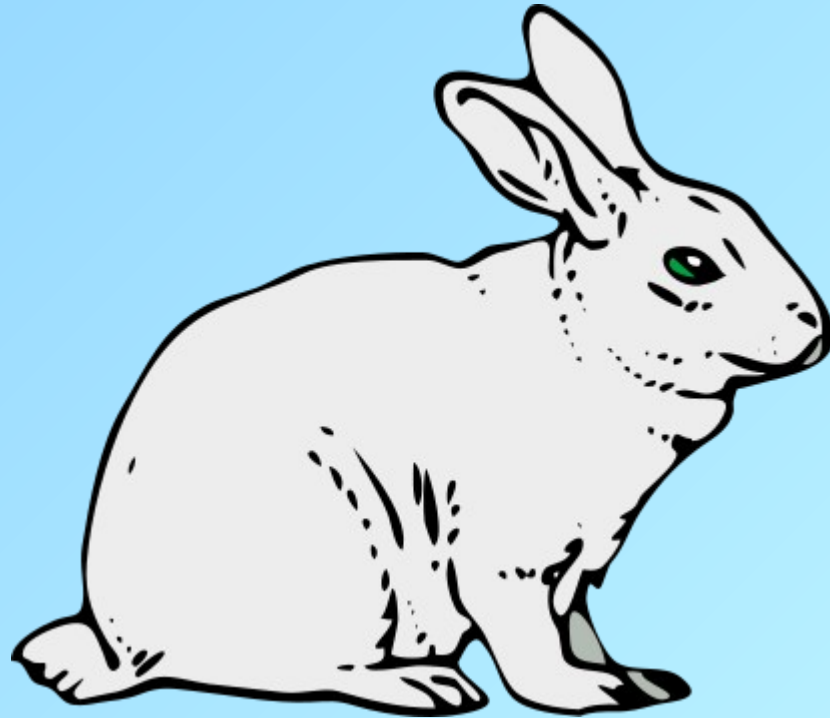


Bunny Hunting



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What is a *Bunny Hunt*?

- A type of *transmitter hunt*.
- Like a *fox hunt*?
 - Somewhat, but a fox hunt is a different type of transmitter hunt.
 - A bunny is a portable or mobile Ham station with a control operator present.
 - A bunny is often just a mobile station parked at an undisclosed location.
 - A bunny transmits when a hunter asks for a transmission.
 - When you find the bunny, you will see it and know it immediately.
 - A fox is a portable Ham station with lower power and automatic operation.
 - A fox is often a small battery-powered transmitter hidden in a wood or field.
 - A fox transmits on a schedule, not upon any request.
 - To find a fox, expect to need to leave your car and walk.

How Does a Bunny Hunt Work?

- One Ham takes his station to an undisclosed location.
- Ten minutes before the start of the hunt, stations (mobiles) check in via the repeater (W3UDX for BCARA hunts).
- At hunt start time, stations QSY to the hunt frequency (146.58 MHz for BCARA hunts).

How Does a Bunny Hunt Work? (Continued)

- Upon request, the bunny transmits, normally counting slowly to 20.
- Hunting stations attempt to determine the bearing from which the bunny's signal is coming.
- Hunters drive toward the direction of the bunny, asking for *counts* occasionally to get improved bearings.
 - There is no limit to the number of counts a hunter may request.
- The first hunter to find the bunny will be the bunny for the next hunt.

What Are the Rules?

- A bunny must be located on publicly-accessible property (park, mall parking lot, public street, etc.)
- The bunny's location must have room nearby for other cars to park.

Bunny Locations

- No places difficult to access, such as on an island in a lake or within a wood with dense poison ivy,
- No place requiring a fee for entry,
- No property accessible only by crossing no-trespassing private property, such as a farmer's field,
- No property completely surrounded by fencing,
- But, no broad prohibition against portable stations.

Examples

- Good Example: a state nature preserve has a gate opened just enough for pedestrian entry. There is parking available near the gate. The bunny is located on a table 500 feet inside the gate.
- Bad Example: The transmitter is located in a wood. The antenna is floating on an inner tube in a stream 100 feet away.

Rules, continued

- At least one week before the hunt, the bunny must announce a square of four (sometimes three) townships in which (s)he will hide.
 - This is often announced on the 8 p.m. Monday-night Weather Net on the W3UDX repeater.
- The bunny must not transmit before the hunt begins, except for check-in time.
- During the hunt, the bunny must transmit upon request.
- The bunny will supply refreshments for hunters who find the bunny.
 - The bunny may set out a money jar for hunters to help defray the cost of the refreshments.

Informal Rules

- Hunting cars may have several occupants.
 - Bring a young person and introduce Amateur Radio!
- Don't hide in the woods on a cold or rainy day.
 - So, if you plan to hide in the woods, have a backup location in mind within your square of townships should the weather turn out to be inclement.
- Obey the law! That includes traffic regulations, private property law, and FCC regulations!
- Bunny should not change power during the hunt.
 - Power change helps some hunters and hurts others.

So, What's the Point?

- Fun. It's a race to find the bunny.
- It encourages Hams to install a radio in their cars.
- It teaches the county road system, valuable knowledge in some emergencies.
- Sometimes we will need to find the location of a station.

Tips

- If there are multiple Hams in your car, check in with only the callsign under which you will be hunting.
 - You may give the other callsigns to the bunny later.
- If you are not a mobile station hunting, do not check into the hunt.
 - The bunny needs to know only the cars that are hunting.
 - Non-hunters' checking in wastes time and causes confusion.
- Bring a map of the townships, especially if you are not familiar with their roads.
 - Find a road that nearly bisects the township quad.
 - Start one end, or at the midpoint of that road.
 - A good starting place can help you find the bunny faster.

More Tips

- Set your squelch level so that the bunny breaks through, even when his signal is weak where you are.
 - You can use stronger squelch when the bunny's signal is stronger.
- To obtain bearings, use a directional antenna connected to an HT.
 - Use a compass or map to determine which way your car is facing.
 - Stand away from metal objects, including your car, when obtaining bearings, to avoid reflections off metal.
- For 2-meter hunts, a loop or portable Yagi would be appropriate.
- Use an attenuator when all directions give a full-scale S-reading.

Examples of Portable Directional Antennas

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No Directional Antenna?

- Your car may be directional, depending on where its antenna is located.
 - Determine its directionality before the bunny hunt.
 - Drive in a circle to get a bearing on the bunny.
 - Beware: Driving in circles may attract undesirable attention from the police.
 - Be prepared to show your Ham license and explain what you are doing.

No Directional Antenna?

- 1) Find the road that bisects the township quad.
- 2) Start at one end of that road.
- 3) Drive the road, noting the bunny's signal strength.
- 4) When the signal strength starts to weaken, return to the place where the signal peaked.
- 5) Turn right or left and repeat from step 3.

Finishing the Hunt

- At some point the bunny will be too strong for you to obtain a bearing, or
- the bunny's signal will be well over S9.
- Then,
 - ask yourself, “Where nearby is a bunny likely to hide?”
 - Try a nearby park or other public spot.

Questions?

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