

## 6 Tips for Hiding an Environmentally Friendly Geocache

The sun weaves its warm beams through the thick growth of the forest. The birds are singing a familiar tune and in the distance you hear the careful footsteps of a deer. The geocache you are looking for is only a few feet away. Your geosense is heightened, you take a deep breath inhaling the calming perfume of the forest and look around. You spot a small stack of unnaturally parallel branches and...sure enough, the geocache you were looking for is right underneath!



“Aww”, you say, “I love nature!” Guess what: so do we. And what’s the best way to give that love to Mother Earth? Hide an environmentally-friendly geocache.

To help you out, we put together a list of our top tips and tricks for nature-nice geocaches:

- **Think before you hide.** If you’re hiding a geocache in the forest or a park make sure to get permission from land management first. They will be able to let you know if there are special rules or regulations in the area and if there is wildlife you could be disturbing. Pro-tip: To give park and land managers a better understanding of what to expect, check out nearby geocaches and calculate the number of geocache logs per month. That way they can decide if the number of additional visitors each month is sustainable.
- **Have a comprehensive geocache details page.** A good description can help fellow geocachers do the right thing. Let them know what they are looking for and what they need to bring. Parking coordinates for the trailhead or specific local policies are important information to put on the details page as well. If you are hiding in a sensitive area, you don’t want geocachers to turn over every stone and create countless “geotrails”. Prevent this from happening by choosing the appropriate ratings for difficulty and terrain, and come up with a good hint.
- **Place the geocache carefully.** When looking for the perfect hiding place for your geocache, be sure to pick a spot that doesn’t disturb what’s already there. That means no digging, chopping, cutting, burrowing, etc... Another good idea is to place your geocache near an

existing trail and add a waypoint for the coordinates of the trailhead, so cachers won't approach the cache from the wrong side and have to bushwhack.



- **Choose an appropriate geocache container.** Your geocache container should be waterproof, tough, scentless and of appropriate size. Searching for a micro in the woods with heavy tree coverage and spotty reception can lead to a fruitless search and disturbed wilderness. Food or scented trade items (for example candles or air fresheners) can attract animals that might chew up the container and possibly get sick. If your geocache is attached to something, don't put any permanent fasteners (screws, nails, etc.) into any trees or shrubs, regardless if they're dead or alive.

- **Work with your geocaching community volunteer.** Give your geocaching community volunteer reviewer as much information as you can about the location and placement of the geocache. They have substantial experience and will know if the placement or attachment of a geocache could cause potential problems for plants and wildlife.



- **Don't leave Cache-Trash.** It happens: you move away or you just do not have the time to maintain your geocache anymore. Before you archive it, ask around. Maybe one of your fellow geocachers wants to adopt the geocache. (Go [here](#) to learn how to adopt a geocache.) If you have to archive the geocache after all, be sure to remove your geocache container from its hiding spot.

Do you feel ready to get outside and explore nature? We hope that these tips will help to make you nature's best friend when you hide your next geocache. But this is not all you can do to be an environmentally friendly geocacher. Next time we will give you tips on "How to find a geocache in an environmentally friendly way." But you might already know...