

JAN 2024 / BIL. 10 / 2024

# EON

*Epitome of Nature*

K E S I H A T A N   D A N   K E S E J A H T E R A A N



MAJALAH PP BIOLOGI  
UITMCNS

ISSN 2773-5869





# TECH-TREKKING WITH GEOCACHING: UNVEILING THE INTERSECTION OF SMARTPHONE DEPENDENCY AND HEALTHY WELLBEING

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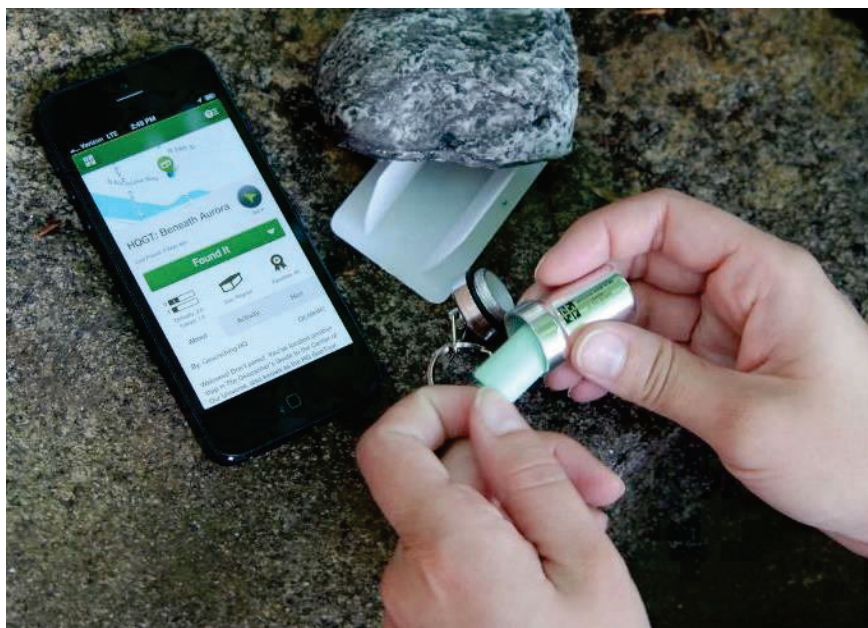


Figure 1: The Digital Hunt (Source: [www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com))

Adventurers have been drawn to the realm of geocaching, a real-life treasure hunt that combines outdoor exploration and the thrill of discovery, for decades because of the thrill of the quest. However, this age-old activity has transformed digitally in today's tech-dominated world, with smartphones becoming an integral part of the hunt (Xu et al., 2017).

The outcome? A spirited discussion about how to maintain our wellbeing while finding a balance between screen time and outdoor activities.

### Accepting the Electronic Treasure Map

Imagine this: you can now locate hidden caches by using your reliable smartphone instead of just your map and

compass. You only need a few taps to join a community of like-minded treasure hunters that can help you locate the elusive prize by providing you with interactive maps and exact coordinates. With this tech-savvy twist, geocaching is now more accessible and appealing than ever, attracting a new generation of modern adventurers eager to find hidden treasures in their backyard (Boys et al., 2017).

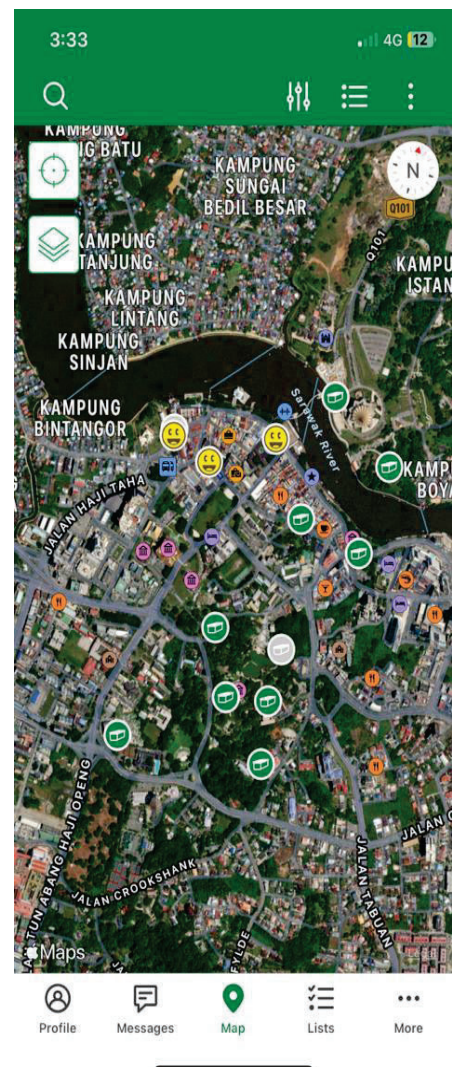


Figure 2: Treasure to be discovered near you (Source: Author's own collection)

### A Tug-of-War: Screen Time vs. Nature's Embrace

However, worries about the effects of prolonged smartphone use have crept into the geocaching community as our displays grow more and more like extensions of our fingertips. Are we becoming too reliant on screens and losing our ability to distinguish between the actual and virtual worlds? We worry that the soul-satisfying effects of an expedition immersed in nature may be eclipsed by this immersive digital experience, leaving us yearning for the pure joy of taking in the fresh air and tranquillity of the great outdoors (Robinson & Hardcastle, 2016).

### Finding the Ideal Balance

Despite these legitimate worries, the geocaching community isn't going down without a fight. Experts and enthusiasts alike are promoting a careful approach to tech integration (Olson, 2012), calling for moderation and a deliberate effort to take in the surrounding natural beauty. It's about using technology to improve the experience while taking a break from the computer and immersing ourselves in the sound of the wind, branches rustling, and leaves rustling.

### The Way Forward: Combining Adventure and Well-Being

This is a time of tremendous technological innovation, and geocaching's future is uncertain.

### Are we becoming too reliant on screens and losing our ability to distinguish between the actual and virtual worlds?

The secret is to balance the best aspects of both worlds, preserving our relationship with nature while taking advantage of technology's wonders. A new generation of adventurers, digitally savvy and deeply reverent for the world beyond our screens, may be paved by fostering responsible smartphone use and a thoughtful appreciation for the environment (Munro-Stasiuk, 2006). So, let's put on our hiking boots, take our cell phones, and embark on a mission to discover the ideal ratio between technological delights and adventurous activities. The geocaching treasure trove awaits!

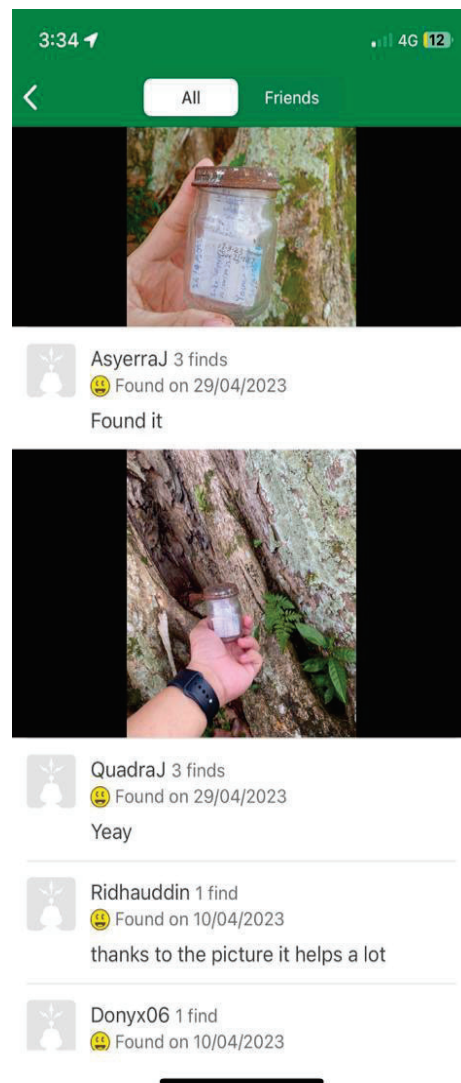


Figure 3: You can digitally store your search memories (Source: Author's own collection)



Figure 4: Geocaching is a fun way to promote both mental and physical well-being (Source: Author's own collection)