The beverage container identification clip attaches removably to the wraparound label of a thin wall plastic beverage container or bottle, and provides positive identification of the container for the owner. The device may also be secured to an insulated can cooler sleeve or the like. The clip includes a pair of arms or fingers pivotally attached to one another at one end, and urged together by a light spring. One arm is inserted between the label or sleeve and the container wall, with the label gripping the arm between the label and bottle wall. The other arm remains outside the label or sleeve, where it is exposed to view. Various forms of identification, e.g., a name, charm or other trinket, sports team or occupational logo or symbol, etc., may be applied directly to the visible arm, or attached to the pivotal or distal end of the exposed arm as desired.
BEVERAGE CONTAINER IDENTIFICATION CLIP

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] 1. Field of the Invention

[0002] The present invention relates generally to removably attachable identification badges, tags, and similar devices. More particularly, the present invention relates to various embodiments of a clip adapted for attachment to the wraparound label or sleeve conventionally applied to many types of beverage containers and bottles. The device enables the owner of the container to readily identify his or her container from a group of similar beverage containers.

[0003] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0004] The use of a distinctive identifying mark, tag, label, etc., to identify the owner of various articles, e.g., books, tools, clothing, and various loose articles and accessories, has been known for a considerable time. Permanent labels or the like, e.g., adhesively applied labels or merely writing the owner’s name and/or other information on or in the article, are commonly used to identify the owner of relatively costly articles and/or articles having some longevity. However, the need for such identification often occurs with less expensive articles having relatively short life spans, e.g., disposable drink bottles and containers. There are many occasions where people are provided with identical drinks or containers, e.g., at catered luncheons and the like, or perhaps purchase identical articles at sports events and similar activities. At times it can be difficult for a person to track just which bottle or container belongs to him or her, particularly when several identical containers have been placed upon a picnic table or merely placed upon the ground while their owners participate in a game or other activity.

[0005] As a result, many people will mark their drink container in some way, but most such attempts are not particularly suitable. Most conventional writing implements, e.g., pencils and ball point pens, are not capable of leaving a readily legible mark on the smooth surface of most such disposable bottles and containers. Even where a legible mark may be applied to the container, the hand of a person holding the container will generally cover such a mark, thus rendering the mark useless if the person does not notice it before picking up the container.

[0006] Various attempts have been made in the past to provide devices for removable attachment to a bottle or similar container for identifying the contents or for displaying other information. An example of such is shown in European Patent No. 865,015, published on Sep. 16, 1998. This publication describes (according to the drawings and English abstract) various embodiments of a device which clips across the mouth or base of a wine bottle, and which contains a permanent or removable card or tag. The card or tag is used for noting information about the bottle, e.g., vintage, etc. In one embodiment, the device is attached over the mouth of the bottle, requiring the device to be removed before one can access the contents of the bottle. In another embodiment, the device is secured beneath the base of the bottle, where it cannot be seen when the bottle is resting in an upright position.

[0007] None of the inventions and patents known to the present inventor, taken either singly or in combination, is seen to describe the instant invention as claimed. Thus, a beverage container identification clip solving the aforementioned problems is desired.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] The beverage container identification clip allows persons to quickly and easily apply an identification or other distinguishing element to a convenient beverage container having a wraparound label. Such labels are commonly used to provide branding and product information on thin wall plastic bottles of various sorts, e.g., bottled water, soft drink bottles, etc. The clip includes a pair of thin arms or fingers pivoted secured together at one end and urged toward one another by a light spring. One arm of the clip is inserted between the wall of the container and the overlying wraparound label sleeve, with the sleeve gripping the captured arm between the sleeve and wall of the container to hold the clip securely in place. The outer arm of the clip is exposed to the outside of the label, where any identification may be readily seen. The device may include additional identifying elements, e.g., beads, charms and/or other trinkets, etc., as desired. When the container is to be disposed of, the identification clip is easily removed from its attachment to the band or label surrounding the bottle for future use.

[0009] These and other features of the present invention will become readily apparent upon further review of the following specification and drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] FIG. 1 is an environmental, perspective view of two embodiments of a beverage container identification clip according to the present invention, showing application and use of the clip.

[0011] FIG. 2 is an enlarged, detailed perspective view of another embodiment of the clip having a different form of identification from the clips of FIG. 1.

[0012] FIG. 3 is an enlarged, detailed perspective view of yet another embodiment of the clip wherein the identification is applied directly to the exposed clip arm.

[0013] FIG. 4 is an enlarged, detailed perspective view of still another embodiment of the clip having an identification ribbon attached thereto.

[0014] FIG. 5 is an enlarged, detailed perspective view of a further embodiment of the clip having a charm or similar trinket attached to the distal end of the outer arm.

[0015] Similar reference characters denote corresponding features consistently throughout the attached drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0016] The present invention comprises a series of embodiments of an identification clip for use with a beverage bottle or other type of beverage or liquid container having a wraparound label or other encircling sleeve therearound. The clip attaches to the container and sleeve assembly between the sleeve and container wall, with a portion of the clip remaining outside the sleeve to display some distinctive form of identification so the owner of the bottle or container may readily identify his or her container.
FIG. 1 of the drawings illustrates two embodiments of the present invention and a conventional beverage bottle having a wraparound label with which the present clip may be used. The bottle B comprises a thin, flexible plastic wall W, with a very thin and flexible plastic sleeve S completely encircling the bottle wall W. Such beverage bottle and sleeve configurations are often used for bottled water and soft drink bottles, as well as for other purposes. The container may alternatively comprise a conventional metal or plastic beverage can or even a paper or plastic cup, while the sleeve may comprise a conventional foam plastic “can cooler” insulating sleeve or a cardboard or other paper sleeve, as is conventionally applied for insulation around paper or plastic cup containing a hot liquid.

The beverage container identification clip 10a, 10b comprises an elongate first or sleeve capture arm 12 adapted for removable installation between the sleeve S and the wall W of the bottle B or container, and an opposite elongate display arm 14 disposed outside the sleeve S when the clip 10 is secured thereto. The two arms 12 and 14 each include a pivot end, respectively 16 and 18, and are joined together at their pivot ends 16 and 18 by a lateral pivot 20 (more clearly shown in the detailed views of FIGS. 2 through 5). Each arm 12 and 14 further includes a manipulation tab, respectively 22 and 24, extending therefrom adjacent the pivot 20. A light spring 26 (shown in the detailed views of FIGS. 2 through 5) may be disposed between the two pivot ends 16 and 18 of the arms 12 and 14 to urge the distal or free ends 28 and 30 of the arms 12 and 14 together.

Each of the embodiments of the present identification clip includes some form of distinctive identification element therewith. In the two clip embodiments 10a and 10b of FIG. 1, an elongate string of beads, respectively 32a and 32b, extends from the outer manipulation tab 24 of the display arm 14, attached thereto by a ring which passes through an end formed through the tab and through an eye or loop formed in the attachment end of the string, generally as shown in FIG. 2 of the drawings. The distal or free end of the bead string 32a, 32b may include a distinctive pendant charm attached thereto, e.g., the turtle caricature 34a of the clip 10a or the mouse caricature 34b of the clip 10b. Other pendant charms or other devices may be attached to the free ends of the bead strings, or directly to the display arm of the clip itself, as desired.

FIG. 2 illustrates another embodiment of the identification clip, designated as clip 10c. The clip 10c is essentially like the two clips 10a and 10b of FIG. 1, differing only in the configuration of the bead string 32c extending therefrom. The bead string 32c is formed of a series of small alphabetized blocks or beads 36 which are arranged to spell a word, e.g., the name of the owner of the clip (and/or the beverage container to which the clip may be attached). Such an alphabetic bead string 32c with its individual alphabet characters 36 may be assembled to form virtually any word or words desired up to a practicable number of beads, e.g., the name of a loved one or friend, the name of a celebrity, the name of a favorite sports team, etc., as desired. Numbers may be included to form an important date, e.g., birthday or anniversary, or perhaps the team number of a favorite sports player, etc.

The clip 10d of FIG. 3 illustrates yet another means of personalizing the beverage container identification clip. The clip 10d includes the identification element disposed directly upon the surface of the display arm 14, where it is readily visible when the clip 10c is attached to the container label or sleeve. In the case of the clip 10c, the identification element 38 comprises a name applied to the display arm 14, but other patterns, logos, and the like may be used in lieu of the owner’s name, as desired.

FIG. 4 of the drawings is a perspective view of still another embodiment of the present invention, designated as beverage container identification clip 10e. The basic configuration of the clip 10e is substantially similar to the configurations of clips 10a through 10d, differing only in that (a) the two arms 12e and 14e are straight, rather than curved; and (b) a different form of identification element is provided. The identification element 40 of the clip 10e comprises a ribbon attached to and extending from the display arm manipulation tab 24, generally in the same manner used to attach the bead strings 32a, 32b, and 32c of the embodiments of FIGS. 1 and 2. As in the case of the other embodiments of the present identification clip, the ribbon identification element 40 may include the owner’s name, the name of a friend, loved one, sports team, celebrity, etc., or a date or other number, or some form of pattern or logo, etc., as desired. The ribbon may have a distinctive color for identification as well, just as the other clips and/or identification elements of the present invention may be colored as desired.

FIG. 5 illustrates a further embodiment of the present beverage container identification clip 10f, in which a pendant charm 34c is attached to the free or distal end 30 of the display arm 14e. A hole or passage 42 is formed through the free or distal end 30 of the display arm 14e and an attachment ring 44 installed therein to secure the attachment chain or line 32f thereto, generally in the same manner used to secure the beads or other devices to the manipulation tabs of the display arms in other embodiments. The pendant charm 34c, e.g., a miniature representation of a sports helmet, or another device as desired, is attached to the distal or free end of the chain or line 32f. Alternatively, the charm could be attached directly to the distal end 30 of the display arm 14c if so desired, as the display arm always remains to the outside of the encircling label or sleeve and cannot interfere with the insertion of the sleeve capture arm between the sleeve and the underlying container wall.

In conclusion, the beverage container identification clip provides a most convenient means for people to keep track of their own beverage bottles, cans, or cups at a gathering. People at parties, office meetings, conferences, sports events, and other activities, often have identical drink containers (bottled water, coffee cups, beverage cans, etc.), and the determination of which container belongs to which person can often be confusing. The identification clip solves this problem in an inexpensive and convenient manner. The clip not only greatly enhances sanitation by assuring that beverage containers are not inadvertently picked up by different persons, but also serves as a decorative and distinctive touch to the container. The identification clip may include virtually any type of distinctive marking or configuration as desired, e.g., personalized by name, or perhaps a holiday theme, sports team logo or player number, symbol or emblem relating to work or a hobby or other interest, etc.
as desired. Accordingly, the beverage container identification clip will prove to be extremely popular with people from all walks of life.

[0025] It is to be understood that the present invention is not limited to the embodiments described above, but encompasses any and all embodiments within the scope of the following claims.

1 claim:

1. A beverage container identification clip, comprising:

an elongate sleeve capture arm having a pivot end and a distal free end opposite the pivot end;

an elongate display arm having a pivot end secured to the pivot end of said sleeve capture arm, and a distal free end opposite the pivot end; and

a distinctive identification element disposed upon said display arm.

2. The beverage container identification clip according to claim 1, wherein each said arm further includes a manipulation tab extending from the pivot end thereof.

3. The beverage container identification clip according to claim 1, further including a light spring disposed between each pivot end of each said arm, the spring urging said sleeve capture arm and said display arm together.

4. The beverage container identification clip according to claim 1, wherein each said arm is curved.

5. The beverage container identification clip according to claim 1, wherein each said arm is straight.

6. The beverage container identification clip according to claim 1, wherein said identification element is an elongate string of beads.

7. The beverage container identification clip according to claim 1, wherein said identification element is disposed directly upon said display arm.

8. The beverage container identification clip according to claim 1, wherein said identification element is a ribbon.

9. The beverage container identification clip according to claim 1, wherein said identification element is a pendant charm.

10. A beverage container with a beverage container identification clip, comprising:

a beverage container;

a sleeve closely surrounding said beverage container;

a beverage container identification clip, comprising:

an elongate sleeve capture arm having a pivot end and a distal free end opposite the pivot end, the capture arm being removably inserted between the sleeve and said beverage container;

an elongate display arm having a pivot end secured to the pivot end of said sleeve capture arm, and a distal free end opposite the pivot end; and

a distinctive identification element disposed upon said display arm.

11. The beverage container according to claim 10, wherein each said arm of said clip further includes a manipulation tab extending from the pivot end thereof.

12. The beverage container according to claim 10, further including a light spring disposed between each pivot end of each said arm of said clip, the spring urging said sleeve capture arm and said display arm together.

13. The beverage container according to claim 10, wherein each said arm of said clip is curved.

14. The beverage container according to claim 10, wherein each said arm of said clip is straight.

15. The beverage container according to claim 10, wherein said identification element of said clip is an elongate string of beads.

16. The beverage container according to claim 10, wherein said identification element of said clip is disposed directly upon said display arm.

17. The beverage container according to claim 10, wherein said identification element of said clip is a ribbon.

18. The beverage container according to claim 10, wherein said identification element of said clip is a pendant charm.

19. The beverage container according to claim 10, wherein said beverage container is selected from the group consisting of thin wall, flexible plastic bottles, metal and plastic cans, and plastic and paper cups.

20. The beverage container according to claim 10, wherein said sleeve is selected from the group consisting of thin, wraparound plastic labels, foam plastic insulating sleeves, and paper insulating sleeves.

* * * * *