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## Nuggets of News and Knowledge

April 2020

Whether you are new to gold prospecting or an experienced old-timer, whether you have just started swinging a metal detector or have been digging targets for years, get the most out of treasure hunting with these nuggets of news and knowledge— tips, ideas, new products and more!



### Gold Prospecting During a Pandemic

Although “social distancing” has become part of everyone’s new normal, gold prospectors and metal detectorists have traditionally separated themselves from the masses. Sometimes it’s because we want to keep our secret spot a secret. Sometimes it’s because spouses and friends don’t share our same passion. Sometimes we just need some alone time with Mother Nature to decompress from the modern world. It has been this way for generations, and most likely will continue.



When you think about it, [metal detecting](#) is the most solitary form of prospecting, even if you are out with a group of friends. A detectorist knows that distance from others is a vital part of detecting. Detectors hear each other, and there is nothing worse than missing a target because of interference from another detector. As a detectorist, we know this and keep our distance for everyone’s success. It is something that we do without thought. A treasure hunter’s appreciation for being outdoors truly allows us to live in the moment when there is color in the pan or while digging a nugget. That being said, we are also not your stereotypical loner aimlessly wandering with only a faithful dog by our sides. Today’s prospectors are socially skilled and adept at working together, or alone, to get the gold. Most are willing to share our lifestyle with anyone that asks.

Our biggest challenges out in the field, which get easier over time with experience and using new equipment and technology, are learning to read the ground and waterways, and then recovering the gold when we find it. However, this year we face a different challenge with COVID-19, the novel 2019 coronavirus. COVID-19 is more infectious and the chances of spreading the virus is much greater than spreading the flu. How does this impact us in our quest for the yellow metal? Should we give up one of our favorite pastimes, hobby, or small business? Although each person needs to make their own informed decision, most would say NO. Undeterred, we should continue to head out into the woods or desert (wear [snake protection](#)!) where we are many times

### Nugget of Knowledge

#### How to Set Up a Sluice

Whether you're a beginner or an old pro, setting up your stream sluice just right takes some trial and error. It isn't hard to do, it just takes an understanding of water currents and angles to guarantee success. Try these helpful tips: Place your sluice in the flow of a stream or river so that the water enters the flared end and flows through the sluice. If the current is strong you may need to lay some stones against the edge of the sluice to keep it from washing away. The sluice should be set at a downhill angle that allows the material to briskly flow through the sluice. The higher the volume of water available, the shallower the angle will be. Shovel material into the sluice at the flared end as close to the end as possible so that

safer than in the social situations that surround us daily. [Article continued...](#)

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## Melt Gold and Other Precious Metals at Home

Professional mining companies recover gold and other precious metals in quantities sufficient enough to pay refiners to do the smelting for them. But what can smaller scale recreational gold miners do? Consider melting gold, silver, and other metals yourself! Check out the various sizes of [Kwik Kilns](#) -- all made in the USA!



## NEW! Best Shovel for Metal Detectorists

Developed and used by the Diggers King George (George Wyant) and Ringmaster Tim (Tim Saylor), these shovels set the standard of excellence— you'll be hard pressed to find a better all-around travel shovel than a rugged Anaconda Treasure Company shovel!

- Tempered steel
- Heat treated for durability
- Powder coated
- Wide, non-slip foot pegs
- Teeth on blade edges for cutting roots
- Pressure tested to 180 - 200 lbs



100% made in the USA! [Check out 31 and 36 inch Anacoda shovel here.](#)

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## Spiral Gold Panning Machines Do the Work

If you don't have the muscle power or time, let a spiral panning machine help you separate the gold from your concentrates and black sand much more quickly and easily. The Desert Fox is a compact, light-weight gold panning machine you can take anywhere. Weighing under 10 pounds even with a rugged folding stand, it folds up and stores neatly in its Action Packer tub. Operate it right out of the tub, or remove it from the case and use it in a stream. The Desert Fox spiral wheel has 7 separate spirals which pick up GOLD 7 times with each rotation of the wheel (105 times per minute). The seven spirals dump gold into the tube-shaft and into a hanging gold catch-cup. The Desert Fox's pitch adjustment and water spray system help you "tune out" the black sand. [Desert Fox Gold Panning Machine is available in two speeds.](#)



**WARNING! Be Safe During Snake Season!**

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the material is washed over the entire length of the sluice. Do not overload the sluice with material. Pace your shoveling so that the sluice box has time to clear before you add more material. [Tips continued here...](#)

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## Stream Sluices and Highbankers



Nineteenth century gold miners used wooden sluices that were at least 12 feet long, but modern gold prospectors primarily use [sluice boxes](#) made of aluminum which are typically 24, 36 or 48 inches long and 6 to 10 inches wide. The idea is to position a sluice box in a running stream so that the water does the work-- separating the dirt and rocks away from the gold. Since gold is heavy, it will stay in the bottom of the sluice, trapped by riffles and miner's moss. A [power sluice or highbanker](#) is basically a sluice box with height and mobility and is motorized. In addition to the ability to go just about anywhere, power sluices and highbankers are able to run more material in less time than a hand sluice without power.

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## Electroscopes Find Treasure



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Don't take a chance when in snake country— snake gaiters or boots offer protection and peace of mind. Some years are worse than others when it comes to rattlesnake, copperhead and water moccasin encounters. When temperatures rise, snakes seek shelter in shady areas under rocks, log piles, old mining equipment, in vegetation— exactly the types of places where gold prospectors and metal detectorists are hunting! Poisonous pit vipers can strike at a target up to two-thirds of their body length, so even hiking in snake country can pose a problem if you accidentally step near or startle a snake. Don't take a chance! Protect yourself from snake bite, painful cacti needles, thorns, and other dangers while enjoying the great outdoors! [Snake gaiters and boots here.](#)

## History Nugget: Bannack State Park



Bannack, Montana is the site of many “firsts” in the Treasure State’s history. Although it’s a gold mining ghost town today, it served as the first territorial capital in 1864, had the state’s first jail, hotel, and chartered Masonic Lodge. It also had the first hard rock mine and the first electric gold dredge. If you’d like to learn more about these “firsts” take a self-guided walking tour of Bannack State Park, located about 25 miles southwest of the city of Dillon.

Although the old-time prospectors are long gone, many mining relics and over 60 buildings remain. Most are so well preserved that you can actually go inside them— a rare treat when it comes to ghost towns. Bannack is unique for another reason, too— for the quality of the gold found here. While most gold is 80% to 95% pure, some of Bannack’s gold assayed 99.5%, which is equivalent to refined gold. Before you start your walking tour, pick up a brochure at the Visitor Center and read the entertaining stories about many of the homes, hotels, bachelor cabins, saloons, and stores still standing along Bannack’s boardwalk. While factual, these tales are also filled with colorful details about the life and times of the original occupants. For example, one of the cabins was still occupied by bootleggers until the 1960s. [Article continued here...](#)

Electroscope is a different breed and concept of metal detector technology. It is an electronic locator that will recognize the presence of metals from a long distance, up to two miles away on sizeable targets. These fine instruments can aid treasure hunters by providing a direction and an approximate location where treasure might be buried, then you can finish off your recovery of gold, coins, relics, and more using a conventional deep seeking [metal detector](#). Hunting for nuggets, veins, and paystreaks in highly mineralized areas is a natural application for these custom designed instruments. Cover more ground in less time and increase the chance of making a recovery! [Learn more about electroscopes.](#)

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