



Great Swamp Watershed Association

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Protecting our waters and our land for 30 years

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Geocaching: This Outdoor Game Might Become Your Next Passion

Learn geocaching basics at a workshop presented by Great Swamp Watershed Association and Northern New Jersey Cachers

(Morristown, NJ) You played Hide-And-Go-Seek and Capture The Flag as a kid, right? You did your fair share of scavenger hunts too. Now that you are grown up, and maybe have a family of your own, it's time to up the ante a little bit, don't you think? It's time to get outside and do a little geocaching!

Never heard of geocaching before? Well, it's a game—a real-world, global treasure hunting game where the players use GPS devices (a navigation tool or GPS-enabled smartphone) to locate special containers hidden outdoors at special locations.

Geocaches—the containers and objects you set out to find when you go geocaching—come in many different forms. Traditionally, your coordinates will lead you to a container holding a log book where you record the date and time of your visit for posterity. Sometimes you will find an item that you can take as a keepsake, provided you leave another item of equal or greater value. Sometimes, finding one geocache gives you coordinates or clues for finding another, or points you toward an environmental landmark like an old tree or a bird's nesting box. Whatever turns up at your destination, it's a good bet that the natural beauty you have seen and experienced on your way is what the game is all about.

Like all games, geocaching has rules. The first two—recording your visit in a log book and only taking a geocached item when you can replace it with something else—were mentioned earlier. Other rules include not putting yourself or others in danger, respecting local laws and property rights, and, minimizing your impact on the environment.

Before you start geocaching, you will want to make sure you are familiar with all its rules. You will also want to make sure you know how to get out and enjoy our natural world without disturbing it.

If this sounds like a lot to consider for a simple treasure-hunting game, never fear! Great Swamp Watershed Association (GSWA) and Northern New Jersey Cachers (NNJC) have you covered. The two nonprofit groups are teaming up on **Saturday, November 5, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.** to teach you all the basics of geocaching—from selecting your equipment to maintaining the health and beauty of all the wild and scenic natural areas you visit. This **Introduction to Geocaching Workshop** is open to all ages and skill levels, and will begin at GSWA's office at **568 Tempe Wick Road in Morristown, NJ**. After a quick class introducing you to basic geocaching concepts, the workshop will travel to GSWA's Conservation Management Area (CMA) at 1 Tiger Lily Lane in Morristown. The CMA—with its 53 acres of undeveloped fields, streams, and woodlands—is a perfect venue for testing out your newly acquired geocaching skills, and there are already several geocaches hidden there for you to find and enjoy. Please note that you do not need your own GPS device in order to participate. And, all the walking or hiking we do outdoors will be on easy, level terrain, so people of all ages will be comfortable, especially kids!

Advanced registration is required for participation in the geocaching workshop. GSWA asks all those who are not yet members of the organization to contribute **\$10 per person** to help offset expenses. Register online at <http://www.greatswamp.org/EventReg.htm> or call GSWA's event hotline at 973-538-3500 x22. Please remember to bring your boots or hiking shoes to the workshop—it's been really wet the past two months! Please also remember to dress appropriately for the weather, and bring your own reusable water bottles and snacks for the outdoor portion of the

program.

Get outside and enjoy the natural world! Give geocaching a try on November 5!

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Founded in 1981, the Great Swamp Watershed Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and protecting the water and land of the 36,000-acre watershed region in Morris and Somerset counties. We work to maintain the beauty and health of our open space, and to monitor and protect five streams: Loantaka Brook, Great Brook, Primrose Brook, Black Brook, and the Upper Passaic—which feed into the Passaic River and provide drinking water to more than a million people.