

Field Test

MYTHTEK 18-INCH COIL FROM COILTEK

By Adrian Gayler

In early summer 2024, I heard that Coiltek were gearing up to release an 18-inch coil for the Minelab Manticore called the MythTek, promising enhanced depth and improved performance. Given the Manticore's already impressive depth capabilities in the field, I was very excited to put this new coil to the test (Fig.1). Minelab and Coiltek have long enjoyed a strong partnership, with Coiltek being well-known for producing a wide range of high-quality coils and being conveniently based in Australia, Minelab's country of origin.

Just before Detectival 2024 I received a call from Scott at Crawfords to confirm that one of the first MythTek coils was entering the UK, and as soon as he received it would be posted out to me. I was hoping it would arrive before Detectival, not only to try on the different fields but also to gain an insight into people's thoughts on the weight and balance. Just after 10am the following day I saw the rather small statured courier almost struggle with the size of box the coil was in – I suspect my neighbours were wondering why I had ordered such a large pizza so early in the morning.

First Impressions

The MythTek came boxed with the coil bolt and a couple of Velcro straps along with instructions. Importantly it asks you to check the coil plug for any dust or dirt and your machine's stem for any splits or damage. I know this was brand new, but a coil plug with even the

smallest bits of dust or dirt can cause excess noise to a machine, so this is a good reminder to check your machine's connection regularly. A simple clean with a soft brush and some Isopropyl alcohol will ensure the connection is at its best.

Right out of the box, the MythTek 18-inch coil looked rather like it could double as a modern-day satellite dish (Fig.2), so if detecting failed, perhaps at least I'd be able to pick up some extra TV channels. It is big but surprisingly, it's considerably lighter than it looks, weighing in at 980 grammes. For something that promises a big leap in depth I was preparing to see how my arm would hold out. After fitting the coil, I reset the Manticore to the factory settings and used the General 'All Terrain' mode prior to evaluating the coil.

Depth and Detection Range

Now, this coil is all about depth. Currently I use the standard Minelab M11 11-inch coil on my Manticore (Fig.3),



Fig.1. The MythTek 18-inch coil fitted to my Minelab Manticore on the day of delivery.



Fig.3. The original Minelab M11 coil next to the MythTek.



Fig.2. Once fitted it does look absurdly big on the Minelab Manticore but is surprisingly light considering the size.

Price	£359.00
Available	Now
Brand	CoilTek

Specifications

Size	18 inches/ 450mm round
Weight	980g / 34.06oz
Configuration	Auto (19 Channels)
Waterproof	5 Metres / 16 Feet
Warranty	2 Years
Compatibility	Minelab Manticore

and to be fair it already gets great depth, plus I am not really into digging down 24 inches on all my targets, but that is not what it's all about with the MythTek. The coil is naturally larger, enabling you to cover more of an area with each sweep providing better efficiency and reduced time detecting large areas of beaches or fields, or for as long as your arm will hold out.

My first day out with the MythTek was the day before Detectival when I still had short stubble on the fields available on my permission. With the Manticore shaft



Fig.4. The MythTek was great at smashing down the stubble.



Fig.5. Front of the field marker.



Fig.5. Rear of the field marker.

extended, the coil initially felt not too bad for weight but a little unbalanced for my liking at first. I thought it would probably take a little while to get used to, so headed out into the field. The stubble was only 3-4 inches high, but I loved the way the coil was knocking it aside due to the weight and size, making it much more enjoyable detecting in stubble, which is not the best of field conditions (Fig.4).

With larger coils you can often struggle with target separation in soils that are contaminated or heavy with ionisation, especially when targets are close together. The field I was on fortunately was what I call a nice 'clean field' and the MythTek was straight away picking up more signals than the original Minelab 11-inch coil which my friend was using. I had no interference from the nearby power lines and other detectors which larger coils can be susceptible to. After digging a few bits of lead and the odd musket ball, I was managing to pinpoint with the MythTek remarkably well. For such a large coil, after a few holes I found the right position within an inch.

The ground was extremely hard due to the dry weather so I struggled to dig down beyond six inches, but I did find the MythTek coil was finding medium to large targets at considerable depths. One find was an old field marker (Figs.5 & 6). When running the other Manticore over the target using the standard M11 coil, it

was only after walking around the target numerous times that a good signal was found. The field marker was on its side at around eight inches deep, but the MythTek coil clearly easily signalled the target.

After three hours detecting without a harness just to see how it would go, I decided that the engineers at Coiltek had done an excellent job in the design and low weight of the coil considering its size. Initially I thought I wouldn't be able to detect for more than an hour, but unless you don't find a target for 30 minutes or so and are continually detecting without stopping for digging, it was a real pleasure to detect with.

Flat, Iron Contaminated Field

The next trip out with the MythTek was on a field on one of my permissions which had just been seeded with cover crop (Fig.7). With the field like a lovely flat carpet without any lumps or bumps from the plough to knock the coil, I was looking forward to the next few hours ahead. Again, I didn't use a harness to see if my last three-hour session had been a fluke. I first headed off to an area of the field which I knew was heavily contaminated with iron and other rubbish, and I wanted to see how the coil would manage such areas. Initially I had the sensitivity set at 26, but the coil was popping and cracking with signals everywhere and both the machine and I were confused what to dig. I dropped the sensitivity down to 22 and things quietened down nicely.



Fig.7. Out on my own permission with the Manticore and MythTek coil.

This coil is powerful, and my first target confirmed this factor. A clear signal reading at 44 on the Manticore VDI and a lovely round dot on the 2D display, so I knew was going to be a coin. Digging down a good 12 inches I unearthed a Roman 'grot' (Fig.8) lying at a 45-degree angle in the soil. This surprised me, as going by tone and clear VDI I had presumed this was only 4-5 inches down without looking at the depth gauge on the Manticore (not often relied on). I have been over this area many times before but struggled with the amount of noise given from the ground to get many deep targets, so I was pleased, even though it was just a Roman 'grot'!

I continued to dig a lot of lead at depth, along with the odd musket ball which my other machines and coils were not finding. My arm began aching after two hours this time and I decided to have lunch before causing myself some form of metal detecting related repetitive strain injury. I managed another hour after lunch but my arm really was aching by now so I felt I should call it a day.

Overall, I felt the MythTek coil was definitely good at finding medium to large targets at depths of up to 18 inches, even if nothing of significance came up on this occasion. I continued to run it with the sensitivity at 22 which made the machine very stable.

Battery Power

Over the last month I have taken the Manticore out with the MythTek and used it as a recce machine on many fields, then changing the coil to the original M11 to see how both compare. It does struggle on heavily ionised soil and areas with a lot of unwanted rubbish and iron, as you would expect from such a large coil. However, this was not as bad as I had feared, and if you don't have the sensitivity too high it still performs very well. It might not be everyone's cup of tea due to the size and weight but if you have a bungee or harness (which I have since used), you can quite easily detect all day with this coil as many still do with the Minelab CTX 3030.

You would expect heavy battery use with a larger coil – the two batteries in the Manticore handle can give you seven hours on a good day with the standard coil. I managed five to six hours on average with the MythTek coil which may also be due to the weather getting colder which also affects battery drain. To get round having to charge the machine every time I got home with the coil pulling a bit more power, I used the new RNB Power-X battery pack (Fig.9), which easily attaches to the Manticore's stem offering twice the battery power of the original Manticore batteries. Even though it only weighs 234gm it did offer a nice little bit of improved balance to the coil as it is positioned behind the arm cup – a great



Fig.8. A Roman 'grot' found at considerable depth in a very trashy area.

addition to the machine. Furthermore, you can charge your phone and other accessories as it has USB / USBC connections.

Success on the Beach

I have not yet taken the coil on the beach but have spoken with others who have, and the feedback is good. Paul Cee, a Minelab Detexpert from Crawfords has been getting depths of up to two feet on the beach with his coil and has had some great finds. Covering ground with the MythTek coil is like mowing the lawn with a ride on mower after years of pushing it by hand. It's fast, so with each swing, you're covering a good stretch of land, making it perfect for sprawling fields where time is precious. However, I would personally highly recommend getting a bungee / harness to go with this product (Fig.10).



Fig.9. The RNB Power-X rechargeable battery pack.



Fig.10. A harness is highly recommended to get the most out of the MythTek coil.