

# Mineral of the Month Club



**March 2016**

## **Featured Mineral Blue Barite**

Our March Mineral of the Month is blue barite from the classic locality at Stoneham in Weld County, Colorado. These specimens consist of bladed, tabular, transparent-to-translucent crystals that formed in seams within layers of shale. The barite crystals originated 25 million years ago when intense volcanic activity produced dense clouds of calcium- and barium-rich ash that settled in layers to form shale. Groundwater then percolated downward through the shale, dissolving calcium and barium mineralization and redepositing it as calcite and barite crystals within the shale seams. These barite crystals are frequently associated with crusty growths of white-and-yellow calcite. The barite's blue color is due to natural geophysical radiation emitted by traces of radium that deformed the barite crystal lattice in a manner that altered its color-absorption characteristics. The Stoneham barite locality is a low escarpment called the Chalk Cliffs where crystals were first reported in the 1870s. Although this barite was long popular with collectors, specimens did not become readily available until commercial collectors began working the site with mechanical equipment in the 1990s.

We have graded our Platinum Level barite specimens by overall size, degree of translucency, and extent of crystal development. The elements of transparency or translucency, specimen size, and degree of crystal development will vary by grouping. Your choice is a matter of personal preference.

To select your Platinum Level specimen, please call or email Christine, our Mineral of the Month Club manager, Monday through Friday to discuss the specimen that best suits your preferences.

As always, thanks to all our members for making the Mineral of the Month Club what it is today!

Dimitri, Mary, Christine, and Lora

# Featured Mineral

## Blue Barite

**A glimpse of how this barite was mined:**



After an hour of breaking rock hard clay a small seam of barite appears.



A 5 foot hole that was dug along a fault. (A fault is a crack in the Earth's crust that forms a sort of valley.)



Ta da! Barite crystals!

# Featured Mineral

## Blue Barite

### Group 1



**Specimen size:** .5" x .5" to .75" x .75"

**Price range:** \$15.00- \$25.00

The smaller pieces in group one are sweet gemmy pieces.



# Featured Mineral

## Blue Barite

### Group 2



**Specimen size:** .5" x .75 to .75" x 2.5" **Price range:** \$35.00- \$55.00

Group 2 is still gemmy, yet have a bit of a deeper blue color to them which is characteristic of how blue barite forms.

# Featured Mineral

## Blue Barite

### Group 3



**Specimen size:** .75" x 1.25" to 1.00" x 3.25"

**Price range:** \$65.00- \$125.00

The larger pieces of blue barite are not as “gemmy” but will have a bit of a deeper blue color to them which is characteristic of how blue barite forms.



We have on barite cluster available, if you are interested, please contact Christine

# Further Information

**Coming in April**



Malachite- DR of the Congo

**We love to hear from our members, so please call or email anytime!**

**Discounts available:** If you order 4 or more minerals from the Featured Mineral letter and/or the Offering sheet you will receive a 10% discount on your mineral purchase.

**Ordering:** To place an order you can call #800-941-5594 or email [christlne@celestialearthminerals.com](mailto:christlne@celestialearthminerals.com)

**Shipping:** As always, shipping is free in the United States.

**Specimen size:** All our specimens are approximate in size.

**Method of payment:** We accept, Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover, PayPal and checks.

***Please make checks payable to Celestial Earth Stones.***

