

Petoskey Stones Answers

Category: Nature

Level: Level 1

Year Introduced: 2013

Originating Institution: Michigan Conference

Requirement Answers:

1. What is a Petoskey Stone? What is its significance in the state of Michigan?

A Petoskey stone is a colonial coral fossil found in various places across the country, but a significant outcropping is found in the upper region of the lower peninsula of the state of Michigan. In 1965, the Petoskey stone, specifically *hexagonaria percarinata*, was designated as the state stone of Michigan.

2. Where can Petoskey Stones be found and what do they look like before they are polished?

Petoskey stones, colonial coral fossils, can be found in various states, but a significant number are found along the shores of the northern part of Lake Michigan, and across the northern section of the lower peninsula of Michigan. An unpolished Petoskey stone is usually a dull gray and often appears to have faint white markings. Frequently the six sided areas of the coral fossil can be seen while the stone is still dry.



3. How is a Petoskey Stone different from a rock or a mineral?

A Petoskey stone is not a rock or a mineral, but a fossil. A fossil is the petrified remains of a plant or animal. The Petoskey stone is a colonial coral fossil often associated with those living in warm ocean waters. These corals fossilized at the time of the Flood.

4. Either orally or in written form, share the "Legend of the Petoskey Stone".

An Ottawa Indian legend states that a French noble man named Antoine Carre, a fur trader with the John Jacob Astor Fur Company, met and married an Ottawa Indian princess. He was given the name of Neatooshing and became the chief of the tribe.

In 1787, a baby was born to the chief and noting the sunshine on the son's face, he was given the name of Petosegay. The name translated means "rising sun", "sunbeams of promise", or "rays of dawn".

As years went by he became a wealthy fur trader and married the daughter of the Ottawa chief, Pokozeegun.

In 1873, just before the death of Petosegay, a city came into being on his land along the bay at Bear Creek. The city, which was small at first, was named Petoskey, an English adaptation of the name Petosegay. It is here that a large number of Petoskey stones are found.



5. Define these terms as they relate to the Petoskey Stone: calcite, calyx, colonial coral, Dr. Edwin Strum, fossil, hexagon, hexagonaria percarinata, Neatoshing, Petosogay, polyp.

Calcite: The mineral material that Petoskey stones are formed from. It is the same material that limestone is composed of.

Calyx: The hexagonal shaped home of the coral found in the Petoskey stone.

Colonial Coral: Coral that live in colonies or groups attached to each other.

Dr. Edwin Strum: It was Dr. Strum in 1969 who designated that the species of colonial coral, hexagonaria percarinata, would be identified as the official Michigan stone from other types of colonial coral.

Fossil: The petrified remains of a plant or animal.

Hexagon: Apolygon consisting of six sides.

Hexagonaria Percarinata: The species of colonial coral designated as the official state stone of Michigan.

Neatoshing: This was the name given ot the Frenchman, Antoine Carre, by the Ottawa Indians when he became their chief. He was the father of Petosegay.

Petosegay: Son of chief Neatoshing. His name meant "rays of hope", "sunbeams of promise", or "rising son". It is from his name that we get the English form, Petoskey.

Polyp: An individual coral organism.



6. What rules of etiquette should be followed when hunting for Petoskey Stones?

Before looking in an area for Petoskey stones, make sure the area is safe and that any and all necessary permissions have been secured. Make sure that young people are properly supervised. Leave the area cleaner than you found it. Be courteous of others that may be in the area.

Be conservative in the number of specimens that you take with you. Petoskey stones are non-renewable.



7. List the materials needed when preparing to polish a Petoskey Stone.

A Petoskey stone

Various grits of sandpaper from very rough (40,60, 80 grit) to smoother grits (220, 320, 400, 600, 1,500 grit)

Sandpaper which can get wet works better than dry

A thick towel or layers of newspaper

A piece of cotton corduroy or blue jean material

Polishing compound (Aluminum Oxide Polish) or car wax

Container of water

8. List the steps for polishing a Petoskey Stone.

Begin by getting the stone wet.

Using rougher grits of sandpaper- (40, 60, or 80) grit, hold the stone firmly and rub the area to be polished. The first sanding requires much time and care so as to remove as many nicks and cracks as possible.

Keep the stone wet at all times.

Continue to use other grits of sand paper which will remove scratches-(220, 320, 400, 600, 1500) grit.

Finally, you can finish your stone by using various rubbing and polishing compounds such as are used with automobile polishing.

Dry your stone and examine.

There may be areas that need this procedure repeated to improve spots that may have been overlooked.

You can't use a standard rock polisher on a Petoskey stone because they are too soft and brittle and a rotary tumbler can easily erode their delicate structures, leaving them with mud instead of a polish. However, with precautions like using a very gentle tumble, shorter times, and added cushioning media, it is possible to use a tumbler for the initial shaping and smoothing stages. Many recommend a vibratory tumbler or hand-polishing for the final shine.

9. What safety procedures should be followed when hunting for Petoskey Stones and when polishing Petoskey Stones?

Children should be supervised during the hunting and polishing process by an adult.

The adult should be there to guide and answer questions that may arise.

Remember that the rougher grits of sandpaper can scrape skin.

10. Obtain a Petoskey Stone and follow the procedures for polishing it.

Stones can be purchased on-line. If possible go to an area where Petoskey stones are found. Polishing one that you have discovered can be the most rewarding. Follow the polishing procedures listed under requirement number eight.

Results will vary depending on the quality of the stone and your patience, perseverance, and care. Stick with it! If it is a good stone - the more you sand the prettier the stone will be.



11. Explain how each of the following scriptures relates to either hunting for Petoskey Stones or polishing Petoskey Stones: Jeremiah 29:13, Matthew 20:16 (Last Part), Ecclesiastes 9:10, Philippians 1:6, Psalm 138:8, Titus 2:14.

Jeremiah 29:13 Just as you must search for God and his will for your life so you must search for Petoskey stones in the same way for they are not always easy to find.

Matthew 20:16 Many people call themselves Christians, but only a few are the true ones who chose to truly follow God. Many Petoskey stones may be found, but only a few would be the ones you would choose to polish.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 Whatever you choose to do in life do it with all your might to bring glory to God. When polishing your Petoskey stone do so with all your might as well. Stick to it.

Philippians 1:6. As you continue to polish your stone remember that God will continue the good work He has begun in you and will be faithful to complete it.

Psalm 138:8 We are God's handiwork and he will perfect or polish each one of our lives so that we will reflect Him.

Titus 2:14 God redeemed us from the gravel pit of this world and if we allow Him, He will purify or polish us so we can be something special, peculiar, different from the rest that we may glorify Him.

12. Illustrate, share on social media or in a group, at least one spiritual lesson you have learned in your study of the Petoskey Stone.

This lesson may relate to one of the scriptures in the previous requirement or another lesson from the activities involved in completing the honor.

Resources:

Wet/Dry Sandpaper - Any Automotive Supply store

Aluminum Oxide Polish for Rocks - Walmart, Hobby Lobby, Amazon

Videos:

A very good online resource for polishing Petoskey's:

YouTube - Michigan Rocks. Rob will give you a demonstration on how to hand polish Petoskey's and also how to use a tumbler to help with the first stage of polishing. He has several videos on Petoskey's. Search for Petoskey's when on his YouTube page.



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