

Mink Pond, New Hampshire Staurolite & Garnet Deposit – March, 2009

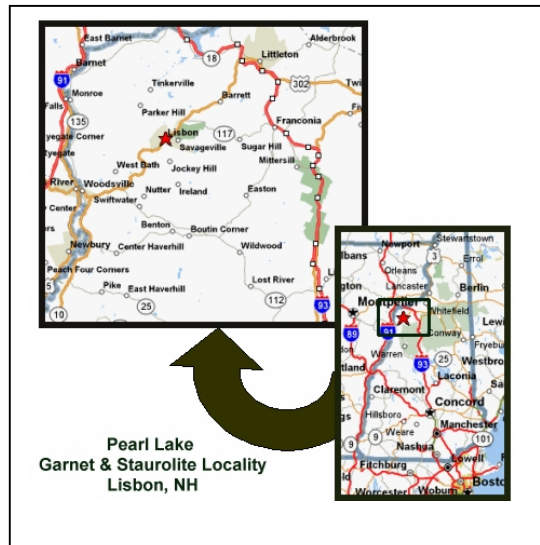
Joe Mulvey (minerals from this locality will be part of my trades)

05/27/2005

With fellow Boston Mineral Club member Peter Cristofono, a trip was made to Mink Pond in northern New Hampshire to try to collect staurolite and garnet.

Mink Pond is in the town of Lisbon. The pond, which seems to be full of jumping trout is also known as Pearl Lake.

Peter has had a very nice garnet specimen for a number of years that is from Mink Pond.



Pearl Lake
Garnet & Staurolite Locality
Lisbon, NH

In Frederick Pough's Field Guide, a Mink Pond staurolite is pictured as an example of the species.

Peter came across some directions, and with the aid of a topo map, we found the location easily. What a beautiful, scenic area!

Upon arriving we parked in a small, convenient pull-out. Directly across the road is the collecting area. As I walked across the street, I spooked a turkey who clucked loudly as she walked away.

The collecting location is a few hundred yards long along the side of the road in some very steep woods. The collecting area starts at road side and goes in a fair way. The hill gets pretty steep very quickly. Bug spray kept the black flies at bay. Immediately, we began to see many fine examples of garnets covering just about every boulder. Most were a bit rusty since they were almandine garnets - the species of garnet that contains iron. It was quite easy to pull many out with our fingers. Occasionally we encountered crumbly schist with staurolite crystals. While we were on the lookout for the classic staurolite twin which forms a cross, we found many very nice samples of single crystals, many with a small (2-3 mm) garnets attached. Chipping the staurolite out of the schist is trickier than it appears! The schist seems to want to break where the crystals form. I ended up taking some nice slabs to 12 inches square with several nice examples instead of trying to break the individuals out on small matrix pieces. I dug a couple of holes to see if I could find something others may have missed.

Meanwhile, Peter found an area chock full of very crumbly schist and with a larger amount of hornblende mixed in. This rock could be broken without tools. Many garnets up to 1/2" were found. The garnets still within the rock either had the typical, very nice red appearance, or in many cases they appeared to be jet black. Interestingly, where the garnets were largest, no staurolite could be found. This proved to be the best collecting area for us. We gathered many nice specimens with fist-sized pieces of schist and hornblende with up to a dozen garnets attached.

On our way out, Peter noticed a nest with 9 large eggs on the ground within some pine bushes. This seemed to be the area from where I spooked the turkey earlier. I assumed the turkey was sitting on the nest and that this site doesn't get much activity. The lack of visitors is probably because the location is about 2.5 hours from the state line with MA. This location is suitable for anybody to collect nice specimens. The area was pleasant, clean and quiet. I heartily recommend it to anyone.