

# SEEKER

The Newsletter of the Geocaching Association of Great Britain

## Hints for new cachers

Mrs Bloreng  
offers some  
helpful advice

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## Taking a global view

The GPS system  
explained

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## GARMIN GPS Map62s reviewed



Issue No. 6: January 2012

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### Meet the Committee

So that you know who we are, here's the 2011-2012 Committee:



Dave Edwards  
(The Wombles)  
Chairman

Jen Harley  
(Maple Leaf)  
Secretary



Richard Mullans  
(DrDick&Vick)  
Treasurer

Colin Bracher  
(The Wobbly  
Club)



Paul Burroughes  
(Palujia)

Cass Flowers  
(cassandy)



Terry Marsh  
(countrymatters)

Lilian Maund  
(Mollyjak)



Tony Pinnington  
(mongoose39uk)

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### The Geocaching Association of Great Britain (GAGB)

is the leading UK Geocaching body, recognised by and acting on behalf of cachers. The association was established in 2004 to provide a voice for its members in the United Kingdom with the aim of establishing good Geocaching practices, providing a focal point for public liaison, and supporting the growth and enjoyment of Geocaching within the UK. Find us on [www.gagb.org.uk](http://www.gagb.org.uk)

Cover picture: Black Rock Cottage, Glencoe  
© Terry Marsh 2010



## Message from the Chairman



Do you have a memorable caching trip?  
Or some lovely photos from such a trip?

If so we'd love to hear from you. Did you find somewhere moving or beautiful? Or fall in the river? Whatever made it memorable, please write about it – or write a short poem about it – so that we can share in your experience and perhaps inspire others. Thanks to Tony and Terry for sharing theirs.

Richard has been reviewing GPS devices, and we'd also like some more reviews of newer devices to share with others. Terry provides a short explanation of how the GPS system supports all these GPS receivers and enables geocaching to exist.

We've started a series of hints for novice cachers provided by Mrs B, and an update for everyone on dialogue with the Police following the Bomb scare(s) of Summer/Autumn 2011.

When we were compiling this edition, it struck us that we have lots of input from committee but little from others. We'd really like to hear about your caching experiences or simply bytes of interest – please write to our Editor – [\[editor@gagb.org.uk\]](mailto:editor@gagb.org.uk)

## Caching is.....??

Caching is  
The thrill of the hunt  
The puzzle to solve  
The walk to the place  
See the compass revolve

Caching is  
The slog through the mud  
The climb to the top  
The search for the box  
Hot brow to mop

Caching is  
The joy of the find  
What's in the cache  
The signing the log  
Sometimes a great stash

Caching is  
The taking of pictures  
Remember that place  
Write up the logs  
With smile on your face

Caching is  
To me it's the pleasure  
Of placing the caches  
The reading of finds  
The DNF gnashes

Caching is  
For some it's the numbers  
For some it's the game  
Whatever drives you  
The pleasure's the same

**Lets get out there  
and do it !**

# Hints for New Cachers

*Courtesy of Mrs Bloreng*

## #1

When you find any trackable item in a cache (that's a geocoin or a travel bug) make a note of the tracking number on it right away – in a notebook, or by taking a photo. If you make an error in logging it out/into a cache you can always correct the mistake – as long as you have that vital tracking number! Also, never write that tracking number into your log, or into a public place (like a forum post). The tracking number should be known only by those who've seen the item in real life.

## #2

Most cache owners enjoy reading the log emails from their caches. If possible, try and write a sentence (or even two!) when you log the cache - it's so much more interesting than TFTC TNLNSL. You can mention whether you enjoyed the walk, what you saw on the way, who was with you, the weather, the condition of the cache.

Some caches are so uninspiring that perhaps you feel they only inspire a "TNLN" – That's fair enough! - but for all the others a few words are appreciated.

## #3

If you find a cache that requires some maintenance by the owner you may choose the 'Needs Maintenance' log from the drop-down log options. This is the correct way to let the owner know that something needs doing - It is NOT giving the owner a "black mark" – although occasionally some owners seem to take it that way! If you do an NM log for a cache you'll also need to do a separate 'Found it' log as well because an NM doesn't record a find.

## #4

If you're going out caching for a few hours (especially in a wooded or hilly area) mark where you've parked the car with a waypoint on your GPS! Always carry some form of back up mapping and a compass, electrical items can go wrong.

## #5

Swag/Swaps and Trading. You don't have to take anything from caches, many cachers never bother with it, but children often enjoy small items and occasionally you may find something you'd like to keep. PLEASE TRADE UP, OR EVEN! Teach the young ones this too. Try and leave the cache contents as good (or better) than you found them.

Don't leave any edible items in a cache and never leave anything that could be dangerous if an unattended child found it.

## #6

Spoilers! Please don't give away too much info about the cache, its hiding place, or the cache container (if it's something unusual) in your cache log.

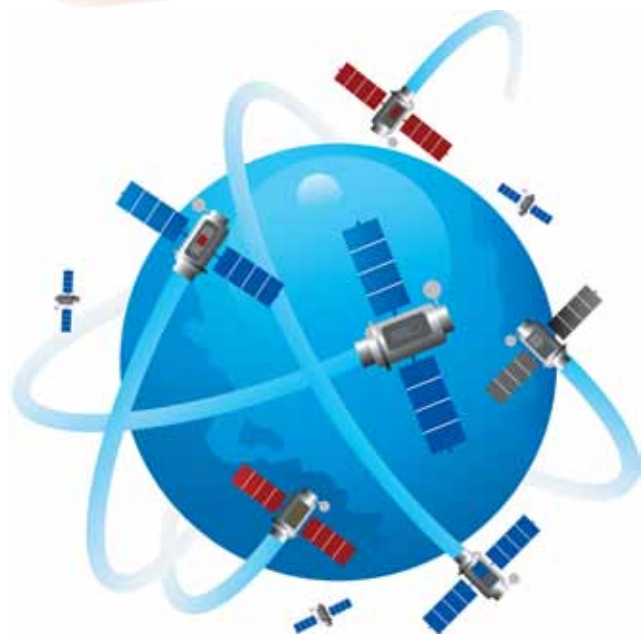
Think about how you'd feel if you'd lovingly created some interesting/clever/cunning surprise for the cache finder, only to have someone put in their log, "Wow. Loved the artificial armadillo. How did you manage to get it 10ft up that Canadian spruce?" Similarly, if you add a photo, please think about just how much it reveals. Groundspeak have now given COs the ability to delete any photo from a log if they feel it's a spoiler but, with a bit of forethought, such situations needn't happen.

# Taking a global view

## The Global Positioning System (GPS) explained

Terry Marsh

Author: Geocaching in the UK



For aeons, man has looked to the sky to calculate his whereabouts. Traditionally, the sun and the fixed stars have been our guides. But today constellations of man-made satellites have taken over as signals to guide our way.

GPS satellites orbit the earth at around 11,000 miles above it, travelling at around 7,000mph, and principally serve as a navigational system for military operations, but increasingly for shipping and travel activities. The GPS takes readings and measurements from up to twenty-four satellites, and uses these to calculate the location of the GPS device. It is rare to get pinpoint accuracy, but for the purposes of geocaching this is not wholly necessary, as part of the fun is the 'hunt', once you get close.

The satellites transmit radio signals that are used by GPS devices to locate the position of the device. Satellites orbit the earth in just under twelve hours and are powered by solar energy. Each satellite sends out a

unique signal that communicates with your receiver, allowing it to compute the distance to the

### LATE NEWS

In late December 2011, China's satellite navigation system, Beidou, became operational, as part of a plan to expand its system to 35 satellites offering global coverage by 2020. It will be interesting to see whether the Chinese system is available for geocaching use.

satellite and so work out the location of the receiver. The satellites are in such orbits that at any one time your GPS device can pick up signals from a least six, and often more, varying with time as satellites come in and out of 'view'. A display on the device shows how many satellites are being connected with. You need contact with at least four satellites to get a clear 3-D fix on location and altitude. Fewer than this and you get only a 2-D fix, but this, in general, is not a critical issue for geocaching unless you are seeking caches concealed on mountain summits.

At present, the US (GPS) and Russia (Glonass) provide the only global satellite navigation systems available. A third system, Galileo, is being built and operated in Europe, and should be fully operable by 2014. In October, 2011, two Galileo satellites were launched by a Russian Soyuz rocket from its base in French Guiana as the first stage in this development, which has seen the European Commission investing

billions of euros in its own version of the American GPS system, expecting this to bring significant return to EU nations in the form of new businesses that can exploit precise space-borne timing and location data, which is great for geocachers in the UK.

The three systems will be completely integrated, which means that you will be able to determine a position by picking up signals from any combination of satellites belonging to any of the three systems.

Anyone can use the satellite system; it is completely free. The system has long been used by aircraft and shipping, but increasingly it is being used by surveyors, map-makers, conservationists, the mobile phone network, emergency services, walkers and motorists.

# GARMIN GPS Map62s

## Review

DrDick&Vick puts it through its paces

Having graduated from an Etrex VistaCx through to an Oregon 300, via the following route Etrex Legend Hc > GPS Map60Cx, I have recently upgraded to the GPS Map62s.

Having used it now for a few caching outings I thought I would write a short review for any members who might be considering an upgrade. Although the screen is slightly smaller than the Oregon it is still easily viewed and is nice and clear. My main reason for upgrading was a very technical one, Boys & Toys! Working wise it is very easy to use, it has all the 'Paperless Caching' functions without a touch screen as all menu navigation is done using buttons and a joystick type pad. During winter caching at least I will now be able to wear gloves. At first I found the joystick awkward to use, but once I got used to not pressing the edge too hard it became much easier to use. Main navigation between the pages is done by use of the Page > & Quit < buttons.

In use, the performance is really good, I always allow it to sit for 5 mins so as to get a good lock, and run it with WAAS enabled and wait for the 'D' to appear before I move off. Under normal circumstances, open ground or minimal cover, it manages to maintain an accuracy reading of +/- 8 to 10ft and even if it does drop out slightly due to being put in a pocket, it responds and returns to that figure within 5 seconds or so.

Under tree cover it compared to my old Map60Cx in that it maintains the signal far longer than units that do not have the small aerial, on a recent outing I was under tree cover for around 60% of the time, but the worst it read was +/- 15ft although I would imagine that it might be a little worse if the tree cover became extremely dense. The screen was easily readable, even in bright sunlight and, once I had sat and gone through the set up procedures and got everything as I want it, navigating between the pages was simple and can be done one handed. Only basics included in the box, Map62s, quick start guide & a USB lead. The full manual is actually stored on the unit itself and can be installed on your computer. I bought my unit as a stand alone without any mapping, as I am happy to use the TalkyToaster maps, but I do create Custom OS maps for the occasional use. £288 from Amazon, delivery was 3 days. As with all of the handheld Garmin units it can be used for pedestrian & motoring navigation with the user being prompted by 'Beeps' and following the map, with or without a text prompt at the top, or by following a text listing of the route.







View of the Compass screen with the 'Small Data Fields' dashboard option.

I have set the data fields to show:  
GPS accuracy  
Distance to Destination  
Battery status  
GPS status



View of the Map screen with the '2 Small Data fields' option chosen and set to show: GPS Accuracy (my preference) Distance to Destination (Selected Cache)



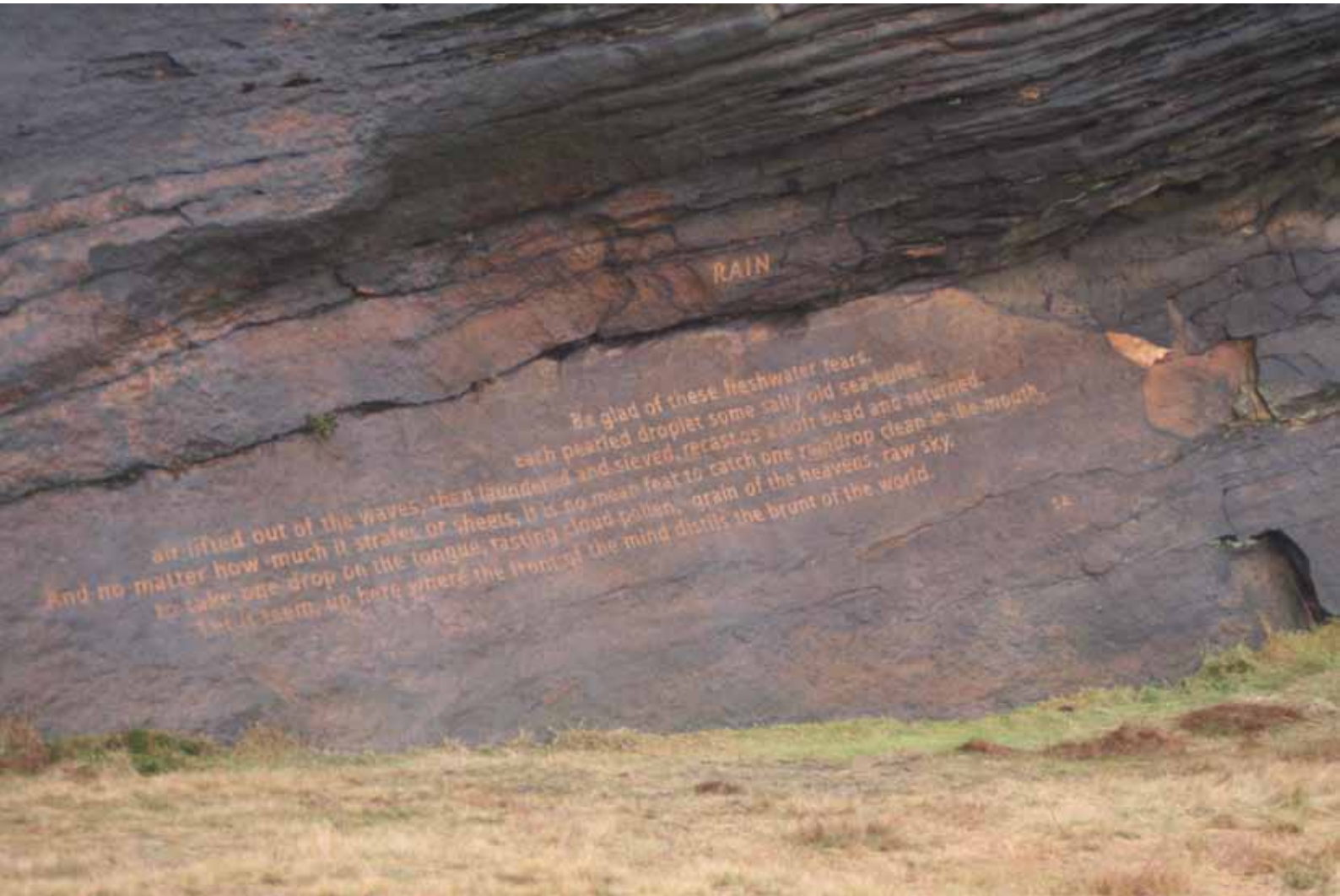
View of the Map screen with the Navigation Bar showing, it cycles through all of the pages that have been added by the user. I have mine setup so as the sequence is Geocaches>Map>Compass>Trip Computer This way it is a simple case of one or two clicks on the Page button to flip through my most used pages



View of the Compass screen with the 'Geocaching Dashboard' option activated. Always shows the closest Geocache whatever you are navigating to.

# MEMORABLE CACHES

Tony Pinnington (mongoose39uk) takes a walk in the Pennines to visit **Rain: GC37TDR**



Over the years I have visited a few caches that have taken me to places where poetry is a feature.

The latest was in December: our lass, who has not been at all well, was feeling fit enough for a walk. Well, knowing how ill she has been, I wanted somewhere where the going was fairly easy.

I remembered that in November a cache had been published a few miles from home, the access was flat and there was a poem carved in the rock near the site. A location with good views as well. It

was just over a mile from the road so I thought it would be ideal.

So, we took a drive to the car park and set off. The weather was pleasantly warm for the time of year so with dog on lead we set off at a gentle pace and wandered up to the cache site. The cache is on the other side of a culvert from the main path and you can see the poem carved into the rock easily. A little walk past, and the path crosses the culvert, which allowed easy access to the minor path and a slightly muddier path to the poem and the cache.



The cache was easily found, was in a good container, a decent size for taking most Travel Bugs and coins. The log book was signed and we were back on our way.

Then some thoughts began to cross my mind. Not about the cache as such but about the poem. The cache has permission from the landowner, getting this permission would be no easy task. Most would assume that it is United Utilities land. No; it belongs to James Dearden, the Lord of the Manor of Rochdale (a title held in the past by Baron Byron of Rochdale, the poet Lord Byron). Easy to contact you may think, not so. He is an absentee farmer/landlord living in New Zealand. So a good effort on the part of the cache owner.

Now what about the poem and its placement. When does Graffiti become art? When do a few lines scratched on a rock become poetry. Is what some would regard as a semi-wilderness

A good effort from the cache owner who found an interesting location and went out of his way to get appropriate permission.

location an appropriate place for it. In fact the location was heavily modified by man many years before the poem was carved.

Does the carver of the poem have permission to carve it there? I could find nothing near the site to tell me about the poem and a cursory search of the interweb thingy found me neither information on the writer, the carving, or its location. So, very little information at all. All I found were a couple of photographs.

*The poem reads:*

Be glad of these freshwater tears, each pearled droplet  
some salty old sea-bullet air lifted out of the waves,  
then laundered and sieved, recast as a soft bead and  
returned.

And no matter how much it strafes or sheets, it is no  
mean feat to catch one raindrop clean in the mouth, to  
take one drop on the tongue, tasting cloud pollen, grain  
of the heavens, raw sky.

Let it teem, up here where the front of the mind distills  
the brunt of the world.

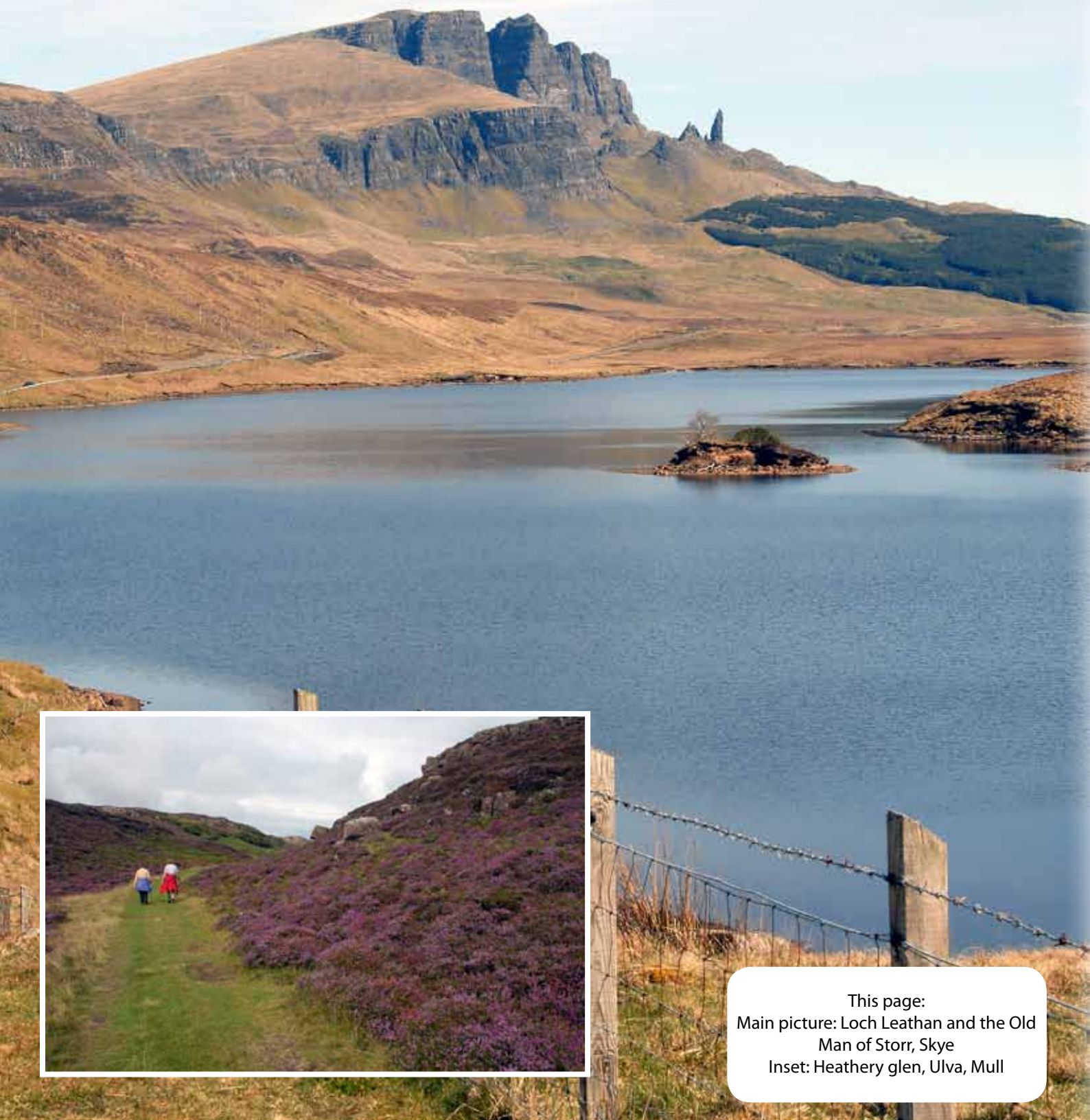


## UK Mega Event 2012

FOR YOUR DIARY: 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](http://www.mega2012.org.uk)

# Western A PORTRAIT OF SCOTLAND



This page:  
Main picture: Loch Leathan and the Old  
Man of Storr, Skye  
Inset: Heathery glen, Ulva, Mull





All images © Terry Marsh

This page:  
 Main picture: Lairigmor, Kinlochleven  
 Left: The Cuillin of Skye and Buachaille Etive Mor  
 Right: The Five Sisters of Kintail from Mam Ratagan,  
 and Eilean Donan Castle, Dornie



# Caching with an Android

An overview by DrDick&Vick



C:Geo



Cachehound



GeoBeagle

With the improvement of mobile phone devices, and especially the introduction of the Android system, geocaching no longer requires a devoted hand held GPS device.

While the majority of Android phones have a built in GPS unit these do tend to be somewhat inaccurate on some phones and all tend to drain the phone battery and drastically reduce the operating time. There are BlueTooth GPS units available that contain the latest Sirf III chipsets and have a rechargeable battery that normally gives 8 to 10 hours use per charge and do not affect the phones battery, apart from the need to run the BlueTooth.

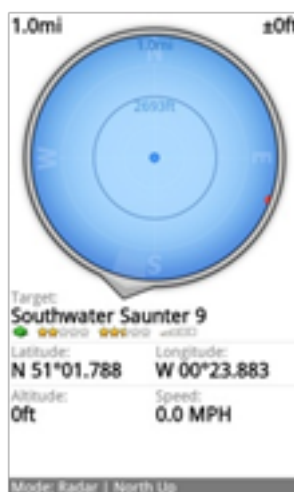
I have tried many of the apps available for the Android system and have listed some of the functions available in five of them. I have added a small chart showing the main benefits of each of the apps that I have field tested.

Although I own a dedicated GPS unit I have tried my phone (Samsung Galaxy S) out in the field using each of the following apps and with a BlueTooth GPS unit connected and carried in my jacket pocket. Normal accuracy with that combination is around +/- 12ft, 90% of the time, which is much better than the built in GPS chipset.

The Apps that use the Groundspeak API have much better communication with the website and therefore are able to do more, but of course they are not free, although I don't find the cost of NeonGeo excessive at £2.75.

Features	Cachehound	Groundspeak	C:Geo	GDAK	NeonGeo
Import PQ	N	Y	N	N	Y
Import GPX	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Import GSAK database	N	N	N	Y	N
Compass Guidance	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Map Guidance	Y	Y	Y	Coming	Y
On Line Search	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Built in Filter	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Offline Logging	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Online Logging	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Hint Decoding	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Next Stage Entry	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Trackables Listed	Y	Y	N	Y (1)	Y
Trackable Drop/Pick	N	Y	N	N	Y
Previous Logs	Y	Y	Y	Y (2)	Y
API Used	N	Y	N	N	Y
Free or Paid for	PAY	PAY	FREE	FREE	PAY

- (1) Only a full list and not on the cache page
- (2) Will list all logs from your GSAK database



NeonGeo



Official Groundspeak

The main thing to remember if you are going to use your phone for caching is to have some form a 'DryPack' for it as unlike modern GPS units the phones are not rugged and waterproof.



# Wetherby Update



## The Chairman explains

Following the bomb scare in Wetherby in July 2011, I've been in dialogue with the Association of Chief Police Officers which is the central Police body in England, Wales and NI. This is an update on those discussions which have continued to be positive and constructive.

ACPO have now distributed instructions to all the separate Force Control Rooms around the country, which provides them with a process to check if suspect packages are listed on the geocaching.com website and informs them about geocaching. The intention is to also distribute this to Forces in Scotland direct from ACPO to the Scottish equivalent ACPOS, and then to develop the process to cover other listing sites. They have also distributed information about geocaching through various internal channels.

They are keen to encourage good relationships between the Police and geocaching community. For example, if a geocacher should be challenged by the Police then they should immediately explain about geocaching and ideally show evidence of this such as a cache page or geocaching leaflet. On the other hand geocachers may come across things which may be useful to the Police such as evidence of crime (e.g. abandoned wallets/handbags) or other information. These should be reported, normally through the non-emergency number 101 (landline or mobile).

Despite a further bomb scare, the Police respect geocaching as a legitimate activity and are keen to work with us to minimise future problems and possibly even benefit from a flow of information from the community. To this end, they asked to meet me on a regular basis to review recent issues, processes and exchange information on an on-going basis.



# GAGB NEWS

## GAGB Competition

The GAGB competition will now be running in line with each issue of Seeker. This issue's competition will end at midnight on 18th January 2012.

To enter you have to have become a FULL MEMBER of the GAGB before the 1st January 2012.

Prizes for this competition are:

Chinese Dragon Geocoin – polished gold (image will be displayed on forum)

Cachers Stamp from UKGeocachers (image will be displayed on forum)

Charity Glamour Calendar

All answers should be sent to [competition@gagb.org.uk](mailto:competition@gagb.org.uk), with a subject heading of 'Competition'.

### Questions:

1. Back in Issue 1, what was the place that got Tidied up a bit?
2. What new GAGB product was announced in Issue 2?
3. Who was interviewed in Issue 2?
4. What unique cache was the subject of an article in Issue 2?
5. In Issue 1, somebody was asked "If you could give one bit of advice to a new geocachers..... what was the answer and who was asked the question?"

### 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'.



### The GAGB now has its own 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, here.

# Members discounts...



[www.ukgeocachers.co.uk](http://www.ukgeocachers.co.uk)

**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.



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.



**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](http://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.

**GeocacheKit** are pleased to be able to offer all GAGB members a **5% discount** on all items on the website [www.geocachekit.co.uk](http://www.geocachekit.co.uk). Including geocoins, trackables, readymade caches and much more.

The discount code is available from the Members' Chat section of the GAGB forums.



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



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.

