



Arizona Department of Mines and Mineral Resources

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ARIZONA ROCKHOUND INFORMATION

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by Diane Bain

The Department receives numerous requests for information on visiting Arizona's mines and mineral collecting sites. The following brief compilation lists sites for mine tours, mine overviews, gold panning areas, mineral museums, and a list of publications on mineral collecting.

We encourage you to visit the Arizona Mining & Mineral Museum. After viewing the excellent mineral collection, the Museum's reference materials may be used to obtain further information on mineral collecting in Arizona. **Field trip guides** to some of the State's many other collecting areas may be reviewed and/or photocopied. Information on mines and mining may also be obtained from the Department's staff and library.

For those interested in joining a rock and gem club, a circular entitled *Earth Science Clubs in Arizona* is available, as well as *Arizona Gem Shows*, a listing of all of the mineral shows each year. These are also on the Department website. www.mines.az.gov/Publications/#CIRCULARS

ROCKHOUDING ON BLM LAND

Rockhounding in Arizona, a brochure produced by the Bureau of Land Management, summarizes the regulations for rockhounding on public lands. Briefly, the regulations state that:

"You may collect reasonable amounts of specimens. In Arizona, BLM sets the 'reasonable' limits for personal use as up to 25 pounds per day, plus one piece, with a total limit of 250 pounds per year."

This brochure is available from any BLM office, including the State office at 1 N. Central Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85004, 602-417-9200.

www.blm.gov/az/st/en/prog/recreation/rockhnd/minerals.html

Specific rockhounding areas are profiled at the BLM website, including Burro Creek Campground Area northeast of Wickenburg, the Black Hills Rockhound Area northeast of Safford, and the Round Mountain Rockhound Area southeast of Safford.

www.blm.gov/az/st/en/prog/recreation/rockhnd/locations.html

OPERATING MINE TOURS

Bagdad

Bagdad Mine. An operating, open pit copper/molybdenum mine operated by Phelps Dodge and dating from the 19th century. The mine is located 2 hours northwest of Phoenix. Free tours by appointment. 928-633-3490.

Tucson

Mission Mine One-hour tours of Asarco's operating, open-pit copper mine. 15 miles south of Tucson on I-19 and Pima Mine Road. Admission fee. The Mineral Discovery Center is free. Tour reservation: 520-625-8233, Recorded information: 520-625-7513

www.mineralecovery.com

Morenci

Morenci Mine

Two hour bus tours of one of the largest open-pit mines in the world. Tours are offered Fridays and Saturdays at 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Reservations are required. Admission fee. Call toll-free: 1-877-646-8687

visitgrahamcounty.com/MorenciMineTour.html

OPERATING-MINE OVERLOOKS

Morenci Overlook

Located in eastern Arizona, about an hour drive northeast of Safford on the scenic Coronado Trail, this site provides a spectacular view of Arizona's largest mining operation - the Phelps Dodge Morenci mine. The Morenci mine, the largest copper mine in the US, produces over 750 million pounds of copper a year and has moved over 1,000,000 tons of ore in a day! The overlook is about 5 miles north of the town of Morenci on Highway 191.

Ray Overlook

Approximately 85 miles east of Phoenix is the Asarco-owned Ray Mine, a major copper producer. Mining operations and equipment may be viewed here daily from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm (closed when raining). The overlook is located approximately 12 miles south of Superior on Highway 177.

HISTORIC MINES

Bisbee

Copper Queen Underground Tour and Lander Pit Tour. Tours are available of the famous Copper Queen Mine and a large open-pit copper mine at the colorful, historic mining town of Bisbee. Historic mining equipment still in place. Admission fee. Open 7 days a week. One-hour tours begin at 10:30, 12:00, 2:00, and 3:30. 520-432-2071

www.cityofbisbee.com/queenminetours.htm

Tombstone

Good Enough Mine Tour. Tours of Ed Schiefelin's mine, first claimed in 1877. Open daily, tours on the hour from 10-4 (call to verify). 520-255-0552. In Tombstone, on the corner of Toughnut and Fifth Streets.

Wickenburg

Vulture Mine Camp This famous mine was discovered in 1863 by Henry Wickenburg. Take US60 from Wickenburg about 3 miles to the west, turn left at the Vulture Mine Road at the Safeway shopping center and continue on paved road for about 12 miles. Mine tour, prospecting tours, lapidary shop. 8 – 4 daily. Closed July/Aug., 602-469-7662.

vulturegoldmine@yahoo.com

www.jpc-training.com/pg06.htm

GOLD PANNING

Lynx Lake Area

This area has been set aside for recreational gold panning. Gold pans and hand tools may be used, but not mechanized equipment. No permit is required. From Highway 69 four miles east of Prescott, turn south on Walker Road (FS 197).

The Lynx Lake turn off is approximately 3 miles on the left.

www.fs.fed.us/r3/prescott/recreation/propect.shtml

MINERAL AND MINING MUSEUMS

Apache Junction

Superstition Mountain Lost Dutchman Museum. Includes exhibits on the geology of the area, military history, mining artifacts from the town of Goldfield, and, of course, an exhibit on Jacob Waltz and the Lost Dutchman Mine. Admission fee. Open daily 9:00 am - 4:00 pm. Located at Goldfield Ghost town, 4 miles northeast of Apache Junction on the Apache Trail (State Route 88). 480-983-8888.

www.superstitionmountainmuseum.org/

Bisbee

Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum

Displays on mining and life in this mining town at the turn of the century. Admission fee. 10:00 am - 4:00 pm daily. 5 Copper Queen Plaza, Bisbee, AZ 85603. 520 432-7071

www.bisbeemuseum.org

Flagstaff

Museum of Northern Arizona

A museum of the history and culture of the Colorado Plateau, displays include geologic models, fossils, and mineral specimens. Located three miles north of Flagstaff on U.S. Highway 180, Admission fee. Open daily 9 am - 5 pm, except Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day, 928-774-5213 www.musnaz.org

Phoenix

Arizona Mining and Mineral Museum

Over 3,000 minerals on exhibit; highlighting the collection are the colorful minerals from Arizona's copper mines. Exhibits on the lapidary arts, Arizona specimen localities, and fluorescent minerals. Open weekdays from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm and on Saturdays from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm, closed Sundays and State holidays. Admission fee: \$2 for adults, children free. 1502 W. Washington, Phoenix, AZ 85007, 602-771-1611.

www.mines.az.gov

Wells Fargo History Museum

This small, well executed museum is located in Wells Fargo's downtown Phoenix complex. Historical displays depict Wells Fargo's presence in Arizona. It includes many interesting exhibits concerning Arizona history and mining. Open weekdays from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm. Free admission. Located north of the main lobby, at 145 W. Adams, Phoenix, AZ 85003. Phone: 602-378-1852

www.wellsfargohistory.com/museums/museums_ph.htm

Tempe

Arizona State University

Robert S. Dietz Museum of Geology

Includes mineral displays as well as vertebrate fossils, a Foucault pendulum, and a working seismograph. Free admission. Located in the Physical Sciences Complex, F-Wing, Monday through Friday, 9:00 am - 12:00 noon, 480-965-7065

www.asu.edu/museums/ns/dietz.htm

Center for Meteoritic Study

Arizona State University. The Center for Meteorite Studies is home to the world's largest university-based meteorite collection. Free admission. Monday through Friday, 9:00 am - 5:00 p.m. Located in ASU's Physical Sciences Complex, C-wing, Room 139.

<http://meteorites.asu.edu>

Tucson

Arizona-Sonoran Desert Museum

This world-renown zoo and botanical garden also features a faux limestone cave, an exceptional collection of regional minerals, fossils, and geology exhibits. Admission fee. Located west of Tucson. 2021 N. Kinney Road, Tucson, March - September: 7:30 am - 5:00 pm. October - February: 8:30 am - 5:00 pm. June-September open until 10:00 pm on Saturday nights. 520-883-1380

www.desertmuseum.org

University of Arizona Mineral Museum

Over 1900 minerals on display as well as an additional 6,000+ micro mount specimens. Monday - Friday, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, by appointment on-

ly until August 2006 because of renovation of the Science Center. Admission fee. Located on the north east corner of University Blvd. and Cherry Avenue, on the University of Arizona campus in the Flandrau Science Center, 520-621-4227

www.uamineralmuseum.org

Asarco Mineral Discovery Center

Exhibits illustrate the deposition, extraction, and uses of copper. Hands-on exhibits, video theater, cactus garden, picnic area. Free admission.

15 mi. south of Tucson on I-19 and Pima Mine Road, 520-625-7513

www.mineralexplorer.com/

SUGGESTED READING

Gem Trails of Arizona by James Mitchell, Gem Guides Book Co., Baldwin Park, CA, 1995.

Geology of Arizona, 2nd Edition by Nations and Stump. Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, Dubuque, Iowa, 1992.

Gold Panning in Arizona by Diane Bain, Arizona Dept. of Mines and Mineral Resources, Phoenix, Arizona, 1990.

Mineralogy of Arizona by Anthony, Williams, Bideaux, & Grant, University of Arizona Press, Tucson, Arizona, 1995.

Minerals of Arizona by Neil Bearce, Geoscience Press, Tucson, Arizona, 1999

Placer Gold Deposits of Arizona by Maureen Johnson. The US Geological Survey's Bulletin 1355 reprinted by Del Oeste Press, Tarzana, California, 1987.

Roadside Geology of Arizona by Halka Chronic, Mountain Press Publishing Company, 1983.

Rockhounding Arizona by Gerry Blair, Falcon Publishing, Inc., Helena, Montana, 1992.

Western Gem Hunters Atlas by Cy Johnson & Son, Susanville, CA, 1994.