

# ROCKS!

*There are so many kinds of rocks.* They come in so many unique textures, colors, shapes and patterns.

Most of the rocks you'll find in the Wallowa Mountains are **igneous** rocks. Igneous rocks are formed when molten rock cools above ground or underground- or even in the air. The speed at which the magma cools largely determines the type of rock that will result.

As you enjoy time at Wallowa Lake or the trails winding through the surrounding mountains, be on the lookout for these common igneous rocks:



**Granodiorite** *The hardest, most abundant rock of the Wallowas, granodiorite forms Eagle Cap and the Lakes Basin and small pebbles to boulders as large as houses can be spotted in lakes, rivers and even farm fields. When you hold a piece of granodiorite up to the light- you might see it sparkle! This sparkle is from quartz crystals that formed because granodiorite and its cousin, granite, come from magma that cooled slowly underground- giving the crystals time to form.*

**Basalt** *Basalt's dark, red-brown color is often easy to spot while you rock hunt at the river or lakeside. Basalt rocks are often filled with small holes, which were pockets of air trapped in the quickly cooling magma. When basalt rock has many of these holes, it is called scoria. Before the Ice Age, most of the Wallowa Mountains were capped by basalt. Glaciers eroded most of this bedrock away.*



**Greenstone** *Greenstones are the oldest rocks of the Wallowas. They were once basalts- an igneous rock but millions of years ago they were squeezed and heated under a great amount of pressure for a long period of time. So now they are what geologists call **metamorphic** rocks. Greenstones are metamorphosed basalts that were once lava flows on a volcanic island off the Idaho coast.*

# Rock Scavenger Hunt

Find rocks that match the descriptions listed below. Put check by the rocks you find.

a smooth rock	
a beautiful rock	
a rock with two colors	
a shiny rock	
a rock with a shape that reminds you of something	
a rough rock	
a rock that fits in the palm of your hand	

## Rock Art to try at Home

There are so many artful things you can do with the special rocks you find. Trying painting them, using googly eyes, pipe cleaners or paper cutouts to turn your rocks into little creative creatures or use them to build small habitats in a green space near your home. You can also try the project below.

### Melted Crayon Art

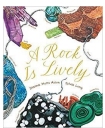
These small treasures are fun to try to color with and also just make beautiful art pieces.

1. Go on a rock collecting walk. Try to find smoother rocks that will fit in the palm of your hand.
2. Wash the rocks and let dry. While your rocks dry, peel the papers off of the crayon colors you'd like to use.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F.
4. Lay rocks out on a cookie sheet and place in the oven for 10-15 minutes.
5. Pull rocks out and, using tongs, place on scrap paper (that can be thrown away after). Press crayons down onto rock and watch as the wax melts. Try mixing different colors.
6. When your art piece is done, set it to the side to cool.

## Book Suggestions for Learning More About Rocks



**Everyone Needs a Rock** by Byrd Baylor



**A Rock is Lively** by Diana Hutts Aston and Sylvia Long



**If Rocks Could Sing** by Leslie McGuirk