

Mineral Spotlight: Azurite

This is a deep blue copper carbonate hydroxide mineral. The name comes from the term azure, which refers to a bright blue color. This mineral forms tabular, prismatic crystals. It can also form earthy, granular or concretionary masses. There have been instances where it forms massive, stalactitic and even botryoidal crystal habits. It has a monoclinic crystal system with a hardness of 3.5-4. It is a secondary mineral formed from oxidation of copper resources by means of water rich in carbonate ions. It can also form as a secondary mineral in sulfide deposits found with carbonate rocks.

Malachite, which is another ore of copper, is replaced pseudomorphically by azurite through hydration. Azurite is often found together with other minerals such as malachite, limonite and chrysocolla. It is used as an ornamental stone and during the Renaissance it was used as a pigment in art.

This feature was posted on Dice Museum social media by Museum docent Gregory Ian Oduor on 7/22/2021. It has since been edited to fit a web-based format.

