



Danburite. (Photo: AJ)

DANBURITE

Named after Danbury, Connecticut, USA where it was discovered, gem-quality danburite was actually first found in Burma (Myanmar). It has since been discovered in Madagascar (Malagasy Republic) and Mexico.

It is a very attractive, if unusual, gem in wine, yellow, pink and colourless varieties. It rates a 7 on the Mohs scale thereby qualifying as an acceptable jewellery stone. Danburite, however, does not have a very strong fire.

There are no known synthetics as yet. It is heat sensitive, so care is required when repairing jewellery set with them.

A dark orange variety has been reported from Russia but is a rarity.

DIASPORE

Only recently introduced onto the market, diaspore (pronounced 'die-a-spore' or 'dee-ass-pra') is a colour-change stone similar to a medium-quality alexandrite; this mineral is also being sold under the trademarked name Zultanite. Its change from greenish-brown in daylight to pinkish bronze in tungsten light cannot compare with Russian alexandrite but still makes it an interesting gem. It has also been found in a champagne



Diaspore. (Photo: ATG/Stephen Kotlowski)

colour, similar to a pale citrine, and brown. Although known in its mineral form for some years, it was not discovered in facetable quality until 1977 in Turkey.

The major source for this gem is still Turkey, but gem-quality blue and violet Diaspore crystals have been found in Massachusetts, USA. The mineral is also found in South Africa and Norway.

Care should be taken in wearing diaspore as it has a strong cleavage and may chip if knocked.