

December 2024

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CENTRAL OREGON ROCK COLLECTORS



Merry
Christmas



Holiday Party

Our Holiday Party was a great success this year. We want to especially thank all the volunteers that showed up early and stayed a little later (there were too many to name!)...Thank you to all that helped in any way!!! You are Amazing!!!



The food was great,
but the
fellowship and laughter
was even better!

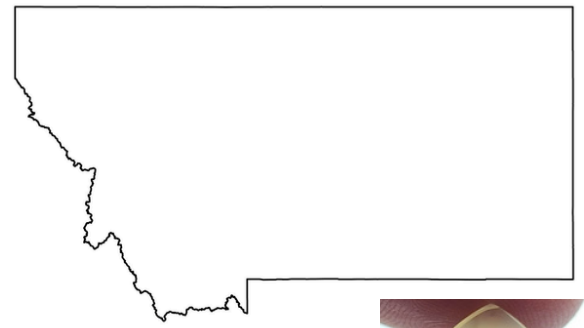


STATE BY STATE

ROCKS, GEMS,

MINERALS

Montana



State Gemstone 1: Montana Agate

It comes from near the Yellowstone River.

Montana Agate is one of the alluvial agates, it is not found in-site, but in the Flaxville gravel deposits scattered over a huge area encompassing thousands of square miles. Montana Moss Agate is found throughout the 670 mile length of the river.

The agate originally was formed in the Yellowstone National Park area of Wyoming as a result of volcanic activity approximately 65 million years ago.

In Montana Agate designer cabochons the red color is the result of iron oxide, the black and brown is the

result of manganese oxide and the red and orange came from iron oxide. On very rare occasions you can get a green from copper.

It is considered a moss agate because of the mossy shape of its inclusions, but more often it is banded, polka dotted or has dendrites.

Most of the Montana Agate rough is broken up and found in smaller pieces. Chunks larger than 10 pounds are rare. However the largest piece ever found weighed 63.5 pounds!

Montana Agate generally has a coating or skin.

Agate is a microcrystalline Quartz and has a hardness of 7, which makes the Montana Agate has been the state of Montana's official state gemstone (along with Montana Sapphire) since 1969.



State Gemstone2: Sapphire

Sapphire production in Montana was, at least initially, a byproduct of the gold rushes of the 1860s. Early prospectors searching for gold in the gravel of the Missouri River repeatedly discarded the annoying blue pebbles that continually clogged their sluices without much thought to what they may be.

The discovery that these stones had value is attributed to Ed "Sapphire" Collins who forwarded samples of these pebbles to Tiffany & Co. in 1895. When Tiffany purchased the lot for \$3,750 (approximately \$110,300 as of 2018) and declared that the stones were "sapphires of unusual quality," a small-scale sapphire rush began.



A year later, a part-time prospector and sheep farmer, John Ettien, discovered the source of the sapphires – an igneous dike about five miles in length. The “cornflower blues” of Yogo Gulch attracted considerable attention and funding from both domestic and foreign mining companies.

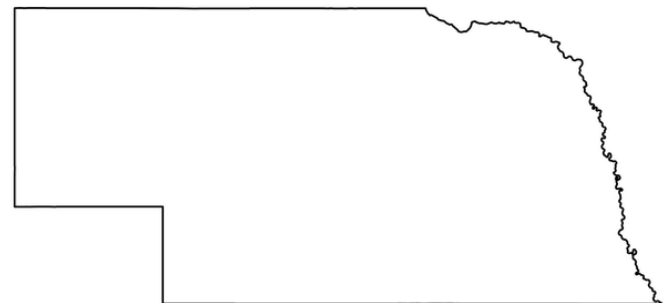
Gold prospectors quickly learned that turning their operations to sapphire mining was proving more lucrative than gold. Stakes claimed along the 5-mile vein of the Yogo dike exchanged hands many times until 1899 when a trio of British businessmen purchased what had been coined the New Mine Sapphire Syndicate for \$100,000 (approximately \$2.9 million as of 2018).

The operation became unofficially known as “The English Mine,” and was flourishing for some thirty years until massive flooding in the 1920s damaged the mines so greatly that they never fully recovered. With British ownership of the mine, Yogo sapphires made their way to Europe and into some royal pieces of jewelry. Many examples can be found among the British Crown Jewels. The Smithsonian Institution also holds many fine examples of jewelry featuring Yogo sapphires, one such famous piece being the Conchita Sapphire Butterfly.

As we move into 2020, the Rock Creek region of Montana continues to show the richest deposits of natural sapphires. Two areas of the region, known as Eureka Gulch and Sapphire Gulch, are being mined with practices that show an incredible amount of respect and responsibility to protecting the land and environment. Sapphire rough from here usually measures in from 2mm to 1 inch in size with a variety of unique and rare colors.



Nebraska



State Gemstone: Blue Chalcedony (Blue Agate)



Nebraska designated blue chalcedony (commonly called blue agate) as the official state gemstone in 1967. Blue chalcedony is a pale stone which sometimes has a dark internal form with bands of blue and white and often has a colorless streak. Blue agate is often used to make jewelry.



Blue agate is found in northwestern Nebraska, where it formed in wind-blown silt and claystone deposited in the Chadron Formation of the Oligocene Age

State Rock: Prairie Agate

The Prairie Agate became the state rock by legislative action on March 1, 1967 (Nebraska's Centennial). Agate is a semiprecious stone, and Nebraska has an abundance of it, especially in the Oglala National Grassland. Agate is a variegated quartz noted for its layered varieties. In most specimens, the bands are coarse and differ in color and translucency, as well as in compactness and porosity. The prairie agate, distinguished from most other agates because it seldom has these bands, is still colorful, has a rounded irregular shape and is popular for jewelry.



References:

statesymbolsusa.org referencedesk.com
 geology.com gemsociety.org Barlowsgems.net
 thenaturalsapphirecompany.com google.com gisgeography.com

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Renewals are due by April 30th.

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membership dues online.

Click on the
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fill out the
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your payment.

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Central Oregon Rock Collectors (CORC)
**4817 SW Volcano Ave
Redmond, OR 97756**

Annual membership dues are
\$20 for individuals,
\$25 for household
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If you would like to make a suggestion,
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To post an announcement or ad in the
CORC newsletter please email
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You must be a current member to do so.



**Thank you again to all who pitched in
to help with the Holiday Party.**

**We look forward to seeing
everyone next year!**