



# Mineralogical Organizations in Australia

Australia is home to one of the most mineralogically diverse localities on the planet, that of Broken Hill (324 mineral species, type locality for 24 of them). This extraordinary place also hosts the oldest known terrestrial mineral, the Hadean zircon from the Jack Hills. It is fitting for this country, rich in mineralogical exotica, that the last lunar mineral to be found on Earth, tranquillityite  $[(\text{Fe}^{2+})_8\text{Ti}_3\text{Zr}_2\text{Si}_3\text{O}_{24}]$ , turned up in Western Australia in 2011. Australia also has some of the world's greatest reserves of iron, copper and uranium as economic resources. Given the lack of Pleistocene glaciation, much of the continental bedrock remains concealed under a deep regolith cover; many more mineralogical surprises are doubtless waiting to be found. However, the lack of exposure, the sheer vastness of the country (similar to the lower 48 states of the USA in area) and the harsh desert climate prevalent over much of it, as well as the small overall population (currently just under 25 million), have kept mineral collectors relatively few in number. The professional mineralogical community is small, but punches above its weight: between 2008 and 2014, Australia provided both the former Chairman (Peter Williams) and Secretary (Stuart Mills) of the International Mineralogical Association (IMA) Commission on New Minerals, Nomenclature and Classification.

Given the small population and strong cultural ties to long-established professional organisations in the UK and USA, there is no discrete mineralogical society as such. Mineralogical interests are catered for by the Geological Society of Australia (GSA) and its Specialist Group for Geochemistry, Mineralogy and Petrology, along with the mineralogical societies of the individual Australian states. The GSA is the host professional organisation for the IMA meeting that is to be held in Melbourne in August 2018.

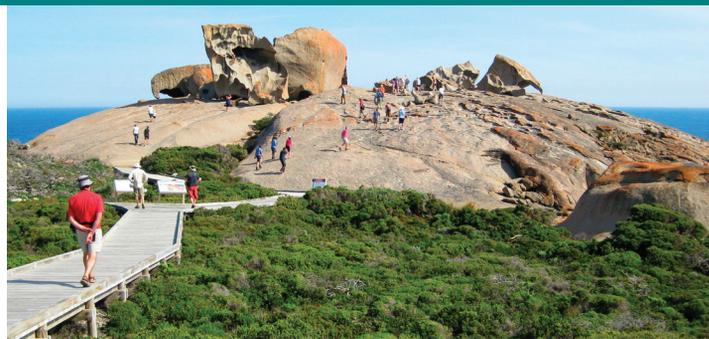


The Chapman Collection in the Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales. A world-class collection of 820 specimens, half of which are from Australian localities, half of those being from Broken Hill.

## Geological Society of Australia

The Geological Society of Australia (GSA, see [www.gsa.org.au](http://www.gsa.org.au)) was established as a non-profit organization in 1952 to promote, advance and support Earth sciences in Australia. The GSA's members represent all Earth science professions, and come from the minerals and petroleum industries, government, research and education institutions, and consultancy groups. The GSA has a division in each state and territory, as well as a branch in the Hunter Valley. Biannual conventions are held Australia-wide, at which members may keep in touch with scientific developments, present the results of their work, and contribute to discussions on vocational and scientific topics. Specialist groups cater to different sectors of the Earth sciences, and organise dedicated conferences and excursions.

The GSA publishes periodicals for Earth scientists and the wider community. The *Australian Journal of Earth Sciences* is its official journal, which publishes papers on all aspects of Earth science. The *Australian Geologist* is GSA's quarterly member magazine and includes technical and special features, society news, conference details, regular reports, book reviews



A field excursion from 2009 by the Specialist Group for Geochemistry, Mineralogy and Petrology to Remarkable Rocks, Kangaroo Island, South Australia.

and other items of interest to Earth scientists. The e-zine *geoz* is an Australian Earth science news service available free to GSA members.

The GSA encourages and recognizes excellence in the Earth sciences through awards, such as the A.E. Ringwood and W.R. Browne Medals, as well as divisional and specialist group awards for outstanding scientific contributions. The Specialist Group for Geochemistry, Mineralogy and Petrology (SGGMP) caters to GSA members interested in mineralogy, along with a larger community of geochemists and petrologists. The SGGMP hosts its own meetings and associated field trips on a quadrennial basis, the venue rotating among the states.

## State Mineralogical Societies

There are currently six mineralogical societies established in Australia, on a state-wide basis. These are in New South Wales (the oldest of the six, founded in 1975), Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia ([www.mineral.org.au/socs/socs.html](http://www.mineral.org.au/socs/socs.html)). All societies are based in the respective state capitals but have memberships which extend the breadth of Australia and beyond. Their membership includes both Earth-science professionals and amateur mineral enthusiasts at all levels of expertise. Although not connected by any formal constitution or agreement, the societies are informally bonded through their common ideals and interests. The societies assemble every year for a joint seminar on minerals and mineral collecting. Usually, this is held in early June, but it is flexible. In 2007, this group was expanded to include New Zealand, so the collective entity is now referred to as the *Joint Mineralogical Societies of Australasia*. The seminar venue is rotated among the states, and the host society decides on a theme topic. In 2018, the 41<sup>st</sup> joint seminar will be hosted by the state of Victoria ([www.mineral.org.au/seminar/seminar18.html](http://www.mineral.org.au/seminar/seminar18.html)).

## Australian Journal of Mineralogy

The *Australian Journal of Mineralogy (AJM)* was launched in 1995, is a joint publication of the six state societies, features all aspects of Australian mineralogy, and appeals to professional mineralogists, geologists and mineral enthusiasts ([www.mineral.org.au/pubs/ajm.html](http://www.mineral.org.au/pubs/ajm.html)). Articles range in scope from new mineral descriptions and the mineralogy of specific localities to mineral collections and mining history. In general, two issues per year have been published. Currently, the journal is produced in Western Australia and is a high-quality production that features excellent colour photography. For subscription information, please consult the *AJM* Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/AJMPublications/](http://www.facebook.com/AJMPublications/)) or contact the editor.



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