

**Expository Nonfiction**



SCI4b

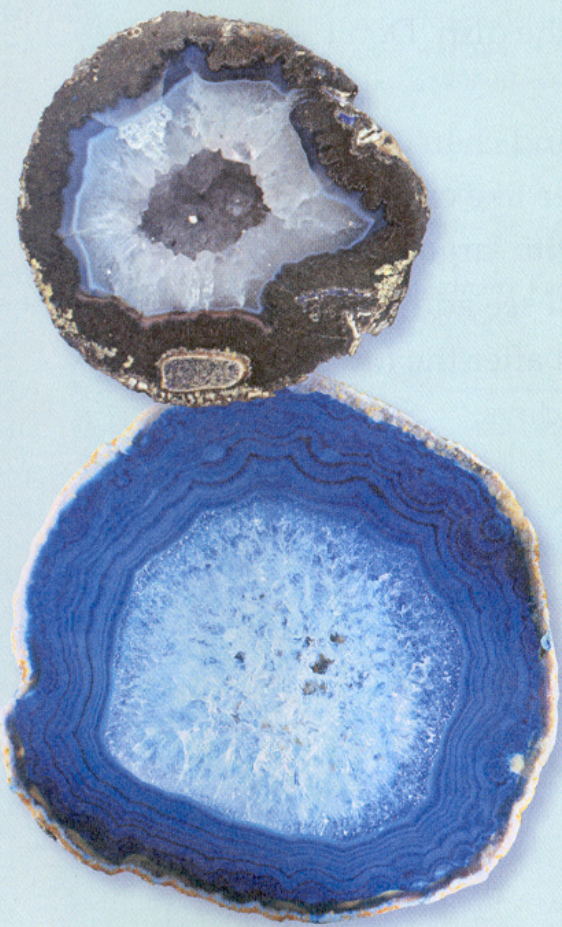
# Geode: A Rock Hound's Treasure

Have you ever seen a thunder egg? You probably have. In fact, you might even own one. A “thunder egg” is what rock collectors call a type of geode. Geodes are rocks that have crystals inside them. The name *geode* comes from the Latin word for *gem* and the Greek word for *earthlike*.

Geodes can be cut open with a special saw. Then you can see the beautiful crystals inside. Most of these crystals are made up of quartz, a type of mineral. The crystals can be clear, white, purple, or other colors.

Some geodes, called nodules, do not have a hollow center. They are completely filled with crystals! Rock collectors, or rock hounds, call this type of geode a thunder egg.

A geode can be the size of a golf ball or as big as a grapefruit. There are larger geodes, too. Some are taller than an adult. Some rare geodes are so large that you can walk around inside them! One such geode, known as Crystal Cave, is located on South Bass Island, on Lake Erie. Crystal Cave is large enough to hold twelve people!



▲ A nodule is solid all the way through.



## CALIFORNIA STANDARDS

**Science 4b** Students know how to identify common rock-forming minerals (including quartz, calcite, feldspar, mica, and hornblende) and ore minerals by using a table of diagnostic properties..



Geodes can be found all over the world. Rock hounds have the best luck finding treasure in the desert. One of the largest geode sites is the Hauser Geode Beds, in southern California. As a boy, Joel Hauser had noticed strange round rocks in the desert near his home. As a young adult in the 1930's, he began gathering these rocks. When he cut them in half, he discovered that they were geodes.

During Joel Hauser's time, the piles of knobby rocks were just lying on the desert's surface. Now, in order to find your own geodes, you will have to dig underground. You can find them in clusters, just a few feet underground. Rock hounds think the reward of cracking open a beautiful geode is worth the effort!

Crystal Cave is lined with quartz crystals. ▼



Uncut geode found in Hauser Geode Beds ▼



Large geodes in Gem Rock Museum ▼

