

THE BADGER DIGGIN'S

The Badger Lapidary and Geological Society, Inc.

Monroe, Wisconsin

Devoted to the Earth Sciences

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President's Message

Dear Badgers,

All winter you've dreamed about it and now it is finally peak rockhound season, so be sure you take advantage of one of the great fieldtrips available through the club this summer.

Our recent fieldtrip to Door County to collect Silurian fossils with our hosts Mike and Ruth Reisch of the Earthaven Museum was a blast. Thank you Mike and Ruth for utterly spoiling us by sharing your time, home, museum, meals and knowledge of the fascinating fossils of the area.

The weekend in Door County began while unloading vehicles Friday night with a well omen; the group saw the gleaming shine of the International Space Station fly over reminding us how far life has come on this little planet of ours. I for one will miss the space shuttles soon to go extinct like the dinosaurs.

As if from a movie we were treated to a night at the museum, foregoing tents to set up air mattresses and sleeping bags right in the Earthaven Museum. If you haven't been to Earthaven yet you wouldn't believe the high class of minerals that are beautifully displayed

there. The museum, home and gardens built by the Reisches own hands, speaks of the talented and sharing nature of these renaissance educators.

The weather was beautiful Saturday and collecting was only limited by the time available. Stromatalites, stramataloids, honey comb, horn, and chain corals abound in the rock piles bordering the fields of the Sturgeon Bay area. Digging in true badger style, Teri Marche' excavated a mighty pit in one area and was rewarded with a fascinating section of fossil cephalopod known to be found in the area, but a form completely new to me, having the appearance of a short stack of little doughnuts.

On Sunday, Mike took us to a quarry nearby that contains an incredible record of this changing planet. Once a upon a time this area was a reef jutting out of an alien salty sea as evidenced by the field of large and well shaped fossilized stromatolite heads peaking out of limestone that has been planed and polished, scratched and gouged by glaciers millions of years after continental drift and upheaval caused these seas to recede. Stromatalite fossil heads were profoundly early single cell algae colonies

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predating all animal and plant life, and believed to have created Earth's early oxygen atmosphere. Once prolific around the globe, Stromatolites are only found living today in one brine rich bay of Australia. Cut and polished, stromatolites show the onion skin layering of their growth with color variations that speak to the varied material absorbed by the growing sticky, oxygen creating, critter colonies. Red Mary Ellen Jasper is a beautiful example of stromatolite growth in an iron rich environment.

Look for emails and details of our upcoming trips to Rockford Iowa Fossil Park, Stockton, IL for Galena, Bellview for Lake Superior Agates and Quarries of Beloit. I'm sure there will be much to show and tell at the meeting in Monroe on September 10th.

Yours truly,

Badger Lapidary vice lieutenant of fruitcake secondary implementation and silly walks,

Dan Trocke



What's Rockin'

The What's Rockin' picnic table was filled to the brim with Geodes (of course). The great display of geodes grew as throughout the picnic. There were many beautiful sparklies cracked open there that were then added to the table. One of the ones that Dan Trocke cracked had some small tabular crystals of blue barite in it, which is fairly uncommon. Jack Hoxie brought a box of beautiful geodes that he had cracked before the picnic. Dan Trocke added a very cool 'Monkey Brain' geode that was egg shaped with 5 holes in it that allowed you to look inside and see the Monkey Brains. He also brought some Titanotheres toe bones and some crystal copper from Michigan. Dave Reese contributed some beautiful blue copper mineral crystals that the home grown result of using copper specimens in a vinegar cleaning solution that had been left to evaporate to concentrate the solution and cause crystallization. They were truly stunning!

Laurie Trocke



Club Calander

July 9 th :	Field Trip – Fossil Park, Rockford, IA Jordan Marche'
July 23 rd :	Field Trip – Stockton, IL Quarry, Brian Green
August 13 th :	Belleview Agate Pits
August 27 th :	Beloit Quarries, Ralph Burgener
Sept 10 th :	Meeting – Show & Tell
Sept 24 th :	Field Trip – Wendling Quarry?? Teri Marche'
October 8 th :	Meeting – Lapidary Day, Trocke's
October 22 nd :	Field Trip – Cave in Rock, IL
Nov 12 th :	Meeting – Flint knapping, Kevin Ponzio
Nov 26 th :	No trip – Thanksgiving
Dec 10 th :	Annual Party
Dec 24 th :	No trip – Christmas

Upcoming Club Events

July 9th: Rockford, IA Fossil Park

I've reprinted the wonderful article from Jordan Marche' regarding this field trip, hope you can join in the trip. It sounds like a fun one!

July 23rd: Stockton, IL

Meet on the east edge of Stockton on Hwy 20 at the Citgo at 9:00. Bring metal detectors, shovels and other dirt digging tools. Hard hats are recommended. Collect Galena, some fluorescent minerals & fossils.

August 13th: Bellview Gravel Pits

This is always a fun trip, easy collecting, beautiful agates, and great company! More details to follow.

August 27th: Beloit Quarries

We will meet at the Stop & Go in Broadhead on Hwy 11 at 9:00 to begin this trip. It is about a 10 minute drive to the quarry from there. This is a great quarry for fossils, they have found clams, horn corral, crinoids stems, snails and even a trilobite or two!! You will need hard rock collecting tools, hammers, chisels, sledges, etc. Also, hard hats & leather boots are required!

Upcoming Local Events

Upcoming Mineral Related Events

July 9-10—ROSEVILLE, MINNESOTA: Anoka County Gem & Mineral Club; Har Mar Mall, 2100 Snelling Ave.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 12-5; free admission; gems, minerals, jewelry, fossils, agates, collectibles; contact Martha Miss, rockbiz@cs.com

July 16-17—MOOSE LAKE, MINNESOTA: 42nd annual show, "Agate Days"; Carlton County Gem & Mineral Club, Moose Lake Area Chamber of Commerce; Moose Lake High School gym and parking lot, 413 Birch Ave.; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 9-4; free admission; dealers, Lake Superior agate, cutting materials, specimens, crystal groups, fossils, gems, jewelry, lapidary equipment, rough rock tailgaters, door prizes, field info, Agate Stampede Sat.; contact Al Hyopponen, (218) 525-7766; e-mail: willow73@cpinternet.com

July 15-16—MINOCQUA, WISCONSIN: Lakeland Gem Club; Lakeland Union High School, 9573 State Hwy. 70; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 9-5; free admission; meteorites, olivine/peridot, artisans, gem and mineral jewelry, gems, beads, minerals, fossils, native copper, jewelry, children's activities, speakers, demonstrations, silent auctions, door prizes; contact Pattie Hartmann, (715) 477-2519; e-mail: gypsy1120@coslink.net

July 23-24—FREDERIC, WISCONSIN: 44th annual show; Indianhead Rock & Mineral Society; Frederic High School; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; free admission; contact Roy Wickman, (715) 357-3223, or Dick Huset, (715) 648-5620

July 28-31—BANCROFT, ONTARIO, CANADA: Bancroft & District Chamber of Commerce; Bancroft Arena and Curling Club, 63 Newkirk Blvd.; Thu. 10-7, Fri. 10-7, Sat. 10-7, Sun. 10-5; adults \$8, youth (12 and under) \$6; contact Kim Forge, (613) 332-1513; e-mail: kimf@bancroftdistrict.com; Web site: www.bancroftdistrict.com

July 9 – 10: Madison - Art Fair on the Square. Sat 9AM - 6PM, Sun 10AM - 5PM. Admission free. For more information call (608) 257-0158

July 9: Kettle Moraine State Forest 75th Birthday Bash 3 pm - 6:30 pm Join in the excitement as we celebrate the Kettle Moraine State Forest turning 75 years old. Check out the Kettle Moraine history display. Make plans to stay for the family concert with Tom Pease at 7:00 pm! Location Mauthe Lake Recreation Area Picnic Shelter Free w/2011 Wis Park Sticker or Daily Vehicle Pass. Kettle Moraine State Forest Northern Unit - Mauthe Lake, 262-626-2116.

July 8 – 10: New Lisbon Wa Du Shuda Days Features live bands throughout the weekend, kids inflatables-magic shows-juggler & pony rides on Saturday, FANTASTIC fireworks on the waterfront Saturday at dusk, & duck races and parade on Sunday afternoon! Riverside Park, On Lemonweir River, New Lisbon, Call 608-562-3555.

July 13 Salem - Drum Corps International Show; : It's Music On The Border. DCI's Phantom Regiment and the CHS Music Dept. presents "Music on the Border" on Wednesday, July 13th at 7PM. Call for ticket info. Westosha Central High School, 24617 75th Street. Call (262) 939-8064.

July 16 - 17 Mount Horeb - 40th Annual Art Fair. Sat 9AM - 5PM, Sun 10AM - 4PM. Admission free. Annual art & fine craft fair on Mount Horeb's historic main street, our "Trollway!" Main Street, Downtown. For more information call 1-88TROLLWAY.

July 20 Green Bay - Rails & Ales Event. All aboard for Rails & Ales at the National Railroad Museum. 5:00PM - 10:00PM. We will bring the historic trains and contemporary craft beers together for one fun evening in a great venue! National Railroad Museum 2285 S. Broadway. (920) 437-7623

July 25th thru 31 - EAA Airventure 2011 - Oshkosh Features more than 10,000 airplanes and 750,000 people. 500 forums/seminars, 700 product exhibitors. Concessions. Air shows daily at 3PM. EAA AirVenture Museum, 3000 Poberezny Road.

This is only a very small sampling of all of the wonderful events and festivals going on in Wisconsin in the Month of July. From Fireworks to Festivals, there is no end of fun things to do! For more information, go to http://www.wistravel.com/wisconsinevents_july.htm



July 9, 2011 Field Trip — Rockford (IA) Fossil and Prairie Park Preserve

by Jordan Marché

On Saturday, July 9, I will lead a field trip to Rockford, Iowa's Fossil and Prairie Park Preserve — the nearest of three fossil parks in the U.S. where public collecting is permitted. The other two sites are located in Sylvania, Ohio and Hamburg, New York — both of which I have visited and previously written about in the *Badger Diggin's*. Fossils at Rockford come from the Devonian-age Lime Creek Formation, also known as the Rockford Shale, which contains a diverse assemblage of brachiopods, corals, gastropods, bivalves, and other invertebrate animals. Reportedly, the remains of primitive fossil fish (e.g., armored placoderms) have also been recovered from the same unit, although they are quite rare.

The Fossil Park is located on the site of the former Rockford Brick and Tile Company, which once extracted the bluish shale and clay to produce agricultural drainage tiles. Some of the beehive-shaped kilns in which the tiles were hardened can still be observed on the park grounds. After the company ceased its operations, the land was donated for the purpose of allowing visitors to come and collect their own fossils. There is no admission fee, but donations are welcome. A new interpretive center was opened in 2001, which includes displays on the region's geology, history, and ecology. The former should enable even novices to identify the principal types of fossils that they find in the Park.

Collecting at the Park is perfectly safe and 'low-energy' — ideal for children and families. The collecting grounds are not located in a rock quarry but instead encompass several large, shallow pits having gently sloping walls. As the shale and clay erodes after a heavy rain, new fossil material is continually exposed. Most fossils can be obtained simply by surface collecting, although a small pointed tool such as a screwdriver or ice pick can be used to dig out those still partially embedded. A small trowel or pointed mason's trowel is especially good for more active digging/excavation. But leave the rock hammers and sledges behind! No hard hat, safety glasses, or steel-toed boots are required,

either. One or more small buckets, handle bags, or a backpack can be used to hold your discoveries. Tissues or paper towels should be used to wrap the more delicate specimens, while a divided box can help you to organize your finds as they are collected. Be sure to bring a sun hat and plenty of water, as the weather will almost certainly be warm. Insect repellent may also be desirable.

The tentative plan is to meet at the Fossil Park at 10 a.m.; to collect for a few hours; then break for lunch and identify your finds; and then (if desired), to collect some more until you are ready to head back for home. Because of the distance involved (about 4-5 hours from Monroe), you may wish to stay overnight on the evening before (accommodations listed below). For those doing the trip as a single-day activity, however, just plan to arrive whenever you want. Bring your own picnic lunch and beverages; while snacks and some drinks (along with restrooms) may be available at the interpretive center (open daily from 1 – 4 p.m.), the fare is probably limited. Carpooling is recommended, to share expenses on gas and accommodations. I will pass around a sign-up sheet at the June meeting, for anyone interested in going. I will also post an e-mail reminder, much like this article, in early July to our regular club and MWF mailing list. Hope to see you there!

Address: Rockford Fossil and Prairie Park Preserve
1227 215th Street
Rockford, IA 50468
(641) 756-3490
<http://www.fossilcenter.com>

Accommodations: Super 8 Motel
1411 South Grand Avenue
Charles City, IA
(641) 228-2888

Wyatt Park Campgrounds
105 1st Avenue Northwest
Rockford, IA 50468
(641) 756-3718

Comfort Inn
410 5th Street Southwest
Mason City, IA
(641) 423-4444



Driving directions (from Prairie du Chien, WI):

Follow Highway 18 west across the Mississippi River into Iowa, as far as Charles City. There, Highway 14 joins 18 (briefly). At South Main Street, take a left to follow Highway 14 alone. Proceed about 7 miles, where Highway 14 turns left at its intersection with T38 (Lance Avenue). After about a half-mile, turn right onto Highway 147 (T24) toward Rockford. Stay on Highway 147 (East and West Main Avenue) through town. Turn left onto 8th Street Southwest (Highway B47 = 215th Street). Follow B47 to the entrance of Fossil Park (on the right side). Note (for those who may be digitally challenged) — Rockford, IA appears on p. 20 of the Iowa *Gazeteer*.

Rockford is located on the Shell Rock River in Floyd County; fishing is possible (with a license).

Other attractions: Floyd County Museum and Historical Society & Marble Rock Historical Society



Special Events

Copper Country Mineral Retreat

Information regarding The Copper Country Mineral Retreat, taking place during the week of August 8 thru the 13th, is now posted on the mineral museum website. The schedule of events, details, registration form, and lodging information is all available at www.museum.mtu.edu Click on the Copper Country Mineral Retreat tab to view these details. Make your plans now to attend this years' COPPER COUNTRY MINERAL RETREAT!

Rock & Mineral Swap Meet

The Rock River Valley Gem and Mineral Society of Rockford, Illinois is sponsoring a "If It Deals with Rock & Mineral Swap Meet" on Saturday, September 17, 2011 at the Odd Fellows Hall, 6219 Forest Hills Road, Rockford. 9:30am - 3:30pm. \$20 donation for a 10x10 space. Free Parking. Rain or Shine. Bring it, Swap it, Buy it, Sell it. CONTACT: Dave Reese 815-885-1410; dmreese56@hotmail.com.

Crack-a-Lackin' Good Times



Door County Collecting Fun



Badger Lapidary & Geological Society, Inc.

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