What's New in the Mineral World?

Report #71
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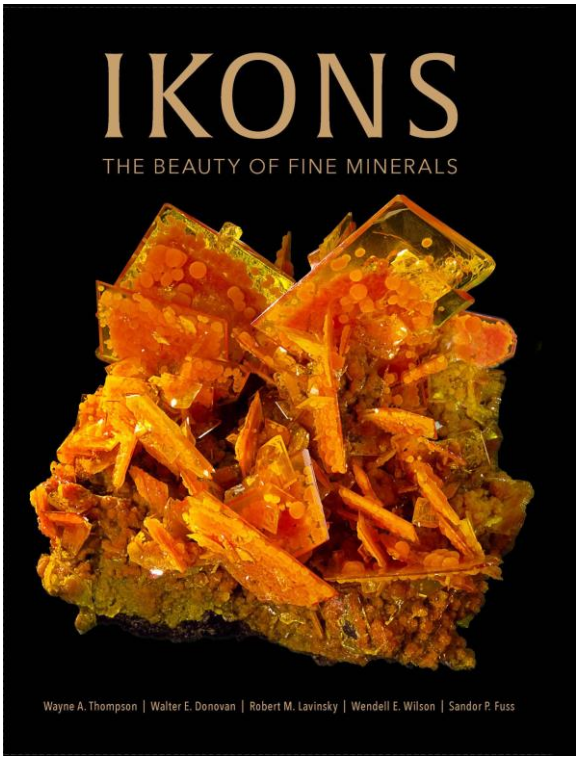


Just to remind or inspire you…here is our gorgeous *Ikons* book, available for $200 from the Bookstore on this website. But be aware that we are almost out of our allotment, and if indeed we are able to get any more after that, the price will have to go up. On the other hand, if you would like to support the Mineralogical Record while getting something *extra*-spectacular in return, go for the much rarer leatherbound edition at $950…and here (below) is **online report #71.**

Introducing report #70 back in June, I noted that that report followed its predecessor by only two months—and, as you may have observed, these reports come at intervals usually more like four months, or, well, sometimes even five. But here comes another speedy one, only slightly more than two months after the last one, sharing a few online things taken note of in July and August.

Dan Weinrich's website (weinrichmineralsinc.com) appears quite often in these reports, as Dan faithfully updates his site every Thursday, and specimens from new lots of nice minerals may be seen every week, either bunched together on the first page or two or else scattered through the site's many subsequent pages. Scattered thus, this late August, are three specimen lots which fully deserve your attention if you haven't already seen them.

First, Dan has maybe about a dozen fine miniatures of lustrous metallic black **chalcocite**, in sharp cyclic twins in loose groups and on matrix, from the Las Cruces mine, Gerena-Guillen-Salteras, Sevilla, Spain. As noted in the print report on the 2023 Ste.-Marie-aux-Mines Show (in the September-October 2023 *Mineralogical Record*), the big copper mine which is the source of these specimens yielded them only briefly in recent years, and the mine is already closed, so anyone interested in these superb chalcocites should acquire one, as they say, "while the supply lasts." Most of the supply in question is now in the hands of Dan Weinrich, who acquired the specimens (with much else) from Jordi Fabre while that sociable, scrupulous dealer from Barcelona was in the process of closing his business. Shown here is one of the best of the miniatures of Spanish chalcocite which is still available on the Weinrich website, priced at $275.

Chalcocite, 4.5 cm, from the Las Cruces mine, Gerena-Guillen-Salteras, Sevilla, Spain. Dan Weinrich Minerals Inc. specimen and photo.

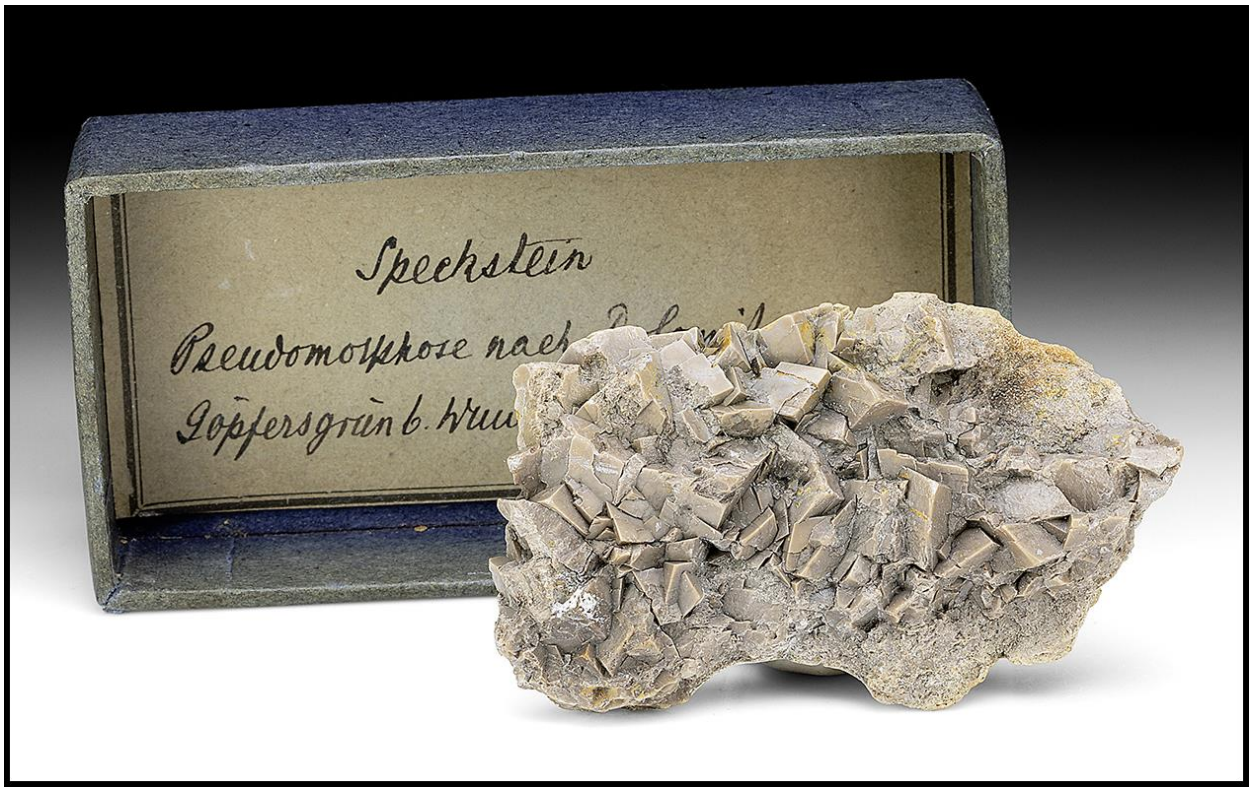
Also with Dan Weinrich are several loose, excellent, thumbnail-size crystals of **väyrynenite** from the Shakpo mine, Shigar River Valley, Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan. This exotic hydrous Mn-Be phosphate was once known only to micromounters and was regarded as exceedingly rare, but a few recent finds in Pakistan's mountains have shown up with dealers, promoting the species to only, say, medium-rare. Larger crystals exist, but a thumbnail as good as one of Dan's would still get you bragging rights among rare-species enthusiasts. Some of the orange-pink, prismatic crystals have transparent areas near their sharp, sloping terminal faces, and all are attractive; Dan prices them in the mid-three figures.

Väyrynenite, 2 cm, from the Shakpo mine, Shigar River Valley, Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan. Dan Weinrich Minerals Inc. specimen and photo.

Scheelite from the prolific Yaogangxian tungsten mine near Chenzhou, Hunan Province, China is generally overshadowed by scheelite from other Chinese localities (e.g. Mt. Xuebaoding), but at its best it is still very good: "The most aesthetic specimens are those showing yellow scheelite crystals perched on transparent and colorless to milky white quartz prisms," to quote from the article on the Yaogangxian mine by Berthold Ottens in the November-December 2011 *Mineralogical Record*. On the handful of Yaogangxian scheelite miniatures now on the Weinrich website, the scheelite crystals perch not on quartz but on intergrowths of pale purple, transparent fluorite crystals with microcrystals of pyrite. The sharp pseudo-octahedrons of scheelite, to 1 cm individually, inhabit the fluorite matrix plates thickly and are a bright yellow-orange…not bad for a "secondary" Chinese scheelite locality. Dan Weinrich asks $835 for the fine-looking miniature shown here.

Scheelite on fluorite, 5.3 cm, from the Yaogangxian mine, Chenzou, Hunan, China. Dan Weinrich Minerals Inc. specimen and photo.

Dan Weinrich Minerals Inc. also offers a few old reproachlessly "classic" German specimens, of which the most interesting (in my opinion) is a 6-cm-wide piece of massive, pale brownish gray talc ("Speckstein") with its top covered by a tight intergrowth of rhombohedral **talc pseudomorphs after dolomite**. An old label which comes with the specimen gives its locality as Göpfersgrün (not "Topfersgrunf," as the website's blurb has it), Bavaria—yes, it is also the well-known source of old specimens showing talc pseudomorphs after prismatic crystals of *quartz*. But, according to a 2003 *Lapis* article, the Johanneszeche talc mine at Göpfersgrün, which was worked between the 12th century and final closure in March 2003, produced not only the famous talc-after-quartz pseudomorphs but also, much less abundantly, talc pseudomorphs after dolomite, calcite, and tremolite. I have never seen an example of one of the non-quartz pseudomorphs offered for sale, but here, for you fellow German-classics lovers, is an intriguing one priced at $330.



Talc after dolomite, 6 cm, from Göpfersgrün, Wunsiedel, Bavaria, Germany. Dan Weinrich Minerals Inc. specimen and photo.

Finally, scattered about the pages of Dan Weinrich's website are about half a dozen cabinet-size specimens of **halite and gypsum** from a *new* German locality: the potash mine at Bleicherode, near Nordhausen, Thuringia. Actually, this mine goes back many decades, but it was not until about 2010 that jumbo halite/gypsum specimens like these of Dan's reached several mineral dealerships. The floater clusters of sharp, colorless cubic crystals of halite and colorless (but stained brownish orange by iron oxides) fishtail-twinned

crystals of gypsum are quite dramatic; what's more, they are spectacularly fluorescent in shortwave ultraviolet light, the halite turning orange and the gypsum blue-white, and the gypsum is even phosphorescent, continuing to glow white for several seconds after the ultraviolet light is switched off. The example shown here bears a price tag of $1,430.

Halite and Gypsum, 12.5 cm, from Bleicherode, Nordhausen, Thuringia, Germany. Dan Weinrich Minerals Inc. specimen and photo.

Andy Seibel of *Andy Seibel Minerals* (andyseibel.com) has ten pages of goodies in his "Latest Updates" section; they are mostly miscellaneous one-of-a-kinders, but there are also four superb miniatures (one marked Sold as of August 25) featuring lustrous, deepest green, tabular crystals of **malachite** in sharp little clusters resting on beds of sky-blue

pseudomorphous chrysocolla on reddish brown matrix, from the Mashamba West mine, Kolwezi District, Democratic Republic of Congo. Recently from the Mashamba West mine we have seen many specimens showing big red octahedral cuprite crystals on and in chrysocolla, but these "primary" malachite crystals are just as attractive and (to judge from market supplies) rarer than the cuprites. Andy's four specimens range in size from 5 to 8 cm and in price from $550 to $1,800, and even though the one shown here is near the lower end of these ranges (5 cm, $650), I can't help but think that it is the prettiest of the lot.

Malachite on chrysocolla, 5 cm, from the Mashamba West mine, Kolwezi District, Katanga copper crescent, Democratic Republic of Congo. Andy Seibel Minerals specimen and photo.

At the big mineral shows I always look forward to checking out the friendly Italians of *The Webmineralshop*, whose online presence (webmineralshop.com) is as full of good things as their jam-packed domains at Ste.-Marie, Munich and Tucson. On this website's "Summer 2024—Last Updates" page one can find about a dozen fine, mostly miniature-

size specimens of **anglesite** from the Monteponi mine, Iglesias, Sardinia, Italy (see Renato Pagano and Wendell Wilson's article on this locality in November-December 2014)—all showing creamy white, equant crystals of anglesite to 2 cm or so on massive galena. The largest and most expensive specimen has sharp anglesite crystals scattered all over a 10-cm matrix and costs 800 euros (almost the same as $800), but most of the others are just as nice for their sizes; for example, the 7-cm piece shown here, with a huddle of 2-cm anglesite crystals on one side, costs 350 euros. Good anglesite (and cerussite, and phosgenite) specimens from the Monteponi mine are, of course, "old"—The Webmineralshop obtained this lot from the former Bedogné collection—and thus the modern collector who respects the mineralogical past would be wise to obtain one. No, they are not as impressive as the gorgeous, gemmy yellow anglesites from Touissit, Morocco of more recent times, but they are classics indeed.

Anglesite, 7 cm, from the Monteponi mine, Iglesias, Sardinia, Italy.
Webmineralshop specimen and photo.

The same page on the Webmineralshop website also has a few of the new, so far rather mysterious **fluorite** specimens which show an "alexandrite effect," from a vague locality in Nigeria: there is a relevant note in my online report #68, posted in December 2023, with two photos of a specimen which appears deep blue in sunlight and greenish blue in incandescent light. According to Jordi Fabre, specimens like this emerged in February 2023

from a locality which Jordi was fairly sure is called the "Jalingo mine, Mambilla Plateau, Taraba State," Nigeria, and now the website of The Webmineralshop offers seven specimens of what is clearly the same material, as loose, single cubic crystals and penetration twins to small-cabinet size, priced between 90 and 380 Euros, these from a locality given by the Italians as "Akwana, Logo Benue, Nigeria." Well, according to Mindat, "Akwana" is a "deposit" of unspecified type near the *town* of Logo, in Benue *State* in southeastern Nigeria, whereas "Jalingo" is not a mine but a hill—"a rounded elevation of limited extent"—in Taraba State, very near "Akwana" in neighboring Benue State. I have not yet seen any of this new fluorite in person, but hope that some will show up at the Munich Show in October. If it does, the dealer who has it can be interrogated, and, anyway, this fluorite is very pretty (to judge by its pictures), and the "alexandrite effect" is surely a winning feature. Meanwhile, the Webmineralshop example shown here is available for 140 euros.

Fluorite, 7 cm, from "Akwana Logo Benue," Nigeria.
Webmineralshop specimen and photo.

You do not have to be, like Mike Keim of *Marin Mineral* (marinmineral.com), a dug-in Californian to be impressed by the mineral riches that the pegmatite mines and prospects of southernmost California have been producing at intervals for more than a century now. Of the dozens (hundreds?) of these pegmatite diggings, by far the most famous is the Himalaya mine, in the Mesa Grande District, San Diego County, whose **elbaite** crystals are among the world's best and most distinctive—as a July 18 update on Mike's website can remind us. Here are 12 unusual, colorful thumbnails and miniatures of Himalaya mine elbaite, each one different and all modestly priced, along with a Himalaya mine morganite and even a **hambergite**, as well as a few spiffy thumbnails from other San Diego County localities. Mike does not say from whose collection the specimens came or how "old" they are, but here are three, anyway, from the Himalaya mine: a thumbnail whereon a single pink, translucent, well terminated elbaite crystal rises from an off-white clump of feldspar crystals; a thin 3.5-cm stalk of elbaite crystals attached at funny angles; and that hambergite, a fine, opaque white single crystal 1.8 cm long priced at $80 (remarkably, for such a rarity).

Elbaite on feldspar, 2 cm, from the Himalaya mine, Mesa Grande District, San Diego County, California. Marin Mineral Company specimen and photo.

Elbaite, 3.5 cm, from the Himalaya mine, Mesa Grande District, San Diego County, California. Marin Mineral Company specimen and photo.

Hambergite, 1.8 cm, from the Himalaya mine, Mesa Grande District, San Diego County, California. Marin Mineral Company specimen and photo.

The *Marin Mineral* website is mentioned often in this space, not just because Mike Keim has an excellent eye for minerals but also because new updates on the site come very frequently: there have been *four* since the July 18 California posting just cited. On August 9, Mike showed us 15 splendid gem crystals, many of which are tanzanites from the Merelani mines of Tanzania, lusciously deep blue (and one lemon-yellow), but also there are gem crystals of scapolite, dravite, spinel and others from various places, as well as something much less familiar: a loose, partially gemmy, blue-green crystal of **kornerupine** from a locality given only as "Tanzania." The 2.8-cm crystal is crudely formed but still an exceptional specimen of this very rare complex silicate which is usually seen—if seen at all—in scraps and fragments with negligible aesthetics. Mike's *other* three updates after the one in mid-July are entirely different from those just noted and from each other…check in on Marin Mineral often, whenever you think of it, is the moral of this paragraph.

Kornerupine, 2.6 cm, from Tanzania. Marin Minerals specimen and photo.

In report #69, posted on April 7, 2024, I went on a while about the extensive selections of radioactive minerals offered by Phil Persson of *Persson Rare Minerals* (perssonrareminerals.com), and now will say that the website still has hundreds of specimens of such rare, hot items as soddyite, kasolite, guilleminite, rutherfordine, etc., etc., from the Congo, beautiful autunite from Portugal, metatorbernite from France, and plenty more. But scroll down on this website a while and you will come on dozens of miniatures and cabinet-size specimens from a recent find of **pyromorphite** in a prospect somewhere near (and tapping the same orebody as) the Daoping mine, Guilin, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. Yes, the Daoping-Yangshao mine area is well established by now as probably the world's greatest "modern" locality for pyromorphite, and its specimens have fairly flooded the market for the past 20+ years—but this new occurrence is *different*, and so far I have not seen examples from it with any dealers other than Phil. Thus there is a fat paragraph on the material in the 2024 Tucson Show report (in May-June 2024), and Phil still has plenty of specimens. The deeply hoppered crystals are not grass-green or yellow-green, as pyromorphite from Daoping usually is, but rather are brownish green or dark olive-green, calling to mind antique pyromorphites from Phoenixville, Pennsylvania or even Bad Ems, Germany. Phil Persson's specimens are impressive, and a miniature such as the one shown here will be priced in the mid-three figures. If, like me, you are fond of pyromorphite doing its best, these *new* examples from the Daoping mine area could well be of interest to you.

Pyromorphite, 5 cm, from the Daoping mine area, Guilin, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. Persson Rare Minerals specimen and photo.

The website of *Boren & King* (borenandkingminerals.com) has a series of galleries by which materials are placed under miscellaneous rubrics (Recent Additions, Elmwood Specimens, Gemstones, Meteorites and Tektites, Man-Made Minerals, etc.), but keep patiently scrolling down, and at the end of the line you will find Native Metals, wherein there are 30 **copper** specimens, mostly thumbnail and miniature-size, from localities including the Ray and Chino mines, the Milpillas mine, Tsumeb, Michigan, Kazakhstan, Russia and more—and most of these little pieces of various habits are highly desirable for those who fancy well crystallized, withal very low-priced, native copper. Shown here is a nearly random pick-of-the-litter: from Arizona's Ray mine: an elongated spinel-law twin with a thin malachite coating ($38); from the Empire mine in Michigan's Copper Country, a group of spinel-law twins with a just-right patina ($150); and from Tsumeb, a complex group of equant crystals with some malachite staining ($300).

Copper, 3.3 cm, from the Ray mine, Pinal County, Arizona.
Boren & King specimen and photo.

Copper, 4.1 cm, from the Empire mine, Copper Harbor, Keweenaw County, Michigan. Boren & King specimen and photo.

Copper, 5.6 cm, from Tsumeb, Namibia. Boren & King specimen and photo.

Speaking of small but elegant specimens, Rob Lavinsky posted an August 1 update of *The Arkenstone* (irocks.com) wherein he offers another slew of top-quality thumbnails from the former collection of Alex Schauss (see the announcements of earlier slews of these at the 2023 and 2024 Tucson Shows: May-June 2023 and May-June 2024). About a third of the specimens are already marked Sold, and Rob is to be credited with keeping them up on the site anyway for our enjoyment and edification, with only their prices removed. Of the thumbnails still *un*sold as of late August, I show you here, first, what is perhaps the world's best specimen of **schizolite,** from the Wessels mine, Kalahari Manganese Field, South Africa. This material, as Rob explains in the accompanying text, was originally called pectolite, then bustamite, then misidentified as a new species called marshallsussmanite, then finally (sorry, Marshall) was shown to be schizolite. The Schauss/Arkenstone thumbnail example of this excruciatingly rare Na-Ca-Mn silicate is even *pretty*, and costs $2,750.

Schizolite, 2.7 cm, from the Wessels mine, Kalahari Manganese Field, Northern Cape Province, South Africa. The Arkenstone specimen and photo.

In the Old European Classic department, Rob has a former Alex Schauss thumbnail of **euchroite** from L'ubietová (old German name: Libethen), Banská Bystrica, Slovakia: a prime dioptase-green example from the type locality for the species, collected at some time in the 19th century and formerly owned by (perhaps among others) Lazard Cahn, Jim and Dawn Minette, Bob Jones, Dave Wilber and Dave Bunk. Rob asks $6,000 for this remarkable piece.

Euchroite, 2 cm, from L'ubietová, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia. The Arkenstone specimen and photo.

A third premium Schauss thumbnail is an amazingly sharp floater crystal of **bornite** from a little-known mid-20th century find in the Kamfundwa mine, Kambove, Haut-Katanga, Democratic Republic of Congo—out of the former Bill Pinch collection. The common sulfide ore mineral is practically never seen in sharp crystals so large, and even though this one is "contacted" on its back side (as the video on the website shows), it still rivals the best small bornites from Cornwall, England; Bristol, Connecticut; and Dzhezkazgan, Kazakhstan.

Bornite, 2 cm, from the Kamfundwa mine, Kambove, Haut-Katanga, Democratic Republic of Congo. The Arkenstone specimen and photo.

Jürgen Tron is a German collector/dealer and hard-driving mineral scout who keeps busy running down new occurrences in worldwide places, writing about them in German publications, bringing specimens to shows, and putting the specimens up for sale on his two *Jet Minerals* websites (jetminerals.com and jetminerals.de). Jürgen was among the earliest Westerners to latch on to the several peculiar, rare species which around 2010 began to emerge from a boron-rich skarn surrounding the polymetallic orebody of the

Shijiangshan mine, Jipeng, Chifeng Prefecture, Inner Mongolia, China; the two most familiar of these are **roweite** (hydrous Ca-Mn borate) and **olshanskyite** (hydrated hydrous Ca borate). Click on either of the Jet Minerals website addresses and you will find yourself on Jürgen Tron's e-bay page, where attractive examples of the rare borates may be seen. Shown below, for example, is a miniature with a rosette of thin-tabular, brown-orange, translucent crystals of roweite on a leafy pile of similar crystals which rests, in turn, on subhedral crystals of snow-white olshanskyite; for this specimen Jürgen asks $380 "or best offer." Word is that work at the Shijiangshan mine is now past the zone which yielded specimens of this kind, and indeed they are much more elusive around the market now than they were a few years ago—so contact Jürgen if you want one.

Roweite with Olshanskyite, 4.5 cm, from the Shijiangshan mine, Jipeng, Chifeng Prefecture, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, China. Jet Minerals specimen and photo.

Martin Grüll's *Via Mineralia* dealership (viamineralia.com) is also no stranger to these reports, and here, from a "Latest Update," are three beautifully photographed one-of-a-kinders typical of the classy things you will find as you scroll down into the depths of this downright addictive website. Martin operates out of his native Austria, and this Latest Update is loaded with **fluorite** specimens from Austrian places which you have probably never heard of but which, it seems, have turned out beautiful fluorite while your attention has been elsewhere: here, for example, is a razor-sharp cubic crystal of deepest purple fluorite perching obliquely on white matrix, "from a recent discovery" in a small cleft in a zone "between two geological shelves" at Hieflau, Landl, Steiermark. Other Austrian

fluorites on the website are of different colors and styles, and many are larger, but this thumbnail is as lovely as any of them and is priced at 150 euros. (Martin points out the irregularity seen on the front left-hand face of the crystal is not damage but rather a snall octahedron face.)

Fluorite, 2.2 cm, from Hieflau, Landl, Steiermark, Austria. Via Mineralia specimen and photo.

Fine **calcite** from unfamiliar localities may also be seen on *Via Mineralia*. This imposing 12.4-cm specimen showing thick, pointed, largely gemmy crystals of yellow calcite is from Karadubsky, Kavalerovsky District, Primorskiy Kraj, in far-eastern Russia—the Kavalerovsky mines are near those of Dalnegorsk, and their minerals are often misassigned to the much more famous locality, but Martin makes the proper distinction here, and for this fine, robust-looking item he asks 770 euros.

Calcite, 12.4 cm, from Karadubsky, Kavalerovsky District, Primorskiy Kraj, Russia. Via Mineralia specimen and photo.

And near the end of his Latest Update, Martin wows us with a spectacular miniature of **hutchinsonite and orpiment** from the Quiruvilca District, La Libertad, Peru. The rare thallium-bearing sulfosalt hutchinsonite ($TlPbAs_5S_9$) is found nowhere but Quiruvilca as crystals routinely larger than micromount-size, and orpiment also does well there, but I do not recall ever seeing these species joined together to form a specimen as striking as this one. Its price is 940 euros.

Hutchinsonite and Orpiment, 4.8 cm, from the Quiruvilca mine, Santiago de Chuco Province, La Libertad Department, Peru. Via Mineralia specimen and photo.

Far from the first time in this space, Ray McDougall of *McDougall Minerals* (mcdougallminerals.com) comes through with more fine zeolites newly collected from the basalt cliffs around the Bay of Fundy. This time the lot consists of about 35 miniature to small-cabinet specimens of **stilbite with analcime** from a site at Five Islands, Cumberland County, Nova Scotia, all priced under $100. Loose clusters of pale orange stilbite fans are dotted by colorless, largely transparent, trapezohedral analcime crystals; the combination is lovely, the analcime crystals are glassily lustrous, and all of the specimens look quite fresh. For the miniature shown here, Ray asks a modest $75.

Stilbite and Analcime, 5.3 cm, from Five Islands, Cumberland County, Nova Scotia, Canada. McDougall Minerals specimen and photo.

Ray McDougall also has a new one-of-a-kinder which is extremely surprising. A small assortment of specimens from European localities, old and recent, which Ray has acquired is capped by an exceptional specimen, once in the Tracy Kimmel collection, which is a 3.3-cm matrix about two-thirds blanketed by sparkling blue crystals of **scorodite**, from the Clara mine, Oberwolfach, Baden-Württemberg (in the heart of the Black Forest), Germany. When we think of scorodite we think, of course, of the very small number of world-beating (and potentially budget-busting) specimens from Tsumeb and from the Cabrestante mine, Zacatecas, Mexico; we might think in passing, too, of the lesser, more recent scorodite specimens from the Ojuela mine and from a short-lived, obscure locality in China. But Clara mine scorodite can be nearer than you might think to the top of the beauty ladder, as

this example of Ray's demonstrates, and specimens are almost never seen on the market. To my regret, this one is *just a little too big* to qualify as a thumbnail, and trimming it would seem a bad idea, but I just had to tell you about it; its price is $450.

Scorodite, 3.3 cm, from the Clara mine, Oberwolfach, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. McDougall Minerals specimen and photo.

By now it has gotten to be my custom to end each online report with a rave-disquisition—plus dazzling photo, of course—concerning a single exceptional specimen spotted at random on some website or other along the way. In most previous cases the specimen has been beautiful, but this time I have chosen a piece that you might call "ugly," as seen on a website already noted at length: a huge, amazing specimen of **native lead** from Långban, Sweden, offered on the already much-discussed website of *Weinrich Minerals* (weinrichmineralsinc.com).

Native lead is quite rare, and specimen-quality crystals of it exceedingly so. Examples such as this towering one of Dan Weinrich's will usually show white efflorescences of alteration and/or will be speckled with black pyrochroite, $Mn^{2+}(OH)_2$, the latter bespeaking the origin of the lead in complex reduction processes in the manganese skarn which

surrounds the larger iron orebodies of Långban. But in premier specimens like this one, sharp lead crystals to more than 2 cm can be clearly discerned.

For a backstory, see (if you can lay hands on it), the Winter 1970 issue of the *Mineralogical Record*, and the article called "Långban-type Deposits in Bergslagen, Sweden," by the late Paul B. Moore. And take, anyway, a good, appreciative look at this 9-cm "black ugly" from Dan Weinrich's website, priced at $7,800. Dan does not tell us from which old collection it came, but it is, for *what* it is, about as good as it gets (except for the one in the Mim Museum).

Native lead with pyrochroite, 9 cm, from Långban, Värmland, Sweden. Dan Weinrich Minerals Inc. specimen and photo.

Good mineralogical wishes to all for the oncoming autumn…

Tom Moore

