

GOLD PANNING

Your reward may be a few flecks of bright-chips (called color) in the bottom of the pan or it may be several lumps of odd shaped gold called nuggets; in either case, you are "hooked". You become a GOLD PANNER with an eye, wherever you go for possible deposits.

"A deposit" to the amateur may mean fine gold flecks caught in some moss or around the roots of trees -- it may mean a real Bonanza of nuggets on the downstream side of a large boulder.

All gold comes originally from ledges and crevices in the rocks and is washed down the mountain sites to the streams. Spring floods or heavy rains carry it downstream where it is caught and dropped (because of its weight) in destructions or in quiet water behind boulders or at the foot of a riffle or water fall. Almost all streams in Josephine County as well as those in Coos, Curry, Jackson and Douglas Counties are good sources of color.

Remember, if you trespass on private property or a posted claim, be sure to ask permission. Some real miners will be most helpful and will even help you locate a good place to pan; whereas, others guard their "diggin's" very jealously. Remember also that someone should be informed as to where you will be, never go alone; be watchful for tricks and snakes; avoid old mine tunnels.

YOUR EQUIPMENT: You will need a gold pan designed for the purpose with flaring sides and about 3 or 4 inches deep. General sizes are available from 6 to 24 inches in diameter -- pick the size that is easiest for you to handle, remembering that a large pan full of gravel can be quite heavy as you pan. Your pan must be "burnt" or "blued" before using

because it will have a film of grease or oil which must be removed or your gold will pick up a coating of oil and will "float" out of your pan. Heat it on your stove until it is a nice blue color and all oils are burned out. We suggest as additional equipment, a pair of tweezers, a small vial or two, a trowel, and a small pick or shovel.

Find a comfortable place to squat or sit at the edge of a quiet pool or slow moving spot on the stream, fill your pan about half-full of likely looking sand or gravel (as you become more adapted you may wish to start with more). Submerge the pan in the water and with your hands wash and turn the contents, letting the dirt wash away in the water. Pick out or scoop out the larger pieces of rock and gravel (or squeeze the moss and discard). Take the pan out of the water and shake it from side to side with a swirling motion causing the water to go around and around. This causes the heavier gold to sink to the bottom and you can then scoop more gravel off the top. With the pan at a slight angle downward, dip the front edge in the water and continue the side shake -- the gold will now fall to the bottom at the lower edge. Continue dipping, shaking, and removing sand until you have a very small amount left -- now you must be very careful so that you don't wash the gold from the pan. With practice, you can cause the sand to go to the opposite side of the pan from the gold. When you have removed as much sand as you safely can, you will have (if you are in "pay-dirt") a small stringer of black sand and gold. Pick the larger pieces out with your tweezers and place in the vial. The fine flecks of color you can pour right with the sand into another vial for further separating when you get home. **GOOD LUCK!!!!**

PAY-DIRT

In Southern Oregon

for

rock hounds and
amateur gold miners.



IF YOU LIKE THE OUT-OF-DOORS, have strong back, and aren't afraid of snakes or far-away places, you are probably a ROCKHOUND or a would be GOLD MINER.

THIS LEAFLET THEN, IS FOR YOU!

We can't pretend that it is a complete coverage of this area nor that it is written by experts, but we hope that you will find it a useful guide.

If you are a newcomer at this game of "rock" gathering, you'll need a rock hammer, sack, and boots, and will find the following to be mighty useful:

First Aid Kit	Shovel
Small-Army Pick	Probe
Rock sacks	Bucket
Rock Hammer	Chisels
2 lb Jack Hammer	Bar
Compass	Matches
Flashlight	Rope
Maps of the area to be visited	

REMEMBER: Someone should know where you will be; never go alone; be watchful for ticks and snakes; avoid old mine tunnels; respect other's diggings (if tools or clothing are left in a digging area, the owners intend to come back); ask permission before entering on private property.

You will find that the term "AGATW" is used and understood by most Rockhounds to include almost any of the Quartz family. These are the ones most often found in this general area. Brief descriptions of this group are:
Agate: Transparent to translucent, might be banded, figured, or mossy, color varied.

Jasper: Opaque, plain, banded, figured, flowered or scenic color varied
Chalcedony: Translucent, waxlike luster, color pale blue or gray.

Opal: Transparent to opaque, plain, banded, figured, scenic, mossy and (uncommon in this area) the precious fiery variety.

Optical quartz: Transparent, water clear and free from inclusions of any kind.

Amethyst: Same as optical quartz, except it has a deep violet color.

Petrified Wood: Agatized, opalized, jasperized or sandstone-like.

Other "rocks" found in the area are: Californite, carnelian, chrysocolla, chrysoprase, garnet, gold, grossularite garnet, quartz crystals, idocrase, "Oregon Jade", jasper, malachite, nephrite, orbicular jasper, pyrite, rhodonite, serpentine, teredo petrified wood.

IN SOUTHWESTERN OREGON, ALMOST EVERY CREEK, RIVER, OR STREAM DESCENDING TO THE PACIFIC OCEAN INCLUDES ATTRACTIVE GEM STONE MINERALS AND PETRIFIED WOOD IN ITS GRAVEL BARS. Look for "Pay-Dirt" in the bed of a dry wash or a gravel bar of a flowing stream; where a stream or a dry-wash runs through an upland valley or small flat area; or eroded and worn down ridges of an ancient mountain system.

SOME GOOD LOCATIONS in Southeastern Oregon Counties are:

CURRY COUNTY: Brookings - Jade. Ocean beaches north and south of the mouths of the Chetco and Rogue Rivers - agate, californite (Idocrase), jasper. Rogue River gravels; (1) mouth of river near Wedderburn - grossularite garnet. (2) upstream from Gold Beach near Agness

agate, carnelian, chalcedony, grossularite garnet, gold, jasper, quartz crystals.

DOUGLAS COUNTY: North and South Umpqua Rivers gravels (especially 22 mi. E. of Roseburg) - agate, carnelian, chalcedony, jasper, petrified and silicified wood, teredo petrified wood, "Oregon Jade" (massive grossularite garnet).

JACKSON COUNTY: East of Ashland on Greensprings Mountain - Agate, agate nodules, carnelian, chalcedony, jasper. Big Butte area - agate.

Cedar Springs Mountain - malachite. 12 miles north of Medford at Table Rock Mountain - agate, petrified wood. Rogue River gravels, 4 miles East of Central Point to 15 miles East of Eagle Point (also in Butte Creek gravels) moss agate.

JOSEPHINE COUNTY: Cave Creek (area around Oregon Caves) - agate, chalcedony gold nuggets, jasper, petrified wood, rhodonite. Holland 1½ miles south along Althouse Creek - agate, garnet, gold, jasper, quartz crystals, serpentine. Waldo and Galice districts - gold, azurite, chrysocolla, malachite.

KLAMATH COUNTY: Crater Lake Park (immediately south) - "Crater Lake Flower" jasper.

Klamath River gravels - agate, chalcedony, jasper.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND LOCATIONS: The Rogue Gem and Geology Club has placed maps and other information in the Reference Section of the Josephine County Library, on 5th Street between "B" and "C" Streets.