

Hobby Mineral Collecting at Lord Hill

USDA
Forest Service

White Mountain
National Forest

Saco Ranger District

Geology: Lord Hill is a pegmatite that is not very different from the Deer Hill pegmatite, except the bulk composition is different and contains many more rare elements which lead to forming rare minerals. There are many rare minerals found at Lord Hill including Triplite, Uraninite, Vivianite, Zircon, Gahnite, Fluorapatite, Bertrandite, and the list goes on. The more common minerals which are found there are varieties of feldspar, quartz, topaz, phenakite, and garnet. For a short time this location was mined for feldspar but was not profitable.

Location: Lord Hill is located in Stoneham, ME. Follow Deer Hill Rd. (FR 9) 4.7 mi. from NH 113 to the Horseshoe Pond Trail, a small parking area at a curve in the road. From Deer Hill Rd., the trail descends moderately past the Styles grave, which is on the right of the trail, then enters a gravel road and turns right onto it. The trail follows this road, keeping straight at a junction in 100 yd. At 0.3 mi., just before the gravel road ends, the trail turns right onto a grassy road. The trail is a gradual uphill climb to the intersection with the Conant Trail. Go left onto the Conant Trail and follow the trail for .3 miles to the Lord Hill summit. At the summit go left for a great view of Horseshoe Pond. Take the Mine Trail to your right to the abandoned mine.

Mineral Collecting Tips: The Lord Hill mine is actually an open depression in the hill, rather than a deep, dark shaft. It can be very hot and sunny on summer days so bring a hat, sun block and plenty of water. The mine area is covered with small pieces of rock. Search for minerals in these rock fragments or in the wall that borders one side of the mine. Miners at Lord Hill were particularly interested in the large chunks of muscovite, silvery mica that can be divided into paper-thin crystals like the pages of a book. Although mica crystals are common in the granitic rocks throughout the White Mountains, the large, striking “books” at Lord Hill are particularly impressive. Make sure to bring Ziplock baggies or newspaper for specimens collected. Other recommended items include safety glasses

, gloves, geologist's hammer and cold chisel and a field guide to rocks and minerals.

Recreational Rock and Mineral Collecting Conditions: A rock and mineral collecting use permit is being developed. The public will be notified when these permits become available. Surface disturbing rock and mineral collecting activities will require a use permit. Hobby mineral collecting without a use permit is allowed as long as there is no surface disturbance. i.e. picking up a rock. Surface disturbance is defined as digging, excavating, prying, destroying, or similar activity that results in the removal, displacement, or destruction of rocks, minerals, soil, or vegetation. Surface disturbing rock and mineral collection activities must follow the Forest Plan standards and guidelines.

General Standards and Guidelines

- Only small hand tools are permitted. The use of power, mechanized equipment, or explosives is prohibited.
- Maximum excavation at any one site is limited to one cubic yard. Only one site may be disturbed at a time.
- Excavated holes must not be dug deeper than three feet as measured from the bottom of the hole to a projected horizontal line drawn between the bases of trees or plants adjoining the hole. In areas where the entire site is already disturbed and the original ground level altered, an estimated projection will be made of the earth's surface for the purposes of monitoring and enforcement.
- Prior to leaving the site, restore the disturbed area similar to the condition you found it in.
- No collecting activities are allowed within developed recreation areas, immediately adjacent to roads, trails, other facilities, in streambanks, wetlands, shores, designated rock climbing areas, or cultural or historic features.

- Digging under trees or severing roots greater than ½ inch in diameter is not permitted.
- Surface disturbance that creates or contributes to a safety hazard is not allowed.
- Rock and mineral collecting is not permitted on, in, or adjacent to existing safety hazards, such as overhanging ledges, deep tunnels, and unstable slope.

For more information contact: Saco Ranger District
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