

The Sierra Pelonagram



October 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.

President's Message



Wait, where did September go? It's already mid-October, and our Club is working on a number of projects & events. Last month there was an SPRC Field Trip to Rincon & Jalama for a day collecting at the beach, and later in the month we were invited to purchase some great specimens, slabs, and darn pretty rocks from a fellow downsizing what he has after 60+ years of collecting, often in sites now closed to rockhounds. It's been like Christmas for the past few weeks with all that everyone has added to their own collections. (And I went on a brief vacation to Arizona, and found a rock club's sale there!)

Our next meeting is less than a week away and we look forward to seeing you there on Tuesday the 21st!

Tina White, SPRC President

Sierra Pelona Rock Club

Board Meeting,
October 7, 2025
Via Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 7:12pm by Tina White. In attendance were Greg Mazourek, Ed Learn, Tina White, Heidi Webber and Jo Lasky. Absent was Julie Tinoco. A quorum was met.

Old Business:

Heidi confirmed the clubhouse is secured for December 14 for the Holiday party.

Jo gave a report on the Rincon Beach field trip. They also went to Jalama Beach. She said it was a great day all around.

New Business:

Ed gave his treasurer's report. All is well.

Jo discussed an elderly person named Jim who contacted the club regarding selling off his 70 years of rock collections and equipment. He needed a lot of help when Jo and Aron went to see his collection, so she and Aron jumped in and organized and contacted our members and eventually other clubs throughout Southern California to come in small groups to buy his collection. Much of it came from closed mines and claims, so this was a real treasure. The sale is still on-going with Jo using FaceBook rockhounding sites to reach people who may be interested. He also gave her a lot of kits and it was discussed that we donate to some science labs at schools and keep a couple for sale at Gilchrist Farms.

So far we have 18 people signed up for the Workshop on October 18. Heidi will send out another email for late signers who wish to attend. Mostly she would like a ballpark figure for lunch preparation.

Heidi said that we have decent coverage at Gilchrist Farms on October 25 and 26 but we can always welcome more help to give others a break. Contact her. She will also send out another email for late signers who wish to come help with our only fundraiser of the year.

Heidi nominated Merritt Kent for membership. Tina seconded and it was unanimous that Merritt become our newest member. Congratulations and Welcome Merritt.

Heidi motioned to adjourn the meeting and Ed seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:53pm.

Respectfully Submitted
Heidi S Webber, Secretary, SPRC

Sierra Pelona Rock Club

General Meeting at Greenbrier Estates
September 16, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 7pm by Tina White, President. Sixteen members and six guests were in attendance. Thanks were extended to Jo and Aron Lasky who brought a pot of spaghetti for us to enjoy. Other snacks were set out and devoured by all.

Julie Tinoco discussed the upcoming field trip to Rincon Beach.

Jo pointed out that she had placed sign-up sheets for working the Gilchrist Farms fundraiser on October 25 and 26, plus for the workshop at Bill and Heidi's home on October 18.

Jo also discussed upcoming planned field trips that she and Julie set up. The calendar will be disbursed to members with the caveat that plans can change.

Tina announced that the Holiday party will be on Sunday, December 14 at the Sierra Inn Clubhouse where it has been the last couple of years. It will be on a Sunday as the clubhouse will be in use on Saturday.

Ed Learn gave his report on the treasury. All is well.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 for Tina's program, the raffle and silent auction.

Respectfully Submitted
Heidi S Webber, Secretary, SPRC

Sierra Pelona Rock Club

October 15, 2025

Additional Zoom Meeting of the Board

The meeting was called to order at 7:40pm. In attendance were Tina White, Julie Tinoco, Ed Learn, Heidi Webber and Jo Lasky. A quorum was met.

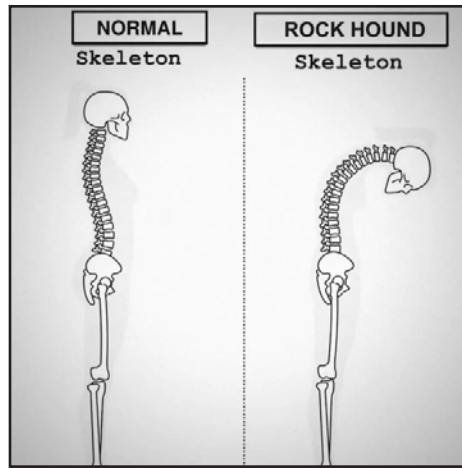
The purpose of the meeting was to authorize a fair amount to purchase the outside rocks of long-time collector Jim, as he is dissolving his collection.

Ed and Julie said the collection is well picked over in their opinion. They will go to his place to look over the remainder and make an offer.

Ed proposed that offer to be up to \$350. Heidi seconded/motion passed.

Julie made a motion to adjourn. Jo seconded and the meeting concluded at 8pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Heidi Webber, Secretary, SPRC



October

Omid Aeen
Josephine Casilang

November

Rodolpho Casilang
Elff
Frank Humelbaugh

**GEOLOGY ROCKS, BUT
GEOGRAPHY
IS WHERE IT'S AT**

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 –Jo Lasky
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

Sharktooth Hill

Recently a group of members took an unofficial trip to Sharktooth Hill in Bakersfield. This was NOT a club trip but one that some friends wanted to take at this perfect time of year for tooth hunting. As a result of this expedition, I decided this would be a good time to reprint an article from almost 10 years ago. Enjoy your read.



Teeth such as this from the extinct 40-foot-long shark *Carcharocles megalodon* are common in the Sharktooth Hill Bone Bed because, like modern sharks, these extinct sharks also shed teeth throughout their lives.

Credit: UC Berkeley

The famed Sharktooth Hill Bone Bed in California is loaded with shark teeth as big as a hand and each weighing a pound, from giant prehistoric killers called megalodon.

Intermixed with copious bones from extinct seals, whales and fish, as well as turtle shells three times the size of today's leatherbacks, all these relics seem to tell of a 15-million-year-old disaster.

But scientists now suggest this vast graveyard might not have resulted from a sudden catastrophe. Instead, they suggest it formed slowly over a long span of time, potentially serving as a window into thousands of years of ancient history.

Richest Deposit Known

The Sharktooth Hill Bone Bed is the richest and most extensive marine deposit of bones in the world, averaging roughly 200 bones per square yard. All in all, the bed is a six-to-20-inch-thick layer of fossil bones, 10 miles of it exposed, which covers nearly 50 square miles just outside and northeast of Bakersfield.

Since the bed's discovery in the 1850s, paleontologists have argued over how the bones got there.

Perhaps a widespread catastrophe such as a volcanic eruption or red tide led to a massive die-off. Or maybe it was a killing ground for the extinct 40-foot-long shark *Carcharocles megalodon*, or a long-term breeding area for seals and other marine animals.

To pinpoint its origins, the researchers cut out a square yard section of the bone bed for study, complete with rock layers above and below. They also examined some 3,000 fossil bone and teeth

specimens previously collected and stored in museums.

The absence of volcanic ash makes a volcanic catastrophe unlikely as the origin of the bones, while the puzzling presence of land mammal fossils, such as tapirs and horses that must have washed out to sea and into the bed, makes it improbable that some toxic sea phenomenon such as red tide was the cause. And given that only five of the some 3,000 bones examined were marked by shark bites, it seems unlikely that giant predatory sharks were the major cause of the bone bed. Finally, the few young or juvenile specimens the researchers found discounted the possibility that the bed was a breeding ground for early seals.

Rotten Bones

When the bone bed formed between 15.2 and 15.9 million years ago, the climate was warming, sea level was at a peak, the vast Central Valley of California was an inland sea now dubbed the Temblor Sea and the emerging Sierra Nevada Mountain range was shoreline. Close analysis of the geology of the Sharktooth Hill area suggests it was part of an underwater shelf in a large embayment, directly opposite a wide opening to the sea.

The fossils in the bone bed itself seemed mostly scattered, as if the animal carcasses had decayed and their bones had been dispersed by currents.

"The bones look a bit rotten," said researcher Jere Lipps at the University of California, Berkeley, "as if they lay on the seafloor for a long time and were abraded by water with sand in it."

Many bones had manganese nodules and growths, which form on bones that sit for long periods in seawater before being covered by sediment.

The scientists conclude that currents swept sediment away from the bone beds for 100,000 to 700,000 years, during which time bones remained exposed on the ocean floor, accumulating in a big and shifting pile.

"These animals were dying over the whole area, but no sediment deposition was going on, possibly related to rising sea levels that snuffed out silt and sand deposition or restricted it to the very near-shore environment," said researcher Nicholas Pyenson at the University of British Columbia.

Not Just a Snapshot

In the layer above the bone bed, most skeletons were found with the bones encased in sediment and articulated together as they were in life.

"Once sea level started going down, then more sediment began to erode from near shore," Pyenson explained, with the sediment preserving the skeletons together.

"So we now know that this bone bed accumulated over a long period of time, and not just a snapshot of history, so it could give you a more complete view of life in the area," Lipps told LiveScience. "I suppose that does make interpreting it a bit more complicated, but scientists are interested in figuring out puzzles."

The researchers hope their study will draw renewed attention to the bone bed, which they note still needs protection.

"This deposit is an outstanding national heritage," Lipps said. "It could be a wonderful tourist site and great scientific resource, the equivalent of Dinosaur National Park," he added, referring to a popular park in Colorado and Utah.