#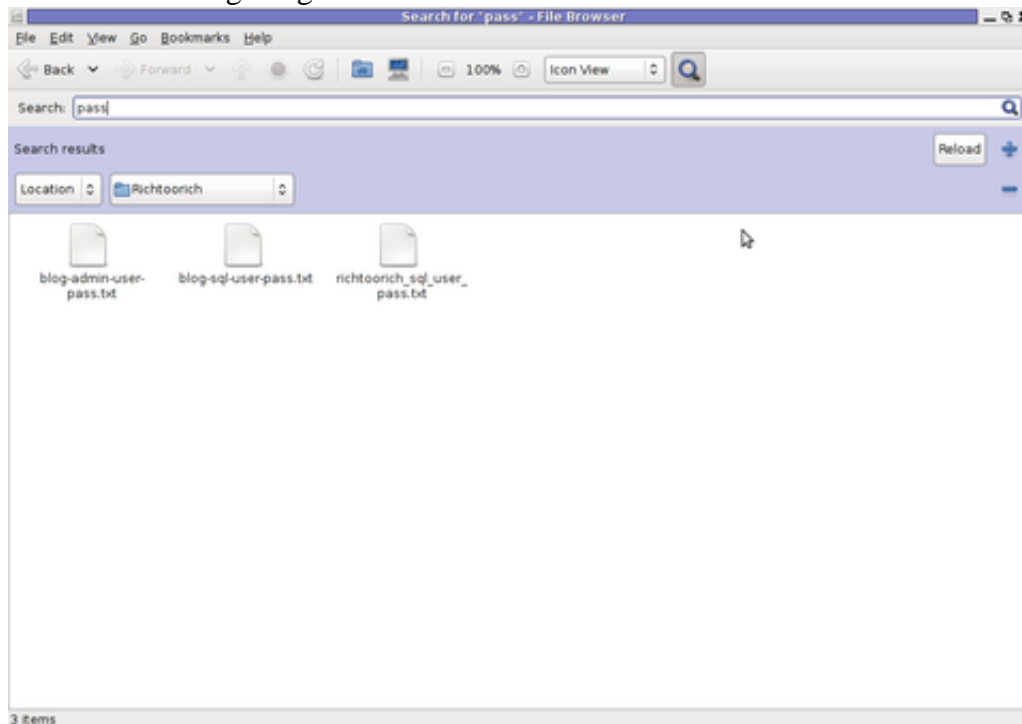 Tools for finding files containing a string (recursively) in Graphical Enviroments (GNOME, KDE and XFCE) on GNU linux and FreeBSD

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1. Finding files containing a specific string with GNOME GUI tool gnome-search-tool

Default installation of GNOME version 2.x and 3.x is equipped with a tool called **gnome-search-tool**. The tool is used by default in the GNOME's file explorer program **Nautilus**. The quickest way to look for a certain text string across all the files located in a directory and show them is with *nautilus*'s - **find manager**.
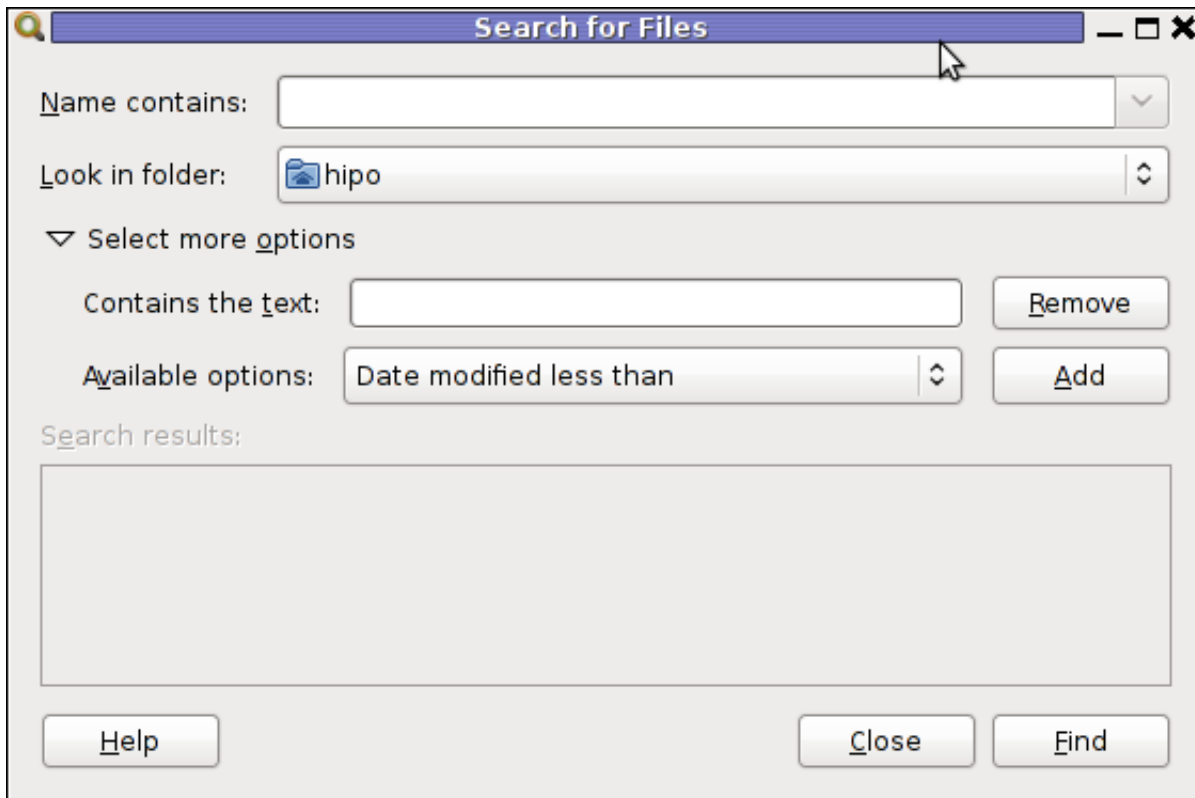
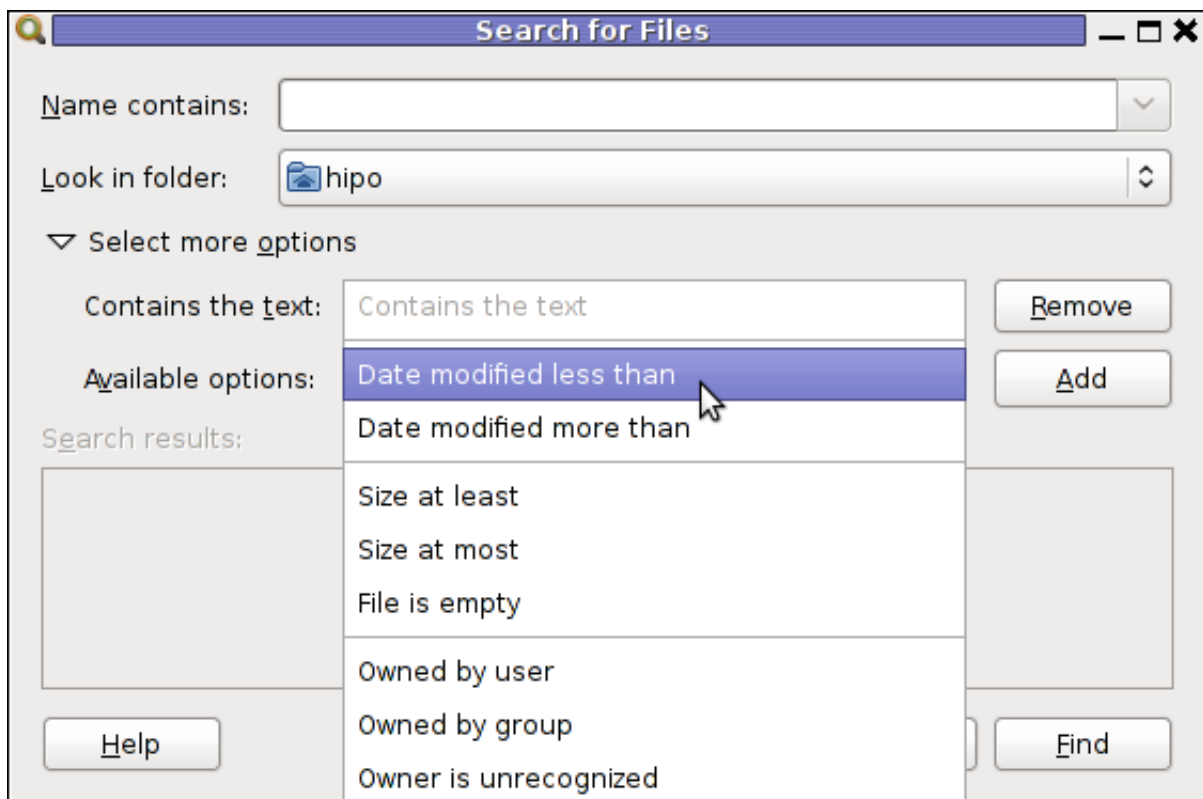Below is a screenshot showing the gnome-search-tool embedded in nautilus

Nautilus find uses *gnome-search-tool* program for its file search. Below is a screenshot showing the gnome-search-tool embedded in nautilus:

The **gnome-search-tool** can be also invoked through *Gnome Run Application* with ALT+F2 or directly run from terminal e.g.:
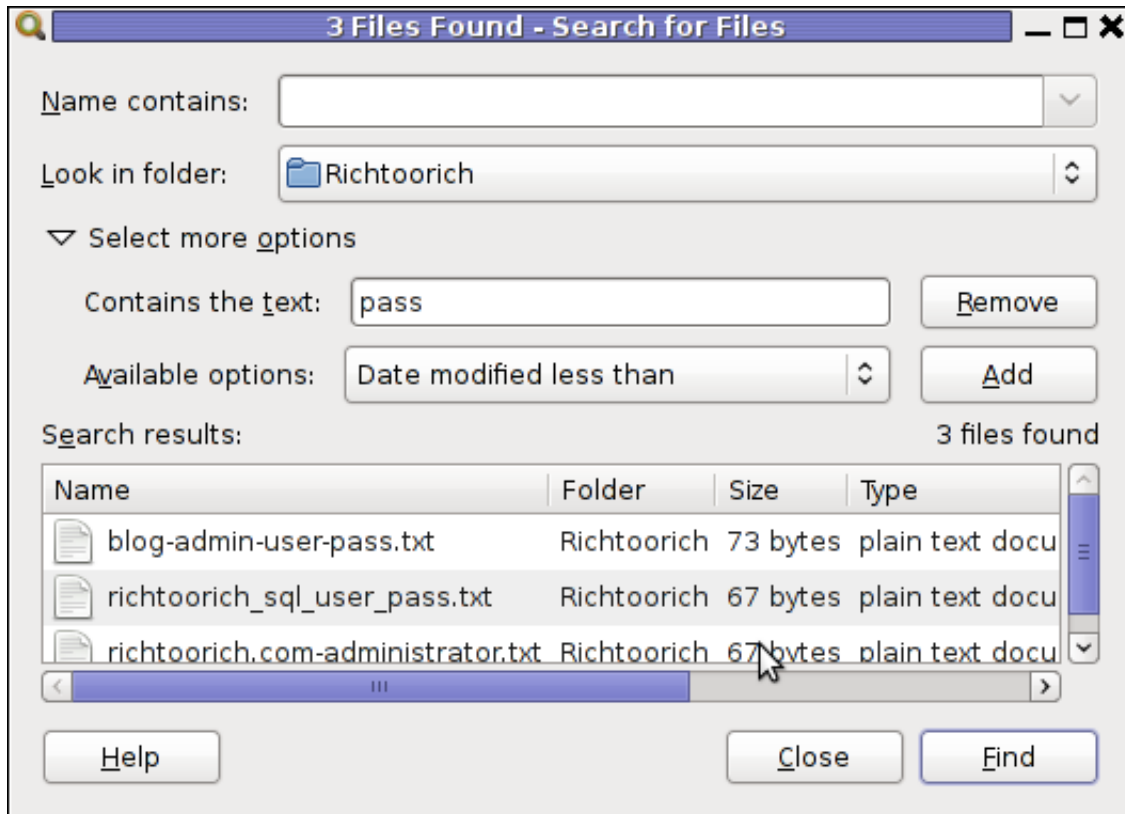
hipo@noah:~$ gnome-search-tool

As you can see in below screenshot, **gnome-search-tool** has many available filter file search criterias.
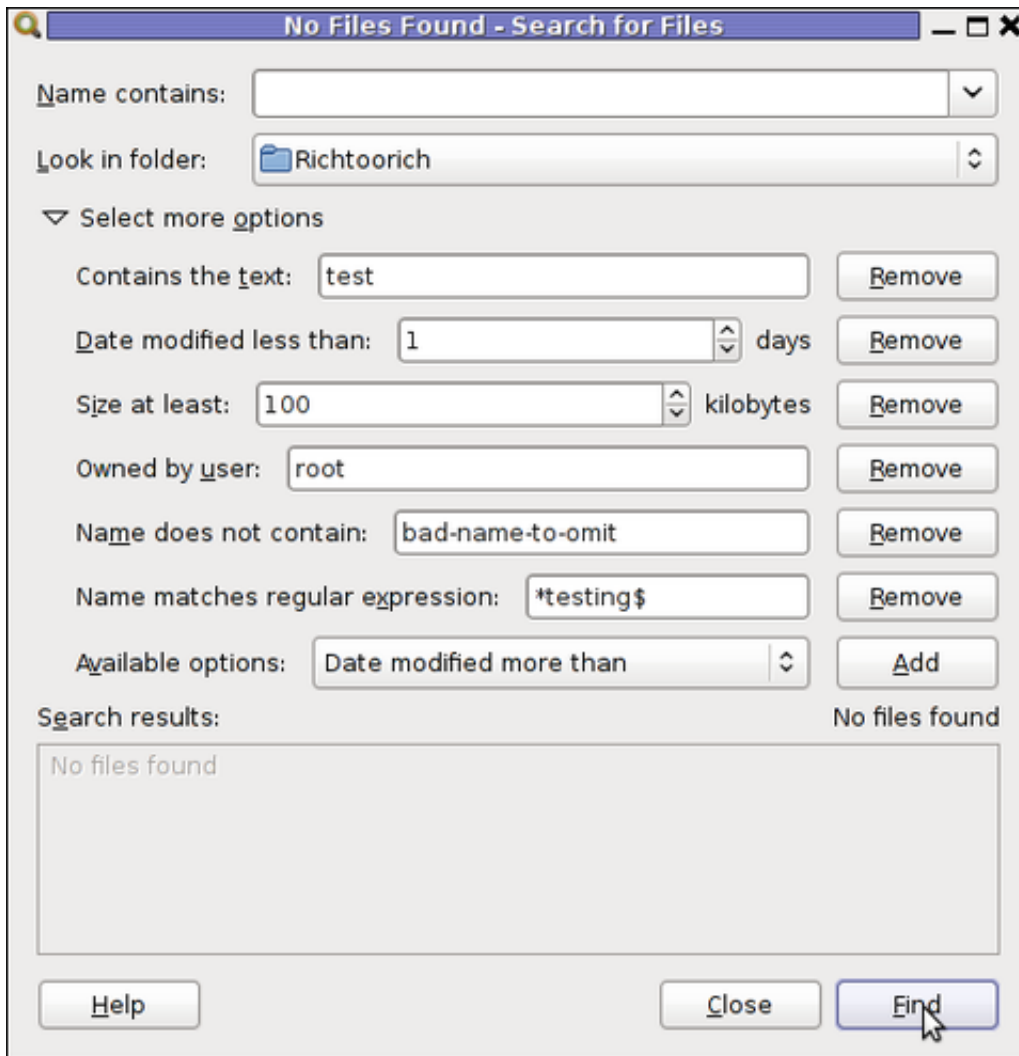
You see I wanted to look for my project passwords so typed in **pass** in *Contains the text:* field and pressed enter to simply look for this text in all my files in the look in folder **RichtooRich**

Actually *gnome-search-tool* offers plenty of more options than one might look for. With it one can easily make a combination of complex search critea (filters) and hence a very versatile Desktop file saerch tool. From testing it I can say it for sure more powerful program than MS Windows default file searching program called **Find It** - this is the program with the ("dumb dog holing a magnifier" :)

One can use the *Add* or *Remove* to Add single or various combination of filter criterias. For the sake of testing it, I've added a number of **file search filters** as you see in the shot below:

The search critias are not matched and therefore 0 files were found.
In case if you wonder how *gnome-search-tool* works? It is actually a GUI wrapper to Linux's Linux find command .

I wasn't complete sure if it uses **find** for the file search, so to check I run a one search and in in console ran:
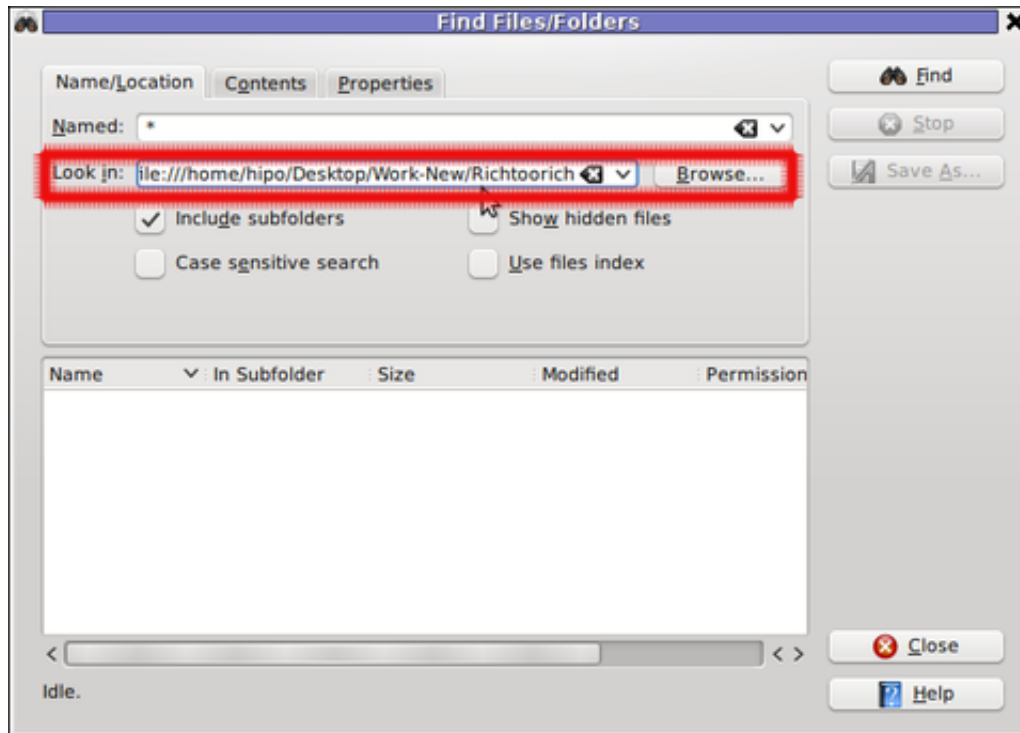
```
hipo@noah:~$ ps axuwf|grep -i find
hipo 18213 2.0 0.0 25568 1276 ? S 23:55 0:00 find /home/hipo/Richtoorich ( -iname * -o -iname
.* ) ! -type p -exec grep -i -I -c test {} ; -mtime -1 ( -size 102400 -o -size +102400 ) -user root !
-iname *bad\-name\-to\-omit* -print
```

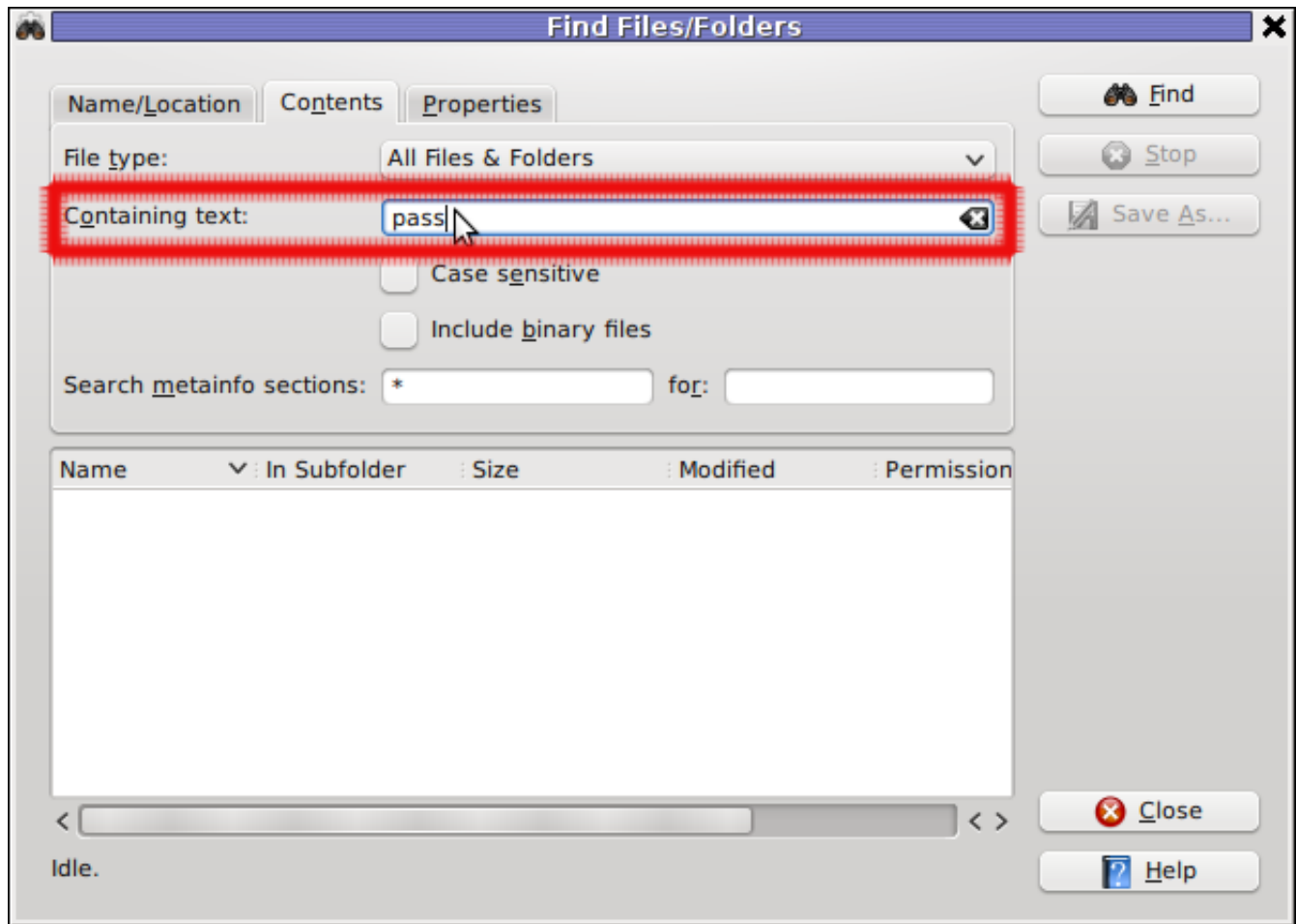You can see the filters set in *gnome-search-tool* are passed as command arguments to find.

2. Finding files containing a string recursively in KDE with kfind

For KDE users there is a handy little tool called **Kfind**. *Kfind* is less "search customizable" if it is compared to *gnome-search-tool* but it has advantage that its search options are way more "user friendly" / human readable :)
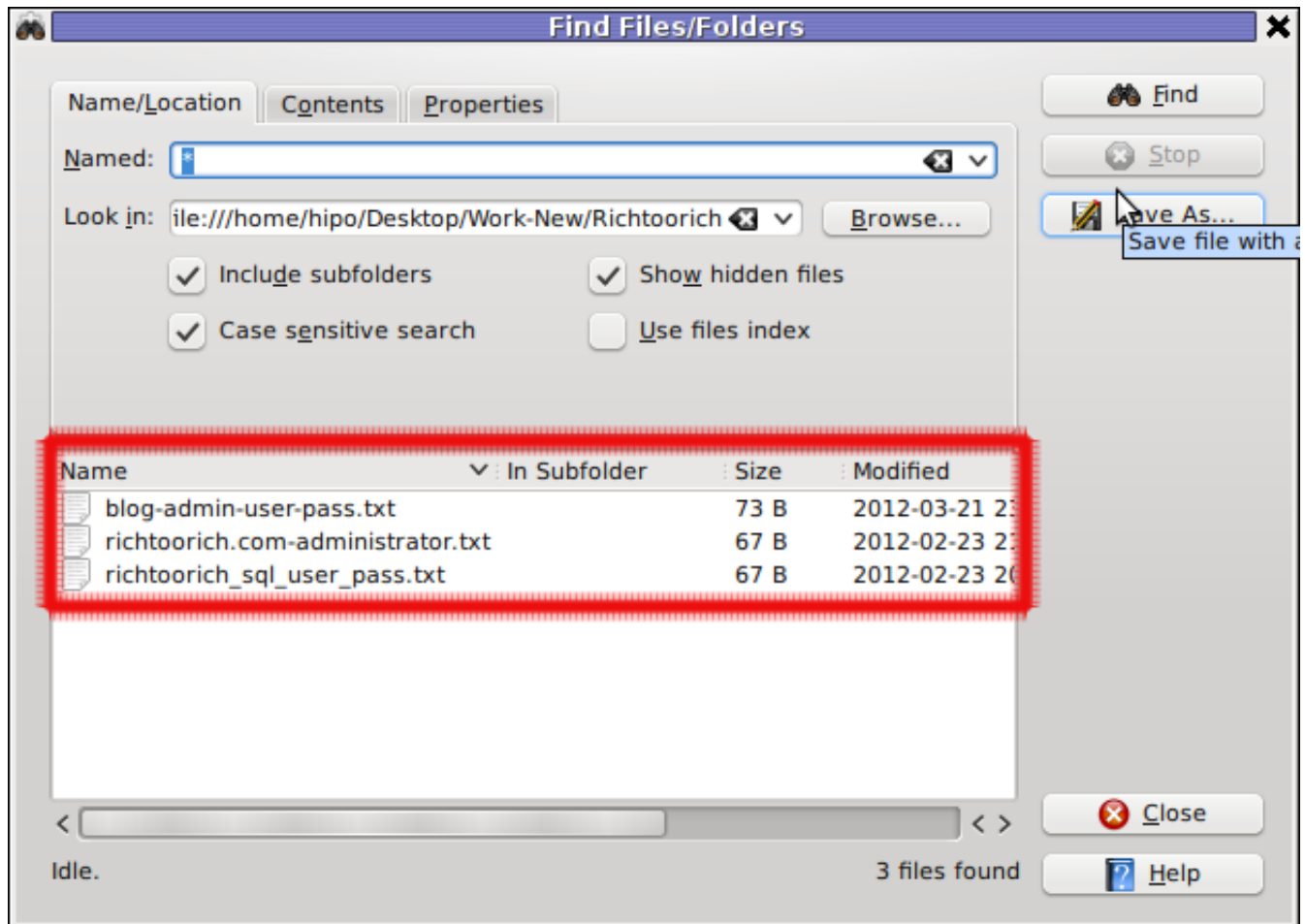
To use the tool to look in all files for explicit string fill in **Look in:** or browse to set the main directory where it will look for the string.

Then in the second **Contents (tab)** fill in the **Containing Text:** with the string to be looked for:

Finally in the **Names/Location** tab, there are two other helpful search options - *Show Hidden Files* and *Case Sensitive Search*

I'll be curious to hear if someone knows some other nice software easy and comprehensive to use for Linux / BSD. If you know a better file searcher for Linux than this kfind or gnome-search-tool please drop a comment.