



# Treasure Hunter's Handbook

*Liza Gardner Walsh*

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The Treasure Hunter's Handbook is for kids and families who love to explore the world around them. This book highlights the appeal of treasure hunting as a fun family activity that encourages kids to get outside. Parents and educators are concerned about children's rapidly increasing screen time and books that get kids in nature are very popular.

The book also seizes on the popularity and market success of pirates, for who hasn't seen a young child wearing an eye patch hoisting a Jolly Roger flag. Books on pirates are constantly in circulation at the library but I have yet to find a book on treasure hunting for kids. I also feel that expanding the typical "pirate booty" concept into something more productive and educational will appeal to parents, grandparents, and educators.

Although not an exclusive 'Maine' book, all of the activities will be field tested in Maine. Just as fairy houses can be built anywhere, kids can hunt for treasure even in their own backyards, allowing for wide accessibility and the making of a great gift book.

The book will cover the following topics:

**Myths and legends of buried pirate treasure:** This section will share some of the stories such as Captain Kidd's loot on Jewell Island and Pirate Ned Lowe's treasure captured from a Spanish galleon and dropped in the middle of the pond on Pond Island.

**Panning for gold:** Building on C.J. Stevens book, *The Next Bend in the River: Gold Mining in Maine*, and the allure of the Gold Rush, panning for gold is making a comeback and is a great activity for kids.

**Mining for minerals and gemstones:** *We Walk on Jewels: Treasure Hunting in Maine for Gems and Minerals* by Jean Blakemore describes in a very detailed way the many areas in Maine where gems and minerals can be found. The Treasure Hunter's Handbook can provide some of the information in a more simplistic and user-friendly way.

**Metal Detecting:** Many kids have their own metal detectors but there are entire organizations that focus on this past time. This section will tell some of the stories of amazing treasure found using this simple device.

**Map and compass reading:** Every child should learn these basic skills and this section will explain the basics of cartography and orienteering.

**Geocaching and letter boxing:** Geocaching is a real-world, outdoor treasure hunting game using GPS-enabled devices. Letter boxing is a low tech version that combines navigational skills and rubber stamp artistry.

**Found treasures:** Hunting for everyday treasures such as sea glass, sea shells, four-leaf clovers, arrowheads, and fossils.

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