



ROCKY TALES

The Official Publication of the Lake Havasu Gem & Mineral Society
March 2026 Volume 52, Issue 3 1

GENERAL MEETING

Next meeting is Wednesday March 4, 2026 at 5:30 pm at Yacht Club at

631 London Bridge Road

5:30 pm Sign in and drink coffee, eat snacks, catch up with friends

6:00 pm Meeting starts



President's Message for March

March is already shaping up to be another exciting month for our Society!

Winterfest was fabulous! We had fantastic foot traffic at our booth, met so many wonderful people, and shared our love of rocks with the community. A big thank you to everyone who helped set up, staff the booth, and pack it all back up again. Events like this truly show what a strong and active club we are.

At our last general meeting — and again at our recent board meeting — we proudly swore in our new board members. They have officially taken their oaths and are already stepping enthusiastically into their new roles. It's always energizing to see fresh leadership ideas combined with the steady experience of our continuing members. We're in great hands moving forward.

We also held our Gem Show Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon, and what a wonderful time it was! Good food, good stories, and plenty of laughter. Our gem show simply wouldn't happen without the many hands that step up year after year. We are grateful for every one of you.

Our store and lapidary shop are both doing great and staying busy — which is a wonderful problem to have! We can always use more volunteers, whether it's helping in the store, assisting in the shop, or pitching in where needed. Many hands make light work... and more time for rockhounding.

Speaking of rockhounding — we need someone willing to step up and lead some field trips! Our members love getting out into the desert together, but trips don't happen without leaders. If

you've got a favorite collecting spot and are willing to guide a group, please let us know. We'll support you every step of the way.

Looking ahead, Michelle and Christine will be representing our club at Jamaica Elementary for the Rock Road Show with the first graders. There's nothing better than seeing young faces light up when they hold their first sparkling geode or learn how rocks are formed. Thank you to both of them for inspiring the next generation of rockhounds!

Spring is bringing momentum, energy, and opportunity. Thank you all for being part of this amazing Society.

Rock steady,

Steve Prather

President, Lake Havasu Gem & Mineral Society



March Birthdays

Have a wonderful day!

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| Sierra Belcher | Ami Radensheben |
| Kennedi Bartlett | Kirsten Saurwein |
| David DeRisirio | Laurie Trestin |
| Laurie Hnatluk | Lucasta Snowball |
| John Jackson | Jason Upchurch |
| Norb Kiesling | Sandie Willis |
| Carol Lewis | |
| Terry McKeever | |
| Randy Price | |

LHGMS General Membership Meeting

February 4th, 2026 / 6:00 PM /Yacht Club-631 London Bridge Rd.

Officers Present

Steve Prather-President

Tara Houde-Secretary

Josh Bagwell-Sgt. At Arms

Meeting called to order by Steve Prather at 6:00 PM

Notes

1. Review and acceptance of previous Meeting Minutes: Minutes are available at Havasu Rocks, the Society website and in the Rocky Tales email.

1. Only 3 Board Members were present tonight due to injuries and medical procedures!

2. President's Report:

a. We are in need of more inventory at Havasu Rocks! Sending a couple people to Tucson shows to shop.

b. A vending Team is needed! It's important to put ourselves out in the community. Sales have been good at vending events.

c. Elley and Steve are not able to lead field trips due to injuries. Anyone in the club is welcome to lead field trips.

3. Treasurer's Report: Review and acceptance of the Treasurer's Report.

Treasurer's reports are available at Havasu Rocks.

a. Talked about our proposed budget.

4. Havasu Rock Shop/Lapidary Shop Report:

a. Havasu Rocks store is doing great!

b. The lapidary shop is doing well, seeing an increase in use this month.

c. Talked about purchasing equipment for the Lapidary Shop, such as a bead machine.

5. Josh Bagwell was sworn in as new Sgt. At Arms.

6. Membership Update-Rose Mann: We now have 294 Members! 15 new members last month.

a. Prices have been raised on badges from \$16 to \$20 due to rising costs and tax.

b. New Members and Guests: We welcomed 5 new members.

7. QIA Pow Wow: Thank you to all the volunteers! Only club info was passed out at our booth.
8. Winterfest: Thank you to all the volunteers! We had 2 booths.
 - a. Last year we made \$231
 - b. This year we made \$1,161

Are there any folks interested in the Annual Parker Tube Float? Member Keith Klingelsmith is the contact person. There is a sign-up and info sheet at Havasu Rocks.

- d. We are planning another chili cook-off and picnic. Check the website and your email for updates.
9. Steve McKay showed 2 educational videos.
 - a. The allure of Morganite
 - b. Mystique of Jasper
10. Having a club claim was brought up by a member.
 - a. Steve needs people to go out with him.
 - b. Need locations for possible club claims.
 - c. BREAK AT 6:31pm
11. Michele Trumbull and Christine Evans are presenting the Rock Road Show to Jamaica Elementary 1st graders on February 20th.
12. 50/50:
 - a. First winner was Steve McKay, with \$54
 - b. Second winner was Byron, with \$27
 - c. The club received \$27
13. Fred, from the Yacht Club, welcomed the General Membership.
 - a. The Yacht Club appreciates us being there!
 - b. Please feel free to attend our meeting and consider joining.
14. **NO MORE OUTSIDE DRINK CONTAINERS ALLOWED IN THE YACHT CLUB BUILDING!!!** See through plastic water bottles are okay.
15. Scholarship:
 - a. 2 students were chosen this year. One is an astrophysics major, the other is going into environmental studies.
16. Gem Show Volunteers:
 - a. Luncheon at Mudsharks.
 - b. Those involved should have gotten an email with pertinent information.
 - c. If you can't make it, a gift certificate will be provided.
 - d. Thanks for an AWESOME show this year!
17. We have t-shirts and aprons available at Havasu Rocks!
18. Cab contest winner:
 - a. #10- Matthew Choate

Next meeting is March 4th, 2026 at 6:00 PM, with a 5:30 PM social time at The Yacht Club

Meeting adjourned at 7:19 PM

Minutes taken by Society Secretary-Tara Houde

BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR SOCIETY

President	Steve Prather
Vice President	Elley Ringo
Society Secretary	Tara Houde
Sargent at Arms	Josh Bagwell
Executive Director h	Christine Evans
Immediate Past President	Jason Upchurch
Havasu Rocks Director	Steve Prather
Society Treasurer	Michelle Trumbull

BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR HAVASU ROCKS

Havasu Rocks President	Steve Prather
Havasu Rocks Vice President	Elley Ringo
Havasu Rocks Treasurer	Steve Petrangelo
Havasu Rocks Secretary	Kelsey Fredrichsen
Lapidary Shop Director	Josh Bagwell

Havasu Rocks Store Director	Steve Prather
Assistant Havasu Rocks Store Director	Michelle Trumbull

<p align="center">Schedule of Workshops and Events</p> <p align="center">Check out our website to stay current with planned events at: https://lakehavasugms.com/events/</p>		
Shop Safety Workshop	As needed and requested. Workshop is required in order to use Lapidary Shop	This is our shop orientation, how to use equipment per manufacturer recommendations, and the safe use of equipment. Cost is \$15.
CHILI COOKOFF	SATURDAY MARCH 14 At 4:00 pm.	Bring your chili in crockpot or bowl and all the add-ons. Bowls, spoons provided. Contact Julie at 949-422-7339 for more details.
BBQ PICNIC/POTLUCK	Saturday April 11, 2026 Rotary Park	More details to come
Rock Swap Tailgate	In the works – feedback welcome	Swap rocks, gems, minerals, fossils at our first annual Swap Tailgate.
Parker Tube Float	Saturday, June 13	Sign up sheet at Havasu Rocks

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Rocks, Rattlers, and Reality Checks

Rockhounding in Arizona is wonderful — but yes, we do share the desert with some creatures that deserve respect. When you are out around Lake Havasu City rockhounding, this is especially relevant.

Here's a clear, practical guide for venomous animals in Arizona and exactly what to do if you encounter them.



1. Rattlesnakes (Most Common Venom Risk)

Common species:

- Western Diamondback Rattlesnake
- Mojave Rattlesnake
- Sidewinder
- Black-tailed Rattlesnake

Where you'll encounter them:

- Under rocks (big flat ones — classic rockhound move)
- In crevices

- In desert washes
- In shaded areas mid-day
- Active most in spring and fall; summer mornings/evenings

If You See One:

- Stop immediately.
- Do NOT try to move it.
- Back away slowly.
- Give it 6+ feet.
- Let it leave.

⚠ Most bites happen when someone tries to move or kill the snake.

Rockhounding Safety:

- Wear high leather boots.
- Use a rock hammer or stick to flip rocks — not your hands.
- Never put hands where you can't see.
- Step ON logs, not over them.

2. Arizona Bark Scorpion (Most Medically Significant Scorpion)

Species:

- Arizona Bark Scorpion

This is the only scorpion in Arizona considered potentially dangerous to adults (more serious for children and elderly).

Where they hide:

- Under rocks
- In wood piles
- Inside gloves
- In rock piles or mining tailings

If You Encounter One:

- Don't touch.
- Shake out gloves before putting them on.
- Check sitting areas.

- They glow under UV light (fun fact for night walks).

If Stung:

- Intense pain
- Numbness/tingling
- Usually not fatal for healthy adults
- Seek medical care if severe symptoms occur

 **3. Black Widow Spider**

Species:

- Western Black Widow

Where:

- Under rocks
- In abandoned structures
- In mine shafts

- In wood or debris

If Encountered:

- Just leave it alone.
- Shake out boots and gloves.

Bites are painful but rarely life-threatening in healthy adults.



4. Africanized Honey Bees (“Killer Bees”)

Species:

- Africanized Honey Bee

Where:

- Rock crevices
- Old mine shafts
- Tree hollows
- Abandoned equipment

Warning Signs:

- Loud buzzing
- Swarming behavior
- Bees flying at your face

If Aggressive:

- RUN immediately.
- Cover face.
- Get inside vehicle.
- Do NOT swat wildly.
- Remove stingers quickly if stung.

This is one of the more realistic desert dangers.

 **5. Gila Monster (Rare but Venomous)**

Species:

- Gila Monster

- Slow-moving
- Rarely aggressive
- Venomous bite (must chew to inject)

If Seen:

- Consider yourself lucky.
- Do not touch.
- Take photo from distance.



6. Harvesterrw Ants (Painful but Not Dangerous)

Species:

- Red Harvester Ant

You'll step on these more than anything else.

- Large cleared circles on ground.
- Painful sting.

- Not life-threatening unless allergic.
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Rockhound Safety Checklist (Especially Around Havasu)

When out in washes and old mining areas:

- ✓ High boots
 - ✓ Long pants
 - ✓ Leather gloves
 - ✓ Rock hammer for flipping
 - ✓ First aid kit
 - ✓ Water (more than you think you need)
 - ✓ Tell someone where you're going
-

What NOT To Do If Bitten by a Snake

- Do NOT cut the wound
- Do NOT suck venom
- Do NOT apply tourniquet
- Do NOT ice it

Instead:

- Stay calm.
 - Keep limb below heart.
 - Get to ER ASAP.
 - Call 911 if remote.
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Realistic Risk for Rockhounds:

In the Lake Havasu / Bullhead / Bouse region:

Most likely encounter:

1. Rattlesnake
2. Harvester ants
3. Bark scorpion

Least likely:

- Gila monster
- Black widow (unless in structures)



Speaking of Scorpions...

Watch out for Scorpion Weed of the genus *Phacelia* spp. If you've been out rockhounding lately and noticed a patch of purple haze hugging the desert floor, you've probably met scorpion weed — *Phacelia* species — one of our most charming (and misunderstood) spring wildflowers.

It gets its name from the way the flower stalk curls tightly at the tip, like a scorpion's tail ready to strike. But don't worry — it's far friendlier than the bark scorpions we watch for under rocks. As the tiny buds open, the curl slowly unfurls in a graceful spiral. It's a desert magic trick happening right at your boots.

Most of our local scorpion weeds bloom in shades of lavender to deep violet, often with fuzzy, bristly leaves that seem to glow in the sun. After winter rains, they can carpet washes and roadsides around Lake Havasu in soft purple drifts — a welcome contrast to our tans and browns.



A quick word of caution, though: those tiny hairs on the stems and leaves can irritate sensitive skin. Some people develop a mild rash after brushing against large patches, especially if they're already prone to plant allergies. It's not dangerous, but it can be itchy. Long pants and gloves — already good rockhounding practice — solve the problem nicely.

Besides being easy on the eyes, *Phacelia* is a pollinator powerhouse. Native bees absolutely love it. If you pause long enough, you'll hear the gentle hum before you even see the insects at work.

So next time you're out hunting agates or checking a favorite claim, take a minute to notice the "scorpion" at your feet. In a landscape known for sharp edges and hard stone, scorpion weed reminds us that the desert also curls, blooms, and surprises — just maybe don't sit in it.

STANDING COMMITTEES	
Events	Courtney Payton
Field Trips	Elley Ringo
Finance	Michele Trumbull
Gem Show	Steve Prather, chair Sandy Willis, co-chair Elley Ringo, vendors
Hospitality	Julie Petrangelo
Havasu Rocks	Michele Trumbull
Lapidary Shop	Steve Prather
Membership	Rose Mann
<i>If you are interested in being on one of the above committees, or chairing a committee, please contact the President Steve Prather.</i>	

The Lake Havasu Gem and Mineral Society meets **the first Wednesday of each month from Sept. through May at the Yacht Club facility at 631 London Bridge Road in Lake Havasu City.** Fiscal Year: February 1 – January 31.

Name badges are required for all members. One time or replacement badge cost is \$20.00.

Annual membership dues are payable on:

Due January 1 for all members who joined before July, 2024. (due Jan. 1 and delinquent after February meeting)

Due month of membership for all members who joined after July 2024. (due the first day of the month of join month and delinquent after the next month’s meeting)

Single membership cost is \$20.00 and Junior membership cost is \$10.00

Payment should be remitted to:

Lake Havasu Gem & Mineral Society ATTN: Membership
PO Box 990
Lake Havasu City AZ 86405

The Lake Havasu Gem & Mineral Society is a member of the Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies (RMFMS) and associated with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS).

Follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/HavaRockShop2017>

Website Administrator is Karen Sawyer <https://www.lakehavasugms.com>.



The Society newsletter, **Rocky Tales**, is published monthly from September through May and is available to Lake Havasu Gem and Mineral Society members by email. Members are encouraged to submit articles, news, photographs, jokes for submission in the newsletter. Please email submissions to the editor at:

Joyce McCluskey, **Rocky Tales** Editor, at
bigmamablue@gmail.com

Submit articles by the third week of the month for inclusion in the next month's newsletter.