

taking it with you...

This one almost doesn't need saying. What should you take with you when you go somewhere? Obviously, a radio. For most people, this will be a VHF/UHF HT. What if you are going for more than a walk around the block? A spare battery or two wouldn't hurt. Some radios have battery cases available that take AA cells. While a rubber duck will get you "on the air" having a longer higher gain antenna will be an advantage. The most important thing is that the radio is turned on. You can't make a call or receive one if it's powered off!

We all know that height above terrain is good for VHF/UHF propagation. If you are going hiking and hilltops will be a destination, experience just what you can do with a rubber duck when there's no terrain in the way!

While taking an HT with you wherever you go is a no-brainer, HF can go with you too. It is possible to provide island-wide coverage as well as reach more distant stations. There are many QRP radios that are compact enough to go in a backpack or even even in a smaller sling pack. For myself, the following goes in my sling pack. While I primarily use it on HF, the radio can be used for VHF/UHF as well.

- FT-817 QRP transceiver
- 3S 3000 mAh lithium-ion battery
- 4S 4500 mAh LiFePO4 battery
- Elecraft T1 auto-tuner
- 3' coax & 20' coax
- 9:1 UN-UN
- wire for end-fed antenna
- wire for counterpoise
- 20 ft fishing pole optional
- string
- VHF/UHF antenna for FT-817
& a 90 degree adapter
- notebook & pen or pencil

A folding or roll-up solar panel can extend the operating time, especially in summer.

The end-fed antenna can be supported by a tree, but I also have a 20 ft collapsible fishing pole that can be used. The antenna has even been demonstrated as being usable even when laying on the ground, but up in the air will always be better.

In dry weather, a portable HF station can be set up almost anywhere. A picnic bench or table and chair make it a lot easier to use. Being under a roof, tent or tarp will allow for operation when it is wet. Winter adds a few more challenges such as keeping your fingers warm. Snacks and water are nice to have along. Operate portable for fun, and also to help you to be ready for the unexpected.

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73 Keith VE7GDH