

A Dowsing Challenge

A Self-Imposed Test of Locating an Object

I'd been practicing dowsing for several months when I decided I needed a tougher challenge. This was a dozen years ago and I'd already made a pair of L-rods and located most of the water lines feeding the houses in our immediate neighborhood.

I wanted something harder, to test my newfound abilities. To this day, I'm still stunned over what happened.

I'd been successful at getting my L-rods to tell me 'yes' and 'no,' at reacting to water on the basement floor and locating buried water lines. Then I got thinking about what the renowned British dowser Hamish Miller wrote about finding hidden objects. I figured that would be a good next step.

So, I took a blue and white plastic drinking-water container from our pantry, filled it with water and asked Christine to hide it in our yard.

A note about our yard: Our neighborhood in Oregon City sits on a large basalt cliff. It's solid rock with little topsoil. When the houses were built here in the 1800s, basements were dynamited and the broken boulders tossed onto the yards.

Ours, like several of the yards around us, is one huge rock garden composed



of chunks of basalt, beautifully cloaked in moss. We have almost no grass, with the ground covered instead by ivy, vines, flowering ground covers, boxwood hedges and herbs, with a handful of trees — all looking more like ruins in the forest than a suburban yard.



Some time during the day on the next Saturday, Christine hid the water bottle. I was busy on work-related writing projects for the next several days. I'd think now and then about the hidden bottle and wondered how on earth I was going to find it with my L-rods. Or even if I'd be able to find it at all. I finally got a break from work and decided one evening to try to dowse the bottle.

The sun was low when I stepped outside with my L-rods. I took a deep breath and started to walk around the house. At first I simply concentrated on the image of the blue and white bottle. Sometimes the L-rods fluctuated, but there was no clear signal.

I changed my method to asking the question: "Am I within 20 feet of the bottle?" I was hoping for a 'yes' signal from the rods. When nothing happened, I'd take a few more steps and ask again. Trusting this method, I disqualified about a third of our yard as the bottle's nesting spot.

I worked my way around to the back yard and again asked the question. At that moment I got a serious pain in my lower back, as if I'd been carrying a heavy load and strained myself. I took a few steps forward and asked again. The rods remained steady but the pain in my back worsened. I had to sit down. I walked to

our picnic table at the rear of the brick courtyard behind the house. I sat in a chair and the pain eased.

Sitting in the chair at the table, I figured I might as well ask: “Am I within 20 feet?”

The rods crossed. Then the rod in my right hand swung rapidly to the left in a wide arc until it pointed backward at my chest.

I shifted the rods back to their neutral positions and was about to ask the 20-foot question again when the right-hand rod again swung around to point at my chest. Because this was not behavior characteristic of dowsing rods, I thought maybe the rod’s handle itself was causing the rod to swing, so I twisted the handle around and held the rod in a different position.

Immediately the rod swung around to point at me for a third time. I realized maybe it actually was pointing at the bottle. That would mean the bottle was behind me. I hesitated and then stood up and stepped over a boxwood hedge behind my chair and spotted the blue and white bottle amid leaves on the ground and completely concealed behind the boxwood.

Christine had hidden the bottle so well that it normally would have taken me hours — examining every square foot of the yard — to find it. You’d have to literally be on top of the bottle to see it.

I admit I was very pleased that I’d met my challenge, as well as very much in awe.