

ANS1

LAND OF THE INSECT MEN



Regional Supplement for the Anchôromé Setting



FILKENNEY18

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CHAPTER 1: THE LAND OF THE INSECT MEN

Uiolent cannibals, gem eaters, insectoid aliens from the far reaches of the Spirit Realm? Rumors have become legend among the Azuposi, Minnewah, and dozens of others. But what is actually true of the thri-kreen? Are they the inscrutable beings that the stories hold them up to be?

INTRODUCTION

This book follows **ANC1 The Anchorome Campaign Guide** by focusing on one particular region of Anchôrômé that was first introduced in the 2nd Edition adventure and supplement, **FMQ1 The City of Gold**.

When the adventure portion of FMQ1 was completed, the Land of the Insect Men was mentioned as an “Other Adventure Idea.” It was a place where you could continue your explorations into the unknown continent of Anchôrômé well beyond the lands of the Azuposi people.

The thri-kreen are not the only inhabitants of this region and it has attracted others who seem to share the insectoid nature of the thri-kreen. Whether this is by accident or design is unknown.

Some believe that rumors are more exciting than the truth, but such is not the case when it comes to the Land of the Insect Men. Prepare for a journey into the vast plains and deserts these creatures call home. Learn their history and their desires. Learn of the secret forces that seek the power under their feet and learn about a region ripe for adventure!

HISTORY

Thri-kreen history is long shrouded in mystery, as is the land which they have now occupied for more than three thousand years.

THE CREATOR RACES

Once, in an age long past, the Land of the Insect Men was part of the empire of the batrachi. For millennia they ruled nearly unopposed in the dawn of the world, when mankind was just learning to make fire.

When the Tearfall split the world asunder and the batrachi empire fell, their successors, another of the Creator Races known as the aeree came to dominated these lands. Their great glassteel flying eyries rarely touched ground in the flat plains and low hills. They only ever flew overhead passing their great shadows across the plains.

When the dragons nearly drove the aeree to extinction they fled further north and west, leaving their aarakocra guardians behind to ensure their survival.

ARRIVAL OF THE THRI-KREEN

Just as the Dragonfall War reached its climax elsewhere in the world, a large gateway opened up in the untouched plains of Anchôrômé where only beasts roamed. The scintillating gateway opened above a hidden ruin of the long gone batrachi from a millennia past, using its latent power to grow stronger and draw those from the other unknown side inwards.

This was how the mantis men came to Toril. Other thri-kreen elsewhere in the world have histories of their own, and some mantis folk are believed to have come to Toril in great ships from the sky, but this is how the Anchôrômé mantis folk found their way to Toril.

THE VOICE

The Great and Mighty Spirits too, had taken interest in these beautiful, yet stark and empty lands. Many of their weaker kind had been enslaved by the powerful sorcerers known as the Ancient Ones and they sought out allies and a people which they could call their own. The mantis folk ignored the spirits, however, having long since abandoned the type of reverence the Great and Mighty Spirits desired.

Thus the spirits moved on to others and left the Land of the Insect Men bereft of divine guidance. To this day, the region lacks the spark of spiritual life found east and south among the lands of the Minnewah and humanity.

The thri-kreen came from a harsh desert world from which starvation was not uncommon and their new home seemed a paradise. Though their cold, insectoid minds rarely had room for gratitude, they sought out the source of their salvation.



A voice eventually responded, telling them that they were brought to this land of plenty for a reason. The voice spoke to all the thri-kreen telepathically, and instead of demanding thanks or reverence like the spirits before it, the being gave them only one command - *dig*.

THE GREAT DIG

So the thri-kreen dug. When they came upon nothing, they dug further. Occasionally they would unearth the ruins of the ancient batrachi and many horrors were released in those first days of the *Great Dig*.

The spark of gratitude that had been lit among the thri-kreen faded with little fanfare, yet the mantis folk continued to dig until one day they broke into a vast cavern of enormous glittering crystals. The crystals came in many colors; with white, green and shades of blue being the most common. They did not know if finding this place had been the purpose of their dig, but the thri-kreen did not care. Hundreds of years had passed at this point and the thri-kreen no longer cared for why they dug, only that it might be nearing completion.

The centuries continued to pass by and still the voice had only been heard once. But now, the thri-kreen found use for their discovery and it permeated the most important aspects of their life.

WAR AND AGGRESSION

The crystal that the thri-kreen found turned out to be workable, and more difficult to crack than crystals of a similar nature. They could even actually be shaped under the proper conditions.

From it, they made their instruments of war - the gythka and chatkcha; traditional weapons of which they had formerly been forced to make of bone, chipped stone, and even a crystalline resin formed of their own saliva (known as *dasl*).

The thri-kreen soon began to war, thinking beyond basic survival and plundering lands to the east and north. Despite their new weaponry, these wars were short lived as the aarakocra picked them apart from the skies.

Also to the east, the spirits had found their people in the Minnewah. Though the thri-kreen fared better against these folk, the devastating power of their spirit shamans turned thri-kreen assaults back time and time again, until the advancements they were making just no longer became worth the effort. A tentative peace with the Minnewah remains to this day.

THE SECRET OF AL'AKAR

Kelemvor's seneschel Jergal was once a powerful god that held the portfolios of death and strife among others. He was an ancient god, however and had grown bored with his powers. At some point in his long existence, he hatched a plan to divvy his power up among others. This is the story of how Bane, Bhaal, and Myrkul obtained their divinity and it is well known among Faerûnians.

THE AVATAR

What isn't known, however, is that a part of Jergal's psyche rebelled from his own decision. Not wanting to abdicate Jergal's great power, this stray desire formed its own avatar and was expelled from Jergal who knowingly cast it out. Jergal's decision had been made.

THE WEAVERS

In its cosmic wandering, the avatar found itself within a ruin of an ancient species known as the weavers, or more commonly spellweavers. By this time, Jergal had already given up his power and the avatar sought a way to get it back.

The weavers had a dilemma of their own, having destroyed their multi-planar, multi-world civilization in one grand act of hubris.

Unlike the avatar, however, they had a plan to set things aright. Using a great ritual known as the *Code of Reversion*, they planned to reset time to before the collapse of their empire, where they could prevent and correct the folly that led to their demise so many millennia in the past.

AL'AKAR

The avatar saw the brilliance in the plan and co-opted it as his own. He possessed the grandest of the weavers, known as Al'Akar, and essentially became the weaver. The weavers believed that a gem, one formed in the dawn of the world before time itself had settled, was the key to initiating the Code of Reversion.

It would be able to find others of its kind and once brought together, time would reset. Jergal would be whole once again.

Al'Akar/Jergal invested the remainder of his divinity in calling forth the thri-kreen from their home world. They were to be workers tasked with locating this mystical gem, specifically chosen through a prophecy he himself had once uttered during his tenure as Lord of the Dead.

It was his voice that spoke to the thri-kreen that day, setting the them on a millennia long task that has yet to be completed. Al'Akar senses the time is near, however, and he grows more impatient with each passing day.

OTHER EVENTS AND ORIGINS

Whether it is something mundane or magical inherent to the Land of the Insect Men, insects and insect folk of all kinds are drawn to the region. Among these, the beefolk, also known as the abeil, are the most common.

There are others as well, including a tribe of bacar from the distant Maztican nation of Far Payit who have recently wandered into the region. There are also ettercaps in the few wooded regions and ankhegs that some of the thri-kreen have learned to ride as mounts.

In fact, the one species of insect folk (or in this case, arachnid) that are conspicuously missing are the tincalli, perhaps due to the batrachian horrors that live underground, none have ever been seen this far west in Anchôrômé.

THE ABEIL

A strong and populous colony of beefolk live in a hexagonal city surrounded by gargantuan flowers. This city is known as Tses'na, and is the center of their civilization, though there are a number of smaller tribes scattered throughout the land; each with their own queen.

The beefolk of Anchôrômé were originally from Abeir, having been chased out of their homelands by powerful dragons. First they sought refuge among the aarakocra to the north and west, but were chased away by aarakocran skywardens.

The thri-kreen did not welcome the abeil, but neither did they immediately go to war - a decision they would likely rethink given the beefolks' aggressive expansion. Skirmishes between beefolk tribes and thri-kreen clutches are becoming commonplace and full scale war has become a distinct possibility.

THE BACAR

While most of the insect folk of the the Land of the Insect Men are at least partially colonial in nature, the bacar truly only follow the every waking whim of their queen.

When the Star Worm H'Calos awakened over a century ago, its former guardians were scattered. These antfolk wandered for over a century, and faced many dangers. An ambitious and young queen split from her colony, bringing many bacar northward with her through Maztica's dangerous deserts. A great number of bacar were lost to tlincalli and other threats, but only a short time ago, they managed to settle in the Land of the Insect Folk.

THE ETTERCAPS

The ettercaps are perhaps one of the few original inhabitants of the Land of the Insect Men. It is believed that they have been here since the days of the batrachi, having been brought to these lands by (or created by) the batrachi to cull any infestation of Fey, who were at best an annoyance to the Creator Race.

In fact, though there are forests in the Land of the Insect Men, there are almost no fey folk to be found. There are no sprites or pixies, nixies or even the puckwudgies of more easterly regions. Any who appear in wooded regions are ruthlessly hunted by these spider-like predators.

ANKHEGS

The ankheg, like the ettercaps, have been in Anchôromé since the time before men first set foot on the continent, though their true origins are unknown. Perhaps they too were brought here by the batrachi; but for what purpose, no one knows.

Ankhegs are commonplace in the Land of the Insect Folk and no discussion of the region would be complete without them. Thri-kreen have formed a symbiotic relationship with the creatures and most ankheg will not attack a thri-kreen without good reason. Ankheg riders known as ankheg dragoons have tamed and bonded with individual ankhegs, often riding them into battle.

LOCATIONS

The following locations can be found in the Land of the Insect Men. Each description is accompanied by an adventure hook for DMs to further develop.

AH'MUZEN'CAB - SUBTERRANEAN TOWN

Ah'Muzen'Cab was a primordial being considered the only alternative to the Queen of Queens among the faithful of the abeil. He was the Queen of Queens's consort and was slain in a spectacular battle soon after the Sundering. When his corpse hit the earth it sunk into a bog and eventually settled in an air pocket hundreds of feet below ground.

The corpse was found by an expedition of abeil who have found their way to its resting spot.

Honey does not rot, and neither is the corpse of Ah'Muzen'Cab. Though it is battered and scarred from dragonfire, the Great Honeybee's body is at the center of a new abeil settlement in an area that lies unclaimed by other races. The industrious bee folk are making due in an environment that most others would shy away from. The bog aboveground is crawling with vile creatures known as leechwalkers, which are an incredible nuisance, but the determined young queen will not give up on her newfound kingdom.

Adventure Hook. The bog above the abeil carries the ancient emanations of the batrachi empires. This magic has caused leeches to colonize and make hundreds of the beasts known as leechwalkers. The young queen wishes these terrible creatures eradicated and would pay handsomely for such a deed. Unfortunately, she is unaware of the root cause of their existence and if the leechwalkers are eliminated, they will replenish themselves in only a short time.

KEKTIK'SHAA - THE VOICE

The thri-kreen of the Land of the Insect Men are mostly atheists, or at least uncaring for the divine. Survival, expansion and the Great Dig comprise of the vast majority of thri-kreen concerns and they spend almost no thoughts on what lies beyond the veil of death.

Nevertheless, Kektik'shaa holds some significance in the psyche of the thri-kreen. While not religious in nature, this is the site where they arrived on Toril and it is also the fabled location where they were first contacted by the Voice in their minds.

Kektik'shaa has fallen from its pinnacle of greatness because many thri-kreen have discarded its history. They no longer care for the purpose of their monumental task, but only in its completion. There are a few however, considered outcasts by most thri-kreen, who maintain the site as a grand shrine of sorts.

Many centuries ago, a massive stone idol of a great mantis was created here by thri-kreen artisans and it was believed to represent the being from whose thoughts the Voice came. This idol, in many ways a mirror of the Great Raven Statue of the Pasocada Basin, is kept clean and clear of detritus by its adherents who still await the voice of their master once more.

Adventure Hook. The mandibles of the great mantis are crumbling and have been for many years. The adherents who attend the statue seek out similar stone to replace them with.

The original statue was carved out of stone dragged from many day's travel to the southwest in unnamed mountains that span the coastline of Anchôromé. The remaining adherents are too few to make this journey themselves, and perhaps the outsiders who have recently appeared in their midst were sent by the Voice to help.

MCHENGA - THE SANDBORN

Enigmatic and shy, the apleurus are generally even more nomadic than their thri-kreen cousins. However, under the sands of the largest desert of the Land of the Insect Men, they have built a small underground settlement of glassteel known as Mchenga.

The settlement is rumored to be created entirely of glassteel tubes with only a few hidden entrances in the desert. The apleurus, who are often called the sandborn due to their unique abilities, use these tunnels to surprise attack hostile beings who might trespass in their territory. They have also been known to collapse hidden sinkholes, suffocating creatures who are incapable of extricating themselves from the resultant landslide.

Adventure Hook. The sandborn are notorious thieves, having stolen both secrets and valuable items from other races, including other thri-kreen. A Minnewah medicine man promises the PCs a gift in "great magic of the People" if they can return a peace pipe that was stolen by the apleurus. The peace pipe is responsible for having helped prevent a great war among the medicine man's people and another tribe of Minnewah that would have ensured the mutual destruction of both. Its significance cannot be overlooked.

PTKWE'SA - THE HIVE CITY

Though it is not customary of thri-kreen to honor their heroes in such a way, "Ptekwe'sa" is named after a warrior and mystic of the thri-kreen named Ptekwe who gave his life saving his clutchmates from angry Poscadari elves. These elves had made a foray into the Land of the Insect Men after a number of their kind were eaten by the thri-kreen.

The clutchmates settled where Ptekwe's body lay and created a hive city with a population that now rivals that of Yishti'cha. All the different subspecies of thri-kreen can be found in this city of spires, domes and walkways formed from mantis folk secretions. The city is disturbing to non thri-kreen, but it is a relatively safe haven considered the only cosmopolitan home of the thri-kreen where even the occasional elf could be found. This is quite an ironic circumstance considering the history of the founding of the city.

Adventure Hook. If the PCs require anything from the thri-kreen that they wish to obtain peacefully, Ptekwe'sa is the place to go. It could also serve as a launching ground for adventures in the Land of the Insect Men, given its proximity to Minnewah and Poscadari elf lands.

Thri-kreen do not often return as undead, but recently, there have been reports that a ghostly thri-kreen has waylaid and murdered other kreen traveling between settlements. The thri-kreen might hire the PCs to determine the source of these rumors and find at least the remains of the missing kreen.

SEVEN PAYWICH'ITIK - WAR CITADELS

It's no secret that the aarakocra of the north and west are often hostile to the thri-kreen and despite a rather long period of general peace between both peoples, there is a need to maintain effective defenses.

Paywich'tik among the Minnewah simply means "defensive citadel" and this is exactly the purpose of the seven paywich'tik. The citadels are slightly mobile, but slow, and only do so when needed in a particular area.

Crudely shaped like mantids, these wooden towers can fire dozens of crystalline chatkchas into the sky at a flying opponent. The citadels are always manned, and they take at least a dozen thri-kreen to maintain. Considered to be crucial to the survival of the thri-kreen, they tolerate no trespassers.

Adventure Hook. The wooden mantids are visible from a distance, but if PCs approach too closely, they might be subject to a dozen flying chatkchas. There is no warning, and no mercy - outsiders are not welcome here.

TOWERS OF ANU'NAKI - BACAR FARM

The Towers of Anu'naki (literally ant-friends in the Minnewah trade tongue) are the sole settlement of bacar in all of Anchôromé, but they are certainly a site to see. A dozen towers of dirt stretch over a hundred feet tall and it is rumored that the underground goes down many times deeper.

The ant folk are incessant in their collection of greenery and the region surrounding them has been deforested for miles. They do not eat the foliage that they bring back to their mounds, but rather use it to grow a pale fungus deep under their towers to feed themselves and their grubs. Only now are the bacar becoming aware of their affect on the local environment and the queen seeks to do something about it.

The ant folk are currently without purpose and direction which has become dangerous for the others around them. Conflicts with thri-kreen clutches have become commonplace and most give the Towers a wide berth. The queen is said to be in a depression of sorts, a strange and foreign emotion. Survival and expansion are tantamount in her desires, but as her vassals grow more aware of the world around them, they realize she must find something to replace the guardianship of the resting place of H'Calos that was literally bred into their creation.

Adventure Hook. The bacar are a new race that have only recently developed any true sense of awareness. They were created through both hishna and pluma magic from distant Maztica in order to guard the prison of a terrible creature known as H'Calos. Now that they are self aware, they also question their existence. If the PCs are traveling near the Towers, they will be captured and brought before the queen. She simply wishes to communicate with them and ask them about their own purpose, but will quickly grow frustrated as she is incapable of forming words. The bacar only communicate through chemical scents.

TSSES'NA - THE CITY OF THE BEEFOLK

The first indication that you have entered the vicinity of this city is the loud buzz that can be heard over a mile from its borders. If you ignore the warning and continue forward you will next feel a sharp stinging pain on your neck, arm, or even abdomen.

This too, is a warning because before too long the stings increase in frequency. None are allowed near this hive city of the abeil without an invitation, and even the thri-kreen give it a wide berth.

If one were to be welcomed however, as the rare Minnewah individual has been in the past, the sights and smells might astound you.

You might get lost in the aromatic and heady smell of gargantuan flowers, many of species seen nowhere else on Toril. Or perhaps the vats of honey as tall as the hill giants of the Long Canyon might draw your eye as they overflow with their golden sweetness. You wouldn't want to get too close to them though, as the giant bees who guard them warn away any who approach with an angry droning.

If you were able to get a bird's eye view (or bee's), you could see that the city is designed with interconnected hexagons, all orderly and built with purpose.

Even visitors who are expected by the queen are greeted by the soldier abeil, who would not even consider allowing armed individuals in the presence of her majesty.

The queen resides in the center of the city. A petrified and hallowed out tree of gargantuan proportions that is completely out of place in the plains of Anchōromé. The history of this tree is unknown to the bee people, but they have lived within its chambers since the first days of their existence on Toril. Perhaps it is an arakhor from the time before mankind?

Adventure Hook. The queen of the abeil wishes her offspring to expand to a new colony. She has two heirs who require a substance known as royal jelly produced by her own biological processes into order to come into their own as young queens. In order for her to produce the royal jelly, she requires pollen from a rare flower which only blooms in a valley near the Dodaliv Mountain.

The queen has sent many soldier abeils to obtain the rare flower, but none have returned. Could it be the fabled spirit known as the Great Thunderbird that is killing her soldiers? She wants to know the fate of her warriors and to acquire the flower as soon as she can, before the bacar claim the territories she is hoping to expand to. Perhaps the strange outsiders would succeed where her warriors have failed?

WA'PAK'TO - ANKHEG WARRENS

Wa'pak'to is the name given to a series of underground warrens that are literally crawling with ankhegs. This land is dangerous even for thri-kreen, though prospective ankheg dragoons journey to this region in order to bond to one of the creatures.

The underground warrens here do not go deep, as the ankheg seem to fear digging too deep into the earth. This prevents them from being used to assist the thri-kreen at Yishtl'cha, and they refuse such commands even under magical compulsions. Because of this innate fear, many of the warrens are dug very close to the surface and sinkholes abound in this region.

There is a latent energy in the ground at Wa'Pak'To with strong ties to the elements. This causes mutations in some ankhegs that appears as they mature. By the time these ankhegs are full grown adults, they manifest strange appearances and powers found in no others. Typically, such elemental ankheg leave the warrens and become a scourge elsewhere in the Land of the Insect Men.

Adventure Hook. The thri-kreen Nikana wishes to become an ankheg dragoon, and she is ready for her journey to Wa'pak'to. Unfortunately, her clutch was destroyed in a skirmish with the bee folk, and she has none to accompany her. Nikana has many gems she could use to pay for a guards, but she also seeks new clutchmates. A desire that is almost as important to the oddly emotional thri-kreen as fulfilling her dream to become a dragoon.



Xi'en'opa - Smaragtin Front

As aquatic mantis-folk, the smaragtin have colonized most of the rivers and lakes of the Land of the Insect Men. The mantis-folk have wanted to form a nest in the Unole Ama for ages, however, and Xi'en'opa is physically the closest nest to the great lake.

Xi'en'opa therefore, has become a front for thri-kreen expansion and invasion into aarakocra lands. Every so often, the smaragtin mount an expedition to Unole Ama with a large enough force to combat the aarakocra who harry their every move. When the aquatic thri-kreen reach the lake, the aarakocra are no longer a threat, but unfortunately, the mantis-folks' problems don't only come from above.

A family of terrible beasts known as gitaskogs have developed a taste for smaragtin, and they have wiped out all of the Unole Ama smaragtin. The lake has many water spirits and beasts, some of whom have made minor alliances with the aarakocra but of them all, only the gitaskogs are an existential threat to the aquatic mantis-folk.

Adventure Hook. If the players have had any peaceful contact with the aarakocra (as they will in the upcoming adventure, **ANA1 Dark Clouds over Anchôromé**), they may be approached by a smaragtin thri-kreen and asked to broker a peace agreement. The smaragtin do not wish to be a threat to the bird-folk, but greatly wish to occupy at least the eastern portions of the great lake Unole Ama.

In addition, the thri-kreen will need assistance in defeating the family of gitaskogs that seem to have grown overly fond of thri-kreen flesh.

Yishtl'cha - The Great Dig

If the thri-kreen were to have a capital "city," Yishtl'cha would be it. The massive settlement holds much significance to the mantis folk as it is the location of the Great Dig and gargantuan crystals which help ensure their survival and culture.

The Great Dig is a task whose origin they are no longer concerned with, yet they have carried on anyway if only because it is what they have always done.

What the thri-kreen don't realize is that the compulsion is magical, a byproduct of the batrachi ruins that are sunken miles below the land.

Eons ago, this batrachi city fell prey to its enemies, cast deep into the underdark in an act of powerful magic by the batrachi lord Zhoukodien himself. A cold consciousness still lives within the sunken ruin, calling out to those who have settled above. The weaver gem necessary for the Code of Reversion can be found somewhere within this city, but the mantis folk have only now begun to approach its uppermost towers.

The magical emanations of the city and the gem it contains have leaked into the ground surrounding the city and have grown enormous crystals in what could only be described as a sequence of air filled geodes. As the thri-kreen dig, they break into these pockets and mine the crystal for their weapons and everyday implements.

Adventure Hook. The thri-kreen are close to the uppermost reaches of the sunken batrachi ruin. Once they break through, unknown horrors will likely pour up through the breach, killing all who stand in their path. Octopoid and amphiboid horrors have existed in stasis for many thousands of years and the world they knew is long gone. Out of time and certainly out of their element, they will continue to decimate the thri-kreen capital unless some form of defense can be organized in time. Luckily, the strange visitors from distant lands can hold off the monstrosities until such time as the thri-kreen can mobilize.

Who's Naming These Places?

The names given here for many locations are not always the names given by their insectoid inhabitants.

Specifically, abeil have at least had an influence on the naming of their own cities and towns and the names that the bacar use are chemical signatures unrecognizable by non-bacar.

The thri-kreen names are close in pronunciation to how the mantis-folk themselves refer to each settlement, but have been bastardized through interactions with others.

Only the aarakocra and Minnewah ever truly come into contact with the insect folk and the aarakocra have only ever done so under hostile conditions. Most of the names here have been given in the Minnewah trade tongue due to the fact that peaceful relations actually sometimes exist with these spiritual folk. The insect folk do not seem to care much how their homes are referred to, so the names tend to stick.



THRI-KREEN OF ANCHÔROMÉ

It is easy to lump a group of beings like the thri-kreen into a singular nature. Poscadari elves believe them all to be cannibalistic, the Minnewah believe them all to be beings without a soul, and the aarakocra see them mostly as an impotent threat.

While there are good reasons for some of these prejudices, thri-kreen can be as varied in outlook as any other mortal man or woman. The thri-kreen share certain traits, but they are not a monolith. Though few realize it, the mantis folk are composed of at least a half dozen subraces and they are most certainly not all alike.

This section delves into the mantis-folk subraces and their unique culture. It highlights specific behaviors and outlooks that distinguish the thri-kreen of Anchôromé from other lands. Perhaps there are similarities to thri-kreen elsewhere in the world, but the mantis folk of Anchôromé certainly consider themselves to be unique in this world.

Thri-kreen adventurers are not the most common site in Anchôromé, but they are growing in number, and the Azuposi and Minnewah are not as shocked when one is brought into their lands these days as they might have in the not too distant past. Whether or not such characters are welcome usually depends on the individual's behaviors.

As far as population is concerned, the standard thri-kreen (as found on page 288 of the **Monster Manual**) has the highest count by far. However, the even these thri-kreen have some major differences from those found in the Shaar and elsewhere. To begin with, the thri-kreen of Anchôromé have brought a language of their own from their homeworld which has changed little over the centuries. Where other mantis-men clack mandibles and wave their antennae in order to communicate, the thri-kreen of Anchôromé formulate full words that could actually be learned by other races with enough practice. Many thri-kreen have also mastered the languages of other species, though there are idiosyncracies in their speech that highlight their insectoid mouthparts.

When referring to thri-kreen from this point forward, the word will be used only for the nomadic subrace who most closely resemble the thri-kreen of the *Monster Manual*.

TOHR-KREEN

The physiological differences between the "standard" thri-kreen and the tohr-kreen are minimal, though centuries worth of different behaviors have forced some biological changes to occur in the tohr-kreen of the Land of the Insect Men.

At one point in their existence, "tohr-kreen" simply referred to thri-kreen who no longer wandered in solitary packs or clutches. In fact, in the thri-kreen language, "tohr" simply means "settled." Over the centuries, the tohr-kreen have grown slightly larger and stronger than the standard thri-kreen and have deviated in coloration. The differences, while minor, indicate a fully formed subspecies but outsiders could rarely be bothered with the differences.

Tohr-kreen are the primary inhabitants of Yishtl'cha, and almost always use weapons formed of Yishtl'cha Crystal rather than the dasl of their nomadic thri-kreen brethren.

Tohr-kreen are sometimes known as the "gigantea" subrace in reference to their great size and strength.



ZIK-CHIL

The zik-chil are a cold and enigmatic subrace of the thri-kreen that behave and appear much as they did when brought to Anchôromé. They are a smaller and slender subrace, and are always a pale green coloration. They are typically masters of psionics and have a tendency to dabble in body alterations.

Zik'Chil are thought to be responsible for the magical experimentation that created the smaragtin and ulyssies subraces.

Zik'chil are an enigma in that they have mostly rejected the Great Dig. They are immune to the magical compulsion that guides the tohr-kreen and thri-kreen. Though they do not know the source, the zik'chil are fully convinced that the mantis-folk have been manipulated by the Voice, and they actively oppose its directive. If it weren't for their subtle and frequent sabotage, the Great Dig itself might have been completed centuries ago.

APLEURUS

The apleurus refers to a single pack of thri-kreen who have been blessed with strange abilities from an unknown desert spirit or god. Their numbers are small, consisting of only a single pack, and they can only be found in the most desolate regions of the Land of the Insect Men.

The apleurus ability to change themselves into sand gives them the ability to remain hidden from the standard thri-kreen and other inhabitants. Soon after their creation, the apleurus stole the secrets of making *glassteel* from the aarakocra and now use the substance to create gythka and chatkcha.

SMARAGTIN

The zik-chil have used their psionic capabilities and body engineering abilities to create the subrace of semi-aquatic mantis-folk known as the smaragtin.

Sources of water in the Land of the Insect Men have traditionally been areas of great danger, as they often attracted predators from nearby regions. The smaragtin were originally created to keep these waterways safe, but they have since bred true and now have a sizeable population.

Smaragtin wander the waterways much as normal thri-kreen wander the plains and deserts, but there are rumors of a major underground hive city being grown from underwater plants and algae. The smaragtin also have their eyes on occupying the Unole Ama, but the aarakocra and the water spirits who occupy the gargantuan lake have since resisted them.

ULYSSIES

In the southwest corner of the Land of Insect Men lies a mountain range that technically is located outside of the region. The zik-chil have sought to expand thri-kreen territory into this area and they created the ulyssies to do so. These mantis-folk are highly suited to the dangers of a mountainous home, being known for their incredible leaping ability and their superb camouflage which is well suited to mountain forests.

The ulyssies are generally loners, but they are aware of their mission. They are scouts for a planned expansion into greater territories for the mantis-folk and they take their assigned duty seriously.

THRI-KREEN CULTURE

Thri-kreen of all subraces have some similarities in culture that are worth mentioning. All thri-kreen are greatly influenced by what they know as the *tokchak* and a general desire and need for the hunt. Tokchak means "clutch mentality," and mostly refers to the organization and familial existence of how thri-kreen know and relate to one another.

In an earlier time, the thri-kreen saw no need for a single, unified nation. Years of conflict with aarakocra, Minnewah and now the abeil and bacar have led them to adopt this foreign ideal for survival. The "Land of the Insect Men" to the thri-kreen is now considered a "Land of the Mantis Men" and they often refer to it as such within their own language.

Of greater importance to the thri-kreen beyond nation, however, still lies their innate tendency to find loyalty to a *pack* and a *clutch*. Thri-kreen are born into what they know as a "birth clutch," but do not necessarily remain with the female who gave them birth. They are specifically adopted by different clutches according to a need to maintain population and fill the voids left by death. Clutches are often tasked with specific duties such as information gathering, discovery, or even defense. Together, many clutches form what is known as a *pack*. Packs are extended families consisting of anywhere from 3-30 clutches. The greatest cities of the tohr-kreen are known to have up to 100 clutches. The whole organizational aspect of thri-kreen culture is noticeably structured for a being widely considered to be chaotic in alignment.

Adventuring thri-kreen almost always adopt their adventuring party as *clutchmates*. Despite the assumption that thri-kreen are dispassionate, there could honestly be no more loyal a party member.

The mantis-folk see all of life's challenges and desires in terms of the hunt. This becomes plainly obvious when they learn another tongue such as Common. Once they are made aware of an adjective or adverb that can relate to hunting or the relationship between predator and prey, they tend to overuse it; often in annoyingly improper ways. They also see nothing wrong with eating sentient beings and consider it wasteful not to do so. Often, they truly are cannibalistic, even consuming their own kind upon death, but they easily adapt to the notion that this is highly unacceptable among other races. The rumors that thri-kreen consider elven flesh a delicacy is not a myth, but this does not mean a thri-kreen would not give its own life to protect an elven clutchmate.

AUTHOR'S NOTE - THRI-KREEN OF ATHAS

If you own this superb bit of Dungeons and Dragons greatness from the 2nd Edition, you may have noticed that it is what many of the thri-kreen concepts found here are based. Thri-Kreen of Athas can be found on DMsGuild at the following link and it gives an even deeper understanding of their culture, physiology and outlook. It is widely speculated that Athas is the mysterious world from which the Thri-Kreen of Anchorome arrived.

<https://www.dmsguild.com/product/17202/ThriKreofAthas-2e>

ABEIL OF ANCHÔROMÉ

The abeil of Anchôromé are the bee-folk natives of Toril's twin world Abeir. They came to Toril in the days and weeks following the Blue Breath of Change, having fled flights of dragons that had destroyed their hive cites for generations.

On their world, the abeil worshiped two primordials of great power. One, the Queen of Queens, is thought to be responsible for the abail's industrious nature. Her mate, known as Ah'Muzen'Cab, was the patron of soldiers, honey, and those who sought to keep the bee folk safe.

The abeil continued to fight off the dragons and on Toril and they received a significant amount of assistance from the eagle-like aarakocra. Assaulted on two fronts, the dragons eventually relented, but not before killing Ah'Muzen'Cab. The titanic Queen of Queens has since fled into parts unknown and the abeil have not seen her living form since, though she still provides spells to her clerics and answers prayers.

The aarakocra did not turn out to be the welcoming allies that the abeil had anticipated and only the the mantis-like thri-kreen seemed to tolerate their presence. Thus, the bee-folk settled in the Land of the Insect Men; a fitting, if unwelcoming new home.

APPEARANCE

The bee people are not well known in Anchôromé, or even in Faerûn for that matter. As natives of Abeir they are extraordinarily rare on Toril and most who have heard of them know only wild exaggerations about their appearance. Some say they are 20 feet tall, and others believe they are simply elves that can shapechange into giant bees.

In reality, the bee people actually are similar in appearance to elves. With pointed ears and high boned facial features, they could easily pass as Ar-tel-quessir (the gold elves) were it not for their multifaceted eyes, antennae, segmented legs and striations of black and yellow across their lightly haired bodies.

Abeil can also be quite tall, with soldiers topping out at ten feet. Queens and vassals are particularly slender, but still tower over most sentient races with an average height standing at 7 feet. Their wings are more translucent than gossamer, but occasional glimmers of color can be seen in bright sunlight.

OUTLOOK

The bee-folk are not a particularly cruel or charitable race of humanoids. They value industriousness over all, a trait that is more a part of their nature than culture. Their concept of good and evil, in fact, lies more along the lines of industry vs. sloth, and lazy abail are exiled from their communities. Of course, even the laziest of abeil as a general rule could impress the most joyless of duergar. Abeil themselves take great pleasure in their work, so finding a lazy member is not only odd, but illogical.

The bee-folk also seek to expand, but not generally through conquest. Rather, they compete for resources and tend to gain the upper hand through pure diligence. Of course, this does not prevent other races from reacting violently and the abeil will not shy away from conflict.

The abeil appreciate the thri-kreen as worthy competitors, but limited resources and conflicts over choice territories have caused a number of skirmishes in the past few decades.

THE QUEEN OF QUEENS

The Queen of Queens, along with her consort Ah'Muzen'Cab, constituted the entire pantheon of the abeil. She is the deity of industriousness and labor, while he was a lesser being of honey and protection. They both existed as living primordials who roamed Abeir concerned only with the welfare of the bee-folk and to a lesser extent, normal bees. Dragons had always been their enemies and throughout the millennia they have slain dozens together.

Shortly after the Sundering, Ah'Muzen'Cab was slain in a spectacular battle on Toril when red dragons returned to eradicate the bee-folk. With his superheated stinger, Ah'Muzen'Cab killed four red dragons before succumbing to his injuries.

BOTANY AND HONEY

Some vassal abeil have become truly specialized botanists and have cultivated hundreds of different types of flowers over the millennia. Some of these flowers have special properties, and many are magical. Some are known to have defensive capabilities of their own and have been bred by the abeil as guardians. Just outside of the capital city of Tses'na, there are flowers of titanic proportions which supply enough pollen for the bee-folk to fill giant vats of honey.

Honey itself is the abeils' primary food source and there are masters who make honey with properties very similar to the potions of foreign lands. The healing properties of some of these honeys are known to be particularly potent.



BACAR OF ANCHÔROMÉ

The bacar of Anchôromé are a strange race of beings who have only recently come into their own. Over a century ago, all bacars were simply jailers who stood guard over the prison of a terrible creature known as H'Calos the Star Worm. For centuries they did not fail in their task, but had little chance to develop their own culture beyond their own duty.

Bacar have three subraces, much like the abeil, and have even more of a hive organization. The queen is the undisputed ruler and she has both workers and warriors that serve her every need. At one point, workers and warriors were not even known to have desires of their own, but this has changed to an extent for the Anchôromé bacars.

When H'Calos was freed by greedy and foolish humans, the Star Worm laid waste to much of the Maztican nation known as Far Payit. Many bacar were slain, but when the danger had passed the bacar remained. For the first time in their existence, they had no direction. It is said that the queen at the time did not move or take any action for days after the prison was shattered.

Eventually instinct took over and the bacars began to wander. The queen, who in the past had only produced a single heir to take the duty of guardianship, now produced an additional queen with every new brood of grubs. Eventually the young queens matured and set off on their own. The bacars have since spread all over Maztica, focused on very little other than expansion and survival.

THE ANCHÔROMÉ QUEEN

Bacars do not have names that can be spoken in the common tongue but instead have identifiable chemical signatures. One young queen, who cannot therefore be given a name, stood out among the many. She encouraged individuality among her subjects and her greatest desire was for them to develop personalities of their own.

While this odd behavior introduced a semblance of chaos into the swarm, they became far more successful than most. The workers were found to have ingenuity and were even able to learn from other races. The warriors also developed new skills and some even began to learn magic.

MYRMECOPHOBIA

In a great upheaval in the lands of Maztica, great armies of giant ants laid waste to the jungle nations, giving the human inhabitants an intense fear and hatred of anything ant related. Logically, this should not have been taken out on the bacars, who had nothing to do with the decimation, but it was.

The ant-folk were unwelcome at best and slaughtered at worst. There was no place for even the evolved bacars of the progressive bacar queen. Like any wise monarch would, she put the safety of her people first and decided to migrate with her burgeoning population of young bacars to the distant and unknown north. The migration took many years and many of her people were slain by the dangers of the deserts she was forced to cross. Eventually, the queen and her people found their way into the Land of the Insect Men, where they founded the Towers of Anu'Naki. They have existed in this glorious series of bacar-made hills ever since.

PURPOSE

The bacars were created for a singular purpose and with the death of H'Calos, that purpose has become obsolete. The Anchôromé Queen has long since died and passed her rulership onto her descendants. With each new generation, the bacars grow increasingly restless and the need to survive can no longer fully occupy their existence. Simply speaking, the bacars are bored.

This boredom has had two major effects on bacar society in recent years; one negative and one positive. The ant-folk have undoubtedly become more aggressive. With no significant provocation they seem to be increasingly hostile towards their neighbors, particularly the thri-kreen. Twice now, the mantis-folk have needed to turn their Paywich'itik citadels towards the Towers of Anu'Naki. The threat has managed to quell the agitated ant-folk, but how long the détente will remain is unknown.

Some bacar workers and warriors have rebelled against this increased aggression and are breaking free of the queen herself. These bacar are what others might consider "adventurers" and they seek a more active role in finding a new "purpose" for their race.



CHAPTER 2: CHARACTER OPTIONS



he mantis-folk, abeil and bacar make strange but powerful allies. this chapter gives a number of character options for each race, including subraces, subclasses and even some racial feats as options.

MANTIS-FOLK CHARACTERS

The mantis-folk are a race of anthropomorphic mantids which have an exoskeleton made out of thick, hard chitin. Though most believe they consist of one singular race, there are at least six known subraces with the thri-kreen being the most common and the only subrace known outside Anchôrômé. Because of this, the mantis folk are most commonly referred to as the thri-kreen, even though it truly only refers to a singular subspecies.

Mantis-folk shells come in a wide range of color, from a variety of browns, greens, and black to shimmering and reflective orange, red and blue.

MUTED EMOTIONS AND SPEECH

It is widely believed that the mantis-folk are cold and emotionless. While it may be true that they are not as susceptible to emotional outbursts, they still experience the full range of emotions that humans do.

Thri-kreen outside of Anchôrômé do not usually communicate with a verbal language, instead using their antennae and clacks of their mandibles to communicate, but the mantis-folk of Anchôrômé have an ancient language of their own (which is still quite difficult for other races to learn). Many mantis-folk learn the tongues of their neighbors as well, but often make glaring grammatical errors that might occasionally be seen as comical.

STRANGE BIOLOGY

Mantis-folk have a biology that makes them unique in an adventuring party. They do not sleep, and can perform light tasks while remaining in a state of meditation. They still receive all of the benefits of a short or long rest, however, despite their constate state of awareness.

They also mature very early and can perform as fully functioning adults at 5 years of age, but have remarkably short lifespans with an average age of 30 for a natural death.

MANTIS-FOLK NAMES

The mantis-folk do not very much distinguish between male or female names and the given names can be applied to either. The names below are the closest approximations for given names as spoken by other races.

Mantis Folk Names: Ak'to, Chax'chik, Dre'ak, Dra'chik'do, Klik'chaka'da, Sa'chai, Sa'relka, T'chai, Tik'tik, Xh'chak

MANTIS-FOLK PRONUNCIATION

Symbol	Sound	Description
qh	<i>click</i>	Tongue-click from human mouth
.	<i>pop</i>	Thumb pop from human mouth
xh	<i>grr</i>	A growl or grinding
mm	<i>hum</i>	Open mouthed hum and buzz
'	<i>glottal stop</i>	Soundless pause between syllables

MANTIS-FOLK TRAITS

As mantis-folk, you have the following traits and those of your subrace.

Ability Score Increase. Your Dexterity score is increased by 1.

Age. The mantis-folk reach maturity with their 5th year of life and have a maximum age of 40.

Alignment. The mantis folk are generally at least in part neutral, with specific subraces having additional tendencies.

Extra Arms. You have 2 extra arms as mantis-folk. You can use them to carry extra objects in your hands like a torch, ammunition, components, a holy symbol, a potion and even weapons. However you gain no benefit from holding multiple weapons or shields in your extra arms and no extra attacks besides from the extra attacks from your class or other special circumstances.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write the Anchôrômé Thri-Kreen tongue and one other local language.

Subrace. There are a number of subraces of mantis-folk, with the most common being the thri-kreen.

Mantis-Folk Weapons. You are proficient in the use of the chatkcha and gythka.

Poison Glands. You have a bite attack which causes 1d4 + Str bonus in piercing damage and an additional 1d4 poison damage. This poison can also be used to make the resin known as *dasl*.

THRI-KREEN TRAITS

Thri-kreen have the traits of all mantis-folk in addition to the following.

Ability Score Increase. Your Dexterity and Strength score both increases by 1.

Alignment. As a wanderers or nomads, you have no time for the restrictive rules that govern the city life of a tohr-kreen. You mostly have a tendency towards a chaotic outlook.

Size. Your size is medium. Thri-kreen range from under 5 to over 7 feet tall and are most often very slender in build.

Speed. Your base walking speed increases by 10 feet.

Standing Leap. You may long jump up to 30 feet and high jump up to 15 feet without a running start.

Chameleon Carapace. You may change the color of your carapace as a bonus action in order to hide, giving you advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks to do so.

TOHR-KREEN TRAITS

The tohr-kreen gain each of the following in addition to the traits of all mantis-folk.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score increases by an additional 2 points.

Massive Body. You count as a Large creature when determining your carrying capacity and the weight you can push, drag, or lift, but your size remains Medium for all other purposes.

Abolishing Might. Your melee attacks deal double damage to structures.

Complex Builders. You gain the proficiency in a set of tools of your choice.

APLEURUS TRAITS

As apleurus, you have all the traits of mantis-folk plus the following.

Ability Score increase. Your Intelligence score increases by an additional 2 points.

Size. Your size is Medium. Apleurus are slightly smaller than thri-kreen, generally hovering around 5 feet in height.

Sand Born. As an action, you can magically assume the form of a pile of sand for 10 minutes. Anything you are wearing or carrying is transformed with you. While in this form, your speed becomes 10 feet. You also can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide.

While you remain motionless you are indistinguishable from a normal pile of sand. You can't attack or cast spells in this form and may revert to your form as a bonus action.

While you are a pile of sand, your hit points are equal to your level and your AC becomes 10. If you drop to 0 hit points in this form you are transformed back and the remaining damages carries over to your normal form. You regain this ability when you finish a short or long rest.

Sand Strider. You can walk on sand as if it were normal ground. Sand is never difficult terrain for you and you cannot fall into a sinkhole made of sand unwillingly.

Glass Specialist. You gain the proficiency with glassblowers tools. You also gain advantage on Wisdom (History) checks made on glasswork and pottery.

ULYSSIES TRAITS

Ulyssies have all mantis-folk traits in addition to the following.

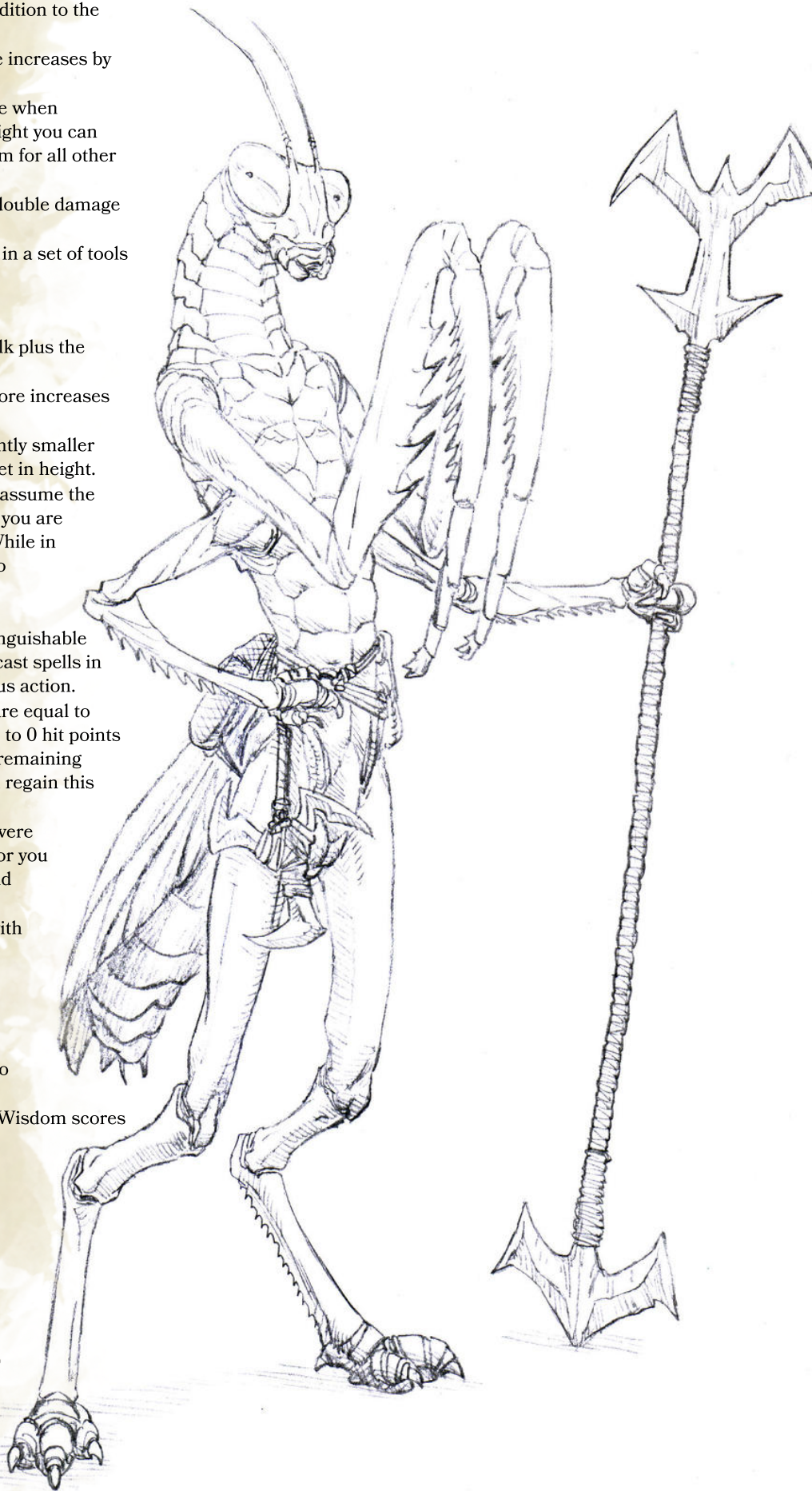
Ability Score Increase. Your Dexterity and Wisdom scores both increase by 1.

Speed. Your walking speed increases by 10 and you can climb with a speed of 30 feet.

Chameleon Carapace. You may change the color of your carapace as a bonus action in order to hide, giving you advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks to do so.

Tremorsense. You gain tremor sense in a 10 foot radius.

Standing Leap. You may long jump up to 30 feet and high jump up to 15 feet without a running start.



SMARAGTIN TRAITS

Smaragtin have all mantis-folk traits plus the following.

Ability Score Increase. Your Constitution score increases by an additional 2 points.

Darkvision. Your darkvision has a range of 120 feet.

Waterproof. You can breathe Air or Water and gain a swimming speed of 30 feet.

Natural Armor. While unarmored, your AC is equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

Sunlight Sensitivity. You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight when you, the target of your attack, or whatever you are trying to perceive is in direct sunlight.

BEE-FOLK CHARACTERS

The abeil range in height from the 7 foot tall vassals and queen to the 10 foot tall soldiers. They share many of the same traits as both elves and bees both physically and culturally.

Bee folk are extremely regimented and follow the commands of their queen generally without question. More bee folk are becoming adventurers these days as the queens require the abeils to discover new lands, possibly for expansion.

BEAUTY IN ORDER

Though it might be a challenge to get them to admit it, abeil value beauty and see it in the order of their society and constructions. When the bee-folk create, they do so with the aplomb of an artist. Their cities and settlements are always a marvel to behold.

The bee-folk are particularly amazed by the colors and geometry of different flowers and many vassals become great floriculturists. Abeil also take great pride in regular figures and frequently use hexagonal tessellations in their art and architecture. Abeil vassals are expert mathematicians.

EVERYTHING HAS ITS PLACE

The abeil's regimented society leads them to believe that everything and everyone in a society has its place. Good abeil extend this to others and the rare evil abeil believe that the place of all others is to fall before an abeil empire.

Most abeil are decidedly neutral. They do not seek war, nor do they shy away from it. Their desire to expand might seem cold when it leads to starvation or displacement among other creatures, but the abeil do not intend malice.

BEE-FOLK NAMES

Abeil names are remarkably similar to those of elves, and the predominance of the elven tongue makes many wonder what the connection between the races is. Abeil generally do not take last names, unless they are given a name by non-abeil allies. If they are pushed on the subject, generally they take the name of their hive city as a last name.

Female Bee-Folk Names: Aemma, Cauladra, Daealla, Elwing, Phaertala, Ghilanna, Halanaestra, Imdalace, Keerla, Lúthiena, Merlara, Phuingara, Quaela, Saélihn, Syviis, Veara

Male Bee-Folk Names: Aeson, Biafyndar, Dior, Elénaril, Eroan, Glynkas, Haryk, Ievos, Jassin, Kelkalyn, Molostroi, Naertho, Oritris, Rhistel, Turgon, Zabbas

BEE-FOLK TRAITS

All abeil have the following traits and those of their subrace.

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom score is increased by a score of 1.

Age. Abeils mature rapidly, taking the responsibilities of adults at age 6. Vassals have a lifespan of about 70 years, and soldiers only 40-50. Queens can live to be as much as 200 years old.

Alignment. Abeils are almost always lawful. They generally value the hive above all else and tend towards neutrality, but there are certainly more good bee-folk than there are evil.

Size. The bee-folk range from 7-10 feet tall. Vassals and queens are never more than 8 feet, and adult soldiers are never below that same height. They are generally slender in build, but soldiers can be robust. Your size is Medium.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 30 feet and you can fly. Your fly speed is dependent on your subrace.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Common and Elven.

Poison Sting. You can use your action to sting a creature within 5 feet of you. A creature hit by this attack must make a Constitution saving throw (DC 8 + your proficiency + your Con modifier). On a failure, the target takes 1d8 + Str bonus in piercing damage and is poisoned for 1 minute. On a success, the target takes half as much damage and is not poisoned. You can't use this feature again until you finish a long rest.

Drone. Once between long rests, you may beat your wings in such a way as to create a droning effect that magically puts creatures who aren't immune within a 30 foot radius to sleep if they fail a Wisdom saving throw (DC 8 + your proficiency + your Wis modifier). This sleep is has a 1 minute duration.

Subraces. As an abeil you can choose to be a vassal, a soldier or a queen. Queens generally do not adventure unless their hive-city and subjects have somehow been destroyed.

VASSAL TRAITS

As a vassal, you are smart and skilled.

Ability Score Increase. Your Dexterity and Intelligence scores both increase by 1.

Flight. Your flight speed is 30.

Worker Bee. You gain proficiency with the artisan's tools of your choice: carpenter's tools, mason's tools or tinker's tools.

SOLDIER TRAITS

As a soldier, you are larger and stronger than others of your race and you are accustomed to wearing armor.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score is increased by a score of 2.

Flight. You have a flight speed of 50 when unarmored and can also wear light armor while flying. If you are wearing light armor, your speed decreases to 30 feet.

QUEEN TRAITS

As queen, you are a born leader whom others follow instinctually.

Ability Score Increase. Your Charisma score is increased by a score of 2.

Flight. Your flying speed is 40 feet.

Authority. You make all Charisma (Persuasion) checks at advantage and double your proficiency bonus when your audience is abeil.

ANT-FOLK CHARACTERS

The bacar are only recently coming into their own as an independent race. Where they once only existed to serve the queen, workers and warriors are developing their own personalities and grow more independent with each new generation. Many are fleeing the queen's undisputed control over every aspect of their lives and solitary ant-folk have started to appear in other lands.

A SEARCH FOR PURPOSE

The bacar are endlessly searching for their place in the world; a reason for existence. They do not worship any deities, nor do they pay their respects to Great or Mighty spirits of any sort. They are lost, bored and remarkably curious.

Some bacar are in fact joining "adventuring groups" with a wide selection of races including thri-kreen, abeil, Minnewah and even humankind. While their mannerisms can be strange and off putting, bacar are remarkably loyal allies. It is in their makeup to follow, not to lead; and once they have found one whom they consider worthy, they treat that individual as if it were their queen.

BEHOLDEN TO THE MONARCH

The bacar are not shy about their divided loyalty. Most still are dedicated to the whims of the queen, and if she were to call her subjects home, most bacar would likely follow.

As bacar form true friendships outside the colony, however, this dynamic might change over time, starting with the adventuring types who develop close bonds with their allies.

ANT-FOLK NAMES

As a race that has only recently come to self-identify, and one whose only form of communication is telepathy, the bacar have yet to develop a common naming convention. Workers and warriors have come to numbering themselves, such as "Worker733" or "Warrior809", but they will gladly accept names given to them by others, even if the names are ridiculous or comical in nature.

ANT-FOLK TRAITS

All bacar have the following traits and those of their subrace.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score is increased by a score of 2.

Age. Bacar mature from grubs to adults within a single year. The lifespan of a typical bacar is 40 years.

Alignments. Bacar are almost exclusively lawful and neutral in their nature. They are dedicated servants to their queen who sometimes extend this loyalty to others. Bacar who spend more time away from the colony have been known to develop morality or malice. Chaotic bacar are very rare, but not unheard of.

Size. The bacar are not terribly large creatures (though the queen is when producing young). Workers typically max out at 5 feet and even warriors are rarely larger than 6. If the bacar were to be forced to stand perfectly upright, their body length would typically add a half a foot, however and they are remarkably strong for their size. Your size as a bacar is Medium.

Language. The bacar mouthparts are incapable of forming speech. However, all bacar can communicate with each other up to 90 feet and don't even need to be able to see the bacar they are communicating with.

This entire form of communication is chemical, and all bacar are aware of each other within this range.

In addition, Bacar can communicate telepathically with all creatures in a range of 30 feet. They may also issue a telekinetic "shout" to all creatures within 90 feet, but this ability exhausts their mental capabilities and can only be used once between short and long rests.

Bacar can target individuals with their telepathy or speak to all within range simultaneously.

Mental Fortitude. Bacar have resistance to psychic damage.

Subraces. Bacar have three subraces, two of which are available for players. Workers are generally more industrious and warriors are aggressive and tough to harm. The Anchôromé Queen is a singular entity that is unavailable for play.

WORKER TRAITS

Worker bacar of Anchôromé have all ant-folk traits and the following.

Ability Score Increase. Your intelligence score is increased by a score of 1.

Cooperative Intelligence. If another bacar is in range of your telepathy, you gain advantage on all skills and saves that depend on Intelligence.

Bite You have a bite attack which causes 1d4 + Str bonus in piercing damage.

WARRIOR TRAITS

Warrior bacar of Anchôromé have all ant-folk traits and the following.

Ability Score Increase. Your Constitution score is increased by a score of 1.

Hearty. When you are hit and brought from -10 to 0 hit points, you drop to 1 hit point instead. You may use this ability once in between long rests.

Bite You have a bite attack which causes 1d6 + Str bonus in piercing damage.





CLASSES AND SUBCLASSES

The mantis-folk, abeil and bacar have any character class available to them, but tend to have some that are chosen more often than others.

Mantis Folk. The thri-kreen and other subraces of the mantis folk tend to choose ranger as their most common melee class, including the hunter variant ranger found in *The Anchôromé Campaign Guide*. There are also barbarians among the thri-kreen and some very rare ones have trained in the Way of the Neheyawak monk. Though rare, one of the most interesting and unique subclasses is the ankheg dragoon.

There are few clerics among the mantis-folk, typically being found only among thri-kreen who have extended their clutches to include other races. Druids are more common, but bards are practically non-existent. The mantis-folk do not enjoy entertainment or music in the way most races are capable.

Dominating the magical side of mantis-folk choice is undoubtedly the mystic. Psionics are a part of the thri-kreen makeup, and many are even born with powers. Sorcerers, warlocks and even wizards do exist, but are less common than mystics.

Bee-Folk. The abeil soldiers are regimented and trained as fighters or even paladins on occasion. Vassals don't usually train in melee classes, but it is not unknown.

Clerics worship the Queen of Queens and gain powers from her. Druids are greatly concerned with the health and well-being of normal and giant bee populations.

Vassals often train as wizards and queen abeil frequently find themselves to be talented sorcerers. Warlocks are uncommon among bee-folk that have not completely abandoned their people.

Bacar. Bacar will train in almost anything which they are given an opportunity. Warlocks are found among the more independent workers who are willing to divide their loyalties even further to find themselves a patron. Warriors are generally fighters, particularly the more regimented subclasses.

There has yet to be a bacar who has taken up the mantle of a cleric, but it is not impossible to do so.

THE MYSTIC

The mystic is a class steeped in psionics that is chosen by a great number of mantis-folk, particularly among the thri-kreen, tohr-kreen and particularly the zik-chil subraces.

The class is not official, but the *Unearthed Arcana* document and alternatives on DMsGuild are provided below. It is up to the DM what is allowed and what is not.

Unearthed Arcana: The Mystic Class by WotC

<https://www.dmsguild.com/product/213033/Unearthed-Arcana-The-Mystic-Class-5e>

Improved Arcana: Psionics and the Mystic by Esteban Ruquet

<https://www.dmsguild.com/product/214099/Improved-Arcana-Psionics-and-the-Mystic>

Mind over Matter - The Mystic Class by Daniel Shea.

<https://www.dmsguild.com/product/183832/Mind-Over-Matter-The-Mystic-Class>

THE ANKHEG DRAGON

The ankheg dragoon is a ranger archetype that is essentially a modification of the *Beast Master* archetype. The same bond a beast master develops with its animal companion is developed between an ankheg dragoon and an ankheg grub.

As the ranger gains in levels, the ankheg grub grows in size, to the point where it can eventually be ridden as a mount when it is known as a dectitious ankheg. Much later in the dragoon's career, the dectitious ankheg emerges as a fully grown ankheg still loyal to the dragoon.

Mantis-folk, particularly thri-kreen, are the only race who become ankheg dragoons. The process is inherent to some of the latent psionic capabilities of the mantis-folk and other races only get eaten when they first approach an ankheg grub.

TELEPATHY

An ankheg dragoon gains the ability to communicate telepathically with all creatures within 60 feet. They may also communicate simple emotions to ankhegs of any age. Ankhegs who fail a Charisma save using DC 10 + Charisma bonus against the dragoon will not attack.

GRUB COMPANION

An ankheg grub behaves almost exactly like a ranger's companion for a beast master. At 3rd level, the ankheg dragoon must travel to Wa'pak'to or a similar ankheg warren where they must find a nest of ankheg grubs. The mantis-folk ranger then uses telepathy to communicate simple emotions to the nest, calming the grubs. One grub in particular will then present itself to the ankheg dragoon and follow its new master.

The ankheg will now fight alongside you and you add your proficiency bonus to the beast's AC, attack rolls, and damage rolls as well as to any saving throws. Its hit point maximum equals four times your ranger level.

The ankheg grub obeys your commands and you may command it telepathically. It takes turns on your initiative though it doesn't take an action unless you command it to.

You may command the ankheg grub where to move, which does not require an action from you, unless you command it to take the Attack, Dash, Disengage, Dodge or Help actions. Once you have the Extra Attack feature at 5th level, you may make one weapon attack yourself when you command the ankheg to take the Attack action.

While traveling through your favored terrain with only the ankheg, you may move stealthily at a normal pace.

Bonding to you also binds the ankheg's soul, as it is, to you. If it is killed, you may spend 8 hours meditating in a psionic stupor to bring it back from death. If its body is destroyed upon death, it forms a new one at the end of the 8 hours of psionic meditation.

DECTITIOUS ANKHEG COMPANION

When you reach 7th level, the ankheg reaches a modified pupal stage of its life known as the dectitious phase. It is metamorphosing but may still act normally. At this point in its growth, the ankheg can be ridden by you. The ankheg moves at 30 feet, but can also burrow at 10 feet with you on its back.

Part of this affect is magical and you can not command it to take on another rider. However, the dectitious ankheg leaves a tunnel behind it that can be followed.

ANKHEG COMPANION

Starting at 11th level, your ankheg matures and has the same statistics as an adult ankheg. The ankheg, however, only gains half of your proficiency bonus (rounded down) to AC, attack rolls and damage rolls. It still gains the full bonus to saving throws and skills. The ankheg continues to use four times your ranger level for hit points.

SHARE SPELLS

Starting at 15th level, when you cast a spell targeting yourself, you can also affect your ankheg companion with the spell if the ankheg is within 30 feet of you.

DMsGUILD CLASSES AND SUBCLASSES

The following classes and subclasses found on DMsGuild are appropriate for the Land of Insect Men if the DM allows their use.

Honemage Wizard Tradition + Monstrous Bees by David "Serpine" Rosson

<https://www.dmsguild.com/product/171273/Honemage-Wizard-Tradition-Monstrous-Bees>

Druid Circle Of Insecta by Daniel Corkum

<https://www.dmsguild.com/product/242009/Druid-Circle-Of-Insecta>

Hivemaster Ranger Archetype (5e) by David Hardie

<https://www.dmsguild.com/product/269072/Hivemaster-Ranger-Archetype-5e>

RACIAL FEATS

The following racial feats can be chosen by insect folk. Some feats require the character to enter a pupation cocoon for 24 hours which is indicated in the prerequisites.

ACID SPITTER

Prerequisite: Ant-Folk, Mantis-Folk, Pupation Cocoon

You have evolved to spit acidic fluid from your glands. You gain resistance to acid damage. Also once a day you can spit acid in a 30 ft. line and 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking (half your level rounded down) X d6 acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

FAST ARMS

Prerequisite: Four or more arms

When you are engaging in Two-Weapon Fighting (*PHB*. 195), and have a light weapon in all four of your hands, you can make instead of one attack as a bonus action, two attacks. You don't add your ability modifier to the damage of the bonus attacks, unless negative.

RANGED SPECIALIST

Prerequisite: Four or more arms

When you are using two ranged weapons with your four hands and take the attack action, you can make one ranged attack as a bonus action with your other ranged weapon. You don't add your ability modifier to the damage of the bonus attacks, unless negative.

STRONG GRIP

Prerequisite: Four or more arms

When you engage in Two-Weapon Fighting (PHB. 195) you can use any melee weapon you are proficient with, even two two-handed ones in both hands. While holding two two-handed weapons you take a -3 penalty to hit with the bonus action attack.

HARDENED SHELL

Prerequisite: Ant-Folk, Bee-Folk, Mantis-Folk, Pupation Cocoon

You evolved to have a thicker shell. You gain Natural Armor equal to AC 12 + Dexterity modifier. The first time you take this feat you must stay in a pupation cocoon for 24 hours for your transformation to take effect.

INSECTOID WINGS

Prerequisite: Ant-Folk, Mantis-folk, Pupation Cocoon

You grow gossamer, insectoid wings and can fly if you are not wearing heavy armor. You gain the flying speed of 30 ft. when you expand your wings as a bonus action.

STRONG FLYER

Prerequisite: Bee-Folk

You gain 1 point in Strength. In addition, your flying speed gains 10 feet and you gain advantage on all Strength saving throws against effects that would affect your flying such as strong winds.

VIRULENT POISON

Prerequisite: Mantis-Folk, Pupation Cocoon

You gain 1 point in Constitution. In addition, your poison glands are particularly virulent and when you bite you do 1d4 + Str piercing damage + 1d6 poison damage. A creature you hit must make a Constitution save with a DC equal to 8 + your proficiency bonus, + your Constitution bonus or be poisoned for 1 minute.



CHAPTER 3: MONSTERS



sentient races aren't the only inhabitants of the Land of Insect Men drawn in by ancient batrachian magics. Almost like a beacon, this power draws in all manner of insectoid creatures. Unfortunately, the vast majority of them are quite hostile to non-insectoid and insectoid life alike!

PUBLISHED CREATURES

There are a number of creatures from published sources that are more than appropriate for the Land of the Insect Men due to the fact that they are insectoid, arachnoid, or have some connection to insects. Sources include the **MM** (Monster Manual), **VGtM** (Volo's Guide to Monsters) and **MToF** (Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes).

INSECTOID CREATURES

Name	Source
Ankheg	MM
Behir	MM
Carrion Crawler	MM
Chitines	VGtM
Choldrith	VGtM
Chuul	MM
Demon, Chasme	MM
Ettercap	MM
Flail Snail	VGtM
Giant Centipede	MM
Giant Fire Beetle	MM
Giant Scorpion	MM
Giant Spider	MM
Giant Wasp	MM
Giant Wolf Spider	MM
Kruthik	MToF
Neogi, All	MM
Phase Spider	MM
Purple Worm	MM
Rust Monster	MM
Scorpion	MM
Spider	MM
Steeder, All	MToF
Stirge	MM
Swarm of Insects	MM
Swarm of Rot Grubs	VGtM
Umber Hulk	MM
Yugoloth, Mezzoloth	MM

DMSGUILD CREATURES

You may find the following creatures from DMsGuild appropriate for use in the Land of the Mantis Men.

Draconomicon: Mantragns by *Spilled Ale Studios*

<https://www.dmsguild.com/product/206717/Draconomicon-Mantragns>

Giant bees have already been given statistics and a description in the following DMsGuild product:

Honeyimage Wizard Tradition + Monstrous Bees by *David "Serpine" Rosson*

<https://www.dmsguild.com/product/171273/Honeyimage-Wizard-Tradition-Monstrous-Bees>

The information below is specific to the giant honeybees of Anchôromé.

Giant Honeybees of Anchôromé. The giant bees of Anchôromé have become fast allies of the abeil.

Giant honeybees are what make the the massive flower gardens of the abeil possible, and along with their abeil allies, produce enough honey to feed entire colonies.

NEW CREATURES

The following creatures are new creatures found in the Land of the Insect Men.

NEW CREATURES

Name	CR
Ankheg, Anchôromé (Grub)	1/4
Ankheg, Anchôromé (Dectitious)	1/2
Ankheg, Anchôromé (Elemental)	2
Ankheg, Anchôromé (Brood Keeper)	12
Ankheg, Anchôromé (Brood Keeper Larva Swarm)	2
Dread Blossom Swarm	4
Harpoon Spider	4
Knell Beetle	4
Leechwalker	7
Megapede	20
Phase Wasp	1/2
Tanilai, Larva	1
Tanilai	6
Wariveen	4

ANKHEG, ANCHÔROMÉ

Ankhegs are a common creature in the Land of the Insect Men. Their tunnels are known to criss-cross great swaths of land, but they instinctually avoid certain underground regions that are permeated by strange magics.

Ankhegs of Anchôromé also leave the abeil, bacar and mantis-folk alone for the most part if they are in turn left alone. Ankheg dragoons are even known to ride them into battle.

ANKHEG GRUB

When first born from their greenish-brown hued eggs, Anchôromé ankhegs are wolf sized wriggling white worms who grow quickly if sufficient food is provided. They can grow to the size of a small horse within a few short weeks at which point their skin hardens and their bite becomes a threat. Until such time, grubs rely on their acidic spittle to fend off predators and take down prey.

DECTITIOUS ANKHEG

When the grub reaches the size of a horse, it begins to mutate over a period of time, all the while remaining active. Features more commonly associated with adult ankhegs start to appear including their prominent crest and powerful mandibles. Eventually, the dectitious ankheg sheds its outer chitin, rebirthing itself as a fully grown adult ankheg.

ELEMENTAL ANKHEG

Some ankheg ignore their instincts for one reason or another and approach too close to the powerful magics that remain buried deep under the Land of the Insect Men.

Most die, but others absorb the magic, becoming elemental in nature. Such creatures live in perpetual pain, and are generally far crueller than the mundane ankheg.

BROOD KEEPER

Brood keepers are an evolved ankheg that is a far different creature that its predecessor. It is unknown if the same magics that developed the elemental ankhegs is responsible for their creation or if it is something unrelated. Either way, brood keepers are a terror to behold. They are far larger than ankhegs and carry swarms of their hungry brood hidden between the plates of their chitin shells.

Brood keepers are quite aggressive, but can placated and convinced not to attack in some circumstances. They are territorial to predators as large as they are and will even attack dragons, as they did while Anchôromé was on Abeir.

BROOD KEEPER LARVA SWARM

The brood keeper larva swarm is the young, maggot-like insects that a brood keeper is willing to unleash on enemies that can threaten it. The brood keeper is perfectly willing to lose its young in order to preserve its own life.

When not "activated" the larval swarm lives between and beneath the thick chitin plates of its asexual parent, ready to swarm to the attack at any moment.

ELEMENTAL ANKHEG

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor, 11 while prone)

Hit Points 39 (6d10 + 6)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Damage Immunities see below

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft. passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Elemental Nature. Elemental Ankhegs may be acid, cold, fire, lightning or thunder ankhegs. The elemental nature of the ankheg alters its immunities (immune to the named type) and the type of additional damage its bite and elemental spray do.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6+3) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) elemental damage. If the target is a large or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the elemental ankheg can bite only the grappled creature and has advantage on attack rolls to do so.

Elemental Spray (Recharge 6). The elemental ankheg spits either acid, a freezing liquid, small fireballs, lightning or a sonic boom in a line that is 30 feet long and 5 feet wide, provided it has no creature grappled. Each creature in that line must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) elemental damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

ANKHEG GRUB

Small monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 18 (4d6 + 4)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	1 (-5)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft. passive Perception 11

Languages -

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) slashing damage plus 2 (1d4) acid damage.

Acid Spray (Recharge 6). The ankheg grub spits acid in a line that is 15 feet long and 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) acid damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

DECTITIOUS ANKHEG

Medium monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor, 11 while prone)

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	1 (-5)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft. passive Perception 11

Languages -

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit:* 9 (2d6+2) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) acid damage.

Acid Spray (Recharge 6). The dectitious ankheg spits acid in a line that is 30 feet long and 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) acid damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

ANKHEG, BROOD KEEPER

Huge monstrosity, neutral

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 229 (17d12 + 119)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	17 (+3)	25 (+7)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws Int +3, Cha +4

Skills Perception +8

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages None unless taught and cannot speak

Challenge 12 (8400 XP)

Fear. A creature who witnesses a brood keeper release a larval swarm or make a rend attack must make a DC 18 Wisdom save or become frightened for 1 minute. This save must be repeated at the start of the creature's next turn after the minute has expired or the fear lasts 1 hour. If a creature is not frightened, it must make an additional save if the brood keeper makes an additional attack of the sort described.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The brood keeper makes 2 attacks with its claws.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (3d10+7) bludgeoning damage. If both claws hit, the brood keeper also rends the victim, causing an additional 22 (4d10) slashing damage.

Release Larval Swarm. The brood keeper can release its young as a larval swarm if the larval swarm is available as an action. If destroyed, a larval swarm cannot be released for a month. If the larval swarm has suffered half its hp in damage or more it cannot be released for a week.

BROOD KEEPER LARVA SWARM

Medium Swarm of tiny monstrosities, unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	7 (-2)	3 (-4)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses blindsight 60 ft. passive Perception 8

Languages -

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Swarm. The brood keeper larval swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa. If the swarm and another creature are occupying the same space, the creature is distracted and makes all attacks, defense, save and skill rolls at disadvantage. The swarm can also move through any opening large enough for a Tiny creature. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (4d4+3) piercing damage or 8 (2d4+3) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.



DREAD BLOSSOM SWARM

The dread blossom is a hazard that is spreading across the Land of the Insect Men brought that first appeared because of the good intentions of the abeil. Unfortunately, they are just as much the victims of these blood sucking plants as are all inhabitants.

Blood Draining Blossoms. A dread blossom swarm seems like nothing more than a field of beautiful red flowers speckled with gold and black. They have a strong and pleasant scent but after they have fed, it is not nearly strong enough to cover the smell of rotting, exsanguinated corpses.

Once the blossoms detect a potential victim or victims that come within close proximity, the blossoms take to the air, fluttering their petals like the wings of flock of birds. At this point, observers will undoubtedly notice their stems end in thick thorn-like protrusions that may be covered in blood if they have fed recently.

Beastlands Transplants. Abeil have made peaceful contact in the past with the Minnenewah, who have introduced to them the Spirit Realm which fascinates the bee-folk. The abeil have formed a particular love for the Beastlands and if they can summon the magic to travel to it, the curious bee-folk vassals would most certainly choose to do so at least once in their lives.

On one such excursion, a vassal found a patch of the dread blossoms that had not yet matured. With good intentions, he returned the blossoms to his queen who added them to her garden.

When the blossoms matured, they killed and fed on a number of vassals before soldier abeil realized the threat they posed and attempted to eliminate as many as they could. Unfortunately, some dread blossoms escaped and have begun to reproduce all over the Land of the Insect Men.

DREAD BLOSSOM SWARM

Medium swarm of tiny plants, unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 63 (14d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
4 (-3)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +5

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed,

petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses passive Perception 15, blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius)

Languages -

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny flower.

Regeneration. The dread blossom swarm regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least one hit point and it is in sunlight.

Paralyzing Pollen. A dread blossom swarm is continuously surrounded by a cloud of pollen invisible to the naked eye, but detectable by scent in a 15 foot radius. Any creature that isn't immune to paralyzation, breathes and starts its turn in this radius must make a DC 14 Constitution save or be paralyzed for 1 minute. If the creature has already saved against the dread blossoms paralyzing poison or if it is aware of this attack form, it gains advantage on the save.

ACTIONS

Blood Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6+3) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage.



HARPOON SPIDER

The harpoon spider is only truly a spider in name with some superficial similarities to actual spiders. In reality it is a cruel, intelligent and hungry predator that is known to hunt alongside ettercap allies whom they might eventually come to dominate.

Ten-Legged Arachnid. Harpoon spiders defy true classification, but most elders agree it has some relationship to the arachnid family. The creature is typically the size of a warhorse, but it has ten legs instead of an arachnid's normal eight, and each is capped in an almost human-like hand. Its circular pattern of eight eyes are also quite human-like, and looking into them will betray their sinister intelligence.

Harpoon spiders are also covered in hairy spines that the harpoon spider will often carry its victims on for later consumption.

Ettercap Allies. The harpoon spiders are generally found hunting with an ettercap ally or two. They will fire their harpoon-like fangs at victims, weakening them with their poison as the ettercaps finish the job. Together, such creatures make many of the wooded areas of the Land of Insect Men terribly dangerous places.

Dread Harpoon Spiders. Harpoon spiders, if well fed, can grow to greater sizes and strength at which point they will come to truly dominate their ettercap allies. These dread harpoon spiders have been known to eat their hunting partners when times are lean.



VARIANT - DREAD HARPOON SPIDER

Dread harpoon spiders are Huge, have 147 (14d12+56) hp, and a CR of 6.

HARPOON SPIDER

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 76 (8d10 + 32)

Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	19 (+4)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)

Skills Perception +5

Senses passive Perception 15, darkvision 120 ft.

Languages Common, Sylvan (or Undercommon if from Underdark)

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

ACTIONS

Impale. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one Large or smaller creature. Hit: 14 (3d6+4) piercing damage. If the attack is successful, the creature is

impaled on the harpoon spider's spines. Until the creature escapes (DC 14 Dexterity), it continues to automatically take damage from the impaling at the start of each of its turns. The harpoon spider may only have 1 Large, 2 Medium, 4 Small, or 16 Tiny creatures impaled at a time.

Harpoon. Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 20 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d4+4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage. In addition, the target must make a DC 14 Dexterity save or the target is drawn to an adjacent square in front of the harpoon spider, where it becomes subject to an impale attack which the harpoon spider makes as a bonus action.

REACTIONS

Spines. If a harpoon spider is attacked with a weapon that has less than a 10 foot reach, the attacker is subject to an attack by the harpoon spider's spines, causing 11 (2d6+4) piercing damage.

KNELL BEETLE

The warping magic that lies underground in the Land of the Insect Men has created many strange creatures, and the knell beetle may be one of the most bizarre.

Mutant Vermin. Knell beetles have a bizarre appearance, having been overexposed to transmutational magic in the depths of the Anchôromé underdark.

They are ten-legged beetles with thick red shells and lobster-like claws with four tiny black eyes and serrated mandibles.

Their most prominent feature however, is a chitin bell shaped apparatus that protrudes from just above their mouthparts. Mature knell beetles are typically 9 feet long and can weigh upwards of 1,500 lb.

Thunderous Attacks. Knell beetles are closely connected to the elemental power of sound. Their bells can be used to form a powerful cone of thunderous energy that can shake flesh off of bone and shatter a creature's teeth.

They are also capable of stomping in a rhythmic pattern which, when combined with other knell beetles, can knock its opponents to the floor.

KNELL BEETLE

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 68 (8d10 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	1 (-5)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)

Damage Immunities thunder

Senses passive Perception 10, tremorsense 120 ft.

Languages -

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

Sonic Healing. If the knell beetle takes thunder damage, it instead takes no damage and regenerates 5 hit points up to its maximum.

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d8+3) bludgeoning damage.

Shake The Earth. By beating the ground rhythmically the knell beetle can cause a localized earthquake. All creatures within ten feet of the knell beetle must make a DC 13 Dexterity save or be knocked prone. This ability compounds when other knell beetles are using the same ability. If additional knell beetles are using the Shake the Earth ability within 30 feet of the knell beetle, the radius is increased by 10 feet up to a maximum of 100 feet.

Sonic Chime (Recharge 5-6). The knell beetle may use its bell to concentrate sound in a 30 foot cone. Creatures in the cone take 21 (6d6) thunder damage or half damage on a successful DC 13 Dexterity saving throw.



LEECHWALKER

Medium aberration, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 97 (13d8 + 39)

Speed 30 ft., swim 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, poison

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, stunned

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 11

Languages -

Challenge 7 (2900 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The leechwalker uses Blood Drain on a creature it is grappling. It then makes two tentacle attacks.

Tentacles. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8+4) slashing damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 14). The leechwalker can have up to two creature grappled at a time.

Blood Drain. One creature the leechwalker is grappling loses 45 (10d8) hit points due to blood loss.

LEECHWALKER

The leechwalker is a horrible creature that exists only to feed. It is the scourge of the swampy regions of Anchôromé, and it can completely exanguinate an opponent, leaving nothing but a dessicated mummy in it's wake.

Swarms taken Form. Leechwalkers were all once a swarm of leeches who were exposed to the transmutational magic that permeates Anchôromé. The swarms imitated and formed bodies very similar in shape to a pot-bellied human which only grows in size once the being is properly fed.

Leechwalkers are now a singular being that are ambulatory and may exist outside of their watery homes. Still, few leechwalkers stray far from their swampy demesnes.

MEGAPEDE

Gargantuan monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 592 (32d20 + 256)

Speed 80 ft., burrow 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
30 (+10)	7 (-2)	27 (+8)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	4 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +7

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, prone

Senses tremorsense 120 ft. passive Perception 11

Languages -

Challenge 20 (25000 XP)

Magic Resistance. The megapede has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The megapede makes five tentacle rake attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 24 (4d6+10) piercing damage and the target must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking 55 (10d10) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Tentacle Rake. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d6+10) slashing damage.





MEGAPEDE

The megapede is a massive predator that preys on anything it can catch. They have been known to consume entire ankhegs so the smaller races are hardly a meal, but that doesn't stop this apex predator from pursuing such beings.

Wasteland Predators. Megapedes were once desert predators who hid below the sands, ready to pounce on whatever meal might approach. They rarely, if ever, allowed a potential meal to pass by because of scarcity and the quantity of food such large bodies required.

In time, megapedes began progress towards the Land of the Insect Men and they have come to dominate the wastes. Megapedes are rare, but a single one can decimate the ecology of an entire region. If a megapede makes an appearance close to the lands of the abeil, mantis-folk or the bacar, it is certainly one creature that could unite all races in desperate opposition to its predations.

PHASE WASP

Small monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 10 (3d6)

Speed 10 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	2 (-4)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 11

Languages none

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

ACTIONS

Sting. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

Magic Missile (Recharge 5-6). The phase wasp casts the spell *magic missile*, requiring no components, as a 1st level spell.

PHASE WASP

A singular phase wasp can be a terrible nuisance, but woe to the creature that disturbs a nest of these 18 inch magical beasts.

Bee-Folk Vermin. Phase wasps are to the abeil what a large and aggressive nest of rats might be to normal human beings. They are a nuisance that, if left unchecked, are known to raid the giant vats of abeil honey. The bee-folk are disgusted by the creatures and will often discard honey which they believe the wasps have contaminated. The magic missile stings of these creatures make them difficult to eradicate.



TANILAI

The tanilal are the closest thing the Land of the Insect Men has to a native dragon species. However, they have just as much in common with the standard *dragonfly* as they do dragons.

TANILAI LARVA

Tanilal have a life cycle very similar to normal dragonflies, and begin life as aggressive larval predators that have been known to attack swimmers and most certainly keep populations of normal fish low.

Driven by Instinct. At this stage in their life, they are not terribly intelligent and are driven mostly by instinct. They are also aquatic at this stage until they finally shed their outer skin, forming a young, colorful new tanilal.

TANILAI (ADULT)

Adult tanilal inhabit almost anywhere there is a large body of standing water, but avoid all but the slowest moving streams.

Some of the shallower lakes of Anchôromé are covered in gigantic lily pads which the tanilal make good use of as a base for hunting or finding a mate.

Tanilal are not long lived, typically only surviving for 20-25 years, which is uncommon for creatures known to be related to dragonkind.

Trainable Mounts. In very rare circumstances, Minnewah and humans have ventured into the Land of Insect Men to capture tanilal to be used as mounts, which is only possible if done so within a few days of their transition into adulthood.

False Breath Weapon. Tanilal are not true dragons, but they have learned to swallow large quantities of water and fire it from their mouths as a projectile weapon of sorts. In order to recharge this ability, the tanilal must take the time to swallow enough water to do so. Oftentimes, they will disengage from battle, using their superior speed to get away and then return with a belly full of water.

TANILAI

Large dragon, lawful neutral

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 102 (12d10 + 36)

Speed 20 ft., fly 90 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills Perception +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 6 (2300 XP)

Quick Getaway. Tanilal may Disengage as a bonus action.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The tanilal makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (2d8+4) slashing damage.

Water Spout. The tanilal spits a spout of water in a 60 foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 15 Dexterity save, taking 44 (8d10) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or have as much on a successful one. The tanilal must take an action to reload this ability by drinking a sufficient quantity of water.



TANILAI, LARVA

Medium monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 37 (5d8 + 15)

Speed 0 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages -

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) piercing damage.

WARIVEEN

Wariveen are often called the centaurs of the Land of Insect Men, but they behave nothing like the sylvan beings and the similarities in appearance stop at their tauric body shape. They are undead creatures forged from an amalgamation of Anchôromé races and creatures.

Born from Battle. The mantis-folk have come into conflict with both the Minnewah and the aarakocra in the past, and powerful magics have been unleashed from all sides. At some point, the elemental magic of the aarakocra, the psionic powers of the mantis-folk and the spiritual magic of the Minnewah all comingled in such a way that assured the destruction of all of participants.

When others came to collect the dead however, something had arisen From the ashes of battle. With the facial features of the aarakocra, mantis-like arms, and the bodies of dessicated Minnewah horses, undead creatures known as the wariveen appeared to chase away or slay those who came to mourn.

The wariveen are now a scourge across the Land of the Insect Men, but it is unknown how or where new undead are formed. All that is known is that they need to be destroyed, as they are an affront to all the living.

WARIVEEN

Large undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 59 (7d10 + 21)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Auran, Thri-Kreen

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Wariveen makes 2 attacks, one wit its beak and one with its claws.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d4+4) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8+4) slashing damage plus 10 (2d6+3) necrotic damage, and the target's Strength score is reduced by 1d4. The target dies if this reduces the Strength to 0. Otherwise, the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest. If manti-folk, aarakocra or Minnewah die from this attack, a new wariveen rises from the corpse 1d4 hours later.



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THRI-KREEN CREDIT

Thomas Haselwanger (2019); The Thri Kreen Race - Always Evolving, Never Resting; Dungeon Masters Guild; Adapted to fit "Land of the Insect Men": Apleurus, Smaragtin, Ulyssies Mantis-Folk etc. and most Feats.

Find the originals at:

<https://www.dmsguild.com/product/271721/Thri-Kreen-Race>

MONSTER STAT CREDIT

Leechwalker, Megapede, Phasewasp statistics originally conceived by ThirdtoFifth on Tumblr and statistics were used for inspiration.

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A LAND WHOSE PEOPLE ARE ALL...BUGS?

Cover Art: ""Thri-Kreen""

Fil Kearney www.filkearney.com

Anchôromé is an entire continent of the Forgotten Realms world of Toril found in the distant north and west. It is a land unlike any other, and there are sights unlike anywhere else in the world.

An overview of this vast new land can be found in **ANC1 The Anchôromé Campaign Guide**. This book is the first in a series of supplements designed to further enhance an Anchôromé campaign.

Each supplement will provide some combination of new locations, lore, magic, monsters, character options and much, much more. **ANS1 The Land of the Insect Men** is the first such supplement, and it is dedicated to one specific region visited in the campaign guide.

In the official Maztica product, **FMQ1 City of Gold**, the Land of the Insect Men was listed as a region to explore if the players wished to go on further adventures. Not much of it was described, but it was said to be to the north and west of the adventure/supplement's map of the Pasocada Basin.

There were rumored to be thri-kreen who dominated the Land of the Insect Men, and so far as the local humans known as the Azuposi were concerned, that was all that could be found. Oddly, it was also rumored that these beings not only possessed a virtual kings ransom in gemstones, but consumed them!

The Land of the Insect Men is permeated by the ancient magic of the Creatore Race known as the *batrachi*. This magic draws insectoid creatures and people to it like a moth is drawn to a flame.

The Land of the Insect Men certainly does have its thri-kreen (though they don't eat gemstones!), but there are also the bee-folk known as the abeil; transplants from when Anchôromé resided on the twin planet of Abeir. The bee-folk have a massive hexagonal hive city ringed by gargantuan flowers of all types. Their vats of honey could feed half the continent were the abeil inclined to share.

There are also the bacar. Ant-folk who have migrated from distant Maztica who are growing bored of their existence now that they no longer have the purpose of keeping the Star Worm H'Calos contained.

"Folk" aren't the only inhabitants because the batrachian magic also draws in insectoid beasts of all types. Ankhegs of all kinds are abundant (and often ridden by the thri-kreen ranger subclass known as the ankheg dragoon) in addition to ettercaps, harpoon spiders, knell beetles, megapedes, insectoid dragonettes and many others.

A FINAL NOTE

Anchôromé is forever expanding, but there is still so much room for new authors, artists and cartographers to contribute.

If you are interested in collaboration, please feel free to email the author, Jon Hild, at the gmail account seethe75.