

# OTA

Steve

N<sub>4</sub>RAF

15 Feb 25





## **Goggle AI says:**

OTA may refer to ochratoxin A, a mycotoxin found in dry-cured ham, or to On the Air, a magazine for ham radio operators

## **Steve says:**

Challenges dreamed up by operators to connect ham radio to other interesting activities, locations, or historical places / events



# Disclaimer

- Bunch of them
- Many are UK / Europe based – but all have worldwide reach
- Some no longer appear to be active
- Some are once a year – others are year round
- Visit websites / google `em to find out more

# OTAs

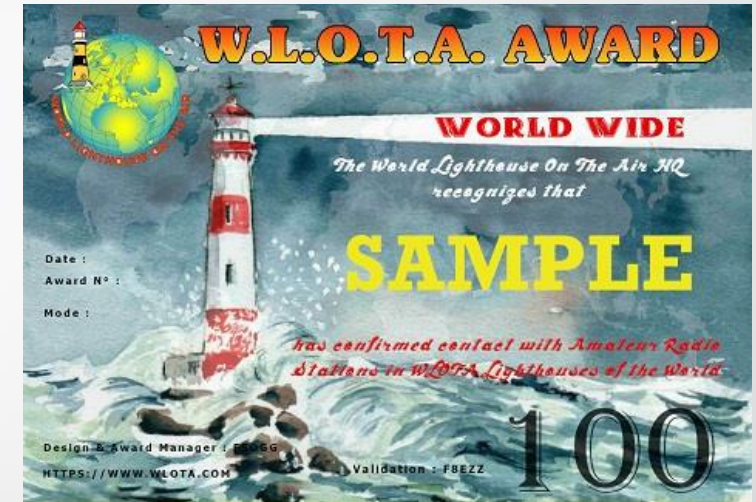


- [POTA](#) (Parks On The Air)
- [SOTA](#) (Summits On The Air)
- [CPOTA](#) (Canadian Parks On The Air)
- [MSPOTA](#) (Michigan State Parks On The Air)
- [OSPOTA](#) (Ohio State Parks On The Air)
- [IOTA](#) (Islands On The Air)
- [USIOTA](#) (US Islands On The Air)
- [LHOTA](#) (Light Houses On The Air)
- [WWFFOTA](#) (World Wide Flora and Fauna On The Air)
- [JOTA](#) (Jamboree On The Air)
- [MSOTA](#) (Museum Ships On The Air)
- COTA (Castles On The Air)
- BOTA (Bunkers On The Air)
- TOTA (Trains On The Air)
- ROTA (Railways on the Air)
- [BOTA](#) (Beaches On The Air)
- [WMPLOTA](#) (Walmart Parking Lots On The Air)
- [RaDAR](#) (Rapid Deployment Amateur Radio)
- [Route 66](#) (Route 66 On the Air Special Event)
- [AOTA](#) (Airfields On The Air)
- [CASHOTA](#) (Castles and Stately Homes On The Air)
- [MOTA](#) (Mills On The Air)
- [YOTA](#) (Young Worldwide The Air)
- [YOTA2](#) (Youth On The Air Region 2)
- [IMWOTA](#) (International Museum Weekend On The Air)
- [Vanuatu](#) (Vanuatu (YJ) On The Air)
- [MOTA](#) (Mines On The Air)
- WWBOTA (Worldwide Bunkers On The Air)





# Wallpaper Collectors Paradise







# World Castles On The Air (WCOTA or COTA)

- The International Award program “World Castles Award – WCA” devoted to work on the air from castles, fortresses and other fortification works.
- Mainly Europe
- 1090 in US
- 21 in VA
  - AP Hill Fort
  - Loudoun Fort (Winchester)
  - → BULL RUN CASTLE, ALDIE, VIRGINIA
- <https://wcagroup.org/>





# BULL RUN CASTLE, ALDIE, VIRGINIA



- “Belgian Castles Award” (BCA), Belgium
- “Belgian Castles and Fortresses Award” (BCFA), Belgium
- “Belgian Military Fortification 14-18 Award” (BFORTA), Belgium
- “Bulgarian Historical Sites Award” (BHS), Bulgaria
- “Castles and Fortresses of Bosnia and Hercegovina Award” (CFBHA), Bosnia and Hercegovina
- “Castles and Palaces of Belarus Award” (CPBA), Belarus
- “Castles and Stately Homes On The Air” (CASHOTA), England
- “Castles and Stately Homes On The Air – Ireland” (CASHOTA-EI), Ireland
- “Castles and Stately Homes On The Air – Northern Ireland” (CASHOTA-NI), Northern Ireland
- “Castles in Serbia Award” (CSA), Serbia
- “Castles On The Air – Austria” (COTA-OE), Austria
- “Castles On The Air – Croatia” (COTA-9A), Croatia
- “Castles On The Air – The Netherlands” (COTA-PA), The Netherlands
- “Castles On The Air – Kazakhstan” (COTA-UN), Kazakhstan
- “Castles On The Air – Latvia” (COTA-YL), Latvia
- “Czech Castles Award” (CCA), Czech Republic
- “Diploma Castillos de Catalunya” (DCC), Spain
- “Diploma Castillos de Espana” (DCE), Spain
- “Diploma Castillos de Espana 1.0” (DCE 1.0), Spain
- “Diploma dei Castelli d’Italia” (DCI), Italy
- “Diploma dos Castelos e Fortalezas de Portugal” (DCFP), Portugal



- “Diploma Monumentos Historicos Portugueses” (DMHP), Portugal
- “Diplome des Chateaux de la Suisse-Romande” (DCSR), Switzerland
- “Diplome des Forts et Chateaux de France” (DFCF), France
- “German Castles On The Air” (COTA-DL), Germany
- “Hellenic Castles Fortresses Award” (HCFA), Greece
- “Hungarian Castle Series” (HCS), Hungary
- “Imperios do Divino Espirito Santo” (IDES), Azores islands, Portugal
- “Le Diplome des Chateaux Suisse” (DCS-SSD), Switzerland
- “Macedonian World Castles Award” (MWCA), Macedonia
- “Silesian Fortifications On The Air” (SFOTA), Poland
- “Slovakia Castles Award” (SCA), Slovakia
- “Slovenia World Castles Award” (S5 WCA), Slovenia
- “Russian Castles and Fortresses Award” (RCFA ex COTA-RU), Russia
- “Romanian Fortress On The Air” (RFA), Romania
- “Romanian Historical Objectives” (RHO), Romania
- “Twierdze i Forty w Polsce” (TFP), Poland
- “Ukrainian Castles and Fortress Awards” (UCFA), Ukraine
- “World Castles Serbia Award” (YU WCA), Serbia
- “Worked All Sweden Fortress Award” (WASFA), Sweden
- “Zamki w Polsce” (ZWP), Poland





# BOTA - UKBOTA – Bunkers On The Air

- The aim and purpose of the UK Bunkers On The Air (UKBOTA) programme and awards scheme is to support radio amateurs and short-wave listeners, both in the United Kingdom and overseas, to communicate with other radio amateurs activating ROC and other types of bunkers in the United Kingdom.
- UK bunkers – WWII and Cold War
- Approx 2000 in the UK
- UK BOTA - <https://bunkersontheair.org/site/>
- Bunker base - <https://bunkerbase.org/>
- Facebook - UKBOTA Facebook





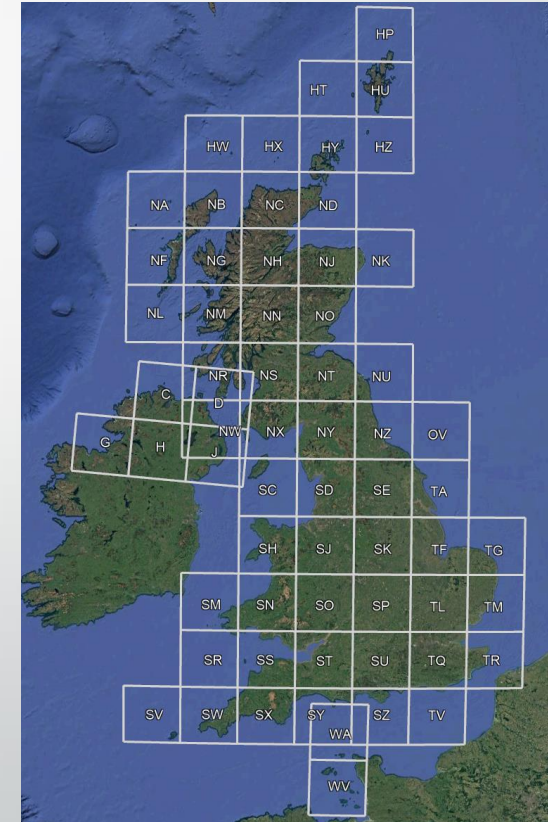




# UKBOTA Mad March Hare Event 2025



- Activators successfully operate from as many UKBOTA bunkers and 'Large Squares' in Mar 25
- Hunters (and listeners) is to work (or hear) as many bunkers and 'Large Squares' in Mar 25
- Similar to POTA
- Awards for Activators and Hunters
- Hunters awards for
  - Large Squares (think grids)
  - Exchanges (number of contacts)
  - Valid Bunkers (number of bunkers)
- <https://bunkersontheair.org/site/hare25>







# WWBOTA - Worldwide Bunkers On The Air

- [UKBOTA \(United Kingdom\)](#)
  - [ONBOTA \(Belgium\)](#)
  - [OKBOTA \(Czech Republic\)](#)
  - [Z3BOTA \(North Macedonia\)](#)
  - [ZABOTA \(Albania\)](#)
  - [S5BOTA \(Slovenia\)](#)
  - [FBOTA \(France\)](#)
  - [LABOTA \(Norway\)](#)
  - [ITABOTA \(Italy\)](#)
  - [EIBOTA \(Ireland\)](#)
  - [PABOTA \(The Netherlands\)](#)
- 
- Worldwide WWBOTA - <https://wwbota.org/>





- “leave their shacks and go outside operating portable in Protected Flora@Fauna areas (PFF) all over the world”
- 36,000 Protected Flora@Fauna sites
- Some POTA sites ‘double’ as WWFF sites
- Heaters Island nearest one to us
- GYPO Spring Fling – 16-17 March 25
  - World wide everyone get out and activate

- <https://wwff.co/>
- US: <https://wwff-kff.org/>





# MOTA – Museum Ships On The Air

- Event – 7 – 8 Jun 25
- 53 37 ships participating in 2025
- Worldwide – US, Canada, Germany, Australia, Greece, Sweden
  - BB – NJ, MA, NC, MO, IA, AL, HS Georgios Averof (Greece), TN Museum
  - Carriers – Midway, Lexington, Hornet, Yorktown
  - Nuclear Merchant Vessel – NS Savannah
  - CSA Ironclad Gunboat – CSS Neuse
  - Submarines, Destroyers, Icebreakers, Liberty Ship, Lightship, River Patrol Boat, and more
- Many of these ships have regular events through out the year



- <https://www.nj2bb.org/museum/>





# BOTA – Beaches On The Air

- Yep – sit on a beach, work on your tan, sip on your favorite drink, watch the waves, and play ham radio
- 30,000+ beaches in the database
- <https://www.beachesontheair.com/>





# Islands On The Air

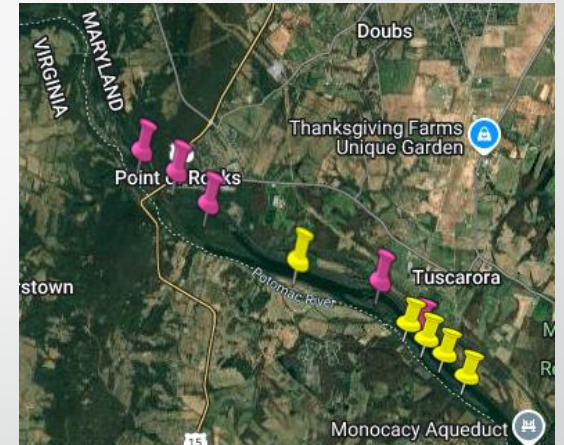


- “encouraging operations from island locations”
- Fund and support Dxpeditions
- Greenland to Sable Island to Chincoteague Island to South Pacific islands
- Which Islands count – they must:
  - not lie in rivers, inland lakes or seas, narrow gulfs or largely enclosed bays.
  - be a minimum distance from the mainland.
  - be shown and named either on Google Earth or on another officially recognised reference map
- <https://www.iota-world.org/>



# USisl – US Islands Awards Program

- Chasing and activating river, lake, and ocean shore islands
  - Captures islands in the US that are not part of IOTA
- Some in our back yard
  - Cox Island, Nolands Island, Birdsaw Island, Paton Island, Heaters Island
  - Potomac River – between Point of Rocks and White's Ferry
- U.S. Islands QSO Party – 23-24 Aug 25 (tentative)
- <https://usislands.org/>



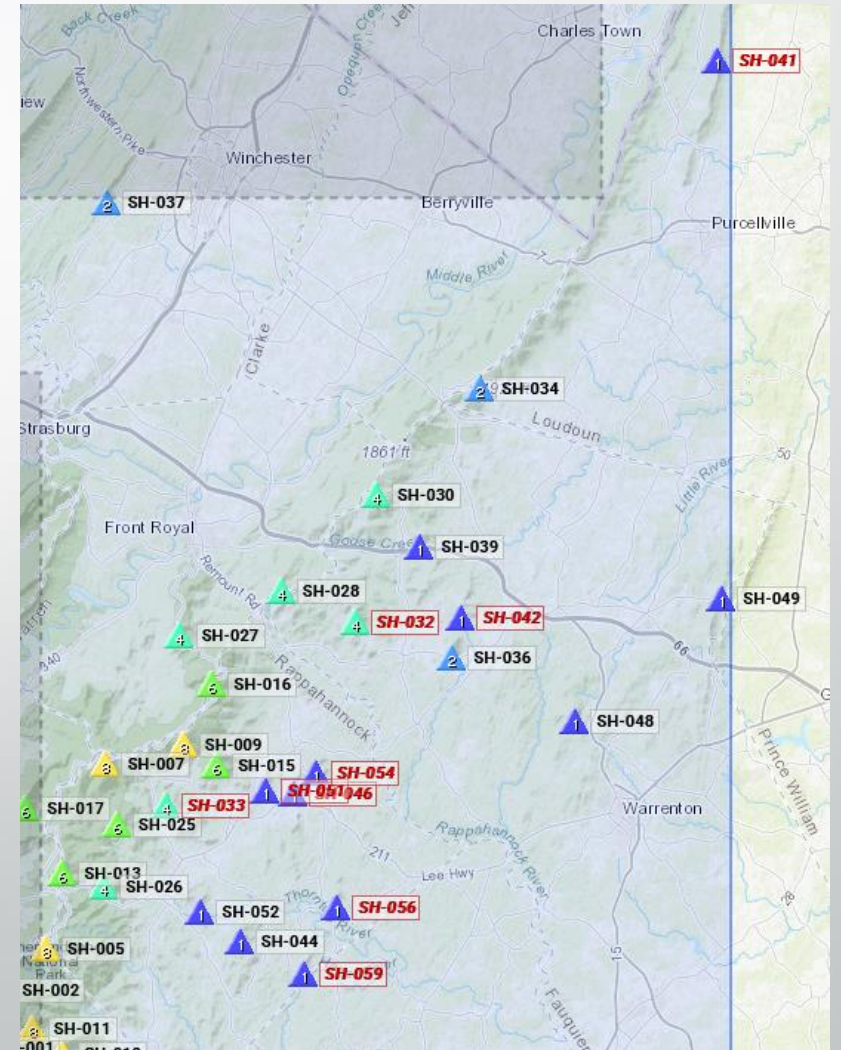




# SOTA – Summits On The Air



- Activators (those who ascend to the summits) and chasers (who either operate from home, a local hilltop or are even Activators on other summits) Worldwide
- Pikes Peak
- Appalachian trail / Skyline Drive have a bunch
- <https://www.sota.org.uk/>



# W4V/SH-034, Loudoun County HP - 588m, 2 points

[Association List](#) | [Back to W4V Association](#) | [Back to SH Region](#)



**Association:** USA - Virginia, **Region:** VA-Shenandoah Park

**Latitude:** 39.0326, **Longitude:** -77.9273

**QTH Locator:** FM19aa

**Valid From:** 31 Jan 2011

**Bonus Period:** No

**ARRL WAS:** Virginia

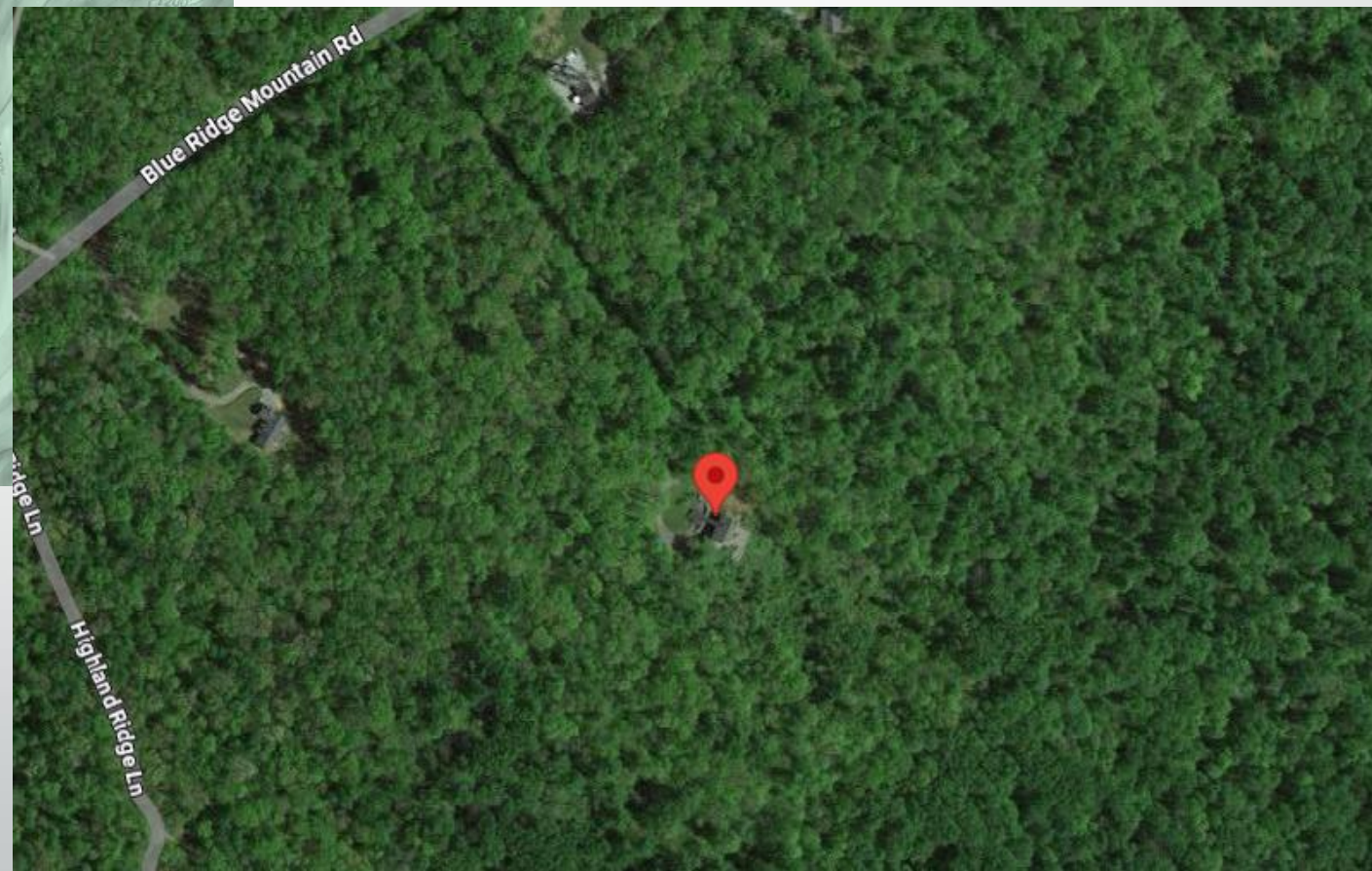
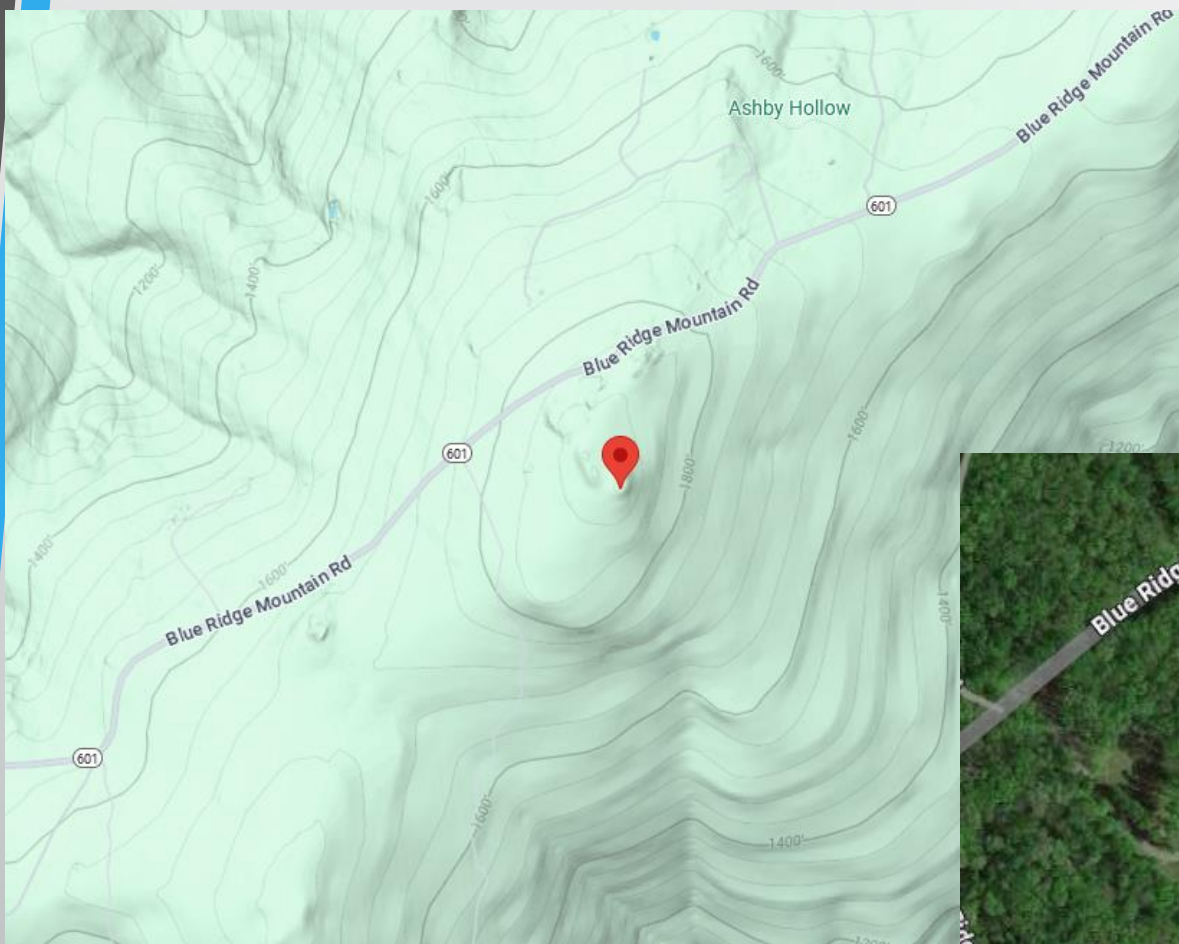
**CQ ZL:**

## W3AAX's Commentary on Loudoun County HP



For further information/pictures, please see my qrz.com page... Here are a few things to know before trying to attack Loudoun County HP: 1. The summit is near a gated area and accessible by foot, but there are a TON of power lines and generators in the area. Be ready to use every noise blanker and reducer you can find on your rig. Doug (W1DMH) also verified he had a lot of QRM on his trip as well. My only contact was EI9GLB from Ireland, and he has an plethora of awesome antennas at his disposal. Thank goodness that even if you don't get the points for 1 QSO, it still counts as an activation. Phew! 2. Police presence is notably high in the area patrolling, but friendly. 3. The area is fairly remote, so I stopped in Purcellville for essentials. 4. If one left early enough, this may be coupled with another mountain in the afternoon, but of course, I would not suggest it because it took me more than an hour just to get one contact here because of the QRM. It's a frustrating place to be! 5. Cell service with AT&T was good on this trip. I was able to easily spot myself via SOTA Goat.









# World Lighthouses On The Air

- Created by some French Amateurs
- “establish radio links, with and from the lighthouses in Sea, Rocks and Islands”
- North America has 716 lighthouses listed
  - easy access : WLOTA in inhabited island - 188
  - difficult access : WLOTA in uninhabited island (or few people only) - 405
  - very difficult access : WLOTA on Rock, reef, detached breakwater or in sea – 123
- US – Amateur Radio Lighthouse Society
  - 4 major events – spring, National Lighthouse weekend, International Lighthouse weekend, Christmas lights

• <https://www.wlota.com/>





# WPLOTA - Walmart Parking Lots on the Air



- Yup a real thing – or at least it was
- Annual event, 1<sup>st</sup> weekend in Jul
- Last one was 2022
- <https://wmplota.org/>



# Common Features of OTA Programs

- Any legal band / mode
- Rules / Award Criteria
- Site Listings / Maps
- Upcoming activations
- Spotting pages
- Info on the sites or links to other resources
- Uploading / recording of contacts
  - Some use LOTW, Club Log
- Activator and Hunter resources
- Mail lists or reflectors or Discord
- Social media presence – Facebook, X

## Latest SOTA Spots

16:10	<b>K4KK</b> on <a href="#">W4G/NG-011</a>	146.52 FM
15:55	<b>M0MTP/P</b> on <a href="#">G/WB-019</a>	14.305 SSB
15:51	<b>M0MTP/P</b> on <a href="#">G/WB-019</a>	14.29 SSB
15:43	<b>M0MTP/P</b> on <a href="#">G/WB-019</a>	145.475 FM
15:11	<b>MW0WML/P</b> on <a href="#">GW/</a> <a href="#">NW-048</a>	SELECT MODE
15:06	<b>LB7PC/P</b> on <a href="#">LA/BU-014</a>	14.321 SSB
14:56	<b>MW0WML/P</b> on <a href="#">GW/NW-048</a>	145.425 FM
14:52	<b>F/DL6GCA/P</b> on <a href="#">FL/VO-167</a>	21 CW
14:43	<b>F/DL6GCA/P</b> on <a href="#">FL/VO-167</a>	21.059 CW
14:42	<b>KJ5FMX</b> on <a href="#">W5T/NT-039</a>	28.382 SSB

>> [See more on SOTAwatch](#)



# Multiple OTAs Per Site

- Many locations are captured by more than one OTA

Name	POTA	IOTA	USIsl#	WWFF
Heaters Island	US-7769	N/A	MDo4oR	FFF-6589
Dry Tortugas NP (Loggerhead Key)	US-0023	NAo62	FL47oS	KFF-0023

- Heaters Island – seen from Point of Rocks bridge





# Activator or Hunter

## Activator

- Get out and put your emergency comm capabilities to the test in interesting locations

## Hunter

- How many can you work?