

In the field - Curt LaPlante

For those involved in active field collecting, the beginning of May opens up all of New England, including the northern reaches to active field collecting. While mosquitoes and black flies are becoming pesky in the south, they have yet to be bothersome north of Franconia Notch.

This month's field news is as follows:

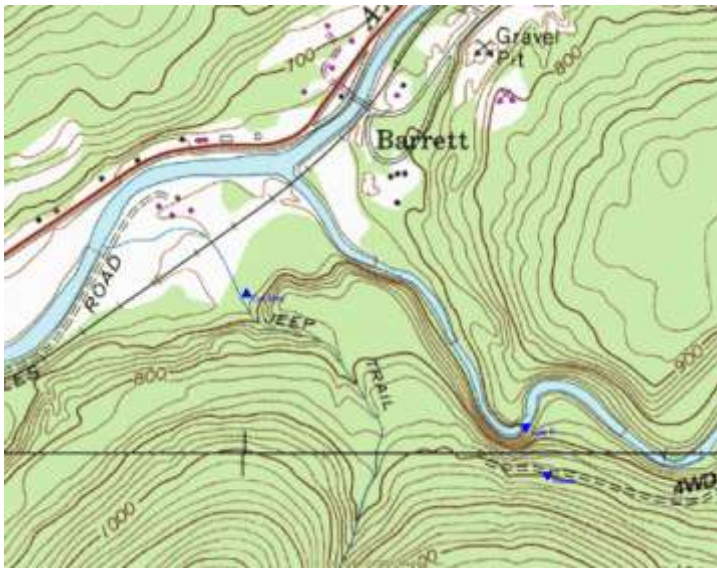
Gale River Galumph – Lisbon, New Hampshire

Tom Mortimer joined Curt LaPlante on Saturday May 2, 2009 on a field trip to look for a "lost" garnet locality discussed in Hitchcock's Geology of New Hampshire circa 1870's.

On a twist to Tom's usual inclusion of a death march field trip, Curt turned the tables on Tom with his own version of a death march with a twist.

The two men spent the better part of the day on a long tiring and futile slog orienteering through the wilderness looking for signs of garnet and staurolite. The pair descended and ascended the ledges along the Gale River a couple of times looking for signs of mineralization. One of the ascents became a frightening nearly vertical 150 foot climb over water soaked moss and loose blocks with both men holding on for dear life. Thank heaven for hoe picks!

They later made a short jaunt to Sugar Hill to check out some recently cleared land near a known staurolite locality. The site was discovered on Google satellite views. Well formed crystals were plentiful. The real difficulty was finding quality specimens.



Map of area hiked. Note the steep ledges at a bend in the Gale River.

e-mail from Tom Mortimer:

Hi Curt

I pasted the 3 GPS markers I saved onto a topo map.

"Curt Jeep" = where you parked

"Hillside" = The eastern most point visited

"Gale R" = our first visit to the river side, (not the gully wash-out visit)

It appears we were about at the easternmost part of the river bend.

The largest garnets in the small sample I brought back were 3 mm.

The small sample of what I thought was limestone... was limestone... gave nice acid fizz. The sample contained what appear to be small pebble grains of opal. There are limestone quarries in this part of the state. My small chunk of basalt contained both Augite and Forsterite embedded xls.

There were no ticks on me the flea collar really works!

Please send my rock wall climbing merit badge to my home address.



Tom Mortimer hanging on for dear life near the top of 150 foot near vertical ledge. His nervous smile betrays his dread!



Staurolite, Sugar Hill. 2.5 inch crystal in 4 inch specimen



Multitudes of small garnets in a mica schist. Way too small for Curt to collect.



Tom Mortimer took this photo looking down the ledge at the raging Gale River 100 feet below.



Curt LaPlante looks over rocks along the shores of the receding Gale River. Newly sprouting fiddleheads were abundant.



Tom along the Gale River beach.