AddressResolutionProtocol

Address Resolution Protocol (ARP)

The Address Resolution Protocol is used to dynamically discover the mapping between a layer 3 (protocol) and a layer 2 (hardware) address. A typical use is the mapping of an IP address (e.g. 192.168.0.10) to the underlying Ethernet address (e.g. 01:02:03:04:05:06). You will often see ARP packets at the beginning of a conversation, as ARP is the way these addresses are discovered.

ARP can be used for Ethernet and other LANs, ATM, and a lot of other underlying physical addresses (the list of hardware types in the ADDRESS RESOLUTION PROTOCOL PARAMETERS document at the IANA Web site includes at least 33 hardware types).

ARP is used to dynamically build and maintain a mapping database between link local layer 2 addresses and layer 3 addresses. In the common case this table is for mapping Ethernet to IP addresses. This database is called the ARP_Table. Dynamic entries in this table are often cached with a timeout of up to 15 minutes, which means that once a host has ARPed for an IP address it will remember this for the next 15 minutes before it gets time to ARP for that address again.

A peculiarity of ARP is that since it tries to reduce/limit the amount of network traffic used for ARP a host MUST use all available information in any ARP packet that is received to update its ARP_Table. Thus sometimes a host sends out ARP packets NOT in order to discover a mapping but to use this side effect of ARP and preload the ARP table of a different host with an entry. These special ARP packets are referred to as Gratuitous_ARPs and Wireshark will detect and flag the most common versions of such ARPs in the packet summary pane.

Gratuitous_ARPs are more important than one would normally suspect when analyzing captures. So don't just ignore them or filter out ARP from your capture immediately. Consider that a normal host will always send out a Gratuitous_ARP the first thing it does after the link goes up or the interface gets enabled, which means that almost every time we see a Gratuitous_ARP on the network, that host that sent it has just had a link bounce or had its interface disabled/enabled. This is very useful information when troubleshooting networks. Remember though that you can only see these Gratuitous_ARPs (or any other ARPs for that matter) if your capture device is in the same Broadcast Domain as the host that originates the ARP packet.

Several viruses send a lot of ARP traffic in an attempt to discover hosts to infect; see the ArpFlooding page.

History

RFC 826 "An Ethernet Address Resolution Protocol" was released in November 1982.

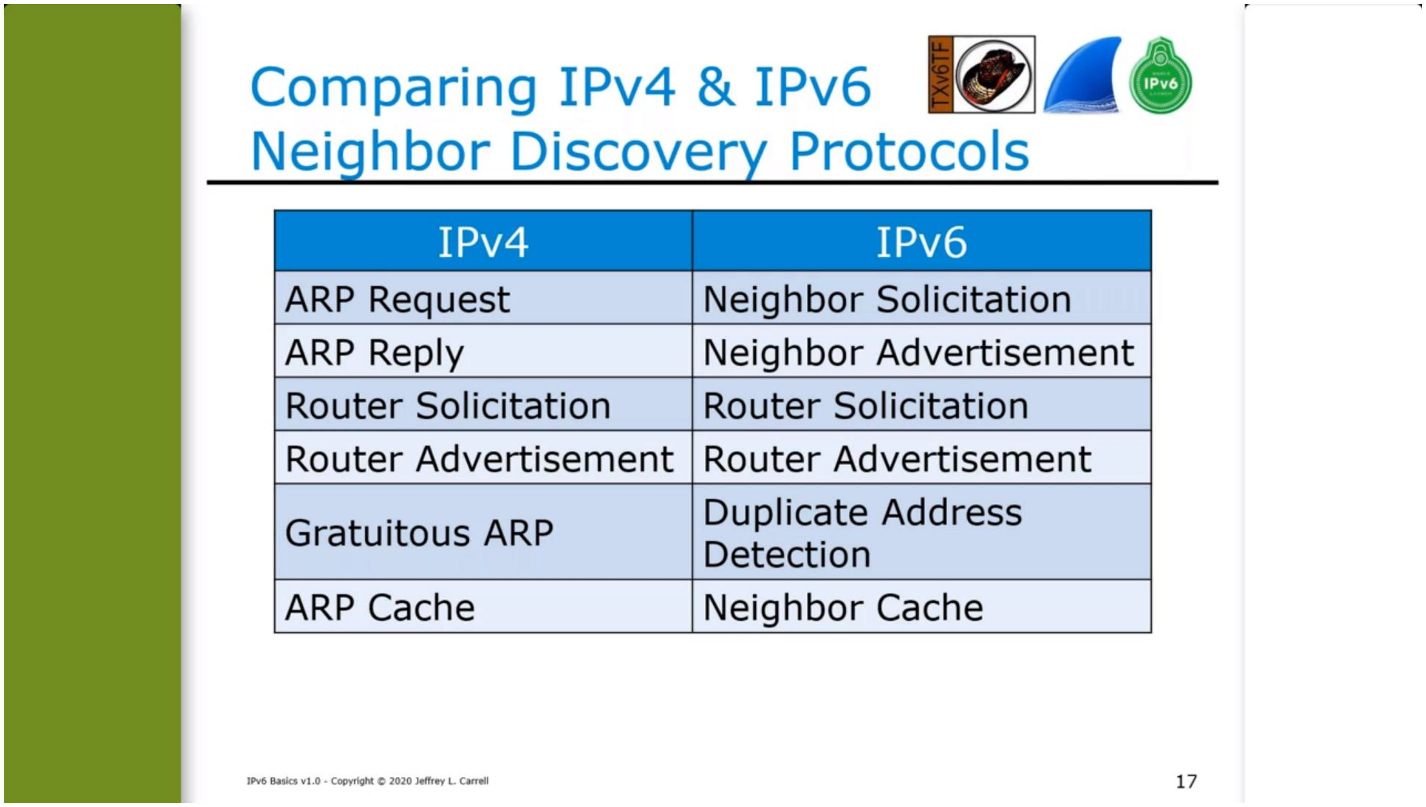
Protocol dependencies

Layer 2 protocols:

- ATM: ARP can use ATM as its transport mechanism.
- Ethernet: ARP can use Ethernet as its transport mechanism. The assigned Ethernet type for ARP traffic is 0x0806.
- Other LANs: ARP can also be used on Token Ring, FDDI, and IEEE 802.11; the same assigned type is used.
- ... and a lot more!

Layer 3 protocols:

- IP: ARP can map IP addresses to layer 2 addresses.
- IPv6: ARP replaced by Neighbor Discovery (see RFC4861) XXX - add/redirect to more info



Comparing IPv4 & IPv6 Neighbor Discovery Protocols

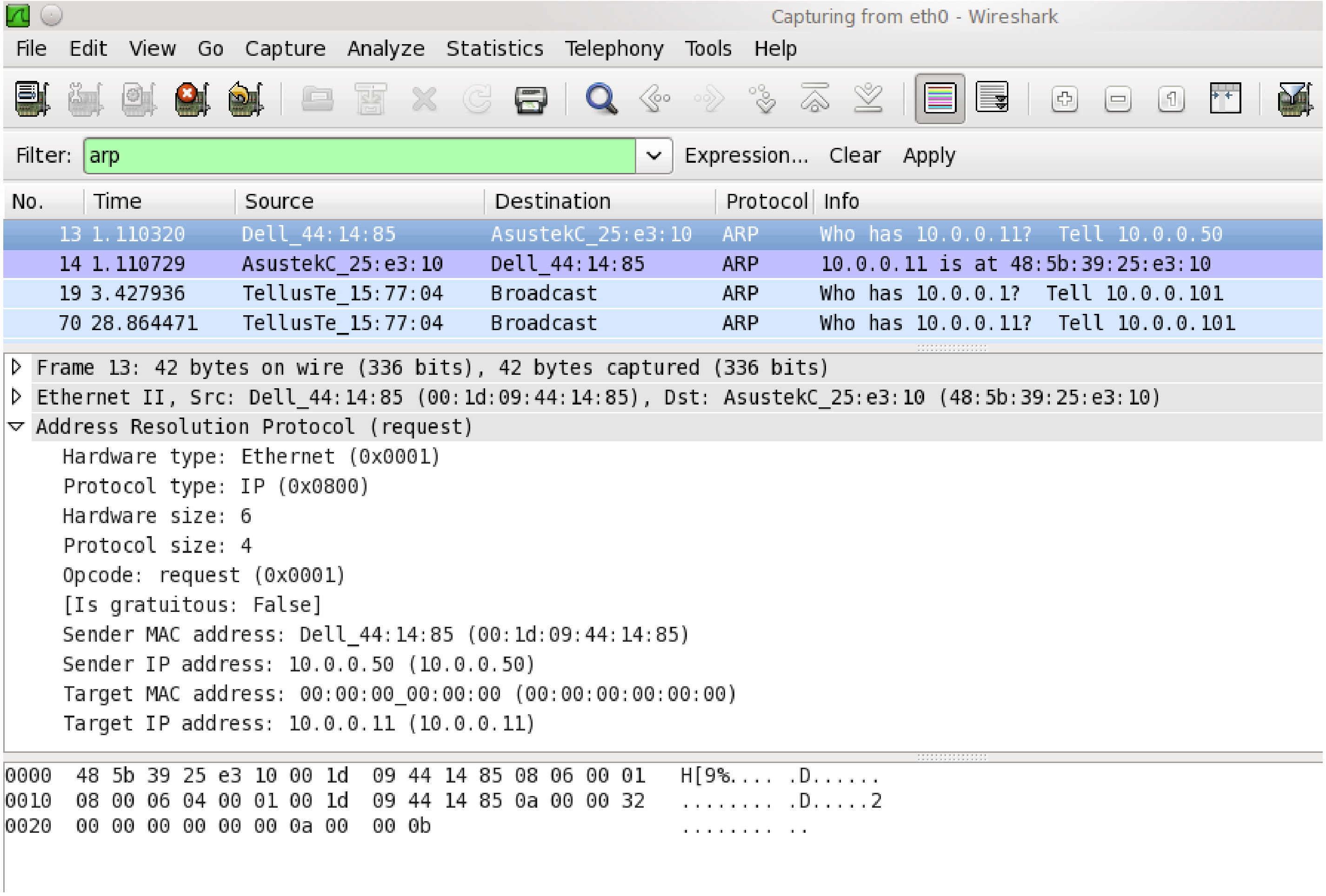
IPv4	IPv6
ARP Request	Neighbor Solicitation
ARP Reply	Neighbor Advertisement
Router Solicitation	Router Solicitation
Router Advertisement	Router Advertisement
Gratuitous ARP	Duplicate Address Detection
ARP Cache	Neighbor Cache

IPv6 Basics v1.0 - Copyright © 2020 Jeffrey L. Carrell

17

(Slide courtesy of Jeff Carrell - @JeffCarrell_v6)

Example traffic


Capturing from eth0 - Wireshark
File Edit View Go Capture Analyze Statistics Telephony Tools Help
Filter: arp
Expression... Clear Apply

```
No.   Time          Source              Destination         Protocol Info
   13 1.110320      Dell_44:14:85       AsustekC_25:e3:10   ARP      Who has 10.0.0.11?  Tell 10.0.0.50
   14 1.110729      AsustekC_25:e3:10   Dell_44:14:85       ARP      10.0.0.11 is at 48:5b:39:25:e3:10
   19 3.427936      TellusTe_15:77:04   Broadcast           ARP      Who has 10.0.0.1?  Tell 10.0.0.101
   70 28.864471     TellusTe_15:77:04   Broadcast           ARP      Who has 10.0.0.11?  Tell 10.0.0.101
```

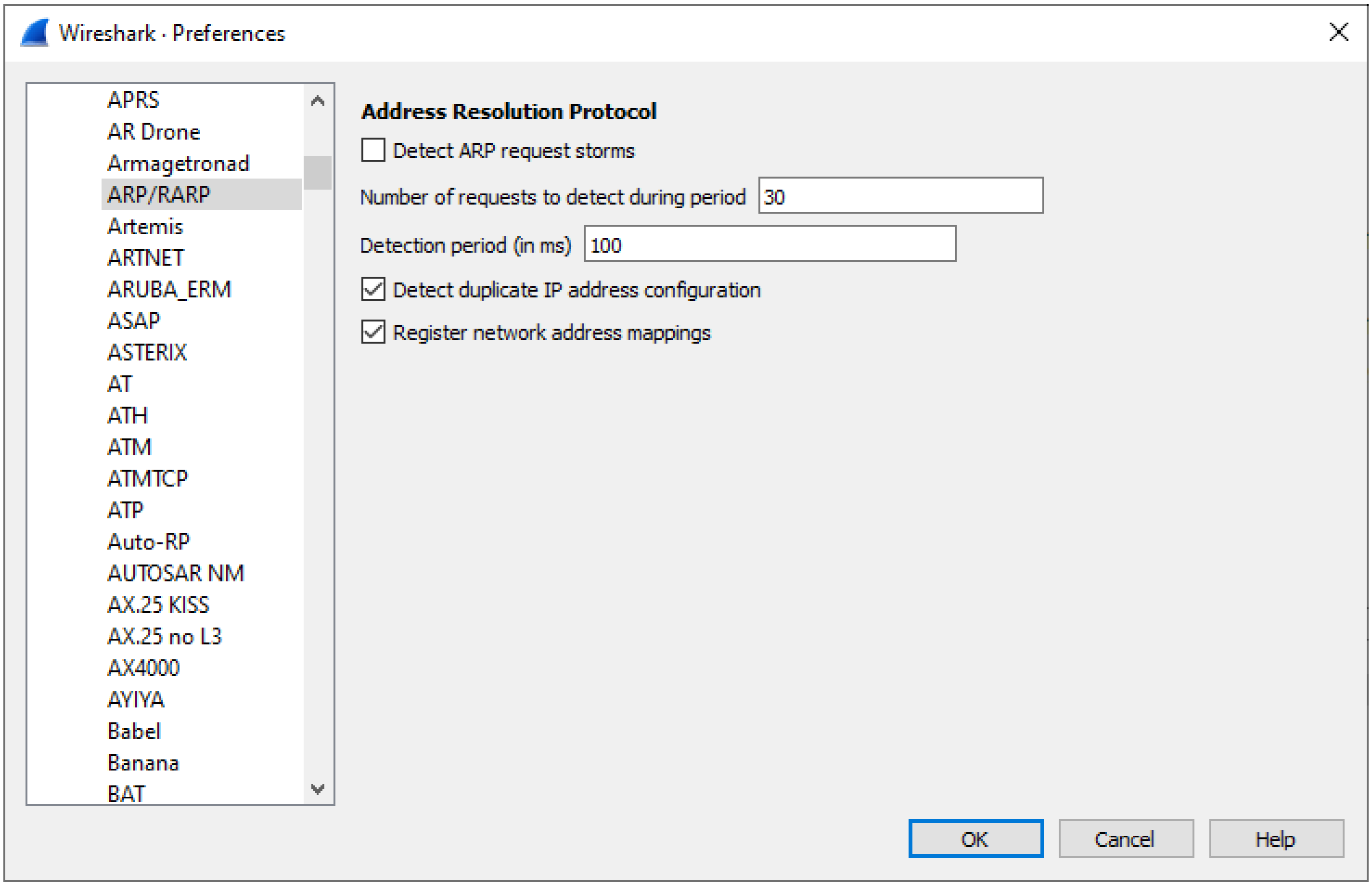
```
▷ Frame 13: 42 bytes on wire (336 bits), 42 bytes captured (336 bits)
▷ Ethernet II, Src: Dell_44:14:85 (00:1d:09:44:14:85), Dst: AsustekC_25:e3:10 (48:5b:39:25:e3:10)
▽ Address Resolution Protocol (request)
    Hardware type: Ethernet (0x0001)
    Protocol type: IP (0x0800)
    Hardware size: 6
    Protocol size: 4
    Opcode: request (0x0001)
    [Is gratuitous: False]
    Sender MAC address: Dell_44:14:85 (00:1d:09:44:14:85)
    Sender IP address: 10.0.0.50 (10.0.0.50)
    Target MAC address: 00:00:00_00:00:00 (00:00:00:00:00:00)
    Target IP address: 10.0.0.11 (10.0.0.11)
```

```
0000  48 5b 39 25 e3 10 00 1d  09 44 14 85 08 06 00 01   H[9%.... .D......
0010  08 00 06 04 00 01 00 1d  09 44 14 85 0a 00 00 32   ........ .D.....2
0020  00 00 00 00 00 00 0a 00  00 0b                     ........ ..
```

Wireshark

The ARP dissector is fully functional.

Preference Settings



Address Resolution Protocol

☐ Detect ARP request storms

Number of requests to detect during period 30

Detection period (in ms) 100

☑ Detect duplicate IP address configuration

☑ Register network address mappings

- Detect ARP request storms:

  Attempt to detect excessive rate of ARP requests (Default: FALSE)

- Number of requests to detect during period:

  Number of requests needed within period to indicate a storm (Default: 30)

- Detection period (in ms):

  Period in milliseconds during which a packet storm may be detected (Default: 100)

- Detect duplicate IP address configuration:

  Attempt to detect duplicate use of IP addresses (Default: TRUE)

- Register network address mappings:

  Try to resolve physical addresses to host names from ARP requests/responses (Default: TRUE)

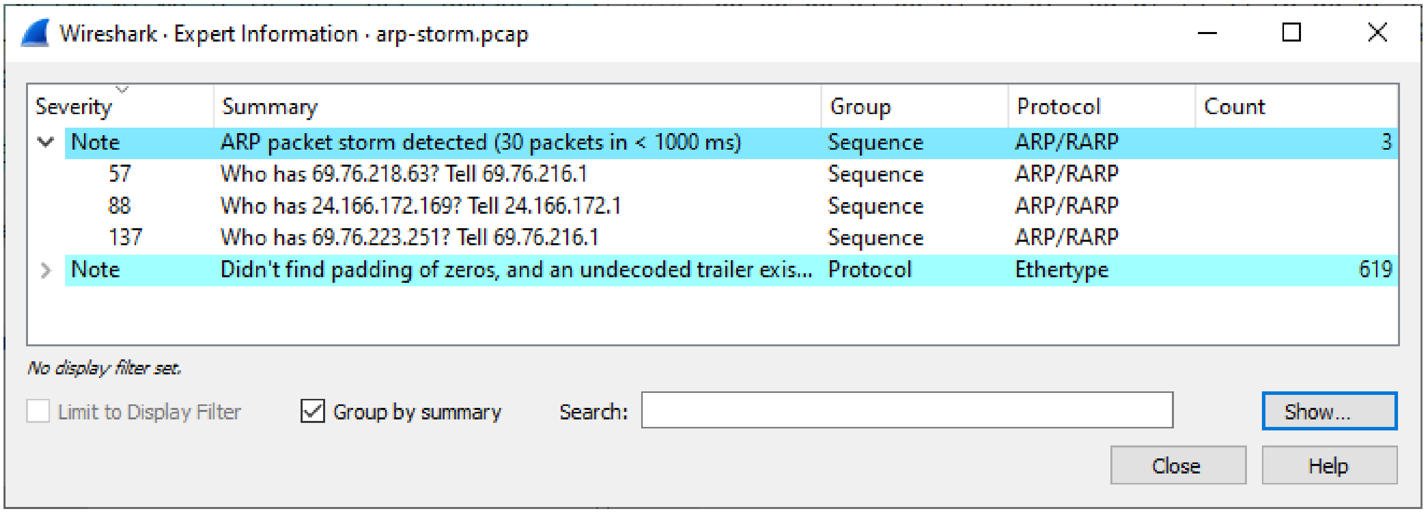
Expert Information messages

```
static ei_register_info ei[] = {
   { &ei_seq_arp_dup_ip, { "arp.duplicate-address-detected", PI_SEQUENCE, PI_WARN, "Duplicate IP a
   { &ei_seq_arp_storm, { "arp.packet-storm-detected", PI_SEQUENCE, PI_NOTE, "ARP packet storm det
```

```
    { &ei_atmarp_src_atm_unknown_afi, { "arp.src.atm_afi.unknown", PI_PROTOCOL, PI_WARN, "Unknown A
};
```

Example capture file

SampleCaptures/arp-storm.pcap Problem with example capture file. No responses were included. (Enable Detect ARP request storms and increase Detection Period to 1000 ms)



Severity	Summary	Group	Protocol	Count
Note	ARP packet storm detected (30 packets in < 1000 ms)	Sequence	ARP/RARP	3
57	Who has 69.76.218.63? Tell 69.76.216.1	Sequence	ARP/RARP	
88	Who has 24.166.172.169? Tell 24.166.172.1	Sequence	ARP/RARP	
137	Who has 69.76.223.251? Tell 69.76.216.1	Sequence	ARP/RARP	
Note	Didn't find padding of zeros, and an undecoded trailer exis…	Protocol	Ethertype	619

No display filter set.

□ Limit to Display Filter ☑ Group by summary Search:

Display Filter

A complete list of ARP display filter fields can be found in the display filter reference

Show only the ARP based traffic:

```
arp
```

Filtering only on ARP packets is rarely used, as you won't see any IP or other packets. However, it can be useful as part of a larger filter string.

Capture Filter

You can filter ARP protocols while capturing.

Capture only the ARP based traffic:

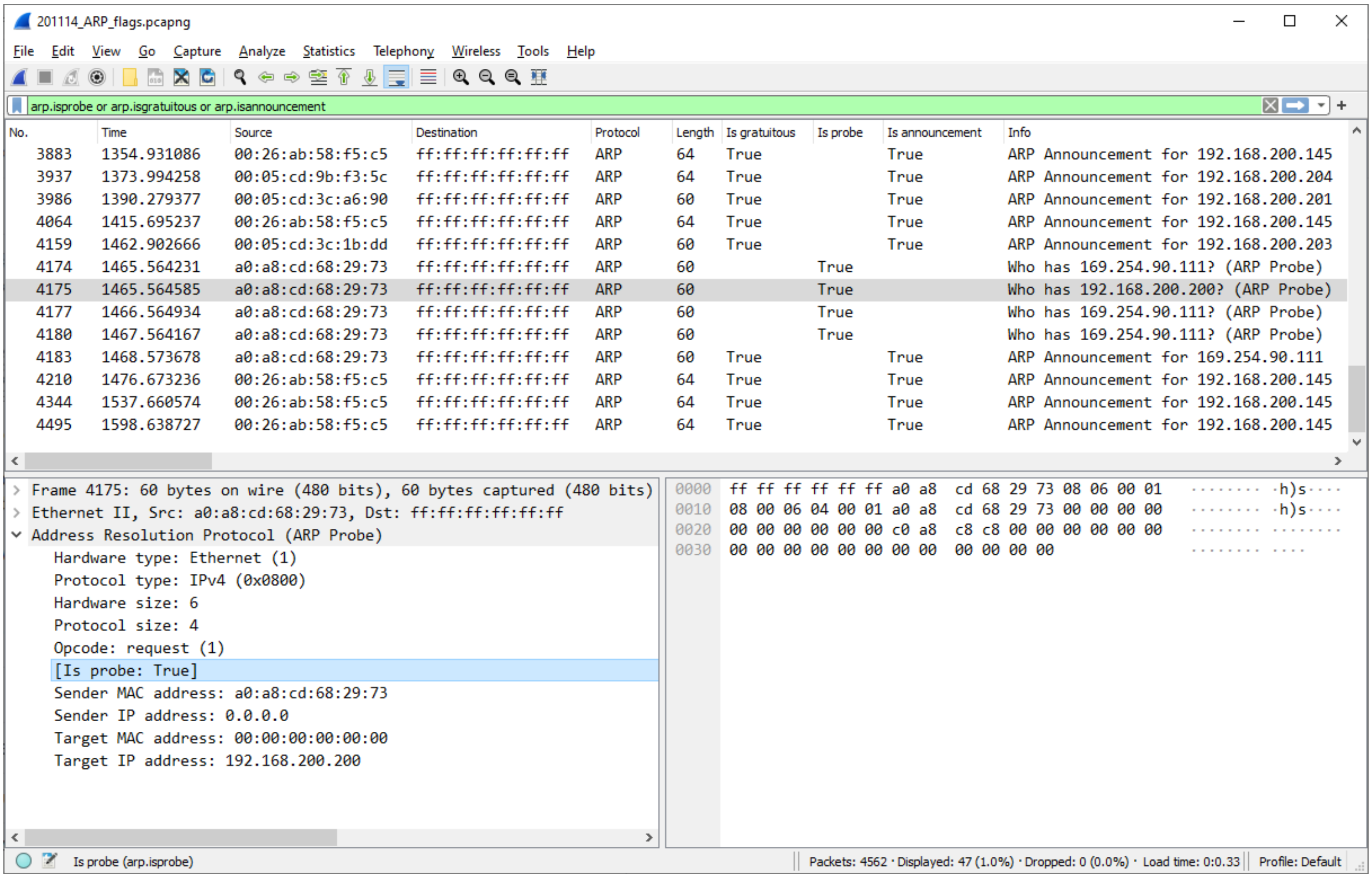
```
arp
```

or:

```
ether proto \arp
```

Capturing only ARP packets is rarely used, as you won't capture any IP or other packets. However, it can be useful as part of a larger filter string.

Generated fields



arp.isprobe or arp.isgratuitous or arp.isannouncement

No.	Time	Source	Destination	Protocol	Length	Is gratuitous	Is probe	Is announcement	Info
3883	1354.931086	00:26:ab:58:f5:c5	ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff	ARP	64	True		True	ARP Announcement for 192.168.200.145
3937	1373.994258	00:05:cd:9b:f3:5c	ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff	ARP	64	True		True	ARP Announcement for 192.168.200.204
3986	1390.279377	00:05:cd:3c:a6:90	ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff	ARP	60	True		True	ARP Announcement for 192.168.200.201
4064	1415.695237	00:26:ab:58:f5:c5	ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff	ARP	64	True		True	ARP Announcement for 192.168.200.145
4159	1462.902666	00:05:cd:3c:1b:dd	ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff	ARP	60	True		True	ARP Announcement for 192.168.200.203
4174	1465.564231	a0:a8:cd:68:29:73	ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff	ARP	60		True		Who has 169.254.90.111? (ARP Probe)
4175	1465.564585	a0:a8:cd:68:29:73	ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff	ARP	60		True		Who has 192.168.200.200? (ARP Probe)
4177	1466.564934	a0:a8:cd:68:29:73	ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff	ARP	60		True		Who has 169.254.90.111? (ARP Probe)
4180	1467.564167	a0:a8:cd:68:29:73	ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff	ARP	60		True		Who has 169.254.90.111? (ARP Probe)
4183	1468.573678	a0:a8:cd:68:29:73	ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff	ARP	60	True		True	ARP Announcement for 169.254.90.111
4210	1476.673236	00:26:ab:58:f5:c5	ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff	ARP	64	True		True	ARP Announcement for 192.168.200.145
4344	1537.660574	00:26:ab:58:f5:c5	ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff	ARP	64	True		True	ARP Announcement for 192.168.200.145
4495	1598.638727	00:26:ab:58:f5:c5	ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff	ARP	64	True		True	ARP Announcement for 192.168.200.145

```
> Frame 4175: 60 bytes on wire (480 bits), 60 bytes captured (480 bits)
> Ethernet II, Src: a0:a8:cd:68:29:73, Dst: ff:ff:ff:ff:ff:ff
v Address Resolution Protocol (ARP Probe)
    Hardware type: Ethernet (1)
    Protocol type: IPv4 (0x0800)
    Hardware size: 6
    Protocol size: 4
    Opcode: request (1)
    [Is probe: True]
    Sender MAC address: a0:a8:cd:68:29:73
    Sender IP address: 0.0.0.0
    Target MAC address: 00:00:00:00:00:00
    Target IP address: 192.168.200.200
```

```
0000  ff ff ff ff ff ff a0 a8  cd 68 29 73 08 06 00 01   ········ ·h)s····
0010  08 00 06 04 00 01 a0 a8  cd 68 29 73 00 00 00 00   ········ ·h)s····
0020  00 00 00 00 00 00 c0 a8  c8 c8 00 00 00 00 00 00   ········ ········
0030  00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00  00 00 00 00              ········ ····
```

Is probe (arp.isprobe) | Packets: 4562 · Displayed: 47 (1.0%) · Dropped: 0 (0.0%) · Load time: 0:0.33 | Profile: Default

- `arp.isannouncement` - ARP Announcement
- `arp.isgratuitous` - reply/gratuitous ARP or request/gratuitous ARP
- `arp.isprobe` - ARP Probe

See RFC5227 "IPv4 Address Conflict Detection" for explanations

(Example Traffic screenshot - in older versions of Wireshark the generated fields were displayed when false)

External links

- RFC 826 "An Ethernet Address Resolution Protocol"

Discussion

At which event is an entry in the ARP table removed/replaced, if the host detects problems sending packets to the entries host? I would think it doesn't take 15 minutes in that case. - *Ulf Lamping*

Could someone explain ARP flooding and other attack's to the ARP layer to capture packets not dedicated to the capturing host? - *Ulf Lamping*

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