CLUB NEWS
FEBRUARY 2026

February Club Meeting - Saturday, February 14 at 10 AM
Lake George Charter School

Let's Get Back to Planning for 2026! Due to winter weather, our January planning meeting had to be canceled — but we're picking right back up in February and look forward to reconnecting with everyone soon.

Our next meeting will continue the important work of planning for 2026, including a first look at potential field trips for the coming year. We'll also revisit the discussion and gauge member interest in pursuing an opportunity to hold our annual club mineral show at a new location and date, including the possibility of hosting the show in Cripple Creek this year. Your ideas and input will help guide these decisions and shape the year ahead.

Winter weather reminder: During the winter months, please be sure to check the club's Facebook page before heading out to a meeting. If road conditions are unsafe due to snow or weather, any meeting cancellations will be posted on that page. We never want members to feel pressured to drive in inclement weather to attend a club meeting.

We look forward to seeing you in February and continuing the conversation as we plan another great year of collecting, learning, and sharing together.

2026 Lake George Gem & Mineral Club Membership registration is now open. You may join or renew your membership through the end of March 2026.

Get social with your rockhounding! Join our FB group.

MONTHLY MINERAL QUIZ

Monthly Mineral for February, 2026 (Carnein photos and collection)

The monthly mineral for February is one that most of you know. It's a rock-forming mineral that occurs mainly in granite and granitic pegmatite. The color varies a lot, depending mainly on the presence of impurities. Notice the "stripy" color variations, caused by the intergrowth of 2 component minerals that separated during crystallization. This mineral is always microscopically twinned, but other kinds of twinning are often obvious, as shown by the 3rd and 4th photos from the left (which are from Ethiopia and near Lake George, respectively). Hardness is 6 to 6 1/2, SG is about 2.55, and crystals, which are common, are triclinic but often look monoclinic. It has 2 cleavages at nearly 90 degrees to each other. There are uncountable occurrences in Colorado. Can you identify this very common mineral?

Last Month's mineral: Scheelite, CaWO4

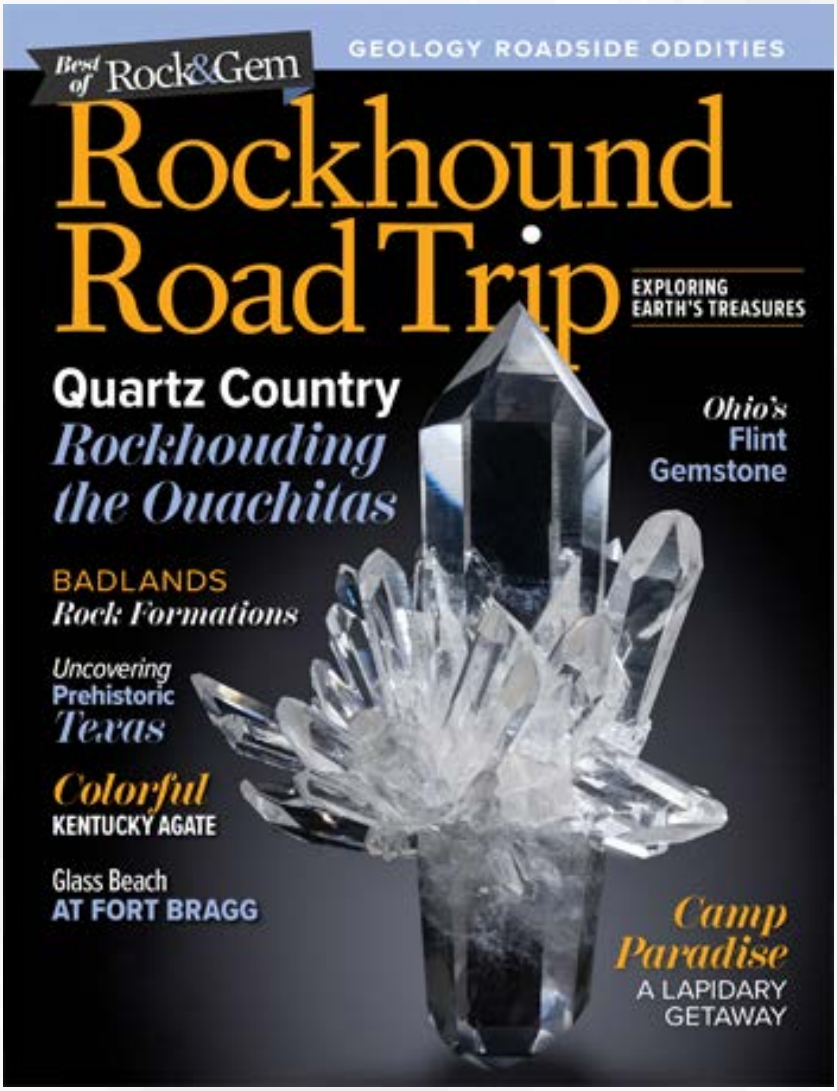
One of two important ores of tungsten (the other being wolframite), scheelite occurs in a variety of geologic environments. Look for it where high-grade contact metamorphism has recrystallized carbonate rocks, such as limestone, to form marble near igneous contacts. The piece to the left, shown in SWUV, came from the Gold City claims, west of Lake George. That locality is one of a number of such occurrences nearby in the Idaho Springs Formation, the oldest rocks in Colorado. Identification of massive scheelite is very difficult without the aid of SWUV (it doesn't fluoresce in LW).

It looks a lot like quartz but is softer (H is 4 ½ to 5), has a moderately good cleavage in one direction, and sometimes occurs in simple, tetragonal crystals. It also has a high SG, compared with quartz. There are several really good localities in Colorado, including the Camp Bird mine, in Ouray Co. Scheelite from the Gold City claims fluoresces in a slightly yellow color, indicating the presence of molybdenum. Scheelite and CaWO4, powellite, have gradational compositions, and the latter was named for John Wesley Powell, famed explorer of the Grand Canyon and 2nd Director of the US Geological Survey.

SHOWTIME!

Denver Gem & Mineral Guild

The Denver Gem & Mineral Guild Show will take place February 27–March 1, 2026, at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds, located at 15200 West 6th Avenue in Golden. Show hours are Friday and Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission and parking are both free, making it a great opportunity to explore minerals, gems, and jewelry close to home.

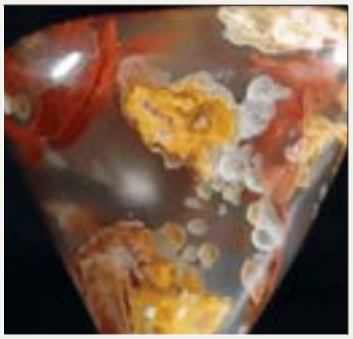


Check out Rock & Gem!

ON SALE!

Your source for Rock and Mineral Shows, Clubs, Rock Shops, & Mineral Museums.

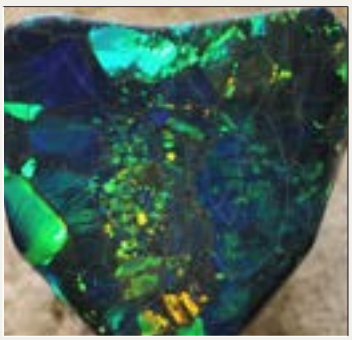
DIG DEEPER: NEWS, NOTES & NUGGETS



LINNITE

Get ready to discover an agate like no other—Linnite! Check out a video from AZ Rockhound Expeditions in Central Idaho where they uncover this rare and one-of-a-kind agate.

How much do you know about Opals? Throughout history, opals have been steeped in myths and legends, often associated with good fortune and considered a symbol of hope. Learn more about the stories behind these gemstones!



OPAL

PREHNITE

Discover more about Prehnite! With its soft green glow and gentle, organic forms, it feels less like a crystal and more like a fragment of a living landscape.

COLLECTING 101

Rock Collecting: How to Get Started

Get started with these rock-collecting tips for beginners: learn how to begin your mineral collection, identify specimens, and organize your growing collection.

Attention Beginners!

How to Store a Rock Collection Properly

Got rocks that need a place to be? What's your collection worth? How can you ensure against theft or damage? Here's your guide to collection storage.

STORING TIPS

READ ALL ABOUT IT!

Whispers from Deep Time: My Quest for Dinosaur Eggs
By Steven Wade Veatch

Forget the colossal dinosaur skeletons, the giants of paleontology. For me, the real, heart-stopping treasures are fossilized dinosaur eggs. They're not just relics; they're delicate, astonishingly scarce snapshots of these prehistoric reptiles. Composed of fragile crystals, an eggshell is a miracle that survived eons of geological forces. This inherent fragility makes any find a momentous occasion, especially those shells from the Jurassic Period.

My journey in search of fossils led to the Morrison Formation, which crops out over a vast area in Colorado. Though famed for its giant sauropods, it unexpectedly coughed up a critical piece of the paleontological puzzle: at least six different spots containing both Jurassic eggshells and whole eggs, a true rarity for a time period between 155 to 148 million years ago. As one of the world's premier Late Jurassic fossil sites, the Garden Park Fossil Area yielded the first discovered remains of iconic dinosaurs like Stegosaurus, Diplodocus, and Allosaurus. It famously served as a primary battleground for the 'Bone Wars,' the legendary 19th-century rivalry between paleontologists Othniel Charles Marsh and Edward Drinker Cope.

Figure 1. General location of Egg Gulch in Garden Park, north of Cañon City, Colorado.

Whispers from Deep Time: My Quest for Dinosaur Eggs
By Steven Wade Veatch

The local action centered in the Garden Park Fossil area of Fremont County, Colorado. The whole thing kicked off in 1991, when Kenneth Carpenter of the Denver Museum of Natural History found a well-preserved eggshell fragment while collecting fossil snails (Hirsh 1994). That initial find paved the way for more fragments and eventually led paleontologists to the site that became the focus of scientific inquiry: Egg Gulch (Figure 1.).

At Egg Gulch, weathering and relentless erosion had stripped away layers of rock, revealing ancient eggshell fragments scattered across a rugged, 10-meter slope (Figure 5.). The presence of tiny fossilized freshwater plants called charophytes established the site's age as early Kimmeridgian (157.3 to 152.1 million years ago), making it the oldest dinosaur eggshell site in North America (Alf, 1998).

The initial surface collection in the early 90s produced hundreds of shell pieces. But the biggest prize was the discovery of an embryonic dinosaur bone at Egg Gulch—proof that life and death had played out right here (Alf, 1998). An entire nest of eggs was collected there (Figure 8).
In 1989, after the dinosaur nest with eggs was found, I was part of a field party from Cañon City's Dinosaur Depot (Figure 5.). We wanted to see if we could find something new. It was time to get serious. I felt the true weight of that when I visited Egg Gulch.

We couldn't just aimlessly wander; we implemented a systematic approach to finding eggshells by spreading out and working our way up the slope, much like a TV search party looking for evidence at a crime scene. The fragments were larger and more concentrated closer to their source. Each shell fragment was bottled and meticulously labeled. I noticed the fragments were mostly concentrated on the flat areas and small ravines, washed out during intermittent rainstorms.

I remember finding my first piece of eggshell. I froze, the heat of the summer day instantly forgotten, my breath catching in my throat as I peered into the deep, spiky shadow cast by a cactus. My heart hammered a prehistoric rhythm against my ribs. There, nestled right against the face of a sandstone outcrop, was not just another bleached pebble, but something impossibly rare and ancient: a tiny, curved shard of a shell. Its color resembled that of a black crow's wing mixed with desert dust, while its faintly bumpy texture hinted at something hidden beneath. With trembling fingers, I carefully plucked the Jurassic dinosaur eggshell fragment from its hiding place, feeling a silent, electric surge connecting me to a world ruled by thunderous giants, a treasure that had patiently waited, buried under the silent sun, for 150 million years.

Back in the lab, the shells underwent rigorous microscopic analysis. Radial thin sections, viewed under polarized light, showed the internal architecture, and highlighted that most fragments were heavily eroded. Lab technicians also used a technique called cathodoluminescence (CL), which causes the material to emit light when exposed to an electron beam (Alf, 1998; Boggs, & Krinsley, 2006; Götze, 2012; Götze, Plötze, & Habermann, 2001; Marshall, 1988; Pagel, Barbin, Blanc, & Ohnenstatter, 2000). This showed that the original shell material in some fragments had been replaced by silica.

Whispers from Deep Time: My Quest for Dinosaur Eggs
By Steven Wade Veatch

Because it is not known which species laid the eggs, paleontologists use an artificial classification system called parataxonomy. The most common eggshell type was assigned to the family Prismatoolithidae, and named *Prismatoolithus coloradensis* (Hirsch,1994). I also found a second, rarer, very thin dinosaur eggshell that was too altered to classify.

Remarkably, the Egg Gulch shell structure is similar to the *Orodromeus* eggshell from Cretaceous sites. *Orodromeus* was an ornithopod (bird-hipped) dinosaur. In the Garden Park area, the only known ornithopods are *Dryosaurus* and *Othnelia*. All the evidence points to one of these two as the likely parent of the *P. coloradensis* eggs.

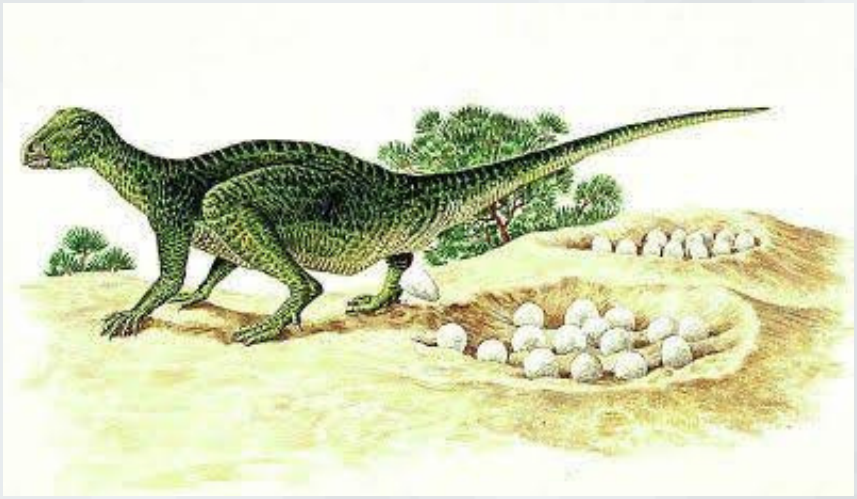


Figure 2. Orodromeus was a small, bipedal herbivore that inhabited North America during the Late Cretaceous. It gained scientific prominence following the discovery of fossilized eggs and embryos, which initially led researchers to conclude that the species nested and cared for its.
Image source: https://www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/dino-directory/orodromeus.html

Figure 3. A prevalent herbivore of the Late Jurassic, Dryosaurus was a lightly built dinosaur characterized by its agile frame. It relied on powerful hind limbs and a stiff, counterbalancing tail to evade predators across the prehistoric floodplains of North America and Africa. Artwork by Raul A. Ramos.
Source: https://newdinosaurs.com/1664_dryosaurus_raul_a_ramos/

Whispers from Deep Time: My Quest for Dinosaur Eggs
By Steven Wade Veatch

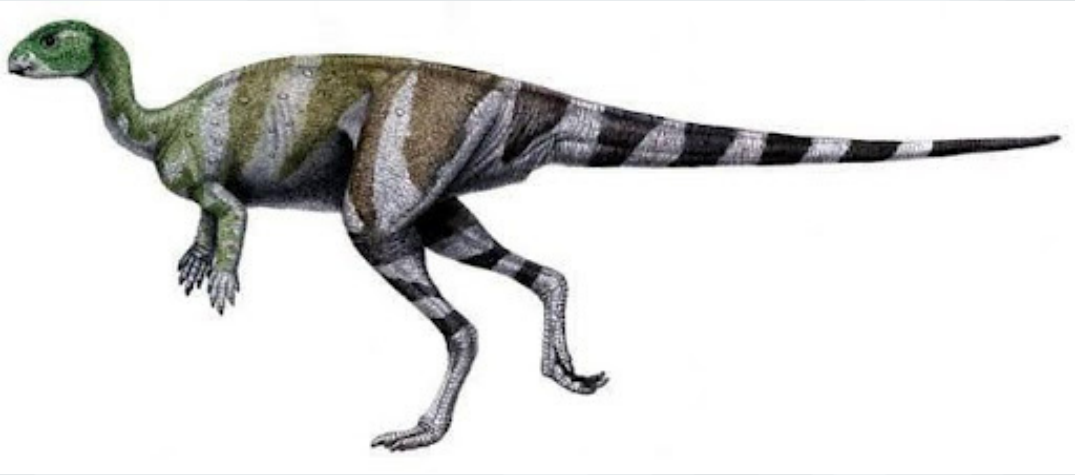


Figure 4. Named in honor of the legendary paleontologist Othniel Charles Marsh, Othnielia was a small, sleek herbivore that darted across Late Jurassic North America. Its slender frame and specialized limbs made it a master of speed, allowing it to evade the larger predators of its era.
Source: https://alchetron.com/Othnielia

Figure 5. Under a brilliant spring sky, the crack team of volunteers from the Dinosaur Depot and the author are in the field, exploring Egg Gulch and painstakingly unearthing rare Jurassic dinosaur eggshells. This 1998 trip followed several years after the discovery of the nest. The Bureau of Land Management protects this area. You can't dig here or take anything without a permit. We had such a permit as the collection of these fragments was for scientific purposes. Photo date 1998 by S. W. Veatch.

Whispers from Deep Time: My Quest for Dinosaur Eggs
By Steven Wade Veatch

Collecting these rare Jurassic dinosaur eggshells marked a highlight of my summer's fieldwork. The dinosaur eggshells unlocked a story of multiple nesting seasons and preservation, all providing invaluable data on a globally scarce fossil resource. The resulting story provides a tangible connection to life 150 million years ago, a whisper from the past made loud by patient, detailed science.

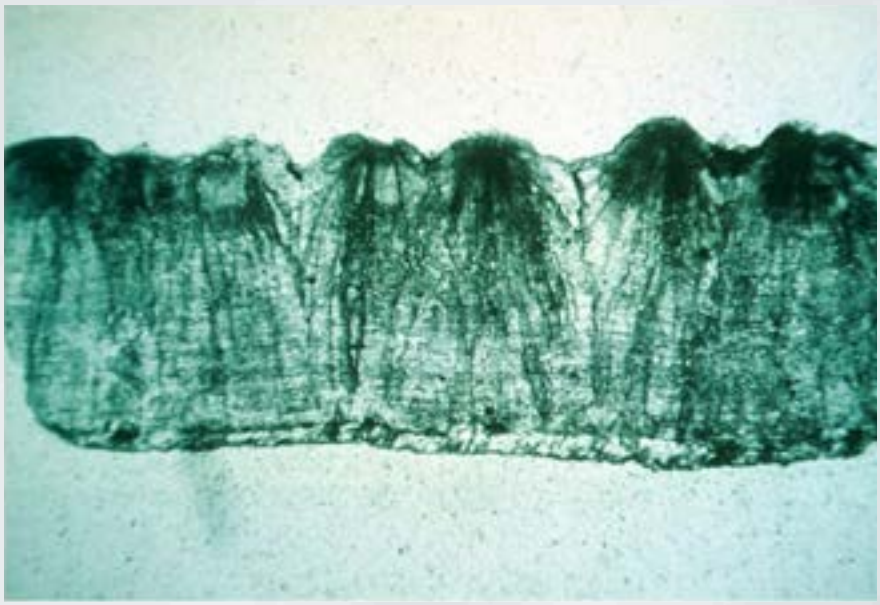


Figure 6. Microscopic cross-section of a Jurassic dinosaur eggshell recovered at the Egg Gulch locality. According to Alf (1998) laboratory analysis revealed extensive recrystallization and diagenetic alteration in several shell samples. Siliceous replacement likely occurred as a result of the decomposition of the shells' organic matter.
Photo courtesy of the Dinosaur Depot.

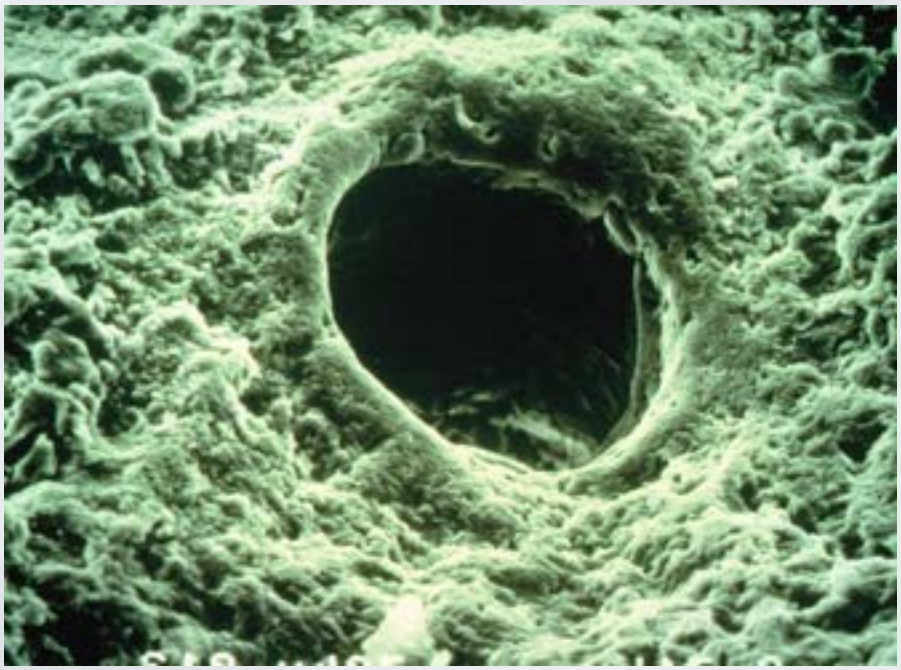


Figure 7. The use of scanning electron microscopy (SEM) depicted eggshell pores that allowed gas exchange between the dinosaur embryo and the outside world.
Photo courtesy of the Dinosaur Depot.

Figure 8. Dinosaur egg clutch from Garden Park, Colorado. Now on exhibit at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science.
Photo date 1997 by S. W. Veatch.

Figure 9. Sawyer Blizzard, an Earth science student at Fort Hays College, spends a recent (2023) spring day looking at eggshell fragments exposed at the surface. None of these eggshell fragments were removed from the site as it is unlawful to do so without a permit.
Photo date 2023 by S. W. Veatch.

Whispers from Deep Time: My Quest for Dinosaur Eggs
By Steven Wade Veatch

Figure 10. Discovering Jurassic age dinosaur eggshell fragments right on the surface of the Morrison Formation is incredibly exciting because these delicate, ancient remnants offer a rare, tangible link to the reproductive lives of the prehistoric reptiles that once roamed this landscape. It's a thrill to realize that just by walking across these rocks, you're picking up direct evidence of where a dinosaur mother may have nested over 150 million years ago. Photo date 2023 by S. W. Veatch.

Figure 11. Nodular patterns or ornamentation, as seen in this image, is primarily hypothesized to have served in functions like shell strengthening, and may have also been related to respiratory gas exchange through specialized pore arrangements.
Photo date 2023 by S. W. Veatch.

Whispers from Deep Time: My Quest for Dinosaur Eggs
By Steven Wade Veatch

Acknowledgments:

Some of the information presented in this report was gained from a number of field trips undertaken by the author to the Garden Park Fossil Area and from former Dinosaur Depot personnel Donna Engard, curator, and Phil Wilder, program coordinator. The author is grateful to Bob Carnein for his thoughtful suggestions and insightful review of an earlier version of this manuscript, which led to significant improvements. Special thanks are also due to Sawyer Blizard for creating the accompanying map and for sharing valuable time on-site examining and discussing Jurassic age dinosaur eggshells.

References and further reading:

Alf, K, 1998. Preliminary study of an eggshell site in the Morrison Formation of Colorado: Modern Geology, Vol. 23, Part 2., pp 241-248.

Boggs, S., Jr., & Krinsley, D. H. 2006. Application of cathodoluminescence imaging to the study of sedimentary rocks. Cambridge University Press.

Carpenter, K., pers. comm.: Department of Earth Sciences, Denver Museum of Natural History, March 17, 1999, (telephone interview).

Götze, J., Plötze, M., & Habermann, D., 2001. Origin, spectral characteristics and practical applications of the cathodoluminescence (CL) of quartz — a review. Mineralogy and Petrology, 71(3-4), 225–250.

Götze, J. 2012. Application of cathodoluminescence microscopy and spectroscopy in geosciences. Microscopy and Microanalysis, 18(6), 1270–1284.

Hirsch, K.F., 1994. Eggshells from the Western Interior of North America. In Carpenter, K., K.F. Hirsch, and J.R. Horner, eds, 1994, Dinosaur Eggs and Babies: New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 137 – 150.

Marshall, D. J., 1988. Cathodoluminescence of geological materials. Unwin Hyman.

Pagel, M., Barbin, V., Blanc, P., & Ohnenstatter, D. (Eds.). 2000. Cathodoluminescence in geosciences. Springer-Verlag.

BENCH TIPS BY BRAD

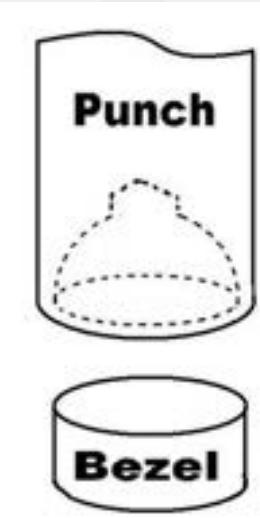
BENCH **SHEARS**

When cutting sheet metal, it's quicker and easier to use a set of shop shears as compared with using a hand saw. The cut is not as precise, but many times you don't need that. Shears will easily cut up to 24 gauge sheet, and some will cut 22 or even 20 gauge.

Current prices for shears run from $13 - $36 in jewelry catalogs, and the Joyce Chen scissors recommended on some jewelry blogs run more than $20. But I found cheaper alternatives at the 99 Cent Store for use in my classes. They're great for cutting bezels, trimming around a bezel cup and cutting a piece off a larger sheet.

BEZEL **CLOSER**

A bezel closer is a steel punch that makes quick work out of pushing the metal down over a round stone and burnishing it. It works with regular bezels, with tube settings, and with prong settings. Stones can be set in as little as 30 seconds.



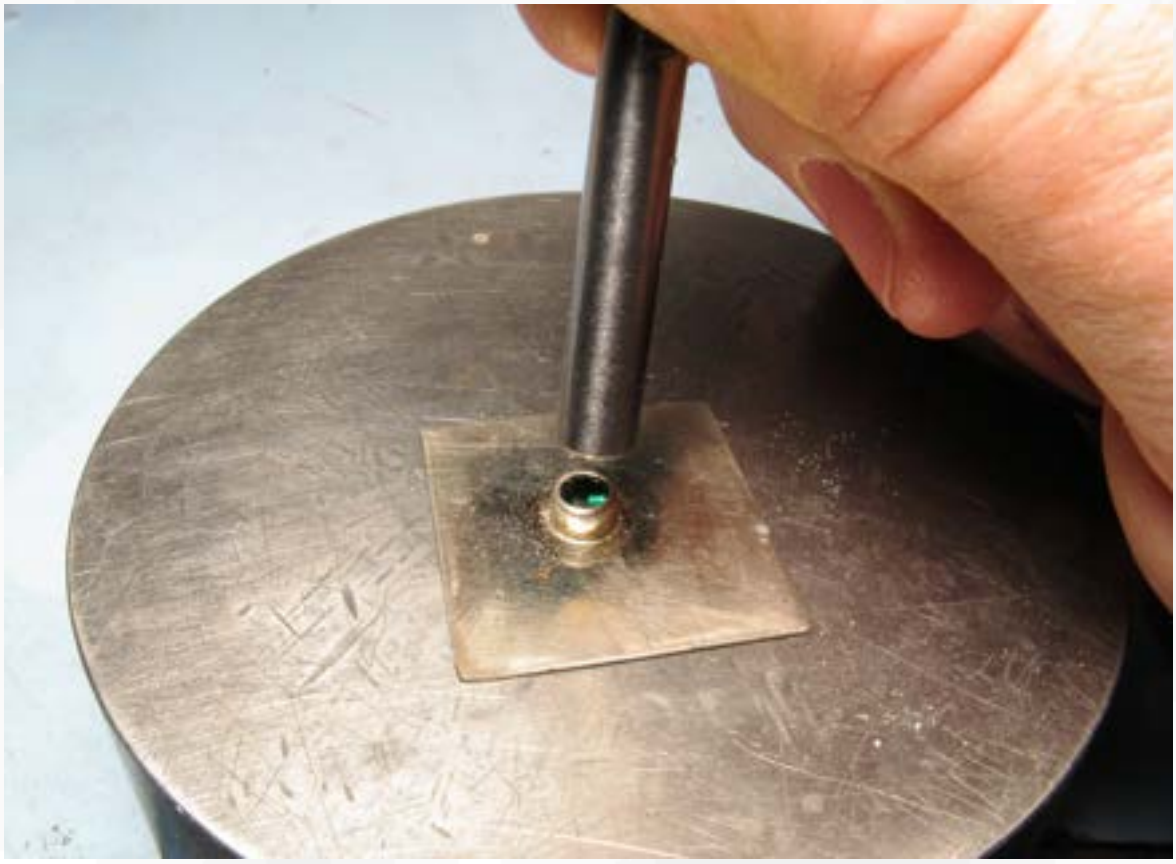
The working end is a concave cavity that fits over the bezel or prong setting and is pushed and twisted to capture the stone. Sets can be purchased but are expensive and contain many sizes you will probably never use. If all you need is one or two sizes, here's how you can make them yourself.

Find a round steel rod or bolt a little larger in diameter than your bezel cup or prong setting. Cut a 5 inch length. File both ends flat. Locate the center of one end, centerpunch a divot, and drill a small pilot hole about 5 mm deep. Remember to use a little oil as lubricant when cutting steel.

Select a ball bur a bit larger than the bezel. Enlarge the pilot hole to a full hemispherical cavity. Test for proper fit with your bezel. Bezel should first contact the cavity about a third of the way in. When the size is correct, polish the cavity using Zam on a length of chopstick in your flexshaft. If the tool is not polished, it will leave scratches on your bezel or prongs.

BENCH TIPS BY BRAD

BEZEL **CLOSER**



When using the tool, the first step is to capture the stone correctly. I usually work by hand and push the punch straight down over the bezel or prongs. This causes the metal to start bending over the stone. The next step is to inspect the stone with a lens to be sure it is staying level. Repeat until the stone is seated on its bearing and can't move anymore.

Finally, force the metal down onto the stone uniformly all the way around. While this can be done by hand, I often gently tap the punch with a hammer. Finish by twisting the bezel back and forth to burnish the top of the bezel.

See More of my Smart Solutions for Jewelry Making

LAKE GEORGE GEM & MINERAL CLUB

About Us

The Lake George Gem and Mineral Club is a group of people interested in rocks and minerals, fossils, geology and history of the Pikes Peak/South Park area, Indian artifacts, and the great outdoors. The Club's informational programs and field trips provide opportunities to learn about Earth Science, rocks and minerals, fossils, lapidary work, jewelry making, and to share information and experiences with other members. Guests are welcome to attend, to see what we are about! The Club is geared primarily to amateur collectors and artisans, with programs of interest both to beginners and serious amateurs. The Club normally meets on the second Saturday of each month at the Lake George Charter School gym, located on the south side of US Highway 24 approaching the town of Lake George from Florissant. A link to a map of the meeting location is provided on the sidebar under "Contact Us". Between Oct – Mar, our meetings start at 10 AM. From Apr-Sep, our meetings start earlier, 9 AM, to allow for more time for any subsequent field trips.

Club Officers

President Dave Bruess david@bruess.me
Vice President Bart Zobel bezobel@gmail.com
Secretary Steve Kahler pipprophet@gmail.com
Treasurer Karen Vogl bigmabe@hotmail.com
Newsletter Editor Angela Wilson AngelaWilso@gmail.com
Field Trip Coordinator Corey Miller corythevaulter@gmail.com
Show Coordinator Carol Kinate kinatec@aol.com

Yellowstone's Morning Glory Pool has changed from deep blue to vibrant greens, yellows, and oranges due to human debris clogging its vent and cooling the water. As temperatures shifted, heat-loving bacteria and algae moved in, creating the pool's striking, multicolored appearance.