

## **Food Preparation (Trapping and Snaring)**

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**Having spent well over 25 years studying the skills of our fore fathers I have had first hand experience of the many processes that each learner will go through to finally achieve each element of natural wilderness survival. As I have mentioned in other fact sheets, food is the LAST thing you should worry about. Shelter, fire, water and signalling for help are far more important. Remember the rule of 3's... You can die from exposure to the elements in 3 hours, you can die from lack of water in 3 days, but it takes 3 WEEKS or more to die of starvation. 3 weeks is a long time, so plan for your essentials first. If you have your other bases covered, then you can start planning for food. Snaring and fishing are your best bets, as they allow for you to "set and forget", which means that you conserve energy. All hunting should be done with as little energy expenditure as possible. Find a comfortable spot and wait for dinner to come to you.**

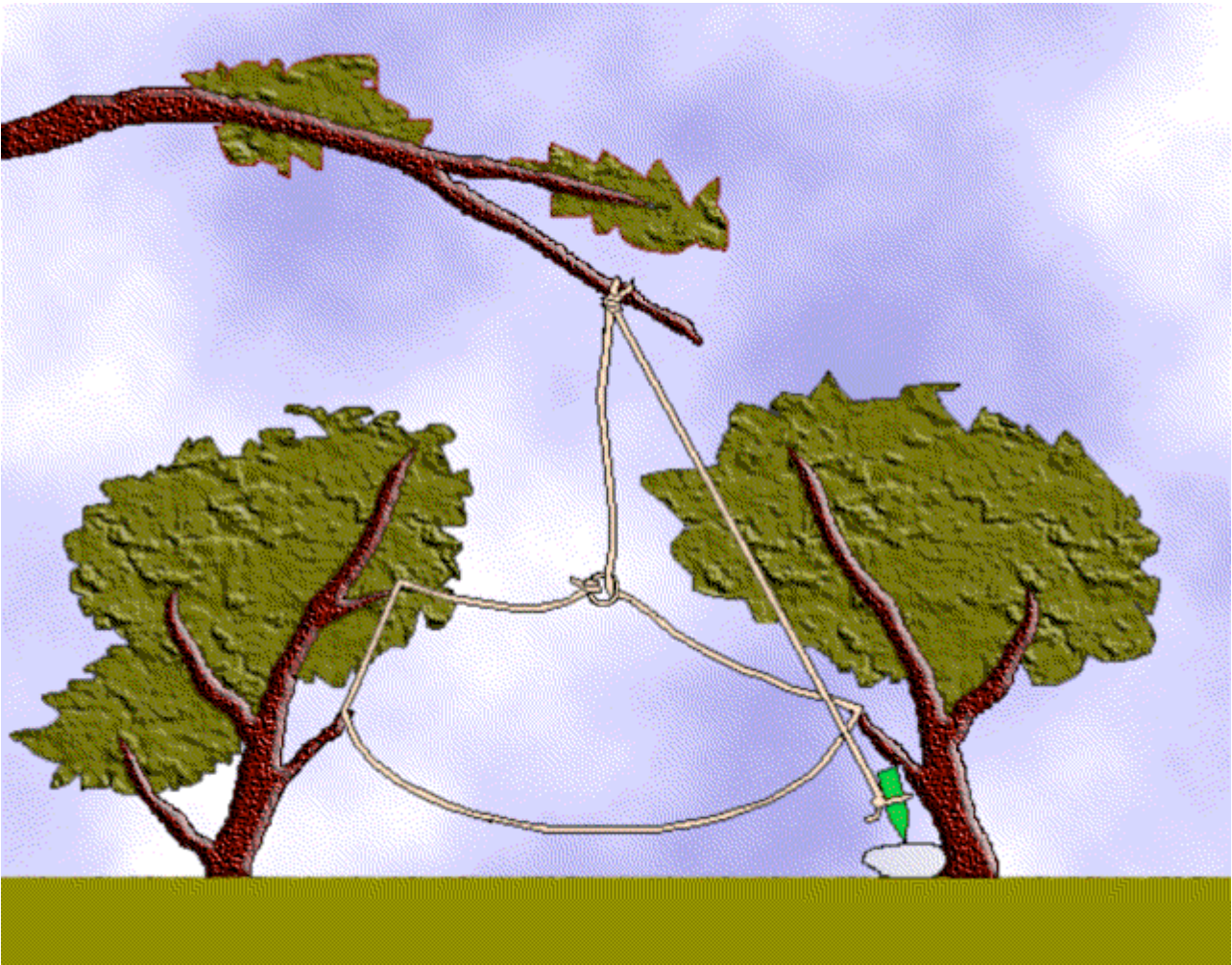
Rabbits, being very common worldwide, are a good wild game food. They can typically be found grazing in fields and clearings where grasses and other low lying plants are found. Watch to see where they enter and exit these areas to provide the locations for snares. Some people have been known to add impassable brush and wooden stakes along both sides of the path leading to the trap creating a funnel effect. They can then drive rabbits or other small game in the direction of the trap and be relatively sure that the game will head straight into the snare.

The Rabbit Snare can be used for many types of small game depending on how and where you deploy it. It consists of a noose loosely draped over twigs, brush, or any low-lying points where you can drape it. The noose is smooth cord that can easily slide through the small metal ring it is tied to (small key-rings work very well for this). The key to this snare is the bowed branch overhead, and the catch or trigger mechanism. As you can see in the diagram below, my trigger consists of a very simple stake that is wedged at an angle very close to that of the line to the branch. It is also sharpened and sits on a smooth rock so that any movement at all will free it.

A rabbit is not very smart, and assumes that the string across its path is simply grass, and typically does not slow down. The looseness and breadth of the noose allows the game to proceed a couple feet before it tugs the branch and releases the catch.

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**Note:** In this picture I have made the cord stand out, but only so that you can see it easily in the example. In reality, I would use either the green paracord or the green heavy (80lb test) fishing line for this. Also, there are MANY types of catches and triggering mechanisms, but this one is quite simple, and requires no fancy whittling skills. The KISS (Keep It Simple, Stupid) principle is always best in the woods (and elsewhere).

### ***BGMA TIPS!***

*You may want to trim back foliage on the overhead bent branch. Otherwise, wind can sway it, releasing the trap prematurely. You must remember that when setting traps or snares you will leave body scent around the area. This will alert the animal to potential danger and the trap will be avoided.*

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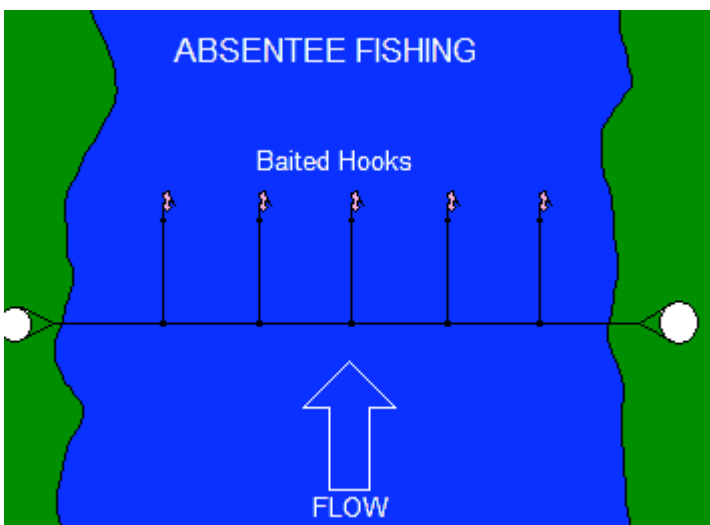
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## Fishing

Survival fishing is quite different than normal fishing. Survival fishing is often done without you even being there. It's more akin to trapping and snaring than it is to conventional fishing. There are several ways in which this can be accomplished.

### Absentee Fishing

If you have fishhooks and line (in a survival kit), then you're way ahead of the game. You can bait a whole bunch of hooks, string them on a line across the waterway, and then walk away. This is "absentee fishing". Be careful that the line you string across the waterway is strong (10 – 15 lb line). Tie it between a couple trees a couple feet above the water, and then you can either rely on the water flow to keep the bait near the surface, or simply put just enough line down to your hooks to not allow them to sink. If the water is moving, your bait will be dancing to entice the fish. If there's little or no movement, you can tie some leaf covered branches to the paracord to catch the wind, which also makes your bait look lively. While waiting for a catch, you can keep yourself busy with important things like fire and shelter, and simply check your lines every few hours.



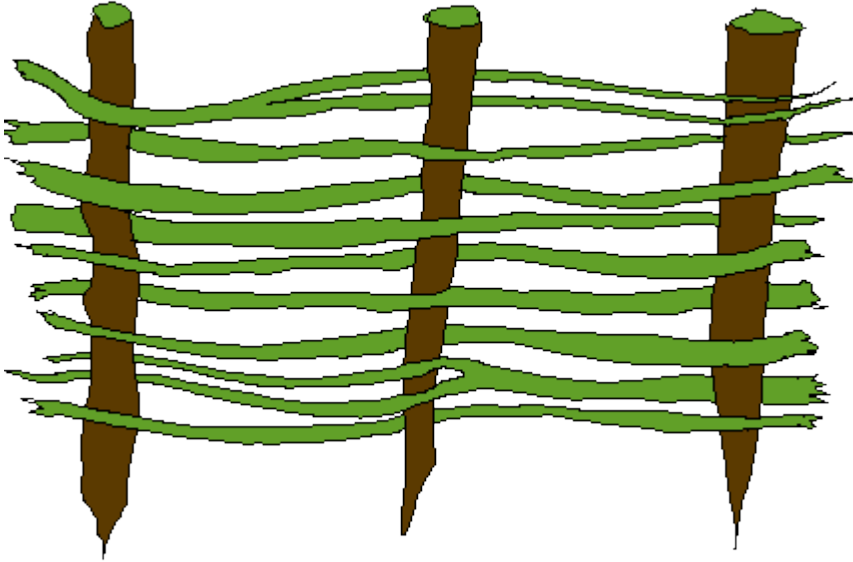
### Fish Fences

If you don't have any hooks and line, then I recommend a "fish fence". A "fish fence" is just what it sounds like. It's a fence that you make out of sticks that will corral the fish for you. Below, you'll see a couple sections of fish fence. As you can see, the smaller twigs are woven back and forth between the posts, which holds it all together nicely.

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The denser the better, as long as water can flow through, and fish cannot! This is built on land in sections, and then inserted in a likely waterway by pushing the posts into the mud at the bottom.



There are several versions of this... it really depends on the waterway.

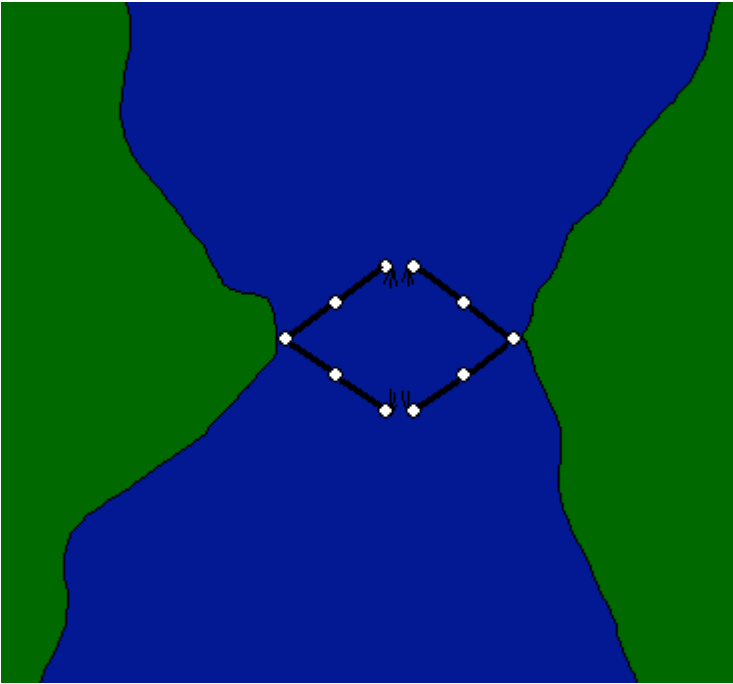
If it's a pond, and there's no flowing water, then you'll just make a corral in a shallow area with only one opening that funnels fish in. Once they're trapped in the small area, they can be speared or grabbed more easily.

If you're working with a stream, then it's important to determine the direction of flow. Observe whether fish are moving upstream, downstream, or both. If the fish are moving in one direction then a basic fence placed diagonally across the stream will concentrate the fish in a small area making it easier to spear one.

If the fish are moving in both directions, you may want to make a "corral" that will catch in both directions as shown below. If you have built your fencing in sections, it's easier to try different configurations to see which works best for you.

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In this picture, I show 4 fence sections across a narrow point in a stream. The points facing inward from the two openings are sharpened twigs. These ensure that once something comes into the corral, it is "encouraged" to stay there.

### ***BGMA TIPS!***

*As always, plan twice and build it once! Before you build, make sure you know where you're going to put it, and how deep the water is. Shallow areas are best. There's less fence to build, but mainly it's the fact that you really don't want to go swimming after fish in November!*