

# Mineral of the Month Club Newsletter

August 2016



**Featured Mineral:** Our Mineral of the Month for August is aquamarine, a composite of aquamarine, the blue variety of beryl, and schorl from Erongo Mountain in the African nation of Namibia. Our specimens are unusual composites with jet-black, needle-like crystals of the tourmaline-group mineral schorl included within hexagonal prisms of translucent aquamarine. Beryl is beryllium aluminum silicate; schorl is basic sodium iron aluminum borosilicate. These specimens formed when aquamarine and schorl crystallized simultaneously, and the smaller schorl crystals were enveloped by the larger and faster-growing aquamarine crystals. Namibia's Erongo Mountain has an interesting history that began with the development of tin and tungsten mines in the 1930s. But Erongo Mountain only became a source of mineral specimens in 1999, when local diggers discovered pegmatite pockets filled with fine aquamarine crystals. Today, Erongo Mountain is recognized as one of the world's classic localities for aquamarine.

*A reminder that each month the featured mineral is available to purchase in larger sizes and can be found in the "Featured Mineral Platinum Letter" which has photos, sizing and pricing information. The Featured Mineral Platinum Letter can be found in the monthly email that goes out to all members. If you do not have a computer we can mail it to you, just let Christine know.*

**Rock Hound Tid Bits:** The special section of our write-up, titled "Pegmatites: Origin, Structure, and Composition," discusses pegmatites in detail. At Erongo Mountain, gemstones and mineral specimens occur in granite pegmatites. Most mineral collectors are familiar with the term "pegmatite," and for good reason. Pegmatites have yielded many of the world's finest gemstones and mineral specimens, along with various industrial minerals and rare metals. In its simplest definition, a pegmatite is a body of very coarse-grained, igneous rock that formed directly from the cooling and solidification of magma. The magma that forms pegmatites is

called “residual magma,” because it is the last of a magmatic body to solidify. Residual magma tends to be enriched with rare elements—the reason that pegmatites often contain unusual minerals.

**Behind the Scenes:** Our Mineral of the Month Club manager Christine is planning to attend the 2016 East Coast Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show in West Springfield, Massachusetts, August 12-14. More than 200 retail vendors of gems, minerals, fossils, jewelry, and related items make this the largest gem-and-mineral show in the eastern United States. Christine acquires many of our featured monthly minerals and special offers at this show. The East Coast Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show is held in the Better Living Center at the Eastern States Exposition in West Springfield.

Please visit the Pinterest, Instagram, and Facebook accounts. Lora has set up folders in Pinterest that show previous and upcoming featured mineral folders and on Instagram and Facebook posts upcoming featured minerals. **Pinterest:** celestialearth, **Instagram:** celestialearth **Facebook:** Mineral Crew and Celestial Earth Minerals

**Memberships:** A warm thank you to all our members who renewed for yet another year!

**Coming in September:** We will feature mottramite, an uncommon basic lead copper vanadate from Mexico’s Ojuela Mine. Our specimens consist of greenish-brown, botryoidal structures on an orange-brown, limonite matrix. This will be the first time that we have featured mottramite. For October, our Mineral of the Month will be nodular agate from Rio do Sul, Brazil.

**We Are Here For You:** We are here for you and all your collecting needs. If you have any questions please contact Christine or Lora at the office, by telephone at #1-800-941-5594 or via e-mail at [christine@celestialearthminerals.com](mailto:christine@celestialearthminerals.com) or [Lora@celestialearthminerals.com](mailto:Lora@celestialearthminerals.com)

Please continue to utilize our extensive, on-line, informational resources that we have compiled as a reference to answer mineral-related questions. The Celestial Earth Minerals website ([www.celestialearthminerals.com](http://www.celestialearthminerals.com)), home of the Mineral of the Month Club, also provides ordering information, membership-renewal services, and listings of monthly offers. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact Club manager Christine during regular business hours by telephone at 1-800-941-5594 or via e-mail at [christine@celestialearthminerals.com](mailto:christine@celestialearthminerals.com).

Thanks again to all our members and we’ll visit with you again in September.