SEKER GeocachingNews

The Newsletter of the Geocaching Association of Great Britain



EarthCache GC1HGBJ: Gordale Scar, North Yorkshire



Issue No. 2: April 2011

SEEKER

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Geocaching News

Meet the Committee

So that you know who we are, here's the 2010-2011 Committee:

Dave Edwards (The Wombles) Chairman

Jen Harley (Maple Leaf) Secretary

Richard Mullans (DrDick&Vick) Treasurer

Paul Lapworth (RuberyBlue)

Terry Marsh (countrymatters)

Bill Daly (Bill D (wwh))

Paul Burroughes (Palujia)

Daryl Stocker (Jacaru)

Tony Pinnington (mongoose39uk)















Message from the Chairman

We've all found those caches which made us wonder why we bothered. An old ice-cream container in a litter-strewn layby? A micro in a forest



with the hint "in a tree"? The geocaching.com 'Favourites' system is a good way to identify those caches which were special to other people, but this month GAGB is launching awards to identify the very best. We are also continuing to build our discount scheme and this month has been particularly successful. In addition to the existing discounts, we are pleased to add the following: UKgeocachers (5%), Blacks and Millets (15%) and renew the discount for Cotswold Outdoors (10%). Thanks to these suppliers for participating.

The geocaching.com reviewers fill an essential role for the geocaching community and put in lots of hours. This month we have an interview with Graculus to describe their work which should help explain how reviewers work and what happens when you cache is reviewed. We are often asked about placing caches in sensitive areas such as National Nature Reserves since there are many beautiful and interesting locations in these places. The cacher TR1LOBYTE thought that it was worth persevering to get the necessary permission and describes how this was achieved. We also have an article on Ye Olde Survey Monuments which is a favourite cache for many (it enables finds of Ordnance Survey trig points to be logged as a cache find).

Iamvery pleased that we can acknowledge a very special geocacher in this issue: read on to find out more. And finally, please, provide us with some feedback on how we can improve, and whether you enjoy, the newsletter?

GAGB GREAT CACHE AWARDS Simply the best







We would like to announce the GAGB Awards for great caches. As this may be the cache page, the location or the actual cache container itself, we have decided to initially group them into three categories and hope that various aspects of the cache are considered when you nominate.

- Great Walk
- Great History
- Great View

Each month we will be asking for you to add your nominations to the forum for a cache that you have recently found and at the end of that period a cache will be awarded the monthly title in each category. The cache owner will then receive an 'award badge' for the cache page.

More details will be posted in the forums.

One of the caching names associated with good caches and locations, certainly if you live in Scotland, is that of 'Billy Twigger'. For more information about 'Billy', aka Ewan Rice, read Firth of the Forth's 'Memoriam' to him on page 11. With the help of the local geocachers, the majority of his caches have been adopted – for a full list of the active caches, have a look at the bookmark that Haggis Hunter keeps.

In the news?



The GAGB are pleased to announce their new GAGB cache label.

Actual size: 8.8cm x 5cm. Priced at 60p each; £2.50 for 5 plus P&P at only 50p for quantities up to 10, and £1 for 10-20.

To order contact DrDick&Vick via their profile. Payment to paypal@gagb.org.uk

PERSONAL POST-IT NOTES

Groundspeak have now added a small section on cache pages entitled 'Personal Cache Note'. This is basically a handy little scribble pad for you to make notes regarding the cache, basically like a yellow Stick-it note.

It could be notes containing the final co-ords for a multi for future reference, the workings out for a puzzle cache or maybe even just some notes on what you thought about the cache itself.

These notes are personal and are not visible to any other user.

UK Mega Event 2012

It has recently been announced that the annual UK Mega Event for 2012 will be in North-West England on **Saturday 11th August 2012 at Cartmel Racecourse, Cumbria**. For more information visit www.mega2012.org.uk



Another date for your 2012 diary is the weekend of 21st & 22nd July - just before the Olympic Games start. Geolympix will be based in the Oxford area and the organising team are hoping to make this a truly international event.

GAGB Monthly Competition

The GAGB have been running a monthly competition since October 2010 with 3 simple questions to answer. The competition is being run so as to give back something to our membership who have supported us over the years.

The question and the prize(s) can be found in the Members Chat section of the forum and are in a 'pinned' topic close to the top. Entry is FREE and answers simply have to be sent to Mrs Blorenge via her GAGB profile.

Some of the lucky winners so far have included: MBface, T.R.a.M.P, susiemerlin1, ClareLouise, Ivanidea & redsox_mark.

If you are a full GAGB member but cannot see the Members Chat section send an email to webmaster@gagb.org.uk and we will rectify it for you.

GC2921G



The UK's Fourth Geocaching Mega-Event Brangwyn Hall, Swansea Sunday 31st July 2011

Come and enjoy the day ... or make it a geocaching holiday in this wonderful part of Wales

TIMETABLE FOR THE DAY

10:00	Doors Open
10:00-15:00	Attendee Registration
10:00-15:00	Supporter Pack Collection
10:30-15:40	Geocaching Talks
11:15-11:30	Opening ceremony
11:00-15:45	Geokids Comer
12:00-14:00	Sandcastle Competition
15:15-15:30	Prize Giving
15:45	I Know My Geocaching Place
16:00	Closing ceremony
17:00	Doors Close

THE SIDE EVENTS

27 [™] July	Flash and Dash in Pembrey
28th July	Tatty Bear's Picnic
29th July	Mollyjak's Sand and Samies
30th July	Picnic at the Big Apple
30 th July	Mega Camping Event
31st July	Mega Wales 2011
1 st August	Picnic on Pen y Fan
2 nd August	A Day Out at Big Pit
3 rd August	Cardiff Bay Perambulation
5th August	Sunset on the Mega

The details above may be subject to minor changes.

To find out more, visit http://www.megawales.co.uk/index.html

You can also find us on Facebook and Twitter

Check out the **GAGB**Calendar

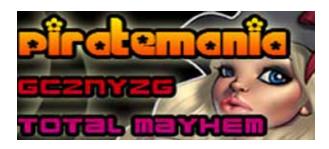
for a list of 'Events' and 'Camping Events'.
And keep up to date with events specifically in your area by creating an Instant Notification for 'Events'.

GAGB geocoin

There are still a number of the special GAGB coins available. Have you got yours? Price per coin is £6.75 plus p&p to UK addresses as follows: 1 x coin £1.10, 2 x coins £1.60, 3 & 4 coins £2.50, for larger quantities and international deliveries email to ask.



Please send all orders and make PayPal payments to the following email address. Please remember to include your address with the order. GAGB-geocoin@hotmail.co.uk



Do you enjoy camping, dressing up and having fun? then put your name down for Piratemania IV. Saturday 23rd July 2011 Ashbourne, Derbyshire GC2NYZG



An informal interview with Chris, who is Graculus, one of the volunteer UK reviewers



What exactly does a reviewer do?

When someone lists a new cache for publication it comes into our queue and we go through it, checking everything is OK and then publish it so it appears on the geocaching.com website for people to go and find. It may sound a simple process but we have to check the guidelines are followed and the location of the cache itself on various maps.

Do you have to read every cache submitted?

We do read every cache page, we have to. Can you imagine the comments if we let a cache go through with non family friendly wording for example? Doesn't bear thinking about! So each cache is read through and that includes where the

owner has decided to copy and paste 5 pages from Wikipedia!

What about puzzle caches, do you have to solve those before you can publish a cache?

No, that would take too long! We rely on the cache owner making sure the puzzle works. As long as the cache meets the guidelines it will be published 'as is'. Sometimes owners explain the puzzle and how it works, but if there is a problem then the geocaching community will soon pick up on it and contact the owner. We do need to know the actual cache location so it is important this is listed on the cache page as a hidden waypoint.

Is that all there is to the job?

Goodness no! We get lots of emails to deal with everyday. These come from cachers asking for help placing their caches, asking for coordinates to be changed or reporting a problem cache for us to look at. I'm also in daily touch with my colleagues. We spend quite a bit of time getting each other's opinions on awkward caches that we each deal with.

Why do you need to ask each other for an opinion on a cache?

Most caches listed are pretty straightforward, but sometimes one comes along that may be questionable or a novel idea that pushes the guidelines. So if there is any doubt about it then we will discuss it and if necessary get the opinion of the world-wide reviewers in our private forum. This way any cache that is rejected for pretty serious reasons has undergone a strenuous check. It isn't the opinion of one reviewer. that would be quite wrong.

You said you get problem caches to deal with. What can go wrong with a cache that needs you to sort it out?

It could be a cache that someone has found that is breaking the guidelines or in sore need of repair. We'll get asked to have a look at the page and see if we can help sort it out. Someone may have found a cache placed on what is clearly private property or a cache that has gone missing and the owner isn't paying attention to the 'Did Not Find' logs. When someone posts a 'Needs Archived' log on a cache we get a notification email. We go through these to see why the log was posted and what needs to be done.

Do you each review just a specific part of the country or the whole UK?

We've split the country up by regions and deal with caches in our own areas. Of course we help each other out when needed. It helps doing your own region because you get to know the local area, local rules and of course your local cachers.

How did you become a reviewer, did you apply for the job?

No, you don't apply, you get asked! I didn't know anything about it until I was approached by Groundspeak. It is the other reviewers who propose you and then Groundspeak check up on your suitability.

So do you have to be a very experienced cacher with lots of finds to become a reviewer?

Yes. You should have a good number of finds and hides and be experienced in most aspects of the geocaching game. My wife Lucilla and I cache as 'The Blorenges'. We've been members since 2001 when Geocaching first started, but didn't buy a GPS and become really active until 2004. So we are not really 'old hands'. As for finds we've not reached 1000 yet, which puts us way down the league table! I think that Groundspeak look at your cache finds, your logs and the caches you've placed and from that decide how experienced in the game you are. They must have thought I knew what I was doing!

Do you enjoy the job?

Oh definitely. It is really nice to be able to help out the geocaching community like this. What I do enjoy is getting a cache with mistakes or problems that need sorting out and then working with the owner to get it published. We work hard with owners to get their new caches listed.

You must spend quite a bit of your time doing this then?

It varies. Most evenings I have my laptop running and will go through the queue as caches pop in. People have said they are amazed we can publish a cache within minutes of it being listed. If it arrives in the queue while I'm working on my laptop I'll review it and publish it there and then. Of course I do have a real life and a full-time job, so some evenings I might not do any reviewing and catch up the next night. If I had to say exactly how long then an hour an evening would probably be about right.

How many caches have you published so far?

I published my first cache on the 8th August 2008, so I've been a reviewer for nearly 2½ years now. In that time I've published over 14,000 caches and written nearly 18,000 logs!

But you must make some mistakes?

Oh yes, we aren't perfect! But it isn't often, and the caching community are usually pretty quick to point it out so I can correct it.

You said you enjoy the job. But is there anything that annoys you?

I wouldn't say I get annoyed, but people do submit caches without properly reading the guidelines and miss out important things such as additional waypoints on a multi or unknown cache. It means I have to review a cache twice and sometimes three times before it can be published.

Do you get pestered at events by cachers asking you about reviewing caches?

I've not kept my reviewing identity a secret, so most people know who I am. I do get asked questions about placing caches and whether it would be OK or not. I don't mind at all, and am happy to help.

Finally, how did you choose your reviewer name, Graculus?

Easy! I grew up with Noggin the Nog on television. It was an animated series on during children's hour in the 60s. I just liked the bird Graculus, who was Noggin's companion on his journeys. I wanted something unique.

Landowner approvals

The Wrens Nest National Nature Reserve (NNR)

TR1LOBYTE updates

The Background

The Wrens Nest National Nature Reserve (NNR) Tour mini series is located to the north west of the town centre of Dudley, West Midlands, England and the cache's are hidden at various places of interest around the site.

GC code Name

GC2M9TZ Wrens Nest Green Pool

GC2M9TR Wrens Nest 3 million year walk
GC2HXYC Wrens Nest Murchison's Viewpoint
GC2HXVI Wrens Nest Severn Sisters Caverns

Negotiations began back in November 2010 when I contacted Senior Warden, Anna Coward, to explain what Geocaching was all about and that I wished to place caches at areas of interest around the reserve. She initially expressed concerns as the area is protected due to the high importance of the fossils, wildlife and safety considerations. After reassuring her that Geocachers respect nature, are sensible enough to use common sense, love the outdoors and are family orientated she gave the green light to go ahead.

Jessica Welch (Learning and Community Development Officer) then stepped in to progress the idea further. After a couple of email exchanges between Jessica and me, we met in early December 2010 to walk the site looking for suitable hiding places. It was a very cold day, the snow, that had fallen in the previous week, had now frozen solid making the underfoot conditions treacherous. A further meeting with Anna in relation to Health and Safety regards rock faces was successfully concluded. We now had five locations.

However, when the series was published there were issues with the cache at the sinkhole named the 'Cherry Hole'. It was too close to the Seven Sisters and Murchison's View hides, even though terrain meant that the walk was a good 15-20 minutes along the designated paths, as you cannot access them in a straight line. Currently

only four are possible but more may be allowed if the current placements prove successful. I have a few locations in mind, so watch this space!

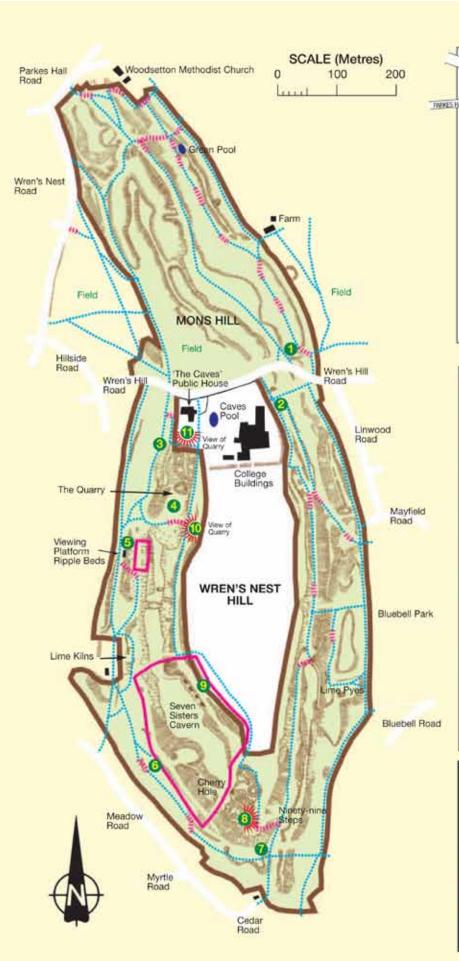
I wanted to place this series to bring people to this historic area tucked away in the heart of Dudley and educate them as they walked around. Ever since I was a child, the Wrens Nest has always fascinated me. Being born and bred in the Dudley Borough, I am proud of the heritage this place has and love to share it. In the past I have done talks at Dudley Museum for the English Civil War exhibition so this is another way for me to do the same using Geocaching as a tool to educate people about the Industrial Revolution and the geology of the area from millions of years ago. I would like to thank Anna and Jessica for their blessing to get this project going and for all their help so far.

The History

Wren's Nest derives its name from the Old English word Wrosne, meaning "the link". This may relate to its topographical position on the boundary between the Severn and Trent watersheds. It is a classic geological site of exceptional importance, being one of the most notable geological locations in the British Isles, visited, and studied by geologists from all over the world.

About 420 million years ago, tropical seas covered the area where Dudley now stands, with coral reefs inhabited by trilobites, crinoids (sea lilies), brachiopods and many other creatures. Their remains are found today as perfectly preserved fossils in the limestone rocks, collections of which occur in museums throughout the world. Over 700 types of fossil have been identified, 186 were first discovered and described here, and 86 are found nowhere else on Earth.

Wren's Nest played an important part in the development of the Black Country, not least because Abraham Darby, Father of the Industrial Revolution, was born on Wren's Nest in 1678. Dud Dudley (son of Lord Dudley) had,





Fossil Collecting Code

- For your own safety please DO NOT climb on the rock exposures. Rock faces can be unstable and dangerous.
- The use of hammers or other tools on the reserve is STRICTLY PROHIBITED. Never collect fossils directly from rock faces.
- Fossils may be collected from the loose material at the base of slopes. Please only take away a few small representative samples.
- For help with identification please contact the Warden Service on 01384 812785 or Dudley Museum on 01384 815575. Remember to keep a note of the exact location your fossil was found.
- If you no longer wish to keep your fossils, remember never throw them away! Donate them to the Museum or the Warden Service for others to enjoy.

THANK YOU



by 1665, developed a process to smelt iron with coke instead of charcoal, but local charcoal burners, who feared that their livelihoods might be threatened, destroyed his furnaces. Darby developed Dudley's work and perfected the process in Coalbrookdale by 1709.

For centuries the limestone was quarried for building stone and for use as an agricultural fertiliser. Huge quantities were excavated during the industrial revolution to act as a blast furnace flux in the Black Country's iron and steel industry, leaving Wren's Nest honeycombed by caverns and underground workings. The caverns known as the Seven Sisters are the spectacular openings to the workings, which formerly descended 100 metres below the hill. The workings were originally connected by underground canal to the Dudley Tunnel. Seven Sisters caverns, so called because originally seven pillars supported the roof of the old workings at this point. Only five pillars now remain. The 'pillar and stall' method of mining can be clearly seen.

During the height of the Industrial Revolution, up to 20,000 tons of limestone were removed annually to act as a flux in the many

local blast furnaces. This activity ceased in 1924, leaving the area honeycombed with great quarries and caverns, some going down 100 metres below the hill to underground canal basins. However, the site would never have been so well exposed without such excavations and few would have known the history of the rocks. It was during this period that many of the best fossils were found, the most famous being the Trilobites. One of these, *Calymene blumenbachii*, was so common that is became nicknamed the 'Dudley Bug' and featured on the town's Coat of Arms until 1974.

When the quarrying and mining ceased, the hill was abandoned and left to nature. It is now colonised by grassland, scrub and Ash-Elm woodland. The limestone rocks support plants that are adapted to lime, including county rarities such as Autumn Gentian, Small Scabious, Common Gromwell and Bee Orchid. The woodlands are home to birds like sparrowhawk, stock dove, tawny owl, green and great spotted woodpeckers, and nuthatch; the caverns offer important roost sites for several species of bat, whilst the locally uncommon white-letter hairstreak butterfly survives on the elms.



TR1LOBYTE and Jessica Welch

'I have always thought that Geocaching is a great way for people to explore the countryside and landscape so was thrilled when Matt (TR1L0BYTE) asked if he could hide some within the Wrens Nest Nature Reserve. The Wrens Nest National Nature Reserve is a geological gem hiding in the centre of Dudley, with rocks that date back to the Silurian Period (425 million years ago). These rocks are not only important for their role as a key component in the industrial revolution that started here in earnest in the 18th century, but also for the fossils that can be found within them. 700+ species of fossil have identified which makes the Wrens Nest one of the most important sites for Silurian fossils in the world. I hope that with the Geocaches hidden on the site encourage more people to come and visit and enjoy the reserve and appreciate its importance.'

For more information on the history and geology of the Wrens Nest National Nature Reserve, please contact Jessica Welch (Wrens Nest Learning and Community Development Officer, Dudley Metropolitan Council) on Jessica. Welch@dudley.gov.uk.

IN MEMORIAM

Ewan Rice aka Billy Twigger 1958 - 2009

When I first started caching in 2003, there was only a score or so of active cachers. One was Billy Twigger, who had started his caching career the previous year. In July 2006, Billy Twigger was delighted to find his 1,000th cache at the top of the Empire State building in New York City. A few weeks later he fell from a cliff while placing a cache on the Isle of Bute, where his family had a house. He was taken to hospital by air ambulance and spent several months in intensive care. For the next two and a half years, his wife Lorna and his grown sons Fraser and Callum devoted themselves to caring for him, and coping with the almost unbearable ups and downs in his progress. Ewan spent most of this time in a spinal injuries unit,



wheelchair-bound. His family sold their house and bought a bungalow adapted for him, but in the end Ewan managed to live there for only a couple of weeks before returning to hospital and passing away on Sunday May 31st, 2009. It is one of my regrets that I never managed to see him during this period: the planned visit with a couple of other cachers had to be cancelled when he took a turn for the worse.

I kept in touch with Lorna, and Ewan's father, Jim, during the years after the accident. Any cacher who knew Ewan remarked on what a lovely man he was. He was a soft-spoken man, who made people immediately feel at ease, and he had a great sense of humour. Fortunately, though he had suffered a brain injury, Lorna and her sons took solace in the fact that his wonderful personality remained intact.

Ewan had many interests including photography (his photos of Bute were made into post-cards), ornithology, maps, geology, walking and of course all of these fed into a love of geocaching when he discovered it. His enthusiasm and creativity produced some of the best caches in Scotland, all of which have been adopted so that they can continue to bring pleasure to others. His caches are varied, original, and many have the kind of twist at the end that makes you laugh out loud when you find them.

Ewan became a keen Geocaching eventer, as well as cache seeker and setter. Pooter. Highland Nick, Billy Twigger and I had a memorable rain-sodden day at the 3rd annual Scottish cache bash in 2005 on the far North coast of Scotland. Despite the atrocious weather, it was one of the most enjoyable caching days I've had, and Ewan and Nick's geology 'lessons' are still remembered. A few months earlier, Ewan played host on Bute as geocachers roamed across the island seeking out his many wonderful caches. The isle of Bute remains a Billy Twigger caching legacy. A combination of Bute's wonderful scenery and BT's inventive caches must make it one of the best caching destinations.

Firth of Forth aka Sally Anderson

Ye Olde Survey Monuments

BERNIE HUGHES (AGENTMANCUSO) EXPLAINS

ne of the great joys of geocaching is the number of 'bolt-on' activities that serve only to enhance the pursuit. Take 'Ye Olde Survey Monuments', for example. There are quite a few caches placed near trigpoints, probably because of the decent views of the surrounding countryside that the original OS surveyors needed. But one cache has a special relationship with trigpointing: GC45CC [Ye Ole Survey Monuments]. Owned by Canadian cacher outforthehunt, this virtual cache travels around Great Britain, alighting on a random trig and remaining there for a short time before moving on again.

It might seem odd that someone in a country as far away as Canada should own such a significant British cache; so how did this come about? You'll no doubt have noticed that it is possible to log Benchmarks on geocaching.com. But of course only US Benchmarks are listed, which leaves non-Americans out in the cold as far as logging finds is concerned, unless we have the time, money and inclination to travel all the way to the States just to get an extra icon on our profile. In particular, many Canadian cachers were annoyed by this, so outforthehunt set up a travelling virtual called Brass Cap Cache which visits Canadian benchmarks (known as 'Brass Caps'), allowing these to be counted in geocaching totals. The YOSM cache extends this idea to Britain, allowing cachers here to count trigpoint visits in our totals – though only once the trig has been visited by YOSM!

The Ye Ole Survey Monuments virtual cache can be logged at any of the triangulation stations it has visited, not just the current one. At the time of writing, 423 trigpoints of all shapes and sizes have been visited by YOSM and it even has its own website where a list of previous sites can be downloaded in various formats. You can get a nice badge for your profile here too, like this:

http://www.yosm.org.uk/statpics/agentmancuso.png

There is also a league table of YOSM cachers – Pharisee is currently in the lead with 174 logged YOSM visits - and over 1000 other cachers have logged it at least once. It's becoming common for YOSM to act as an introduction to trigpointing for experienced cachers, and quite a few familiar names are starting to show up logging trigs on T:UK too!

How to do it

- 1. YOSM is logged in the usual way, with a 'Found it' log on geocaching.com, but as with any cache, repeat logs do count towards your 'total finds' tally.
- 2. YOSM can be, and usually is, logged retrospectively. The only stipulation is that the date of your trig visit be subsequent to the initial publishing date of the cache in Oct 2003. If your trig visit was prior to Oct 2003, then you do have to revisit. Groundspeak guidelines apparently.
- 3. A complete list of YOSM trigs is downloadable as a .gpx file from http://www.yosm.org.uk/for use in GSAK or equivalent.
- 4. When logging on geocaching.com, include the YSM code, trig name and type e.g. YSM424 Trink Hill pillar. This way your log will automatically be counted in the YOSM league table.

Only trigs that have been selected by outforthehunt count towards YOSM, but he has proved willing to accommodate requests for a specific trig to be added for special occasions etc..

CacheFolio



A selection of images depicting cache locations around the UK. We welcome images submitted by members for future publication on this page. Please supply images at high resolution (300ppi), with a caption and GC code.





Captions:

Above: GCYK2T Got a Light Boy and GC2BJBK HDS Bissoe Trail #4; Right: GCPNMP Find him a wife

Top: GCNB2G Salmon Station; Top right: GCD0AC Red Castle





Members discounts...



Geotees: For geocoins, travel bugs, caches and more. We can also have your own coins or tags made for you to your design. Please visit us at www. geotees.co.uk where **GAGB members enjoy**

a 5% discount. To get your discount, open an account, then PM or email me (Mongoose39uk) through the GAGB website before you place your order. This only needs to be done once, the discount will then be applied to all future orders.



Jacaru sells coins through his Ebay shop. He not only stocks geocoins from other manufacturers, but also coins that he has designed himself. He also supplies caches, personalised cache-calling cards, self-inking stamps and more. If you see anything that you like in his listings. Jacaru offers a 10% discount on sales to GAGB members.

The address for the shop is http://stores.ebay.co.uk/Jacaru-Geocoins To obtain a discount, please contact him directly at daryl@jacaru.co.uk.



The outdoor leisure retailers **Blacks** and **Millets** have offered GAGB members a card giving a 15% discount off all products except GPS but including Sale items.

All GAGB members can receive a card and should apply by following the application process, details in the GAGB members chat forum.



Cicerone Press are pleased to offer GAGB members a **discount of 20%** on **all** Cicerone titles purchased online at www.cicerone.co.uk.

All members need to do to claim the discount is to add the voucher code 'GAGB' on the shopping basket page of the Cicerone website.



UK geocachers are happy to offer GAGB members a 5% discount on their products. In order to obtain your discount, you need to email UKgeocachers and set up an account, so that the discount is applied to each order.

www.ukgeocachers.co.uk



We are pleased to announce the renewal of the 10% discount from Cotswold Outdoor which was offered last year.

More detail and the discount code are available from the members chat section of the GAGB forums.

