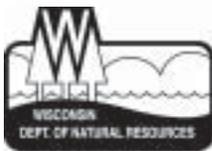


Learning to Hunt

Hosting a hunting-based outdoor skills event in your community



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Wisconsin
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Karmalion Hunt

Hunting as a management tool

Participants “hunt” for the “Karmalion,” a small, elusive and imaginary game animal imported into the U.S. They learn about bag limits, poaching and the effect of economics on hunter ethics.



Objectives

Participants shall:

describe the concepts of hunting pressure and bag limits, and what effect these have on the resource.

describe the difference between a bag limit and a possession limit.

describe how knowledge of a game animal's habitat can increase hunter success.

Equipment

Several bags of wrapped caramels (depends on group size). For Variation #2, more than one type of candy is required.

1 paper lunch bag per participant

1 jar of pennies

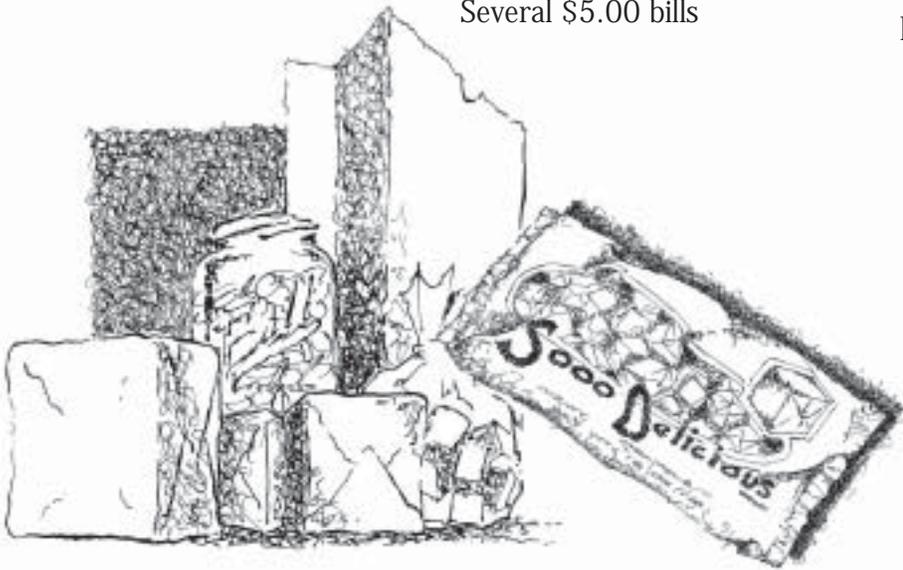
Several \$5.00 bills

Station Setup

Before your group arrives, find a lawn, an old field or a relatively open woodlot. Make sure there is no poison ivy in the playing area.

Place plastic-wrapped caramels in the area. Rather than scattering them haphazardly, deliberately place them in a predictable habitat: only at the base of trees, only under a dandelion leaf, only near where a certain plant grows, etc.

Depending on the size of the group and the thickness of the vegetation, the number of caramels bags you dispense will differ. The more overgrown the area, the more caramels you may want to place in the area. Hide the caramels so that they are not immediately visible to the group when they arrive at the hunting grounds. They should not know what they are really hunting until they actually find one during the hunt.



Procedure

Greet your group as follows:

“Hi, I’m Lionelle Shootsmore, an outfitter with “Hunting Expeditions, Inc.” out of Karmal, Wisconsin.

I’m going to be taking you folks on a hunting expedition to the great Northwoods, about 150 miles outside of Karmal. Many years ago, before laws prohibited such actions, a rich family in the area imported an exotic game animal for their private hunting preserve.

This critter originated from the Karmal Islands in the North Pacific. Early 17th century explorers who visited the islands called the animal the Karmalion. “Very little is known about this small creature, except that it may be related to the type of snails in France called “escargot.”

However, unlike their snail kin, Karmalions do not have a hard outer shell. They do have an outer covering that protects them from the elements. But it is a very thin, transparent, yet tough membrane. The Karmalions are very small for game animals, and very slow moving, but their sweet-flavored flesh is considered a delicacy. Some people cook them, but I prefer to simply remove their inedible outer membranes and eat them raw. They’re soooooo



delicious! The membrane is quite easy to remove; you don’t even need a knife.

“Well, a problem has arisen at Karmalion Game Preserve. The Karmalion population has grown far beyond expectations and the state’s wildlife managers are really concerned that their population might overflow into the surrounding State Forest, and pose a real threat to the native snails living near the Karmal River. So the Department of Natural Resources has requested that the game preserve increase the hunting pressure and bag limits to reduce the population and keep it within the boundaries of the preserve.

“Karmalions are very sensitive to shadows. They burrow underground when they sense a tall animal towering over them. When they are underground the only way to find them is to use well-trained boars which sniff and dig them out ... similar to how

Activity

Station

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Karmalion Hunt

Learning to Hunt

hogs are used to find the delicate truffle mushrooms in Europe.

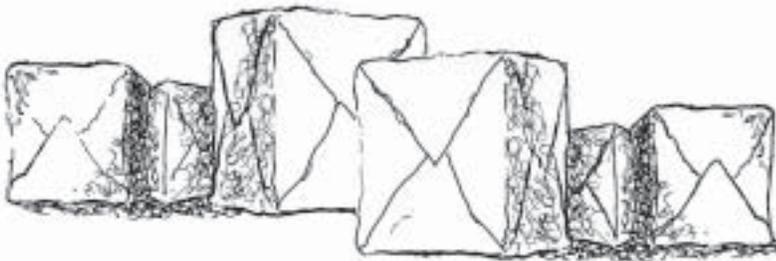
“Like truffles and escargot, Karmalions bring a pretty penny on the market. Even though market hunting is no longer allowed by law in the United States, and sale of native game animals is stringently regulated, no restrictions exist to prevent the sale of imported game animals harvested on hunting preserves such as the Karmalion Ranch.

“Like most of the expedition hunters who hunt here, you are interested in filling your bag limit so you can earn as much as you can from the sale of the meat. So rather than sharing information with others on this expedition, each of you will keep to yourselves and refrain from broadcasting any information about the Karmalions - what they look like, where they are found, most effective means of harvesting them, etc. If you share such information you’ll only increase the competition and reduce your chances of filling your bag limit. Most hunters at the ranch never even share with others what a Karmalion is until the end of their hunting day.

“Since it would take me a long time to train you to use our boars, I’m going to have you hunt the Karmalions by stalking them through the grass. So you won’t frighten them into the ground, you’ll have to hunt them on your bellies by slinking through the grass. Keep a sharp eye out for the Karmalions. Remember, do not stand, or else they’ll burrow into the ground and you will go home empty handed.

“Silence and stealth is important here. If you locate a Karmalion, put it into your game bag that Hunting Expeditions, Inc. has provided. Remember that the Karmalions can be sold for a nice profit and you don’t want to increase the competition any more than you need to.”

Now take your group to the playing field of the Karmalion Hunting Preserve. Have participants circle the area and lie on their bellies. Tell them what the bag limit for that first hunting day is. Start with a low figure— 2 or 3 for the first few rounds. Tell them that the the hunting season begins at 10 a.m. and lasts only two minutes until 10:02. Select your hunting season based on your actual start time of the activity. For example, if you begin this activity at 2:00 p.m., you could have the “season” run from 2:10 p.m. to 2:02 p.m. Keep an eye on your watch and tell your participants when the season is open.



After the first round, have them stand and return to the perimeter of the hunting area with their game in their game bags. Explain that there is no refrigeration at the ranch, but that the Karmalions remain fresh for a couple of days. Have your participants get on their bellies again and tell them it is the next day. Give them the opening time (it varies because of the seasonal change in sunrise and sunset). Now tell them that the bag limit is the same as yesterday, but that their possession limit is twice the bag limit. Tell them that the conservation warden will be out and about today and will be checking bag and possession limits. Do not exceed either! Violators will be given a stiff fine!

At the end of the second round, tell the hunters to stand and return to the perimeter of Karmalion Hunting Preserve. Ask them how their second hunt went. Were they more successful than before? Why or why not? Anticipate answers like: knowing what to look for, knowing where to look, being faster than their competitors, or the resource has been diminished (there are fewer Karmalions on the playing field after the first round.). Did they notice anything about where the Karmalions lived? Did that knowledge help them in the second round?

Explain that a “Karmalion Gourmet Company” representative has arrived at the ranch and is paying one penny per Karmalion. The hunters can either sell what they’ve bagged or consume what they’ve harvested. If they’ve reached their possession limit and do not eat or sell some of their bag, they will not be able to hunt tomorrow.



They may want to keep some of the Karmalions in case the price goes up as the supply decreases. Karmalions have been known to fetch as much as 10 cents per individual. [To control expenditures for this activity, you can create cards before the game and hand them out to the participants. The cards indicate who sells and how many they sell, who keeps and who eats.]

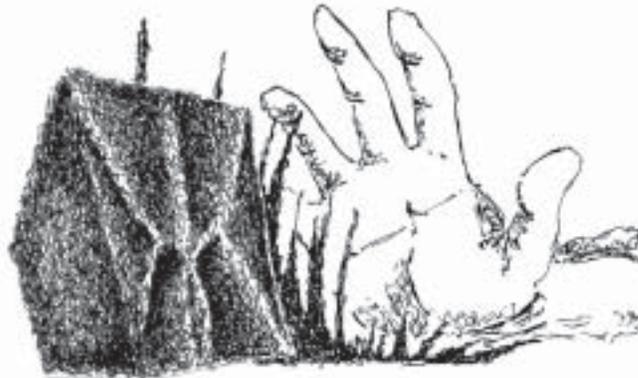
Next, collect all uneaten Karmalions and redistribute them in the playing area while the hunters’ backs are turned. Increase the size of the bag limits and possession limits and play a few more rounds. Describe the impacts on the resource.

Variations

- ❑ Create hunting refuges on the ranch. Place obvious and abundant prey near the inside boundary of the refuge. Place only a very few caramels within the open hunting area. Tell them that the price of Karmalions has just skyrocketed, and they can trade in a bag limit for a prize worth \$5.00. Watch to see if anyone is tempted to violate the refuge boundary. Use this situation as a springboard for discussing poaching, how poaching decreases the opportunity for everyone to hunt in the future and about hunter ethics in general. It might be useful to have a person secretly appointed as a violator and see if that has an effect on the other players. Does the group use peer pressure to force the violator to conform to the rules? Do they report the violation? Or do they follow the example of the violator?
- ❑ Use several kinds of game species (different kinds of wrapped candies), with some having discreet distributions (like only being found under the loose bark of certain types of trees) and others being scattered randomly throughout the area.

Compare the effectiveness of the hunters in harvesting the different game animals. Sample the population repetitively without replacement. As the population declines, is there any tendency for the expanded hunting effort to change? How does this relate to the expectations of hunters and their satisfaction? Did effective harvesting stop before all the individuals were recovered?


End of Teaching Station



References

4-H Shooting Sports Hunting Curriculum, edited by: Ronald A. Howard, Jr. and James E. Knight. (curriculum guide).