Cryptid Hunters

What is Cryptid Hunters?
Cryptid Hunters (C.H.) is a cooperative or competitive tabletop roleplaying game where the protagonists hunt for Cryptids, or animals with disputed existence, such as Bigfoot, The Jersey Devil, Giant Squids, etc. These Cryptids are hunted by regular people, scientists, or even Government agents from the *Cryptid Containment Bureau*.

C.H. games generally take place in the 1960's America but can be adapted to any time period or setting. Additionally, C.H. games don't necessitate a specific genre – they can be horror, comedic, sci-fi, rustic, or fantasy.

Character Creation

Class
Class is the most important part of creating a character. The classes in C.H. determine the characters winning objective. If the GM decides the player's have fulfilled their objective, they are granted a two-point bonus to their skills or a one-point bonus to their attributes (the C.H. version of leveling up.) There are four playable classes with different, competitive objectives.

1. The Hunter
The Hunter's primary objective is to kill the cryptid. Maybe it's for a trophy, to protect livestock, or just because their homicidal. Hunters get a +1 bonus to the Tracking Skill.

2. The Liberator
The Liberator's primary objective is to keep the cryptid free from capture and alive. Liberators get a +1 bonus to the handle animal skill.

Campaign and Cryptid Creation
Individual campaigns are necessary for gameplay. There are several necessary components of those campaigns. A GM, who runs the game, will prepare these elements.

3. The Seeker
The Seeker's primary objective is to show the public proof of the cryptid's existence, (whether it be by capturing it, photographing it, etc). Usually they're journalists or scientists, but not always. Seekers get a +1 bonus to either research (legends) or research (facts) skills.

4. The Agent
The Agent (a member of the government Cryptid Containment Bureau) has two objectives. The Primary objective is to capture the cryptid and return them to the C.C.B. If the Agent fails their primary objective, their secondary objective is to keep the public from finding out about the cryptid (contrary to the seeker) – they receive only one bonus skill point for this. Agents get a +1 bonus to communication.

Skills
There are twelve skills for players to choose from to help define their character. Assign the following values to 6 skills: (4, 4, 3, 3, 2, 2). These will be the bonus on d20 skill checks.

-Brawl- Physical combat. Ability to hit physically (But not the damage).
-Handle Animal- Ability to interact with animals/cryptids.
-Perception- Ability to hear or see something beyond the range of normal observation.
-Research (facts)- Ability to do research of actual facts, articles, and newspapers.
-Research (legends)- Ability to do research of urban legends, word-of-mouth, and stories.
-Stealth/Hide- Ability to hide and move silently.
-Survival- Ability to find food, create shelter, etc.
-Tracking- Ability to follow tracks, leavings, and movement of an animal (or Cryptid).
-Trapping- Ability to build and use animal traps.
-Photography- Ability to take pictures.
-Use Firearms- Gun Combat. Ability to hit with firearms (but not how much damage they do).
-Zoology- Knowledge of animal/cryptid behavior.

Lore

Attributes
There are five attributes for players to use to cover checks not covered by a general skill. The type of attribute check is up to the GM's jurisdiction. Assign the following values to the attributes: (4, 3, 2, 1, 0).

-Strength- Checks determining physical ability.
-Dexterity- Checks determining mobility and maneuvers.
-Intelligence- Checks determining previous knowledge.
-Charisma- Checks determining communication.
-Luck- After failing a skill check, you can choose to make a luck check instead. If you fail, you will have BAD LUCK, and something bad will happen at the GM's discretion.

Hitpoints
The amount of health a hunter has. Determined by rolling a 2d6+strength bonus.

Belief Points
BP determines how much the hunter believes the Cryptid exists. If they run out of BP, they must stop looking for the Cryptid. The time it takes to find the Cryptid, false leads, etc lower belief points. Determined by rolling a 2d6+intelligence bonus.

Combat
While combat isn't the focus of C.H., it does occasionally arise. If a successful brawl roll is made, the player does either a 1d3 (unarmed) or a 1d4/1d6 (armed). A successful firearms roll allows between 1d6 and 1d12 damage.

Inventory
Players may start with any possessions that they believe they will need (up to the GM's Discretion) that can be used to help find the Cryptid or accomplish their objective. They may also purchase necessary items with a charisma check during the adventure.

Setting

Most C.H. Campaigns take place in the 1960's Vietnam-Era United States. This means that Cryptids can be chased through the forests of Washington, the mountains of Colorado, the cities of New York, etc.

Most settings will include a town or civilization that the Cryptid was spotted in, that has lore about the Cryptid, and that explains the source of the Cryptid Hunters. It can be scary, funny, rustic, or just plain ridiculous.

Individual Objective

Although the players will each have their own objective from their class, the GM will have to define the conditions under which each class has fulfilled their objective. For example, does the Agent have to take the captured cryptid somewhere? Will the Seeker have to show the mayor a photo of the Cryptid? Etc.

Cryptid

The most important part of a C.H. campaign is the Cryptid being hunted. Although generic Cryptids like Bigfoot or the Chupacabra may be used, you're free to make your own Cryptids too! Use the following information:

Physical Characteristics

A short physical description of the Cryptid (I.E. Big hairy ape-like creature).

Special Abilities

Any supernatural abilities the Cryptid has (I.E. Flight, breathing fire, etc).

The lore the community has formed about the creature (I.E. It's older than man, eats children, and is scared of fire). This doesn't necessarily have to be true.

Skills, Attributes, and Hitpoints:

These are the same as the similarly named-stats for Cryptid Hunters. They may have higher or lower values than normally allowed, however.

Objective

The Cryptid will often have an objective of its own, like protecting its young, survival, or eating live stock.

Aggression/Reclusion

Both Aggression and Reclusion are assigned on a scale of 1 to 5.
Aggression details how aggressively the Cryptid acts towards humans and animals. A value of 1 means it's docile, while a value of 5 means it will actively try to kill them.
Reclusion details how much the Cryptid tries to stay away from the humans and animals. A value of 1 means it will seek them out, and a value of 5 means it will run from them.

Gameplay

A normal game of Cryptid Hunter follows a fairly simple formula. The players are given their reason for knowing about the Cryptid (Maybe it ate a farmer's livestock or was sighted running through a supermarket?) and set out on their way to find it.

The players will use their combined skills to try to find the Cryptid, and will have to work together early on. They will likely interview people who may have seen the Cryptid, research the literature in the area for stories about the Cryptid, and attempt to figure out where the Cryptid is located.

After using this information to form a plan to find the Cryptid, they will use their skills to track the Cryptid down through its natural environment.

Once the Cryptid has been found, the players will stop cooperating and try to fulfill their own objectives. Some objectives won't contradict each other (like the Seeker and the Hunter), but usually the players will have to fight each other or trick each other into fulfilling their objectives. Players do not have to reveal their class to one another, and it is possible that all players could have the same class and objective. The GM will decide who has fulfilled their objective (and survived) and they will get the bonus from completing it.

Example of Gameplay

Thomas, Stephen, Koby, and Abby get together with their Game Master, Damon, for a game of Cryptid Hunters. Damon has prepared a Cryptid called "The Leg Breaker" and forest setting that it lives in. The four players create their own Cryptid Hunter Characters over about 30 minutes. Damon then begins telling them the story, and they begin to research "The Leg Breaker's" origin. They discover where it lives, and find out it might be able to breath fire. They travel into the forest, and after several trying days of tracking and survival, they locate "The Leg Breaker". Stephen and Koby both try to kill "The Leg Breaker" (because they are Hunters) but are stopped by Thomas, the Liberator, who kills them. Abby, an Agent, knocks Thomas unconscious and captures the Cryptid to take back to the Cryptid Containment Bureau. Abby's character gets a skill bonus. The whole game takes around 3 hours and everyone has a great time.
They plan to use the surviving characters again in other Cryptid Hunts – this time, they will be enemies.