

# Mineral of the Month Club Newsletter

September 2016



**Featured Mineral:** For September, our Mineral of the Month is mottramite, a mineral that we have not featured before. Mottramite is an uncommon basic lead copper vanadate. Our specimens consist of greenish-brown, botryoidal structures on an orange-brown, limonite matrix. It usually occurs as drusy growths of tiny, intergrown, equant, dipyramidal crystals that form encrustations, plume-like and arborescent aggregates, and botryoidal masses with radiating, internal structures.

Our specimens are from the Ojuela Mine in Mapimí, Durango, Mexico. One of the Western Hemisphere's most historic and productive mines, Ojuela, which is located in north-central Mexico 40 miles northwest of Torreón, has produced ore or mineral specimens continuously for more than four centuries and ranks among the world's top-ten specimen-producing localities. Ojuela has yielded more than 126 different mineral species and is the type locality for 6 species. Although Ojuela is not mined for commercial ore today, professional collectors and specimen miners lease sections of the mine to recover specimens to sell on the international market.

*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:** Although chemical formulas are specific, minerals rarely have precise chemical compositions. Chemical formulas represent an ideal composition that does not necessarily exist in nature. The composition of most minerals is variable, and this graded compositional change is known as a "solid solution." *Be sure to read the special section of this month's write-up titled "Solid-Solution Series: A Melding of Minerals," for a detailed discussion of this topic on pages 7, 8, and 9.*

Our Mineral of the Month Club manager Christine attended the 2016 East Coast Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show in West Springfield, Massachusetts, on August 12-14. With more than 200 retail vendors of gems, minerals, fossils, jewelry, and related items, the "East Coast Show," as it is known, is the largest gem-and-mineral show in the eastern United States. Christine managed to speak with dozens of dealers while still finding time to attend several lectures and view the many exhibits.

“I was particularly impressed with the special exhibit, which was Dr. Peter Megaw’s world-class collection of Mexican minerals,” Christine reports. “Dr. Megaw, who is a geologist, acquired these specimens during his 35 years of field-exploration work in Mexico. The specimens that he exhibited were superb from both aesthetic and mineralogical perspectives.”

**Behind the Scenes:** Our Mineral of the Month Club manager Christine attended 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 monthly offerings 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. Dr. Peter Megaw’s world-class collection of Mexican minerals was on exhibit this year. Dr. Megaw, who is a geologist, acquired these specimens during his 35 years of field-exploration work in Mexico. The specimens that he exhibited were superb from both aesthetic and mineralogical perspectives

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 up:** We are excited about our Minerals of the Month that will close out the year. In October, we will feature a beautiful form of microcrystalline quartz—cut-and-polished agate nodules from Soledade in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. Soledade, the world’s leading source of agate, is known by a fitting nickname—*Cidade do Pedras Preciosas* or “City of Precious Stones.” Our write-up will present an in-depth discussion of agate, the world’s most popular gemstone.

Our November Mineral of the Month will be pyrite or iron disulfide from Huanzala, Peru. These pyrite specimens are not in the familiar cubic habit, but occur instead as clusters of striated pyritohedrons.

In December, the featured mineral will be diopside, a hydrous copper silicate, from the Kaokoveld Plateau in Namibia. These specimens consist of clusters of very well-developed, green, semitransparent, trigonal crystals.

**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).

[www.celestialearthminerals.com](http://www.celestialearthminerals.com) Phone #800-941-5594