

• Minelab • Times •

PRESS RELEASE

The goldfields came alive in October as Minelab released the ALL NEW GPX-4000 gold detector.

GPX-4000 Field Testing Diary

After many sleepless nights pondering the question, should I or shouldn't I, I decided to give the brand new GPX-4000 a go. My GP3500 in previous weeks had been on fire. I'd picked up 80 odd bits with it going over some older areas and was on a high with supreme confidence in it. So what was I thinking!! A restless week followed but when the machine turned up, it was like Christmas day, lots of pieces in a big Minelab box waiting to be put together.

DAY 1 – Saturday morning arrives, and I caught up with a couple of friends for our first test on this new beast. Location is Nerrina, just north of Ballarat, where I have been picking up gold on a sluiced hill for around 2 years. The ground has lots of exposed red/orange clay, which has proved noisy on previous Minelab detectors when using mono coils, namely my GP3000 and GP3500. We set up and all are impressed with the machine and its battery. The first time out we are using the machine and all its accessories as supplied, except for testing purposes – we fitted Coiltek 10x5 elliptical mono's to the 4000, GP3500 and GP extreme to compare target signals.

Off we head trying to find a target we can all compare, but 10 minutes in and the GPX-4000 with the 10" elliptical mono was unstable and twitchy. Thinking I probably hadn't set the machine up correctly for the small mono and being unfamiliar with the machine, the supplied 11" GP series DD coil was put back on. Amazing – it was like a complete new machine in our hands! We were running with the suggested FP (factory preset) settings and the machine was running exceptionally smooth and quiet! 10 minutes later and the first gold target is out, quickly followed by 2 more, and I was now getting used to the 4000 and its responses, being able to pick the softer more mellow signals. I now realized that we initially tried to be "smart" and cranked up all the settings BEFORE getting to know the machine with the basic settings. With confidence in the capabilities of the detector, I then

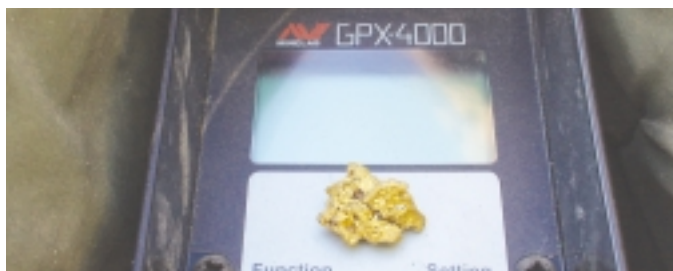


changed coils back to the CT 10x5 mono setting the Gain level to suit, and was rewarded straight away with more signals. 13 pieces was the total including 5 specimens.

DAY 2 – Had me hitting an area which the previous week had yielded me 15 small pieces in a run from exposed yellow clay, but no luck today and my confidence was down, not knowing if I was "hearing" targets.

DAY 3 – Back at the above location, this time armed with new 8" and 11" Commander monos. Another 4 hours for no gold and not much else except some booming hot rocks which had the heart racing. I persisted for another hour before I was rewarded with a very soft hum which turned out to be a deep specie. I was happy once again. Tally – 1 bit.

DAY 4 – Had me hitting the first test hill armed with the 8" Commander mono. The first piece came within 10 mins and was a pretty 0.2gram bit from deep in the red clay - I knew it was here. All were impressed by its depth and ability to run stable, but we were more interested in the mono capabilities. A 15x12 Commander mono was fitted and I had much convincing the machine was turned on and running. The 4000 loved this coil and it ran so smooth and stable on all the hottest clay we could find. I was constantly bashing and crashing this coil just so I could get a noise from it. 2 more bits were found with it, both could be just heard with the 3500 but all agreed that they probably weren't signals that you could pick from ground noise. We then fitted another 10x5 CT elliptical mono and tweaked the settings that allowed the machine and coil to run smooth and stable. This combo accounted for another 5 bits including one small 0.3g piece dug at around 6 inches. I must admit the target response was different to my 3500, I was used to a very unique "blip" over gold but the 4000 was a softer more mellow signal that reminded me of a 2200. But, the machine runs that stable that any slight tug in the threshold should be and was investigated. End tally for day 4 was 8 bits.



DAY 5 – Started off quite cold and windy with a little drizzle. I pulled up on a new spot with a goal in mind – just how good is this machine, and can I find gold in new areas? This was a short story as 10 feet from the truck "Bingo" a soft mellow sound which turned out to be the smallest piece of gold I had detected. It gave a huge response that I was surprised at just how small it was. I then worked below this reef for another 5 bits. Tally – 6 nuggets.

DAY 6 – Saw the land cruiser pulling up at the same spot I walked away from very happy the last trip, so I kitted up and got straight into it. The first signal was another specie, followed by 4 more in quick succession - I was in heaven, as the machine was running faultlessly. This small area is littered with junk and I forced myself to dig EVERYTHING. 10 pieces was the end tally for the day.

DAY 7 – Was a quickie on the way home, with only a couple of hours available I decided to detect the back of this same reef. It wasn't long before a warble between 2 detector holes had me digging another little specie - amazing stuff. This lead me down the slope for a little nugget fest! 5 more were found including a specie and nugget from the same hole. These were all down deep in a wash layer and the clay below. Tally - 6 pieces.

The final tally to date is 44 pieces of gold including lots of species from around 20 hours swinging over 3 weekends. I am now confident with the machine but still not adjusting the settings much. For me the machine is running smooth and stable using mono coils - exactly how I imagined the GPX-4000 would be. My main fear was that the success with my GP3500 would not continue on - how wrong I was as the GPX-4000 has replaced the GP3500, and has found gold more quickly than I could have ever imagined. Am I sold - You bet!

This machine runs smoother, more stable and quieter than my previous ML detectors which include a SD2000, GP3000 and GP3500.

by Toolman



The NEW X-TERRA 70 Treasure/Prospecting detector, or better known as Mr. Versatile

For many years, there has been a need for a detector that could be used for coin and jewellery hunting as well as gold prospecting. Metal detectors were all designed for a specific purpose and people who wanted to do both forms of detecting were faced with buying two machines, or with trying to use one for a purpose it wasn't really intended.

At long last there is a machine that has been designed for both purposes. The X-Terra 70 has three coin & jewellery hunting modes, each with their own target identification and discrimination patterns and also has a specific prospecting mode with true automatic ground tracking for when gold prospecting.

Other advantages with the X-Terra 70 are its ultra lightweight, and well-balanced construction. No other detector has such a comfortable feel that allows you to detect tirelessly for hours on end. Ideal for all the family, a smaller accessory shaft is available for the kids. The X-Terra 70 runs for 20+ hours on just 4 x AA, Alkaline or NiMH batteries.

Target Identification & Discrimination

The X-Terra 70 is very accurate at identifying the type of metal detected and separating worthwhile items from the junk. It does this by testing the conductivity of the target, which is divided into 28 segments from the lowest conductivity up to the highest. Discrimination of the unwanted targets is easily achieved by blocking the unwanted segments. The X-Terra 70 has three preset patterns for different junk types or the operator can set up their own pattern.

Ground Balancing

Being ground balanced to a particular area improves target ID accuracy, increases overall stability, and allows the detector to operate at maximum depth and sensitivity. Ground balance is absolutely essential when gold prospecting on highly mineralised ground. The X-Terra 70 features Minelab's patented automatic ground tracking technology that continually adjusts the ground balance to suit changing ground conditions. This ability to ground balance on the beach, in a park or out bush in the goldfield makes the X-Terra 70 much more versatile than the normal specialised detectors.

Accessory Coils

Exclusive to the X-Terra range of detectors is VFLEX technology. This allows the search frequency and characteristics of the detector to change, depending on the coil being used. The X-Terra 70 has a wide variety of accessory coils available. These range from a very low frequency 3kHz coil for improved depth, through to a high 18.75kHz coil for improved sensitivity, ideal for 9ct jewellery and thin gold chains etc. There is also a range of Double/D coils designed specifically to improve the gold prospecting ability of your detector.

Overall, the X-Terra 70 is ideal for the individual or family who spends time in different locations, looking for a variety of treasures. Although it doesn't have the depth of a GPX-4000 and isn't as sophisticated as an Explorer SE, the features it does offer make it a fabulous all-purpose machine.



A NEW Benchmark for VLF Detectors

by B.T.

When the X-Terra 70 was released and I got my hands on one I honestly didn't know what to expect. But after having used one now for several months I have nothing but praise for this machine.

I have used it everywhere in central Victoria's Golden Triangle region looking for coins and relics from right on the goldfield's in heavily mineralised ground to old homestead sites and farmhouses. Everywhere it has performed flawlessly. The readout screen is super easy to understand and view, even when wearing polarizing sunglasses and in direct sunlight, with the balance of the detector overall being exceptional. And on top of that, it's light enough to carry around all day by just about anyone, young or old alike.

I've had some truly great finds with this machine which range from 1800's coins and trading tokens to historical medallions marking the opening of the first Australian parliament in 1901 and another honouring the Australian Infantry Forces contributions in France, Gallipoli and Palestine. Many of these too were found in pretty heavily mineralised ground, a testament to the X-Terra's ability to cope with just about any ground conditions that you might encounter. As far as a discriminator machine goes this thing is top notch. But, how about in prospecting mode?



In all honesty and as far as I am concerned this machine has redefined VLF single frequency gold detecting. A big wrap I know but the proof is always in the pudding. Put Minelab's new 18.5 kHz Double/D coil on this machine and this thing truly "transforms" into a top notch VLF gold detector.

I have used it in areas of old river wash deposits, gully workings and reef workings and found enough to convince myself that I am using something pretty unique by today's standards. Sure, it's not an SD or GP, and it never has been presented as being anywhere in their league, those guys truly are the heavyweights in the gold game, but it sure is in a class of its own, ability wise. The gold I have been finding with the X-Terra 70 has clearly shown me that it is more than capable at finding the precious metal.

I have recovered numerous pieces from specimens containing several grams of gold right down to the minutest pieces, if you could call them that, of a mere 1/40th of a gram. Now in anyone's book you have to admit that for a multi purpose single frequency target ID machine that's pretty impressive.



This really has to be the best value for money detector on the market and sets a new benchmark for VLF detectors.

A close look at what's in the Box with the NEW GPX-4000

October saw the release of the all-new GPX-4000 gold detector. The GPX-4000 is not just a simple upgrade, as there are several new features on offer. Here is a brief outline of the main improvements achieved over the GP3500:

1. Separation of Threshold pot – several users commented that combining the threshold pot and on/off switch on the GP3500 was a bad idea. The new threshold pot is at the bottom of the front panel, where the user can make quick adjustments, but is protected from accidental bumps etc. The on/off switch is now a push button next to the power cable socket on the back of the control box, which is also used to reset the Factory Preset settings.

2. Gain Control – controls the overall sensitivity of the detector allowing users to fine-tune the machine to provide optimum performance in different conditions. The Gain control will affect both Electromagnetic Interference as well as ground noise. In quiet conditions the Gain can be increased, and in very noisy conditions the Gain can be decreased to maintain a smooth threshold – both cases providing improved performance. A range of 1-15 is available, for settings above and below that of previous GP detectors.

3. Manual Tune in LCD – provides the user with a visual number allowing you to see where your setting is in the available range.

4. Search Mode Switch – allows the user to select a specific mode for different search criteria. The three modes are "Patch" for when the operator is walking & swinging more rapidly than normal; "General" for normal casual detecting; & "Deep" for when slow careful detecting over a small select area. Each mode is loaded with Factory Preset settings, with the General mode providing a favourable audio response to those familiar with previous GP detectors and "Patch" and "Deep" being new search modes. Each mode is user editable via the LCD with Auto Save, so users can tweak each mode to suit their own preferences.

5. Motion Speed Select – will give the user extra performance when sweeping faster or slower than normal. The Very Slow option will give the best performance when sweeping extra slow, and will reduce ambient noise for a super smooth threshold. This is the preset for the Deep Search mode, but still available for the other modes if required.

6. Audio Controls in LCD – many previous GP users have commented that once they set their audio controls such as Volume Limit, Tone and Signal control, they will rarely change them. Having them in the LCD gets rid of several pots on the rear panel, and allows the user to see a number display so that favourite settings are easily remembered, rather than pot positions. It also allows the Levels to be Factory Preset, giving beginners a lot less to worry about when first using the detector.

7. Lightweight Lithium Ion battery – with fast recharge, simple connection, and comprehensive protection circuitry. The weight of the battery is a mere 870g yet still has the capacity to run the detector for 12-13 hrs. A fully flat battery is recharged in approx. 3 hrs.

8. Improved Circuitry – the combination of the digital control system with the LCD display, and the flexible end cap PCB's in place of wiring looms, has meant a reduction in weight and improved circuit reliability. The control box now weighs approx. 160 grams less than the GP3500. This may seem very minor, and won't be noticed once you have your coil properly balanced, but when you lift the detector over obstacles or to detect the sides of a mullock heap, you will quickly appreciate the reduction in weight.

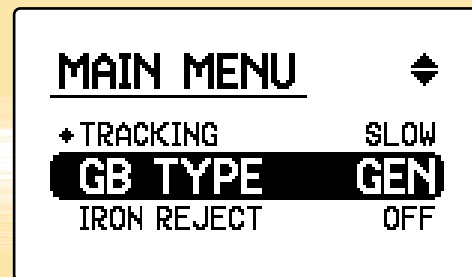
9. Battery Test - provides the user with a voltage readout on the LCD.

10. Specific Ground Balance – This is a completely new method of balancing out ground signals, and will provide improved performance in highly-magnetic soils, regardless of what Soil/Timing is selected.

11. Tracking Speed – Offering three tracking speeds in the GP3500 gave operators the ability to set their Automatic Tracking speed to suit the variability of the ground mineralisation. This feature has been continued in the GPX-4000, and is now selected from the menu.



A selection of nuggets and specimens found in Victoria in only a few days use!!



Simple LCD menu layout, for quick adjustment of all functions

12. New Audio modes – The old Boost switch has been replaced by the Audio Type function. This features four new options. Normal, Deep, Quiet, Boost. Normal is similar to the old Normal Boost on previous GP's; Deep gives you extra volume and tone modulation, without the wide moaning sounds as on previous GP detectors; Boost give you a sharper louder response again ideal for Patch hunting or pin-pointing small nuggets; and Quiet is used in extreme circumstances to stabilise the threshold without any depth loss.

13. Smooth Sensitive – In previous GP's, the Soil switch was used to change the pulse timings of the detector to improve the detectors performance in different soil types. These Soil settings were Sensitive, Normal and Salt. The GPX-4000 is now equipped with two Sensitive Soil/Timings options for the Sensitive position – Smooth and Extra. Extra is the same as Sensitive in all previous GP's, providing an increase in signal response to smaller nuggets, and improved stability in certain ground types. Smooth is a completely new timing, which cancels out most hot rock signals and random ground noises, giving you a "smooth" threshold.

The new Smooth timing has been optimised for use with monoloop coils, and the best areas to use the new timing are heavily mineralised grounds, and those littered with hotrocks, particularly in areas where a monoloop coil could not be used on previous detectors, and especially those that were noisy to work even with a DD coil. In these areas, it is very probable that thousands of smaller shallow nuggets are sitting there hiding in their highly mineralised grounds, and are now ripe for the taking!! One user reported finding 50 nuggets in a day, on a patch of ground he had already been over with the GP3500. This goes to prove that depth isn't always the answer, and sometimes a Smooth threshold is all that is needed!

14. Inverted Response – Those who like to chase big gold have not been left behind. The GPX-4000 offers some great Depth enhancing features like the Slow Motion options, adjustable Gain, Deep Audio Type, and the new Response function which lets you Invert the target signal response of large deep targets, to give you a HI-LOW signal similar to most small targets. It has often been argued that a Tone that rises first and then falls is a lot easier to hear than a low-hi response, and when listening for the faint wide response of a big nugget, the Inverted Response can make a big difference to your success rate.

Many, many ounces of gold was found with the GPX-4000 in the first week of it being released, mainly by users giving it a run on areas where they have found gold in the past with previous detectors. Once these users become more familiar with their GPX-4000 and learn how to tweak the settings for the best results in different areas, it is certain that some excellent finds will be made – STAY TUNED!!

P.S. No-one gets it all, and no matter what someone tells you, THE GOLD IS STILL OUT THERE!

The NEW Explorer SE

Since its release over three and a half years ago, the Explorer II has been enjoying its reign at the top of the Coin and Treasure detector market, and has developed a huge following of users worldwide, who contribute on a daily basis to various on-line forums, clubs and communities sharing finds, tips and ideas. Well, Minelab isn't one to sit still when it comes to improving their detectors, and October saw the release of the very new Explorer SE, (Special Edition).

Focus on New Features

The first thing people will notice about the SE is the simplicity of operation. Huge changes have been made to provide a simpler and more logical menu layout, easier to read fonts, and larger target ID numbers. All functions are now available from the one menu structure and functions have been grouped using a common-sense sequence. These changes make the Explorer SE much easier for everyone to use.

Ergonomically the Explorer SE is supplied with a new coil based on the Slimline design, which is not only submersible, but is also lighter in weight, and a more central shaft mounting position has greatly improved the balance of the detector.

However, the improvements don't stop there. The Explorer SE comes with a faster and more efficient processor that is able to supply more information, more accurately and has improved the response time of the detector. This latest version processor is also more efficient, providing a longer run time from the supplied 1600 mAh battery. The detector is quieter in areas of high trash, the target ID's are much more stable and accurate and the Factory Preset settings have been tweaked for greater performance straight out of the box.

There are also a couple of completely new features. The pin-point audio has been vastly improved, and operates with a modulating tone, so the target location can be found in seconds, and gives a much more defined signal on large deep targets. Another new feature is the Pitch Hold response mode, which is perfect for beach use, providing an improved response and greater depth.

The Explorer SE really is a high-tech, high-spec unit and regardless of whether it's a first time detector user, or a seasoned treasure hunter, it is a detector that will continue to dominate in the high-end field of Coin, Jewellery and Relic detection.



RRP: \$1,825

NEW MINELAB WEBSITE

Minelab's all new website is now up and running. It features information on all the latest models, field tests, product manuals for current and previous detectors, video footage, Frequently Asked Questions, Dealer locator, and much more. You can even view the tips and stories featured in previous Minelab Times.

Visit: www.minelab.com.au and click on the Metal Detectors tab to enter.

Minelab wins US Army Contract

Minelab recently announced their involvement as a major partner in a new multi-million dollar contract to supply the US Army with the next generation of hand-held mine detectors. This contract is the culmination of over 8 years of collaboration between Minelab and a US based provider of ground penetrating radar. Known as HSTAMIDS, the new detectors will replace the US Army's previous generation of detectors over a 10 year period. Minelab are extremely proud of their involvement in this project and see this contract as the ultimate validation of the metal detection technology that they have pioneered.



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Minelab reserves the right to respond to ongoing technical progress by introducing changes in design, equipment and technical features at any time. Certain descriptions and illustrations may differ from the exact model purchased.

