

Whether you're a seasoned explorer who wants to break new ground, or you're just looking for a new experience for the family, Highlands East's abundance of Crown land, rich mining heritage, and vast mineral wealth is just what you've been looking for.

Basic Tips for Mineral Collecting

Dress Appropriately

Sturdy shoes (no open toes), hat, gloves

Go Prepared

Shovel, trowel, rock pick or bricklayer's hammer (do NOT use a carpentry hammer), safety glasses, collecting bag, newspaper for wrapping specimens

Stay Safe

Never go under overhanging rocks

Trails are marked with flagging tape



The Municipality of Highlands East is proud to be the first Municipality in Ontario to take steps to secure public mineral collecting sites to allow our residents and visitors an opportunity to get outside and appreciate nature in a new and exciting way.

Hobby Mineral Collecting is a fun outdoor recreational pursuit that people of all ages can enjoy, and it makes for a great family outing. Adults and kids alike will delight in the chance to dig for buried treasure, get hands-on with the unique geology that defines the Highlands region, and bring home some colourful gems of your very own!



"There's no bad place to dig in Haliburton County!"
-Steve Smith, Yukon gold prospector, and life-long mineral collector

Mineral Collecting in Highlands East



MUNICIPALITY OF
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to Explore*®

highlandseast.ca

Photo: Michael Bainbridge

Highlands East, Ontario is world famous for fine specimens of gem green apatite, deep purple fluorite, large crystals of collector minerals like mica, tremolite, zircon, titanite, feldspar, and several rare and unusual species like fluororichterite, and stillwellite.

Schickler Fluorite Occurrence

This site was explored for fluorite in the early-to-mid 1900s, and you can still easily find gemmy fluorite in colours ranging from colourless to rose-red, to deep amethyst purple in white calcite on the rock piles. Associated with fluorite in the calcite are hexagonal crystals of red/green apatite, yellow scapolite, buff coloured feldspar, and green pyroxene. The Schickler occurrence is only one potential collecting site of many on the 400 acre Crown property – come prepared to do some exploring!



Desmont Mine (Homer Yellowknife Prospect)

Like so many other properties in the area, this site has been explored for various rare elements in the past, but as was so often the case, nothing of economic potential was found. There are a number of small workings on the property where one can find beautiful and unusual mineral specimens though. It has long been a popular rockhound destination for hexagonal plates of silvery molybdenite, emerald green diopside, and the rare mineral stillwellite (which can be identified as small (~5mm), tabular crystals and coatings with a distinctive maroon-red colour). These, as well as other minerals are found in orange and white calcite near the workings.



Gibsons Road East Occurrence (Titanite Hill)

At this occurrence, you will find part of a large deposit that made this area famous amongst mineral collectors. A series of calcite veins carrying large crystals of gem green apatite, buff coloured feldspar, lustrous brown titanite, and black fluororichterite. Occurrences like this are known from Gooderham (the Bear Lake Diggings) to Wilberforce (Liscombe Mine). This one is very similar to both, but is easily accessible, and the reward is often greater. You will see where other collectors have uncovered parts of these veins, showing you where and how these minerals occur. From there you can pick through what has been left behind, or dig around to find a new vein!

Greenmantle Farms As fun as poking around in the woods looking for buried treasure can be, it can also be helpful to get some local advice to point you in the right direction.

At Greenmantle Farms you can take a guided tour of some great natural exposures of local minerals, and get some insight into their formation and their importance to the landscape. Please note that collecting is not permitted at this site.

Cameras are welcome, but hammers are not. For more information, or to arrange a tour, please contact Mark and Sandra Bramham through their website at www.mineraltours.net



No Charge to Collect - Permission Form Required

Currently, there are three mineral collecting sites available in Highlands East. At two of the sites, Schickler and Desmont, the municipality owns the mineral rights. Mineral collecting is encouraged, but **a signed waiver and a permission to collect form is required before going to the properties.**

When you have decided which sites (Desmont and/or Schickler) you wish to visit and what dates you will be visiting, go to highlandseast.ca and select Explore & Play / Mineral Collecting to complete the Mineral Collection Waiver and Application form online, one for each adult over 18 years. Children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

Permission forms are valid for two consecutive days.

We will email you back a signed and dated permission to collect form with directions to the sites.

Please plan ahead and **allow three business days** for the processing of your permission to collect form.

NOTE: Titanite Hill (Gibson Site) does not require a waiver be signed.