

**Author:** Vince A Miglore, [Email](#)

Vince Miglore is a researcher and technical writer with a keen interest in metal detecting. He's written for numerous magazines, including W&E treasures, and is former editor of a hobbyist newsletter.

"I bought a detector back in 1982, and in the first 5 minutes I found an Indian Head penny dated 1881 -right in my own front yard! Since then I've been hooked."

You'll be hooked too, when you see how great this sport is for your physical fitness, your appreciation of natural science, and most of all for the wealth of treasures you can find.

Vince is the author of *Metal Detecting for the Beginner* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2010 which can be found at [Amazon.com](#)

### ***Let's Go Metal Detecting!***

#### **A Good Hobby for Bad Times**

by *Vince Migliore*

Let's go metal detecting! It's a fun outdoor activity that helps you find all sorts of coins, jewelry, historic relics, and even gold nuggets!

**The sport of metal detecting** has come a long way in the last few years. Modern detectors now have a feature called discrimination, which tells you if the object is a dime, a quarter, or just a piece of junk. That saves a lot of time digging, and steers you towards the more valuable targets. With this hobby, you can go to just about any park, beach, or ball field and come home with a pocket full of coins and valuable trinkets. Instant wealth, though, is not the goal of this sport. Some of the real benefits of metal detecting are as follows:

**Science.** You learn a lot about science. You learn about search coils and the practical application of electromagnetism. How does the detector know if you've got a silver dime or a tin bottle cap? How deep can the search coil penetrate the ground? You learn about geology and the kinds of rocks where gold is found. (Clue: quartz.) The mineral makeup of the soil in your area becomes a curiosity for you. In getting out into the field, you are exposed to all kinds of biological systems – small animals, birds, insects, and plants. By estimating the age of a tree you can judge how old a search site is. You become attuned to the weather and the wind.

**Physical Fitness.** The doctor tells you to get more exercise, or do 100 deep-knee bends. No way, Jose! With metal detecting, however, you'll be trekking for miles, squatting down, swinging the machine, digging, huffing and puffing, and enjoying every minute of it. You'll get a work-out without even noticing it, because you are having so much fun. This sport is at the opposite end of the spectrum from sitting on the couch watching television.

**Nature.** With metal detecting, you find yourself wandering over hill and dale, enjoying the fresh air and the sights of nature. You go to parks and see all kinds of wildlife. If you get into nugget hunting, you find yourself scrambling over rocks along remote stretches of the American River, or up in Yuba county. Oftentimes, you will stop and just look at the birds, or the wind in the trees. You know, it can be a real pleasure.

**People.** Contrary to the image of a lone ranger on an isolated beach, the typical metal detector hobbyist is quite social. Metal detecting clubs and hunting partners make this a group sport. You have to ask permission to search on private land, so interaction with land owners and park rangers is a must. Besides, you soon find yourself showing the kids in the park how it works, or giving a demonstration to the grand-kids.

**History.** Back in 1964, the **US Mint** stopped making silver dimes and quarters. The Holy Grail for metal detecting, then, is to find the old silver coins. To accomplish this, you have to know your history. What schools

and parks were around back then? Where are the oldest streets and neighborhoods? Gold was found in our area back in 1849. Where can I get in on some of that action? As you begin finding old toys, antique household items, and historic relics, you develop an even deeper interest in the history of your town. Finding square nails, old metal buttons, and bullet shell casings becomes fascinating for their historic significance.

**Treasure.** Ultimately, the biggest pleasure of metal detecting is finding coins, tokens, toys, jewelry, and valuable minerals. You can throw the coins into a loose-change jar, take up coin collecting, or sell what you find on the Internet. The biggest kick comes from stashing all the jewelry and baubles you find into your personal pirates' treasure chest. Sometimes, you might even have the pleasure of returning a lost wedding ring to a distraught owner. Metal detecting is fun. It gets you out and moving and engaged in activities. Realistically, you cannot expect to strike it rich with that elusive rare treasure. But, there is something rewarding about finding things for free. It's like pulling the handle of a slot machine. That beep in the headphones means you have found something.

**Will it be Junk or Jackpot?**