Gold Mining Methods and Equipment

Early prospectors in the gold region used simple methods to separate gold from the placer deposits. A sluice box was used to separate gravel from the gold. The floater would scoop up gravel and water, creating a trash water that allowed the heavier gold to settle to the bottom. Usually, the rough materials were then washed in a pan, opened at both ends and on one side. Gravel would be dropped into the pan, and a pan of water would be carried along. The miner or prospector would wash the gravel and water through a pan, trapping the heavy minerals. After the gravel settled, the miner or prospector would discover tiny particles of gold.

Equipment

A sluice box is a wooden trough, open at each end and on one side. Gravel would be dropped into the sluice box, and a pan of water would be carried along. The miner or prospector would wash the gravel and water through the sluice box, trapping the heavy minerals. After the gravel settled, the miner or prospector would find tiny particles of gold.

Life and Times in Georgia's Gold Rush Days

The discovery of gold in Indian territory allowed the Cherokee people to make gold coins. However, the Cherokee were not allowed to mint their own coins. In 1832, a lottery was held to distribute the lands to white settlers. Four thousand people then moved to the west. By following the traces of gold up the river, miners could find the source of the gold. The coinage of the Dahlonega Mint was not legal until 1857. The discovery of gold in Indian territory allowed the Cherokee people to make gold coins. However, the Cherokee were not allowed to mint their own coins. In 1832, a lottery was held to distribute the lands to white settlers. Four thousand people then moved to the west. By following the traces of gold up the river, miners could find the source of the gold. The coinage of the Dahlonega Mint was not legal until 1857.
Prospecting for Gold In Georgia Today

Where to Look

Prospecting Tools

Identifying Gold

Ammon

Everyone has dreamed of finding nuggets of pure gold. But can gold be found in Georgia? The answer is yes, but it may be in a form you would not expect. Gold in the state of Georgia comes in many forms, and it can be as easy to find as a sparkling black diamond.

Gold in Athens

Gold is a native element. It occurs in nature as small, shiny black stones that may be difficult to see. Gold nuggets are often found in streams and rivers, where the current energy is very high. In places where streamflow slows down, such as near the base of a waterfall or in a slow-moving river, gold is often deposited in Valhalla. This is because the rocks of the New Georgia Group. These rocks are very clean and free of contaminants, making them ideal for the development of gold deposits.

Gold in Dahlonega

Dahlonega is a gold-producing region in Georgia. The gold belt is a narrow, northeast-trending band that extends from the Alabama border in Rabun County to the northwestern edge of the state. The gold belt is composed of several different types of deposits, including gold-quartz veins, gold-sulfide veins, and gold-graphite veins.

Permits Required for Prospecting in Georgia

To prospect for gold in Georgia, you must obtain a permit from the Department of Natural Resources. The permit will grant you permission to search for gold in a specific area. The permit fees vary depending on the type of deposit and the amount of material you plan to recover.

Selected References and Further Reading


