

Paperless Caching using Plucker

This tutorial describes how to convert pocket queries results that have been received via e-mail into Plucker format to be read on a Palm device.

Requirements:

- Premium Membership at Geocaching.com (required to produce Pocket Queries)
 - For information on becoming a Premium Member visit <http://www.geocaching.com/subscribe/>
- Palm Desktop
 - CD included with purchase of Palm device, or can be downloaded from www.palm.com
- Plucker Desktop
 - For information on downloading and installing Plucker visit <http://desktop.plkr.org/>
- GPX2HTML or GPX Spinner
 - GPX2HTML (Free)
 - can be downloaded from <http://www.fizzymagic.net/Geocaching/gpx2html/gpx2html.exe>
 - GPX Spinner (Registration fee of \$13.30, but unregistered version is fully functional)
 - can be downloaded from www.gpxspinner.com

Prerequisites:

- Have pocket query results unzipped and stored as GPX file(s) in a designated folder on the local hard drive

Overview

Plucker is a document viewer for Palm devices. There are three steps required to load the cache pages:

- Convert the GPX file to HTML pages using either GPX2HTML or GPX Spinner
- Convert index file to Plucker format
- Synchronize with Palm

Step 1: Converting GPX to HTML

There are a least two different programs that can be used to do this: GPX2HTML and GPX Spinner. There are advantages to each, so it's just a matter of preference.

Both programs not only create the cache pages in html format, but they also create an EasyGPS file that can be used to load the waypoints on your GPS. There are a few differences in the way this is done:

- GPX2HTML
 - Adjusts the GC number on GPS to indicate the cache type
 - GC12345 – Traditional
 - Gc12345 – Traditional, Micro
 - GE12345 – Event Cache
 - GG12345 – EarthCache
 - GM12345 – Multicache
 - Gm12345 – Multicache, Micro
 - GQ12345 – Puzzle Cache
 - Gq12345 – Puzzle Cache, Micro
 - GV12345 – Virtual Cache
- GPX Spinner
 - Uses Smart Names (converts the waypoint name to the cache name rather than the GC number)
 - GCYG37 becomes 18CARROTS
 - Can customize to ignore certain caches
 - Can customize to use Corrected Coordinates on puzzle cache pages

Using GPX2HTML

- Copy the GPX2HTML.exe file to the same folder where your unzipped GPX file is
 - If I am running separate pocket queries for different areas, I usually set up a separate folder for each (eg. Winnipeg and Brandon). The GPX2HTML needs to be copied to each of these folders, and the GPX file downloaded to the appropriate folder. This way, when I convert them to plucker, I will have one document containing all the Winnipeg caches and one with all the Brandon caches.
 - If you want to combine pocket queries together (eg. to include all caches in Manitoba) then just copy all GPX files to the same folder.
- Double-click the GPX2HTML icon
 - This will open a DOS screen that shows the progress. It should indicate that it is parsing the file and then writing the HTML pages. This will take a few seconds depending on the speed of your computer and the number of caches requested in your pocket query.
- When it is finished, the screen will close. You should have a new folder called HTML in the directory along with an EasyGPS file called Caches.loc
- Use the Caches.loc file to load the waypoints on your GPS. It will list them by their GC number, but the second letter has been changed to indicate the cache type as mentioned above.
- The HTML folder should have a page for each cache in your pocket query, plus a few index pages.
 - If the directory is empty, then something didn't work right. Make sure that your GPX file is in the directory and that it has been unzipped. You can also open the GPX file in EasyGPS to make sure that it's not blank – if it is, check to make sure your pocket query was set up properly.

Using GPX Spinner

- Drag GPX file over GPX Spinner icon on the desktop
 - This will open a DOS screen that shows the progress. It should indicate that it is parsing the file and then writing the cache pages. This will take a few seconds depending on the speed of your computer and the number of caches requested in your pocket query.
- When it is finished, the screen will close. In the folder where you installed GPX Spinner, you will find a folder named "Cache" with the cache pages in HTML format along with an EasyGPS file called Spinner-EasyGPS.gpx
- Use the Spinner-EasyGPS.gpx file to load caches on your GPS. It will list them by their smart name as mentioned above.
- You can customize GPX Spinner to ignore certain caches.
 - In the Spinner Folder you will find a file called IgnoreCaches.txt Open that file and list the caches you wish to ignore
- You can update the coordinates for Puzzle Caches
 - In the Spinner Folder you will find a file called CorrectedCaches.txt. Open that file and list the GC Number, and revised Latitude and Longitude for the caches you wish to adjust
- See <http://www.gpxspinner.com/help/customizing.htm> for more info on customizing GPX Spinner
- Geocacher University also has a good write up for working with GPXSpinner/Plucker: <http://www.geocacher-u.com/resources/paperless.html>

Palm Desktop

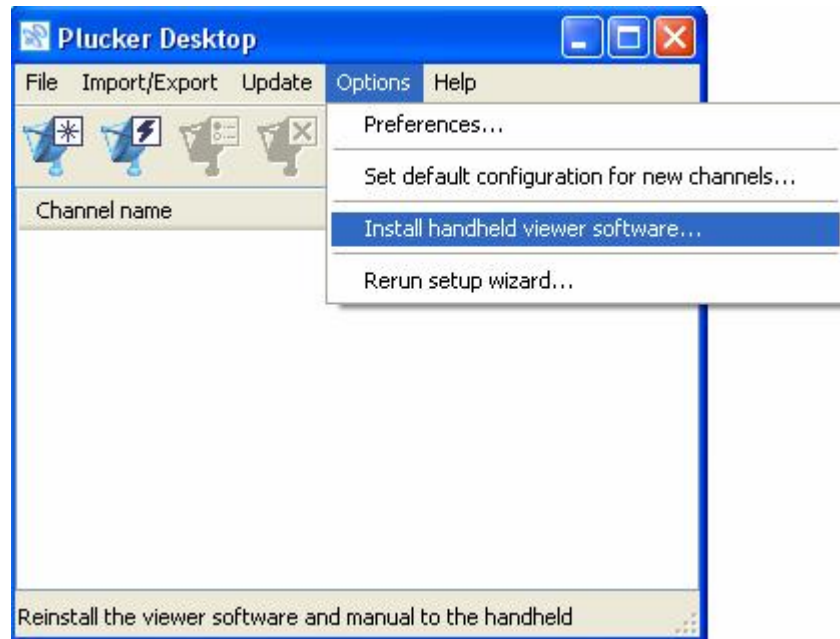
If you are using your Palm for the first time, then you will need to install the Palm Desktop software as well. This should have been included on CD when you purchased the unit. If not, then visit the Palm.com website and download the appropriate version based on the unit you have and the operating system you are using.

The Palm Desktop software includes HotSync Manager which controls the synchronization between your Palm device and your desktop PC.

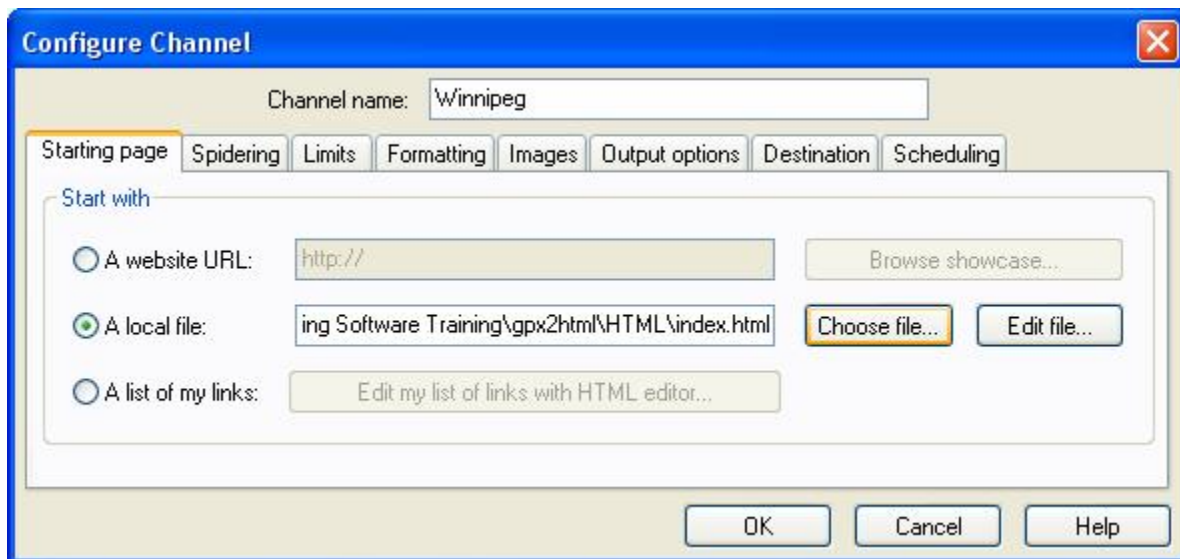
- Double-click the Palm Desktop icon on your desktop.
- Click New to create a new User.
- Enter your name and Click OK

Step 2: Convert Index File to Plucker Format

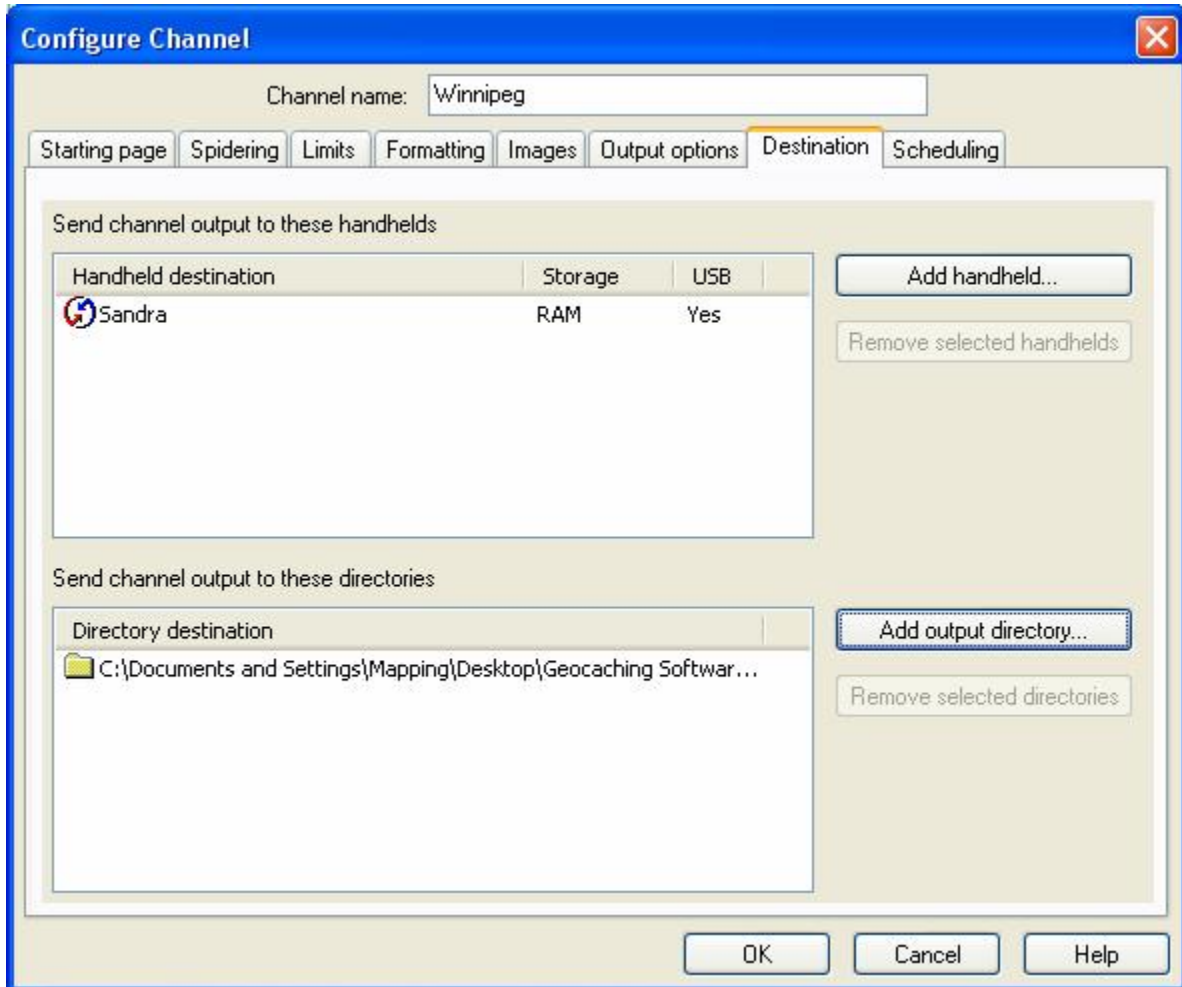
- Double-click the Plucker icon on the desktop to launch the program
- The first time you do this, you will need to load the viewer software on the Palm device
 - Click **Options/Install handheld viewer software...** from the Menu bar
 - The file will be loaded on your Palm the next time you synchronize



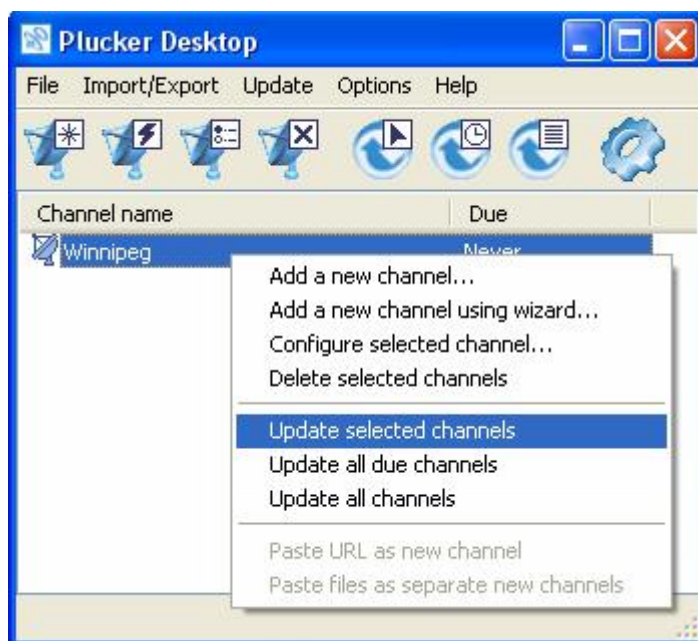
- Convert HTML file to Plucker format
 - Click **File/Add New Channel...** from the Menu bar
 - Enter a name (eg. Winnipeg) and click OK
 - Click "local file" and browse to Index file.
 - For GPX2HTML users, browse to Winnipeg/HTML/index.htm
 - For GPX Spinner users, browse to Spinner/cache/index_by_name.htm



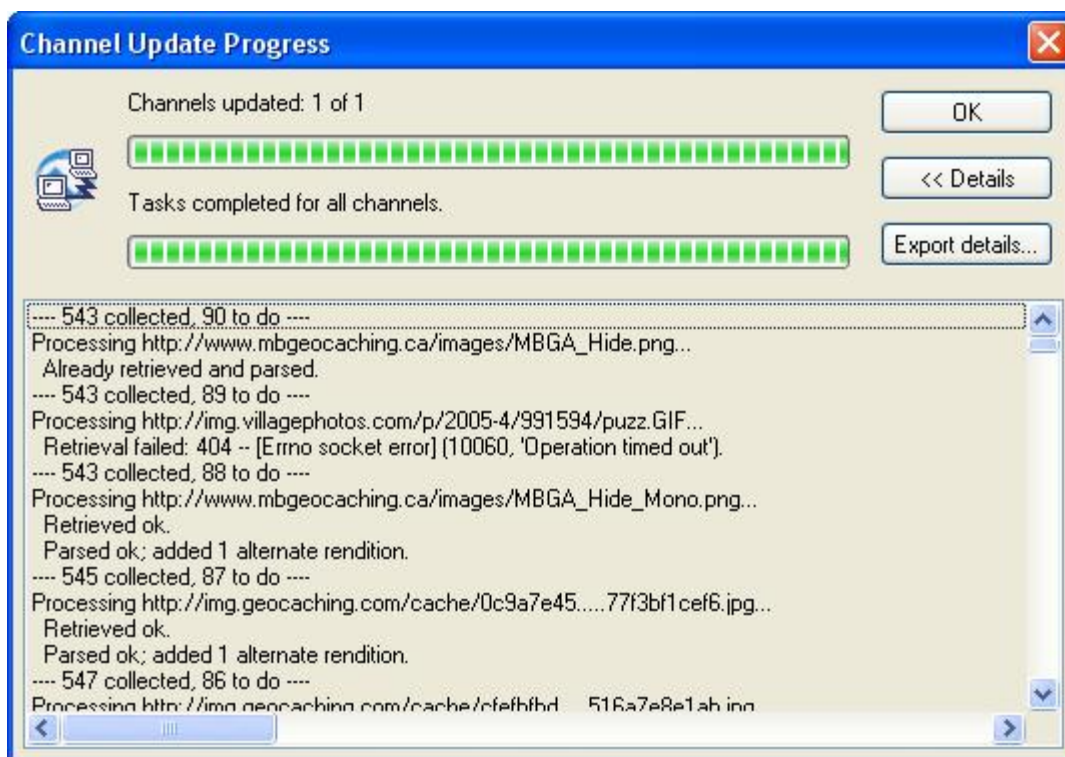
- You can use the default settings for most of the other tabs
 - Under the Spidering Tab, Retrieval order should be Breadth First
 - Under the Limits Tab, Maximum depth should be 2
 - Under Images tab you can uncheck the Include Images checkbox, or change to colour images if your Palm supports that.
- Click the Destination Tab
- Click the **Add handheld...** button and select the name for your Palm device
- Click the **Add output directory...** button and browse to the directory where you'd like to store the file



- Click **OK**



- Click the name of the channel you just created to select it
- Right-click and select **Update selected channels**
- When it is finished, both progress bars will be green, and the OK button is activated



- Synchronize with Palm