

# What's New in the Mineral World?



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When you last heard from me in this space, our blow-dry summer in Tucson was set on High, but now we're well into that seven-month, non-summer Tucson season for which my favored term is Other. And if you think I've waited too long to produce this update, well, you might have something there, but at least it's coming in time to help you with *Christmas shopping*—especially for any serious mineral collectors on your gift list. Then again, you might find something *you* like on one of the sites mentioned here and, in the time-honored practice, place it under the tree, gift-wrapped, for yourself. Generous Christmas giving can take many wonderful forms...

## Online in late 2014

Dave Bunk of Denver is one of the very best mineral dealers around, with a huge mineral-database in his head, an excellent eye, and—most admirably of all, I'd say—a deep appreciation of mineral classics. However, by reputation he has been, these many years, a dealer best seen in person at shows rather than an especially prominent online presence. It seems that that is about to change, though. An end-of-October announcement on his website informs us that earlier technical issues with the site have now been resolved, and “it will now be a much more pleasant experience to shop at [www.davebunkminerals.com](http://www.davebunkminerals.com).” And quite pleasantly (sure enough), I found, when I clicked on “shop” and then on “available,” many pages of fine photos of fine specimens, most numerous and impressive among which are specimens of elbaite, amethyst, Tsumeb minerals, and Sweet Home mine minerals. Also scattered on these pages are items from the Frank and Wendy Melanson thumbnail collection and the Bill and Carol Smith collection of Pakistani minerals; and then there are the still-generous lots of cabinet-size specimens of California borates. These last came to Dave mostly from the fabled Jim and Dawn Minette collection, a part of which he acquired a few years ago. The Minettes were champs at leveraging their big borate specimens (gathered by Jim on off-hours from his



work as a mine supervisor at Boron) for what turned out, by the time of Jim's death, to be one of the best collections of worldwide thumbnails ever assembled. And so, thumbnail-size classics being among my most favorite things in the world, I will unabashedly start this report by showing you two such former Minette specimens which are still (somewhat surprisingly) available from Dave Bunk, and I'll say that there are plenty more where these came from. The Broken Hill **stolzite** has some damage but also boasts plentiful, vividly colored and very large intact crystals, while the **hureaulite** from the phosphate pegmatite mined at Hagendorf, Bavaria until 1984 is surely unbeatable for color, composition and all-around "presence."



**Stolzite, 3 cm, from the Proprietary mine, Broken Hill, New South Wales, Australia. Ex-Minette Collection. Dave Bunk Minerals specimen and photo.**



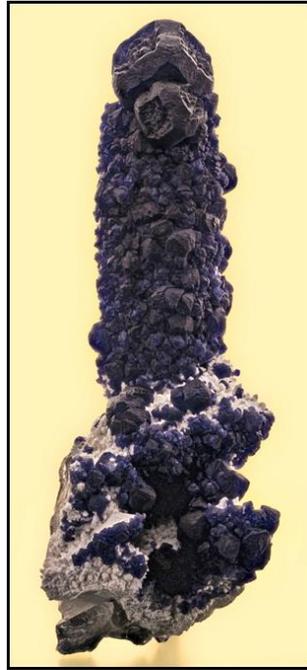
**Hureaulite, 2.9 cm, from Hagendorf-Süd, Bayern, Germany. Ex-Minette Collection. Dave Bunk Minerals specimen and photo.**

I first saw the new hematite-included **quartz** from Aouli, Khenifra Province, Meknes-Tafilalt region, Morocco at the 2014 Munich Show, but Andy Seibel ([andyseibel.com](http://andyseibel.com)) has several fine miniature to full-cabinet-size examples in an August update on his site. Brick-red and lustrous, prismatic quartz crystals with large rhombohedral terminal faces form jumbled groups to 15 cm; some of the crystals are transparent enough near their tips to show very-red phantoms against the medium-red interior backgrounds.



**Quartz included by hematite, 10.7 cm, from Aouli, Khenifra Province, Meknes-Tafilalt region, Morocco. Andy Seibel Minerals specimen and photo.**

Andy Seibel also offers two full web pages—40 specimens, plus a few outliers—of the new and distinctive **blue fluorite on quartz** from the Huanggang mine, Chifeng Prefecture, Inner Mongolia, China. These specimens have been scattered rather widely “around” for the past few months (I reported on some from the 2014 Denver Show, as you’ll see in January-February 2015), but this selection of Andy’s is the most generous I’ve yet encountered. All of the specimens have the same basic architecture: the roughly elongate shape of an underlying quartz crystal is completely covered by a druse of spiky, grayish white, little quartz crystals, upon which druse rest equant, complex, transparent but very deep purplish blue fluorite crystals. Some of the fluorites are isolates to 3 or 4 cm, but smaller crystals may gather elsewhere to form little carpets that cover significant areas of the quartz. Here are two of Andy’s best, a jumbo and a merely big specimen, priced respectively at \$9500 and \$600.



**Fluorite on quartz, 15 cm, from the Huanggang mine, Kèshíkèténg Banner, Chifeng Prefecture, Inner Mongolia, China. Andy Seibel Minerals specimen and photo.**



**Fluorite on quartz, 7.2 cm, from the Huanggang mine, Kèshíkèténg Banner, Chifeng Prefecture, Inner Mongolia, China. Andy Seibel Minerals specimen and photo.**

*Jinan Chinese Mineral Trading Co., Ltd.* has an extensive website ([chinesemineral.cn](http://chinesemineral.cn)) full of material from the Huanggangliang mining complex (indicated in the site's captions simply as "Chifeng, Inner Mongolia"), including more specimens of the dark blue fluorite on quartz, as above, but including much else as well. Several pages here have large, superb specimens of the locality's **löllingite**—far and away the best ever found in the world—which typically forms flattened, ovoid fans to many centimeters long, sometimes bright metallic gray and sometimes a dull blue-gray from thin coatings of molybdenite. The site's description of the specimen pictured here goes "Extreme lustrous Lollingite are decorated by star-spangled Arsenopyrite crystals."



**Löllingite, 13.5 cm, from the Huanggang mine, Kèshíkèténg Banner, Chifeng Prefecture, Inner Mongolia, China. Jinan Chinese Mineral Trading Co., Ltd. specimen and photo.**

The *Jinan Chinese Mineral Trading* site also has excellent wulfenite specimens from Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (these have been having a revival lately), excellent specimens of familiar kinds of Chinese scheelite, cassiterite, azurite, fluorite, etc.—and a one-of-a-kind surprise, namely a huge (24.5-cm) matrix plate breaking out everywhere in bursts of transparent, colorless, bladed **creedite** crystals. The stated locality is "Qinglong, Guizhou," and indeed, according to Ottens' *China: Mineralien-Fundstellen-Lagerstätten* (2008), antimony mines near the towns of Qinglong and Dachang, in the Dachang district of southwestern Guizhou Province, have sparingly furnished creedite specimens like this since about 2004:



Creedite, 24.5 cm, from Qinglong, Guizhou Province, China. Jinan Chinese Mineral Trading Co., Ltd. specimen and photo.

Mike Keim's *Marin Minerals*, a California-based, web-only dealership often cited in this space, especially for exciting finds of gem crystals, checks in again this time. A November 30 update on his site ([marinmineral.com](http://marinmineral.com)) has two pages of splendid **brochantite** specimens from a 2014 find in the Milpillas mine, Sonora, Mexico—all showing lustrous, lush blackish green, chisel-terminated brochantite crystals which, as Mike says, are “thick and robust and can be safely shipped”; in this they are quite unlike, and more impressive than, the earlier brochantite specimens from Milpillas which are matrix-covering spreads of finely acicular, pale green crystals. But surely the specimens of both types represent the finest brochantite ever found in the world, then or now. Some of Mike's new pieces are loose, thumbnail and miniature-size crystal clusters, while others are plates of chalk-white matrix with discrete little forests of dark green, stalk-like crystals:



**Brochantite, 2 cm, from the Milpillas mine, Cuitaca, Sonora, Mexico. Marin Minerals specimen and photo.**

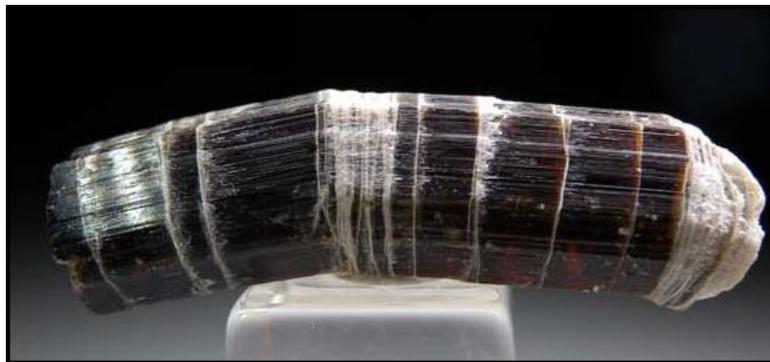


**Brochantite, 6 cm, from the Milpillas mine, Cuitaca, Sonora, Mexico. Marin Minerals specimen and photo.**

Also, an October 28 update on the *Marin* site offers beautiful **dravite** specimens recently found at Mwajanga, near Komolo, Tanzania. (In Joe Polityka's report on the 2014 Springfield Show in November-December 2014, Joe mentioned a find of crystals, to 10 cm, of a tourmaline-group species at Mwajanga, but these dravites of Mike's look quite different and probably are from a different discovery.) Some of the dravite crystals are loose singles of thumbnail size, yellowish brown and entirely gemmy (and some are doubly terminated); others are also gemmy singles but pale green instead of brown; still others are starkly zoned, switching suddenly, somewhere along the *c* axis, to opaque fibrous white or gray domains; and *still* others are multiply bent, having fractured and rehealed several times. In size the crystals range from 5.8 to less than 1 cm:



**Dravite crystal (looking like a transparent neptunite!), 1.7 cm, from Mwajanga, near Komolo, Manyara Region, Tanzania. Marin Minerals specimen and photo.**



**Dravite, 4.8 cm, from Mwajanga, near Komolo, Manyara Region, Tanzania. Marin Minerals specimen and photo.**



**Dravite, 2.4 cm, from Mwajanga, near Komolo, Manyara Region, Tanzania. Marin Minerals specimen and photo.**

A few years ago, in the great and famous Ojuela mine at Mapimí, Durango, Mexico, a pocket in galena yielded small numbers of the best **cerussite** specimens ever found in the mine, and now there has been a repeat performance. Kevin Conroy of *KC Minerals* ([kcminerals.com](http://kcminerals.com)) has a page (page 14) on his site with just three specimens, found sometime in October in an unspecified *lugar* in the Ojuela mine, showing sharp, lustrous, transparent and colorless cerussite crystals to a few millimeters apiece in groups on dense matrix consisting of intergrown, striated, cubic pyrite crystals. Now this is very unusual, in that Ojuela has never yielded specimens in any numbers showing well crystallized sulfides—but here are masses of pyrite crystals, all right, and the glassy cerussite crystals atop them make for pleasant aesthetics. I can't show you a picture, as the site wouldn't let me copy one, but let's keep a lookout for any more of these brand-new Ojuela cerussite/pyrite combos which may come up on the market.

At the 2014 Munich Show, John Veevaert of *Trinity Minerals* ([trinityminerals.com](http://trinityminerals.com)) picked up some very good, thumbnail-size loose crystals of **axinite-(Mg)** from the Merelani mines, Manyara Region, Tanzania, and about a dozen of them can be seen on his November 4 "New minerals from the 2014 Munich Show" posting. Most of the thin, gemmy crystals are incomplete, but some smaller ones are *all there*, and there are even a couple of clusters of intergrown crystals measuring 2.9 and 3.2 cm. All are lustrous and totally gemmy, and all strongly exhibit the color-change property seen sometimes in axinite-group minerals: pale purplish in incandescent light, blue in sunlight.



**Axinite-(Mg), 1.6 cm, from the Merelani mines, Manyara Region, Tanzania. Trinity Minerals specimen; John Veevaert photo.**

To persist for one more paragraph in the little-gem-crystal motif...an Italian dealership not cited previously in these online reports, *Mineral One* (mineralone.net), has a page of 18 alluring crystals of **euclase** from Alto Santino near Ecuador, Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil. Yes, these are the lovely, classic “blue racing stripe” euclase crystals from the locality usually given simply as “Ecuador” or “Equador.” They are sharp, commonly complete, and colorless but for a thin central zone down the middle which is deep blue. Discovered in the early 1960s and marketed fairly extensively in the 1970s, these specimens have been scarce for a while. *Mineral One* doesn’t say whether its crystals are from recent finds, but they are just as pretty as ever, and they range in size from just above 1 cm to 5 cm. Prices start at \$200 and rise rapidly from there, but many nevertheless have already been marked “Sold” since the November 5 posting—so maybe you’d best get busy with that Christmas shopping.



**Euclase. 1.6 cm, from Alto Santino, Equador, Borborema mineral province, Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil. Mineral One specimen and photo.**

In my last online report I hailed another new web dealership, this one based in Spain: *Mch Minerals* (mchminerals.com). While I was already engaged in gathering notes for *this* report, I found in my in-box a “December” update (it was November 30) from *Mch Minerals* showing many excellent items from new or nearly-new finds. These include gorgeous miniatures of the new pale blue barite which forms big “crests” on limonite matrix, from the Ouichane mine in Morocco; very flashy miniatures of cassiterite from the classic Viloco, Bolivia occurrence (also coming alive again now, as I learned in Munich); splendid Chinese aquamarines and Peruvian green fluorites; and—I have to show you a photo here—a couple of wonderful miniature groups of **bournonite** cogwheels stacked on each other irregularly, from the Viboras mine, Machacamarca, Potosí, Bolivia. The specimen in the picture is priced very reasonably at 150 Euros (now ≈ \$185) but is “reserved.”



**Bournonite, 4.5 cm, from the Viboras mine, Machacamarca, Potosí, Bolivia.  
Mch Minerals specimen and photo.**

Marked on the *Mch Minerals* site as representing a “new find” were three specimens of **orpiment** from Quiruvilca, Santiago de Chuco Province, La Libertad Department, Peru. Large numbers of orpiment specimens came from this locality in the 1970s, but it has not been heard from for a long time; the new specimens show stout, lustrous orpiment crystals to 1.5 cm on matrix with little pyrite and calcite crystals, and the orpiment looks bright *red*, like realgar, except for a few cleaved areas which are more properly orange-yellow. We could wish for more liberal matrix coverages of the orpiment crystals, and for less visible damage, than on these three specimens, but perhaps they are harbingers of things to come - ?



**Orpiment, 7 cm, from Quiruvilca, Santiago de Chuco Province, La Libertad Department, Peru.  
Mch Minerals specimen and photo.**

A November 27 update on the site of Ian Bruce’s *Crystal Classics* ([crystalclassics.co.uk](http://crystalclassics.co.uk)) is full of English specimens from “the Nick Carruth West Country and George Farr North Country” collections. The Farr collection of 3,000+ fluorite and other north-of-England specimens will take months to prepare fully for marketing, Ian says, but this teaser group, with fluorites of every color-persuasion, looks very good. The Carruth collection centers on Cornwall and Devon and is—again quoting Ian—“one of the few remaining great Cornish collections in private hands,” although some of the goodies that Ian offers are, of course, bound soon for other hands. Shown here are two specimens—one from each group—from these great, and both now defunct, mining districts: a yellow **fluorite** from Weardale and a gleaming grass-green **metatorbernite** from the classic locality of Gunnislake in eastern Cornwall.



**Fluorite, 11.5 cm, from the West Pastures mine, Stanhope, Weardale, Durham, England. Crystal Classics specimen and photo.**



**Metatorbernite, 3.5 cm, from the Old Gunnislake mine, Gunnislake, Cornwall, England. Crystal Classics specimen and photo.**

And yet another new dealership on the web—German this time—is *Mintreasure.com*, run by Carsten Slotta and Armin Schöler. Here you will find a good inventory of minerals from Nepal: not just the predictable quartz but also some nice, pale pink, partially gemmy elbaite crystals from the impossibly remote and now-inactive Hyakule mine, Sankhuwa Sabha district, Kosi Zone. That, plus a lot of good Tsumeb material, is Armin’s specialty, but Carsten comes from the Black Forest region of Germany and his heart belongs to that region’s mineral classics, with emphasis on the Clara mine at Oberwolfach. The famous *Grube Clara*, a barite and fluorite mine begun in the 1720s, is home to more than 350 mineral species, but its most spectacular large specimens have always been, well, barite and fluorite. *Mintreasure* now offers several examples, the best of the barites (pictured below) exhibiting clearly the distinctive chisel-shaped crystals which Germans call *Meisselspat* (“chisel spar”). The site’s “Black Forest” page also contains a terrifically “classic” miniature of dendritic **silver overgrown by arsenic** from the long-closed Sophia mine at Wittichen—also pictured below.



**Barite, 7 cm, from the Clara mine, Oberwolfach, Black Forest, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. Mintreasure.com specimen and photo.**



**Silver with arsenic overgrowths, 3.3 cm, from the Sophia mine, Wittichen, Black Forest, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. Mintreasure.com specimen and photo.**



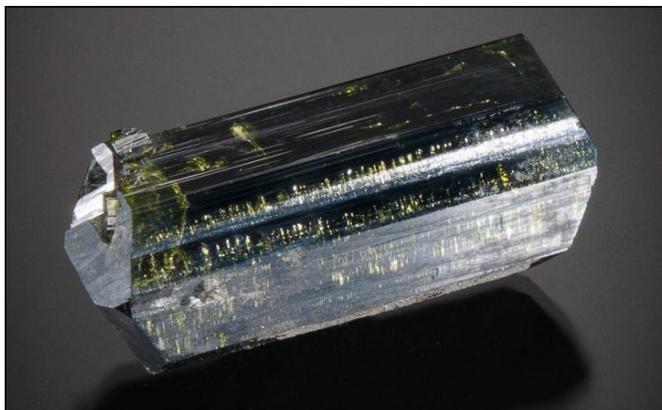
**Elbaite, 3.1 cm, from the Hyakule mine, Sankhuwa Sabha district, Kosi Zone, Nepal. Mintreasure.com specimen and photo.**

*McDougall Minerals* ([mcdougallminerals.com](http://mcdougallminerals.com)) now offers a few of the unusual, rarely seen **hematite** specimens from the “Brezouard Massif”—the locality actually is just a hillside exposure south of the town of Ste-Marie-aux-Mines, Haut-Rhin, Alsace, France. Cabinet-size matrix plates are thickly covered by metallic black, lustrous, intergrown hematite “roses” which come at the viewer edge-on: for a bit more on these, see my review (in September-October 2014) of Alain Martaud’s fine book on the Ste.-Marie mining district (or, better yet, buy the book).



**Hematite, 7.5 cm, from the Brezouard Massif, Ste.-Marie-aux-Mines, Haut-Rhin, Alsace, France.  
McDougall Minerals specimen and photo.**

A second noteworthy item on the *McDougall Minerals* site is a handful of loose, prismatic, in some cases doubly terminated **epidote** crystals from the 2002 find at Pakot, North Eastern Province, Kenya. Wayne Thompson brought a sizable lot of these excellent epidote specimens to the 2003 Tucson Show (see report in May-June 2003), but no new examples have happened along since then; Ray McDougall says that the ones he is selling are from the original group. The crystals are lustrous and very sharp, in sizes ranging from 4.2 to 7.7 cm, and in the photos their bright pistachio-green inner highlights are easily seen.



**Epidote, 4.9 cm, from Pakot, North Eastern Province, Kenya. McDougall Minerals specimen and photo.**

Although in the “post-Munich” update of *Fabre Minerals* (fabreminerals.com), Jordi Fabre complains of a lack of really new finds at that show, he goes on to offer good things from *fairly* new finds, among them Panasqueira, Portugal fluorite and pyrite and some extraordinary loose crystals of hydroboracite from the Kohnstein quarry, Neidersachswerfen, Harz Mountains, Germany. Also he offers a few fine miniature-size specimens of **bavenite**, found in 2006 in the Valdeconeillos granite quarry at Cadalso de los Vidrios, Madrid Province, Spain. On these specimens, spherical aggregates of shiny white bavenite microcrystals are spotted generously on microcline matrix—you can’t do better than that for display specimens of the rare Ca-Be-Al silicate.



**Bavenite on microcline, 5.8 cm, from the Valdeconeillos quarry, Cadalso de los Vidrios, Madrid Province, Spain. Fabre Minerals specimen and photo.**

Jordi also is one of several dealers now handling ever more impressive specimens of **plumbogummite coating and replacing pyromorphite** from the general vicinity of the Yangshuo mine, Guilin, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. Around the turn of millennium the Daoping and Yangshuo mines (which enter the same orebody from different sides) won fame as one of the world's greatest localities, past or present, for pyromorphite, and more recently we've come to know the peculiar specimens in which blue-green plumbogummite appears to have been thickly poured over groups of large pyromorphite crystals, unfortunately blurring the crystals' outlines. But it's just in the past year or so that we've seen some amazing specimens, some very large, in which pale green plumbogummite forms either thin coatings or faithful, complete pseudomorphous replacements of pyromorphite crystals such that the least details of the latter come through, even to complex hopping on the terminations. I saw a couple of blockbuster specimens of this material at the 2014 Denver Show (again, see January-February 2015), and Jordi for his part has four fine miniatures and a 2.4-cm thumbnail now up on his site. It is hard to describe the milky-green perkiness and *precision* of these specimens, which defy the old notion that pseudomorphs can't be pretty...so I will show you a picture of one of Jordi's best:



**Plumbogummite coating pyromorphite, 2.9 cm, from near the Yangshuo mine, Guilin, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. Fabre Minerals specimen and photo.**

And now, after long wanderings in foreign parts, I'll return to Arizona. The website of *Shelter Rock Minerals* ([shelterrockminerals.com](http://shelterrockminerals.com)) has a page with 33 specimens from an old hoard from the great Mammoth-St. Anthony mine at Tiger—closed in 1953 and secure since then in its reputation as one of the world's best localities for crystallized caledonite, linarite, leadhillite, diaboite and more, and noteworthy too for “snowflake” cerussite, vanadinite, willemite and other more common items. The definitive article, by the late Richard Bideaux, may be found in the rare, long out-of-print “Arizona I” issue (May-June 1980). In the colorful *Shelter Rock* specimens, many exotic Tiger species appear only in massive or microcrystallized form, but then again the eight **wulfenite** specimens are beautiful clusters of red-orange to yellow, tabular crystals to around 1 cm individually; the crystal clusters measure from 3.6 to 6.5 cm and are priced at only \$50 to \$200. They are, I would say, the best bargains of any glimpsed during this giddy shoot, now concluded, down the “what’s new online” waterslide.

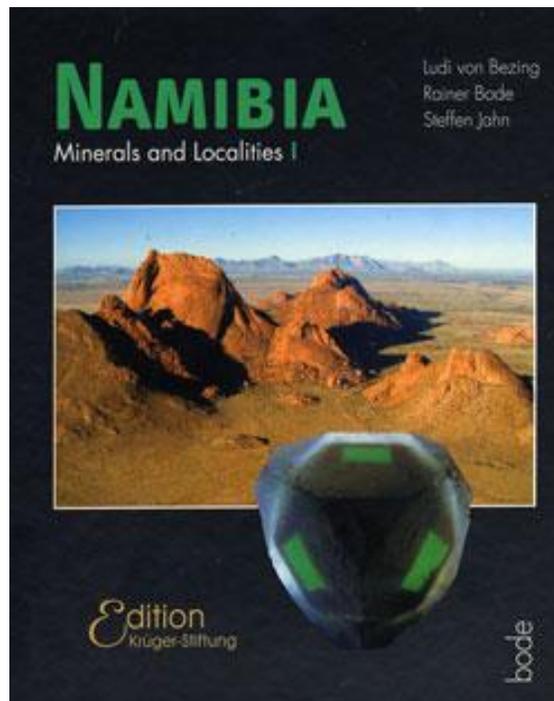


**Wulfenite, 6 cm, from the Mammoth-St. Anthony mine, Tiger, Arizona. Shelter Rock Minerals specimen and photo.**



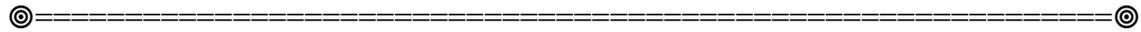
## Two New Books

In 2007, Rainer Bode's publishing house, Bode Verlag GmbH ([bodeverlag.de](http://bodeverlag.de)) published a massive (nine pounds!) book on the minerals and mineral localities of Namibia. The book's first printing quickly sold out, and there was no second printing, and thus many people who waited too long to order a copy were disappointed. But Rainer has now responded by issuing a *second* very large book on the same subject, and he is not finished yet: *Namibia I: Minerals and Localities* will be followed in due course by a *Namibia II* and even perhaps a *Namibia III*. The first volume in the series (2014) is 608 pages long and contains thousands of beautiful specimen photos and other photos (and weighs *seven* pounds), and at 78 Euros (about \$100) it is a bargain. Its chapters are names of localities, the Tsumeb chapter alone coming in at 156 pages, and it is packed with data, not only about the minerals but also about the geology and collecting history of each Namibian place—from the huge Tsumeb mine to the many little holes in the ground in Kaokoland (northern Namibia) which lately have been turning out such fine specimens of diopside, cerussite, shattuckite, malachite, wulfenite and more. The *Mineralogical Record* bookstore is already sold out of *Namibia I* but that may change—in time for the Tucson Show, we hope. Meanwhile you can go to [bodeverlag.de/shop](http://bodeverlag.de/shop) and order a copy.



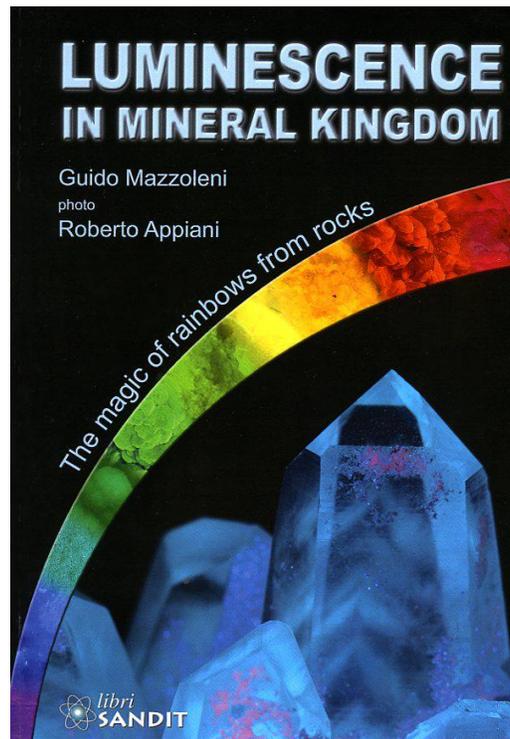
Let me draw your attention also to *Luminescence in [the] Mineral Kingdom* (2012), by Guido Mazzoleni with photos by Roberto Appiani—the best little book on the topic of mineral fluorescence that I have ever encountered. The original, Italian-language version was published in 2010; this English translation (by Constance Del Nero) is in response to the fact that, as the author writes, “recently issued books about fluorescence of minerals under UV light are almost lacking worldwide.” At 240 pages, the book is a thorough treatment of the topic of mineral fluorescence, with extensive backgrounds provided by chapters on optics, basic concepts of mineral chemistry, the causes of fluorescence in





minerals, the varieties of ultraviolet lamps, fluorescent-mineral-collecting tips, two glossaries of terms, and a short survey of major worldwide localities (and many “minor” Italian ones) for fluorescent mineral species. The discussions in general are scrupulously detailed and well illustrated with photos and diagrams; the author assumes little specialized knowledge on the reader’s part but treats him/her, anyway, like an intelligent, curiosity-driven adult with a taste for beauty. In general the translation is fluent—with the major exception that “the” often gets omitted from the English sentences, and even from the book’s title (surely *someone* should have seen the need for “the” before “Mineral Kingdom” on the cover and title page - !). That bit of carping aside, though, I highly recommend this book to all enthusiasts of mineral fluorescence.

The book is produced in Italy, and its only authorized U.S. distributor is George V. Polman of *Polman Minerals*: go to [polmanminerals.com/html/books\\_for\\_sale.html](http://polmanminerals.com/html/books_for_sale.html). It is a softcover measuring 9.25 × 6.5 inches, and its price (including U.S. shipping and handling) is \$47.17. All copies now being sold by Mr. Polman are signed by Guido Mazzoleni, the author. See a picture of the front cover on the next (and final) page here:



Happy Holidays!

