors report spoke about the limit on liability of shows and that they should raise that limit. There was also a like of Federation Rules for non-profits.

Heidi motioned to adjourn the meeting/Tina seconded, meeting was adjourned at 8:27.

Respectfully Submitted
Heidi Webber, Secretary, SPRC

Sierra Pelona Rock Club
General Meeting June 7, 2025
Valencia Meadows Park

The annual SPRC Potluck Picnic was held on June 7 at Valencia Meadows Park. 30 of our members were in attendance. This is our End of Season Picnic. Bill and Heidi Webber and Jo and Aron Lasky were there about 9 to set up. People started showing up by 11 and lunch was served about 12. We were all stuffed!

Kim and Eric Balstad were given their badges. Tim Hood's badge was given to his sister Kim as he couldn't attend. Tina gave a brief message to the group to have a great and safe summer. It was a beautiful day, the weather was perfect and so was the end of our season, having the hot summer off. There will be a potluck luncheon at Jo and Aron's patio August 9. Details to follow. There will also be an unofficial field trip somewhere on the beach, to be announced.

Then the auction began. There was a full table of items to be auctioned off which took most of the afternoon, so we decided not to have our bingo game. Greg Mazourek was our auctioneer, doing a great job as always. Dianne Hellrigel was our "Vana" and was busy passing out newly won treasures to various members. There was a lot of competition for some of the prizes, which is always fun.

After the auction, we all packed up, checked our area for any loose trash and headed home—for a nap if they were lucky!!!

Respectfully submitted
Heidi Webber, (Stuffed) Secretary, SPRC

June
Connie Reisbeck
Aron Lasky
Akiko Strathmann
Heidi Webber
Janelle Williams
Dianne Wohlleben

July
Trina Aeen
Sandra Cattell
George Feneht
Marie Feneht
Dower Jai Gervais
Betsy Swallow
Jaclyn Wright

August
Don Cogan
Bryan Hori
Jo Lasky
Ron Lawrence
Doug Vito

September
Eric Bolstad
Kim Bolstad
Janet Catmull
Cheryl Cogan
Shawn Geirahn
Margaret Stamboulian
Julie Tinoco

CFMS Director's Meeting
Greg Mazourek, Federation Director

The CFMS Directors meeting was held on May 10th at the AV Fairgrounds as part of the annual gem show held in conjunction with the Lancaster Rock Club. A QR Code was provided for a CFMS website to help register for a rock club's non-profit status. Both state and federal assistance is provided. Additional information about electronically filling, after answering some questions, is also available.

Other topics discussed were whether a club audits its treasurer every year, that clubs should purchase one million liability insurance for club board members through CFMS (McDaniel's) for $350, the need for a CFMS field trip leader, kids can earn badges via the CFMS website, the CFMS has various relics in five museums including a Benoite necklace at the Buena Vista museum, John Martin has digitized some of the Slide Shows, the Houser Beds are still open pending a Blue Ribbon Coalition lawsuit, Mojave Trails and Chuckwalla are still open for collecting, some information about the Paradise workshops and that there will be a field trip to Topaz Mountain September 25-28. A note was made to ensure members notify the field trip leader when they show up and leave.

Officers:
President – Tina White
Vice-President – Julie Tinoco
Secretary: Heidi Webber
Treasurer –Ed Learn
Federation Director (CFMS/AFMS) --Greg Mazourek

Chairpersons:
Donation Rock Table--Dianne Wholleben
Equipment--Bill Webber
Field Trips – Julie Tinoco
Co-chair Field Trips--Jo Lasky
Historian -Open
Hospitality – Heidi Webber
Membership – Heidi Webber
Website-- Larry Holt
Pelonagram Publisher, Editor – Heidi Webber
Programs –Tina White
Publicity –Open
Sunshine--Yolanda Resnick

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 7:00 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

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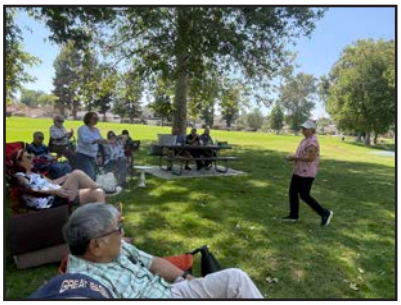
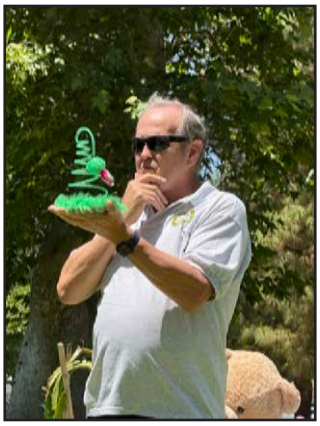
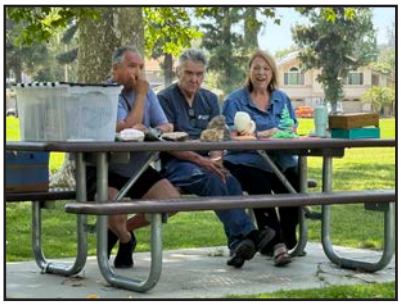
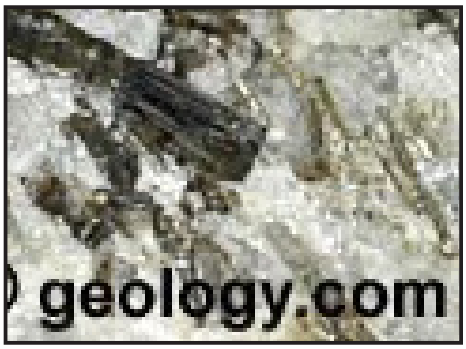
Visit the SPRC website www.sierrapelona.com







It was a fun day at the picnic. The weather was great, nice and cool with a perfect breeze. We are off until September, although we normally have a beach collecting trip and a luncheon which this year will be at Jo and Aron Lasky's home. Stay tuned for details!



What is Tourmaline?

Tourmaline is the name of a large group of boron silicate minerals. These minerals share a common crystal structure and similar physical properties - but vary tremendously in chemical composition. The wide range of compositions and color zoning within crystals causes tourmaline to occur in more colors and color combinations than any other mineral group.

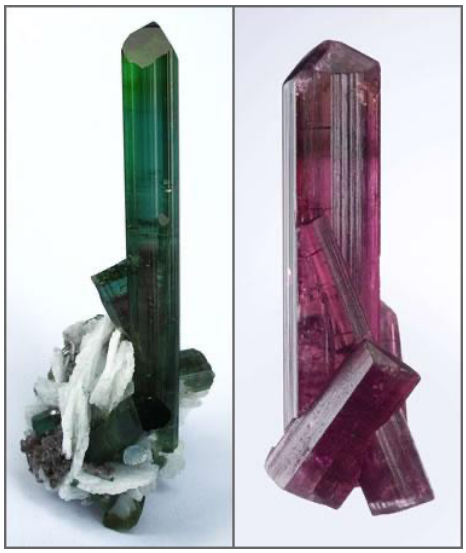
Tourmaline is one of the world's most popular gemstones and it serves as a birthstone for the month of October. Because of its popularity, tourmaline is easy to find in jewelry stores. Well-formed tourmaline crystals are also valued by mineral specimen collectors. Specimens with attractive colors and crystal forms can sell for thousands of dollars.

Geologic Occurrence of Tourmaline

Tourmaline most commonly occurs as an accessory mineral in igneous and metamorphic rocks. Large, well-formed crystals of tourmaline can form in cavities and fractures during hydrothermal activity. Tourmaline is a hard and tenacious mineral. That enables it to persist during stream and beach transport as durable grains in sediments and sedimentary rocks.

Tourmaline Crystals

The most spectacular tourmaline crystals are formed by hydrothermal activity. These crystals form when hot waters and vapors carry the elements needed to form tourmaline into pockets, voids, and fractures, which offer an open space for crystal growth. The tourmaline crystals formed in these cavities range in size from tiny millimeter crystals to massive prisms weighing over 100 kilograms.



One rich pocket of nice tourmaline crystals can yield mineral specimens and gem materials worth millions of dollars. Many mineral collectors and gem hunters have become wealthy by discovering just one of these treasure-filled cavities.

Tourmaline has a Mohs hardness of 7 to 7.5, and that hardness makes it a durable sediment granule. Tourmaline is also relatively resistant to chemical weathering. So, particles of tourmaline weathered from igneous or metamorphic rocks can persist in a stream and can be transported long distances

from their source area.

Tourmaline gem rough is mined from stream sediments in many parts of the world, often by artisanal miners. It generally occurs as small granules and pebbles that that have been rounded by the abrasion of stream transport. Tourmaline is often one of many different minerals produced from a single mining location.

Tourmaline as Accessory Mineral

The most common occurrence of tourmaline is as an accessory mineral in igneous and metamorphic rocks. It often occurs as millimeter-size crystals scattered through granite, pegmatite, or gneiss. In this mode of occurrence, tourmaline rarely makes up more than a few percent of the rock's volume. The variety of tourmaline most often found as an accessory mineral is black schorl.

Tourmaline Sources

Brazil has been the world's leading source of tourmaline for nearly 500 years. In the 1500s Portuguese explorers obtained green and blue tourmaline from indigenous people and from panning streams in search of gold. They thought that these colorful stones were emeralds and sapphires and sent them back to Portugal, where they were cut into gems and used to make jewelry for royalty and wealthy citizens. (Tourmaline was not recognized as a distinct mineral until 1793.)

Beginning in the late 1800s, a steady stream of tourmaline discoveries have been made in the pegmatite deposits of Minas Gerais, Brazil. Since then, millions of carats of tourmaline have been produced in a wide range of colors, including much bicolor material. This diverse stream of tourmaline from Brazil has been the most important source for the worldwide gem and jewelry market.

The first commercial gemstone mine in the United States followed an 1821 discovery of tourmaline near the town of Paris, Maine. Over the past 200 years, significant amounts of pink and green tourmaline have been produced from dozens of Maine localities.

The most important source of tourmaline in the United States has been the tourmaline mines of southern California. Tourmaline has been mined there since the late 1800s. On the basis of cumulative dollar value, tourmaline has been the most important gem material mined in California. Most of this production occurred over 100 years ago in Riverside and San Diego Counties. Tons of red tourmaline was mined there and shipped to China, where it was used to make snuff bottles, carvings, jewelry and many other items. Today, a little tourmaline is being produced by small-scale mining. The miners today sell much of their best production as mineral specimens.

Today, discoveries of tourmaline of various kinds are made in Afghanistan, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Tanzania, the United States and other countries. These provide the market with a constantly changing supply of gem tourmaline and mineral specimens.

Physical Properties of Tourmaline

Tourmaline has a few properties that can aid in its identification. If you have a tourmaline crystal, identification should be easy.

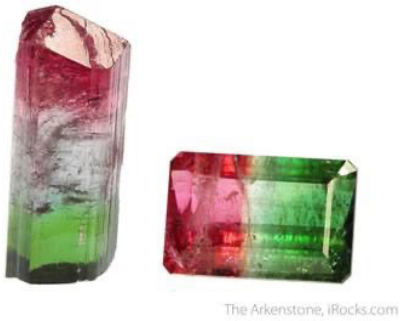
- Tourmaline has a prismatic crystal habit and often has obvious striations that parallel the long axis of a crystal.
- Tourmaline crystals often have triangular or six-sided cross-sections with rounded edges.
- Tourmaline crystals are often color zoned through their cross-sections or along their length.
- Tourmaline can be pleochroic with the darkest color viewing down the C-axis and lighter color viewing perpendicular to the C-axis.

Don't despair if your suspected tourmaline is an accessory mineral in an igneous or metamorphic rock. It often occurs in these rocks as tiny prismatic crystals. Get a hand lens and look for striations and rounded cross-sections. Tourmaline has indistinct cleavage, so any specimen with obvious cleavage is probably not tourmaline. Color might not be helpful. The most common tourmaline color is black, but the mineral occurs in all colors of the spectrum.

Color Zoning in Tourmaline

Changing conditions during tourmaline crystal growth often result in single crystals that contain two or more different colors of tourmaline. The earlier color is usually overgrown by the later color. These bicolor crystals are known as "zoned crystals." Cut gemstones with distinctly different color zones are known as parti-color gems.

In many gems, color zoning is undesirable because most gem and jewelry buyers prefer stones that have a single, uniform face-up color. Tourmaline is an exception to this trend. Gems cut from color-zoned crystals with pleasing colors are a novelty prized by designers and collectors.



Color-zoned crystals are often sawn into thin cross-sections and polished. These thin bicolor gems can be very attractive. The most popular bicolor tourmaline is "watermelon tourmaline." It has a pink interior and a green rind - just like a slice of watermelon. The closer the colors match those of a real watermelon, the more people enjoy them and the higher the price.

Tourmaline crystals are also faceted to produce bicolor gems. "Watermelon" is again the most popular, but many other beautiful color combinations are cut.

Zoned tourmaline crystals often have clarity problems in the color-change area. If the color combination is attractive, minor clarity problems usually do not have a major impact on their desirability or price.

Pleochroism in Tourmaline

Tourmaline is a pleochroic mineral. That means its apparent color can change with different directions of observation. The color is usually darkest looking down the c-axis of the crystal (down the long axis). It is usually lightest when viewing perpendicular to the long axis of the crystal.

Cutting pleochroic gem materials requires skill and knowledge. Rough must be studied and oriented to produce a gem with pleasing face-up color. A light piece of rough can be cut with the table of a stone perpendicular to the c-axis of the rough to maximize color. Dark rough can produce lighter gems if it is cut with the table plane of the stone parallel to the c-axis of the rough. Some rough can be cut to nicely display two pleochroic colors in the face-up position. Many jewelry buyers enjoy these gems.

Color optimization of pleochroic rough is time-consuming, requires special skills, and usually involves sacrifice. Which will produce a higher profit? A stone of premium color with a lower carat weight, or a larger stone with a less desirable color? These are the economics of faceting tourmaline.

Imitation Tourmaline

Imitation tourmaline is occasionally seen. The popular watermelon tourmaline and other parti-colored tourmalines are a common target of the imitators. Some assembled imitation stones consist of a thin wafer of colored glass or plastic, glued between two pieces of colorless glass.

These imitations are easy to detect with a microscope or loupe. If the stones are examined along the girdle, the edge of the colored wafer or the glue line can usually be seen. If the stones are examined by looking down through the table, bubbles or debris in the glue plane are sometimes visible.

Reference: Geology.com