The legend of a giant hairy hominid prowling the forested back country is firmly entrenched in Canadian folklore. So naturally, for years, people have made a sport of tracking these elusive — perhaps non-existent — beasts.

As in all sports, great and admired figures have risen from these efforts to hunt down Sasquatch. Rene Dahinden, the late Swiss-Canadian Sasquatch hunting pioneer, is regarded among the Sasquatch-hunting blogosphere as one of legends of the field, along with his rival Bob Titmus.

But now, these frontiersmen have been eclipsed by a new generation of Sasquatch hunters who are combining science and adventure in their quest to prove the ape-man’s existence.

“It’s the next generation of research,” said William Barnes, who’s spearheading a novel venture called the [Falcon Project](http://the-falconproject.com/main_site/?page_id=53), an initiative he set up with Idaho State University scientist Jeff Meldrum.

Barnes believes the search for the beast on the ground has been exhausted; to find the apelike creatures and prove their existence, one must take to the air.

Through crowd-funding website Kickstarter, and a campaign to attract corporate sponsors, Barnes is hoping to raise $355,000 to pay for the construction of a “helium dual airship” with a mounted camera that will cruise over Sasquatch “hot spots” across the U.S. and British Columbia.

The aircraft will be made by Remote Aerial Tripod Specialists, an Alberta company that makes remote-controlled aircraft, said Barnes. The blimplike air ship will fly at between 600 and 900 metres, with a 16-pound camera that will point straight down between the trees below.

“You need something that can hover, that can do 45 m.p.h. You need something that can spin on a dime,” said Barnes, a former gold miner in California. “This thing can do it all.”

Barnes believes the plan will increase the likelihood of catching a Sasquatch on camera, since high-flying aircraft will provide minimal intrusion in the wild.

“If we get on top of one, we can stay with it from 4 to 6 hours,” said Barnes, saying the aircraft, which runs on alcohol, can hover for several hours before returning to refuel.

Even though he has only received roughly $1,400 in donations, Barnes is confident he will find a way to finance the airship’s construction, so that he can hunt the furtive Sasquatch from above.

“I’m not giving up on it,” he said.