

Mineral Spotlight: Smithsonite

For February's first Mineral of the Week, we have smithsonite! Smithsonite is a carbonate mineral that can be found in a wide range of colors: blue, green, yellow, and of course, pink! It is most commonly found in rounded masses, exhibiting the botryoidal crystal habit that we see in this specimen. The name smithsonite comes from James Smithson, who was the founder of the Smithsonian Institution.

Being a zinc carbonate mineral, it's commonly found in oxidation zones of zinc ore deposits and in the nearby calcareous rocks. Smithsonite can be polished as gems, but is more frequently mined as an ore of zinc.

This feature was created by curator Andrew Mulder and posted on Dice Museum social media on 01/30/2023

