DIS-MIN-US-NC-Ruby

Ruby, Macon County.

Formula: Al2O3 **.**Cr 2O3

System: Hexagonal

Color: Red

Hardness: 9  
A red, gem variety of corundum caused by minor amounts of trivalent Cr replacing Al in the crystal structure. Named "corinvindum" in 1725 by John Woodward and derived from the Sanskrit, kuruvinda ("Ruby"). Richard Kirwan used the current spelling "corundum" in 1794. Known by many names in ancient times: adamant, sapphire, ruby, hyacinthos, asteria, etc.  
  
In traditional gemological terms, ruby has to be blood-red and of clear, facetable quality to justify the name, however in wider usage any corundum with a red or reddish color has attracted the name 'ruby', and this name is usually applied in this way by mineral collectors.  
  
Pink corundum is usually referred to in gemmological terminology as [pink sapphire](http://www.mindat.org/min-3529.html) rather than ruby.  
  
Pure Cr 2O3 occurs in nature as the mineral [eskolaite](http://www.mindat.org/min-1411.html) which is green.

References

Collins, J.E. and R.L. Kath.1998. A QUANTITATIVE X-RAY DIFFRACTION STUDY OF MAFIC AND ULTRAMAFIC LITHOLOGIES USING THE REFERENCE INTENSITY METHOD (RIM): A CASE STUDY FROM CORUNDUM KNOB, CLAY COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA, *GEORGIA JOURNAL OF SCIENCE,* Volume 56.

Streeter, Michael. 2003, *A Rockhounding Guide to North Carolina’s Blue Ridge Mountains*. Milestone Pr Inc.