



Arizona Rocks 30

Text and photos by Ray Grant

This is a summary for metamorphic rocks. In Arizona most of the metamorphic rocks are very old, Precambrian. They are the original continental rocks forming Arizona from 1.8 to 1.6 billion years ago. They have been buried miles deep and uplifted back to the surface by many periods of mountain building. They can usually be recognized because they are vertical in outcrops and road cuts.

Remember there are two classes of metamorphic rocks, the foliated and the massive. The foliated rocks are named by their texture, mainly the size of the mineral grains or if they have banding. The massive rocks are named by their mineral composition.



Vertical Precambrian metamorphic rocks at North Mountain Park in Phoenix



Vertical Precambrian metamorphic rocks in the bottom of the Grand Canyon



Granitic gneiss of the Santa Catalina Mountains
Photo by S. Coté



Quartzite at Piestewa Peak

