

A squirrel character, likely a mutant, is the central focus. It wears a tactical vest, goggles, and has a determined, slightly aggressive expression with its mouth open showing teeth. It holds two pistols, one in each hand, with flames or muzzle flashes visible. The background is a fiery, apocalyptic cityscape. In the lower right foreground, the head of a dinosaur or similar prehistoric animal is visible, looking towards the squirrel. The overall color palette is dominated by reds, oranges, and browns, suggesting fire and destruction.

GAMMA **SQUIRRELS &** **MILITANT** **MOOSE**

**Mutant Animals for the
GAMMA WORLD® Game**

THE COURAGEOUS MUTATED SQUIRREL, ROKI, SPREAD HIS LEATHERY WINGS AND GLIDED DOWN FROM HIS HIDDEN PERCH, HIS TWIN REVOLVERS BLAZING. FOUR KNIGHTS OF GENETIC PURITY SURROUNDED HIS COMRADE, BINKEL, AND EVEN THE GREAT CREATURE'S MIGHTY ANTLERS AND THICK CARAPACE WOULD PROVE NO MATCH FOR THE KNIGHTS' BLASTER PISTOLS. PERHAPS ROKI'S SECOND BRAIN, COMPLETE WITH ITS POWERS OF TELEPATHIC SUGGESTION, MIGHT DISSUADE THE HUMANS.

BY ANDY COLLINS

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The latest version of the GAMMA WORLD Roleplaying Game includes six species for use as heroes: humans, mutants, androids, dabbers, sasquatch, and sleeth. While these choices provide plenty of options for your GAMMA WORLD campaign—particularly one set in the grim and gritty Land of Settle—the allure of creating a truly unique character is one of the hallmarks of GAMMA WORLD past and present.

Here, then, are guidelines for creating your own mutated animal hero for GAMMA WORLD. In addition to this article, you'll need a copy of the new GAMMA WORLD game for reference (particularly for mutation descriptions).

SPECIES

Depending on the area of the world the campaign is based in (and what your Gamemaster allows), a nearly unlimited array of options exist for the mutated animal character. In general, all mutated animal heroes fall into one of the types listed below (with examples).

Amphibian: Frogs, toads, salamanders, and newts.

Bird: Crows, eagles, seagulls, owls, ostriches, and sparrows.

Bug: Spiders, flies, beetles, moths, and mosquitoes.

Fish: Salmon, trout, swordfish, sharks, and rays.

Reptile: Lizards, snakes, and turtles.

Mammal, tiny: Mice, rabbits, squirrels, bats, and weasels.

Mammal, small: Porcupines, badgers, wolverines, raccoons, and beavers.

Mammal, canine: Dogs, wolves, coyotes, and foxes.

Mammal, feline: Tigers, lions, cougars, pumas, and housecats.

Mammal, primate: Apes, monkeys, chimpanzees, and orangutans.

Mammal, large: Bears, horses, buffalo, and cows.

While other options exist—lobsters, slugs, octopi, and such—heroes of such unusual types should only be created through the cooperation of the player and the GM. (A mutated crab, for instance, could use the Bug template as a basis.)

Your choice will guide the rest of this process by limiting certain options while opening others. The "Species Notes"

SPECIES NOTES

In addition to the general information found on Table 1, the following abilities are common to heroes mutated from particular species, most of which are (or were, prior to the Cataclysm) native to the Land of Settle and surrounding regions. If you don't find the species you're looking for, either modify a similar one or create your own special abilities using these as guidelines.

Ant (Bug): Natural Attack (pincers). (If flying ant selected, gains bonus mutation—Flying; -4 mutation points.)

Bat (Mammal, tiny): Bonus mutations—Flying, Sonar. Bonus drawback—Diminished Senses, slight (sight only). -3 mutation points.

Bear (Mammal, large): Natural Attack (claws). Bonus mutations—Improved Senses (smell only), Environmental Adaptation (cold). -1 mutation point.

Beaver (Mammal, small): Character can move at full rate using Swim or Easy Swim.

Beetle (Bug): Natural Attack (claws). Bonus mutation—Dermal Plating. -2 mutation points.

Bighorn sheep (Mammal, large): Natural Attack (horns). Bonus mutation—Environmental Adaptation (cold). Gains -1 step bonus to Athletics—climb in rocky terrain. -1 mutation point.

Bull (Mammal, large): Natural Attack (horns).

Butterfly (Bug): No Natural Armor or Natural Attack. Bonus mutation—Flying (at half listed rates).

Chipmunk/squirrel (Mammal, tiny): Gains -1 step bonus to Athletics—climb.

Coyote (Mammal, canine): Natural Attack (teeth). Bonus mutation—Improved Senses (hearing and smell only).

Deer (Mammal, large): Natural Attack (antlers). Bonus mutations—Improved Senses (hearing only), Increased Speed (ground rates only). -1 mutation point.

Elk/caribou/moose (Mammal, large): Bonus mutation—Improved

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Table 1: Mutated Animal Traits

Type	Traits	Size	Movement Rates		
			Ground	Fly	Swim
Amphibian	Gills, Environmental Sensitivity, slight (arid)	Small	1/2	None	Full
Bird	Improved Reflexes, Natural Attack	Small	1/2	Full	1/4
Bug	Natural Armor, Natural Attack	Small	1/2	Full	1/2
Fish	Gills, Natural Armor, Environmental Sensitivity, slight (arid)	Small	1/2	None	Double
Reptile	Natural Armor, Natural Attack	Small	1/2	None	1/2
Mammal, tiny	Night Vision	Small	1/2	None	1/2
Mammal, small	Natural Attack, Night Vision	Small	1/2	None	1/2
Mammal, canine	Natural Attack	Medium	3/4	None	Full
Mammal, feline	Improved Reflexes, Natural Attack, Night Vision	Medium	3/4	None	Full
Mammal, primate	None	Medium	Full	None	Full
Mammal, large	Natural Attack, Slow Reflexes	Large	3/4	None	3/4

Table 2: Mutated Animal Ability Scores

Type	STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIL	PER
Amphibian	4-14	4-14	6-14	4-11	4-12	4-11
Bird	4-12	8-16	4-12	4-12	4-13	4-12
Bug	6-15	6-15	6-15	4-11	4-12	4-11
Fish	4-14	4-13	6-14	4-11	4-12	4-12
Reptile	6-14	4-14	6-14	4-11	4-12	4-11
Mammal, tiny	4-11	8-16	4-12	4-13	4-12	4-12
Mammal, small	4-13	6-15	4-13	4-12	4-13	4-13
Mammal, canine	6-14	6-14	4-14	4-13	6-14	4-14
Mammal, feline	6-14	6-15	4-14	4-13	6-14	4-14
Mammal, primate	7-15	4-14	6-15	4-14	4-14	4-14
Mammal, large	9-16	4-12	6-16	4-12	6-14	4-13

Table 3: Animal Mutation Points

Type	Points
Amphibian	7
Bird	4
Bug	4
Fish	6
Reptile	4
Mammal, tiny	6
Mammal, small	4
Mammal, canine	5
Mammal, feline	3
Mammal, primate	7
Mammal, large	6

sidebar lists many species of animal, but feel free to create something that isn't described there if you so desire (and the GM allows).

Note any special or unique characteristics about the species you choose, both from the sidebar and **Table 1: Mutated Animal Traits**.

Size and Shape

Despite the size of the base species, all mutated animal characters are a minimum of 1 meter in height. Those types

listed as Small in **Table 1** are approximately 1 meter tall; those listed as Medium are between 1.5 and 2.5 meters tall, while those listed as Large are approximately 3 meters tall. Appropriate penalties to ability scores and movement rates are already part of each base type's attributes on **Table 1**.

All mutated animal heroes are assumed to be generally bipedal and capable of walking erect, though most species don't move at the full normal rate (because of size and/or difficulty in walking). See "Movement" below for more.

Finally, mutated animal characters are assumed to have hands capable of grasping objects and using tools. At the player's option, the character can be created without this ability (see "Drawbacks," below).

ABILITIES SCORES

Divide 60 points among the six Abilities—STR, DEX, CON, INT, WIL, PER—and assign those Ability Scores to your hero. Make sure to arrange them so that your hero abides by the minimum/

maximum figures for Ability Scores for the your hero's species base type, as given in **Table 2: Mutated Animal Ability Scores**. (Mutations and drawbacks can raise or lower ability scores beyond the listed limits.)

MUTATIONS

Each mutated animal character has a number of mutation points as listed for its type in **Table 3: Animal Mutation Points**. In some cases, the animal's particular species might adjust this number up or down. This cannot reduce the character's starting pool of mutation points below 1 or increase it above 11. Regardless of the character's total pool of mutation points, remember that no character can have more than 3 Ordinary mutations, 2 Good mutations, or 1 Amazing mutation.

Drawbacks

Mutated animals have only 2 points of drawbacks (2 Slight drawbacks or 1 Moderate drawback). These are selected in the same manner as listed in Chapter 4: Mutations in the GAMMA WORLD Role-playing Game.

The player can, with his Gamemaster's approval, select the Poor Manipulation drawback, which greatly restricts the hero's ability to use his forelimbs to manipulate objects. The character suffers a +3 step penalty to any skill checks requiring manual dexterity, including (but not necessarily limited to) Athletics—throw, Heavy Weapons, Melee Weapons, Manipulation, Ranged Weapons, Vehicle Operation, Computer Science, Demolitions, Knowledge—first aid, Medical Science—surgery and treatment, Security—set/disarm traps, and



Technical Science—*invention, juryrig, and repair*. (Mutated primate characters cannot select this option.)

In addition, all mutated animals automatically have the Physical Change (major) drawback. Thus, they suffer a +4 step penalty to Personality-based skill checks, as well as any other skill check made to interact with those who might find such deformities distasteful. At the Gamemaster's discretion, the character can reduce or ignore this penalty when dealing with similar species (for instance, a mutated raccoon interacting with a dabber). If the mutated animal character rolls or selects the Physical Change (minor) drawback, select a different drawback instead.

Traits

In addition to the mutation points possessed by a mutated animal hero, the "Traits" column in Table 1 includes a number of naturally appearing traits common to mutated animals of each type. Most correspond to the mutation (or drawback) of the same name and are detailed below.

With the Gamemaster's permission, the player of a mutated animal hero can choose for his character not to have one or more of the standard traits. If so, they should be replaced by additional mutation (or drawback) points as appropriate. For instance, a mutated frog who chose not to have the Gills trait (normally an Ordinary mutation) would gain one bonus mutation point.

Environmental Sensitivity

Some mutated animals have a natural sensitivity to dry or arid climates. This is equivalent to the Slight drawback of Environmental Sensitivity (arid), which inflicts a +2 step penalty to all skill and action checks in such an environment.

If a mutated animal hero with this inborn trait rolls or selects the Environmental Sensitivity (arid) drawback, it automatically upgrades one level (to Moderate if Slight is selected, or to Extreme if Moderate is selected). If the Extreme version of this drawback is selected, the hero can reduce his pool of drawback points by two.

Mutated amphibians and fish have the Environmental Sensitivity (arid) trait.

Natural Attack (antlers) (replaces Natural Attack). -1 mutation point.

Fox (Mammal, canine): Natural Attack (teeth). Bonus mutations—Improved Senses (hearing and smell only), Night Vision. -1 mutation point.

Frog (Amphibian): Gains -1 step bonus to Athletics—*jump*.

Gorilla (Mammal, primate): Gains -1 step bonus to Unarmed Attack—*brawl*.

Grasshopper/cricket (Bug): Gains -3 step bonus to Athletics—*jump*.

Gull (Bird): Natural Attack (beak). Can Glide at 125% listed rate.

Hawk (Bird): Natural Attack (claws, beak). Bonus mutations—Improved Senses (sight only), Increased Speed (Fly and Glide rates only). -1 mutation point.

Horse (Mammal, large): Natural Attack (hooves). Bonus mutation—Increased Speed (ground rates only). -1 mutation point.

Hummingbird (Bird): Natural Attack (beak). Bonus mutation—Enhanced Reflexes (replaces Improved Reflexes). -1 mutation point.

Lizard (Reptile): Natural Attack (claws, teeth).

Lynx/bobcat (Mammal, feline): Natural Attack (claws, teeth). Bonus mutation—Improved Senses (hearing and smell only). Gains -1 step bonus to Athletics—*climb*. -1 mutation point.

Mink (Mammal, tiny): Natural Attack (teeth). Gains -1 step bonus to Athletics—*climb*.

Monkey (Mammal, primate): Gains -1 step bonus to Athletics—*climb*.

Moth (Bug): No Natural Armor or Natural Attack. Bonus mutations—Flying (half listed rates), Pheromones (affects insects only). -1 mutation point.

Mountain lion (Mammal, feline): Natural Attack (claws, teeth). Bonus mutation—Improved Senses (hearing and smell only). Gains -1 step bonus to Athletics—*climb*. -1 mutation point.

Mouse/shrew/rat (Mammal, tiny): Gains -1 step bonus to Stealth—*hide and sneak*.

Otter (Mammal, small): Character can move at full rate using Swim or Easy Swim.

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Table 4: Mutated Animal Free Broad Skills

	STR Athletics	DEX —	CON Movement—swim Stamina	INT Knowledge	WIL Awareness	PER Interaction
Amphibian						
Bird	Athletics Unarmed Attack	Acrobatics	—	Knowledge	Awareness	Interaction
Bug	Athletics* Unarmed Attack	—	Stamina	Knowledge	Awareness	Interaction
Fish	Athletics	—	Movement—swim Stamina	Knowledge	Awareness	Interaction
Reptile	Athletics Unarmed Attack	—	Stamina	Knowledge	Awareness	Interaction
Mammal, tiny	Athletics	Stealth	Survival	Knowledge	Awareness	Interaction
Mammal, small	Athletics	—	Stamina Survival	Knowledge	Awareness	Interaction
Mammal, canine	Athletics Unarmed Attack	—	Stamina	Knowledge	Awareness	Interaction
Mammal, feline	Athletics Unarmed Attack	—	Stamina	Knowledge	Awareness	Interaction
Mammal, primate	Athletics	—	Stamina Survival	Knowledge	Awareness	Interaction
Mammal, large	Athletics	—	Stamina	Knowledge	Awareness, Resolve	Interaction

*If the hero is of a flying species, substitute Acrobatics for Athletics.

Gills

If a mutated animal character has **gills** (listed on **Table 1**), that character automatically begins with the Gills mutation. If the Gills mutation is rolled or selected, reroll or choose a different Ordinary mutation.

Mutated amphibians and fish have the Gills trait.

Improved Reflexes

Some mutated animals retain their ancestor's lightning-quick reflexes, granting them the equivalent of the Improved Reflexes mutation. This grants a -1 step bonus to all action checks.

If a mutated animal hero with this trait rolls or selects the Improved Reflexes mutation, it becomes the Enhanced Reflexes mutation at no additional cost. If he rolls or selects the Enhanced

Reflexes mutation, it becomes the Hyper Reflexes mutation at the cost of 1 additional mutation point.

Mutated birds and felines have the Improved Reflexes trait.

Natural Armor

A mutated animal with Natural Armor has armor equivalent to the Dermal Reinforcement mutation (d4+1/d4-1). If a mutated animal hero with Natural Armor rolls or selects the Dermal Reinforcement or Dermal Armor mutation, she replaces it with the Dermal Armor or Dermal Plating mutation, respectively (at no additional cost of mutation points).

If a mutated animal hero with natural armor rolls or selects the Dermal Plating mutation, she upgrades her Natural Armor to Dermal Plating and gains one bonus mutation point.

Mutated fish, insects, and reptiles have the Natural Armor trait.

Natural Attack

If a mutated animal hero with Natural Attack rolls the Natural Attack mutation, he replaces it with Improved Natural Attack at no additional cost in mutation points.

If a mutated animal hero with Natural Attack rolls or selects the Improved Natural Attack mutation, he upgrades his Natural Attack to Improved Natural Attack and gains one bonus mutation point.

Mutated birds, bugs, reptiles, small mammals, canines, felines, and large mammals have the Natural Attack trait.

Night Vision

Some mutated animals have eyes abnormally sensitive to light. This is equivalent

to the Night Vision mutation. If the mutated animal character rolls or selects the Night Vision mutation, reroll or choose a different Ordinary mutation.

Tiny and small mammals and felines have the Night Vision trait.

Profession

Using the GAMMA WORLD Roleplaying Game, select a profession—Combat Spec, Diplomat, Free Agent, or Tech Op—that logically encompasses your hero's character concept. Each profession provides special benefits to the heroes who belong to it, as described in the game.

Most mutated animals will tend toward professions that maximize the utility of their abilities; for instance, mutated bears generally make better Combat Specs than Free Agents. Don't let that stop you from making a unique character, though—if you want your mutated mouse to be a Combat Spec, go for it!

Skills

Like other GAMMA WORLD heroes, mutated animals get six free broad skills. These are listed in **Table 4: Mutated Animal Broad Skills**. Note that amphibian and fish heroes gain one free rank of Movement—*swim* in addition to their free broad skills.

The number of additional broad skills your mutated animal hero can start with, and the number of points he receives to purchase additional skills, depend on the hero's species and Intelligence score. **Table GW42: Skill List** in Chapter 5: Skills of the GAMMA WORLD Roleplaying Game contains complete information on how much skills cost and what each one enables a hero to do.

ATTRIBUTES

Choose one motivation, one moral attitude, and up to two character traits (found in the GAMMA WORLD Roleplaying Game) for your hero. Most mutated animals tend to have traits that match their base species. For instance, mutated wolves tend to be Aggressive while mutated songbirds are often Talkative.

However, playing a mutated animal hero that doesn't fit the normal mold can be very enjoyable. For a change of pace,

try a mutated cougar who is Compassionate and Kind or a mutated rabbit who is Calm and Courageous!

MOVEMENT

Though more-or-less bipedal, mutated animal characters still don't move as quickly as their more-evolved comrades. Multiply the character's normal ground movement rates (as determined by **Table GW7: Combat Movement Rates**) by the value listed on **Table 1** to find her Sprint, Run, and Walk rates.

At a cost of 1 mutation point, you can choose for the mutated animal character to be fully bipedal. This allows her to move at the full normal rates listed on **Table GW7**. (This doesn't apply to mutated primates, who are already fully bipedal.)

Flying

Mutated animals with "Full" listed under Fly on **Table 1** are assumed to have full-size functional wings (in effect, they have the built-in mutation of Wings). If a flying mutated animal rolls or selects the Gliding mutation, he increases his Glide movement rate by 50%.

If such a hero rolls or selects the Wings mutation, he increases both his Glide and Fly movement rates by 100%. He does not incur the modifiers to his ability scores listed under the Wings mutation.

The player of such a character may voluntarily choose that his character's wings are non-functional. In this case, he gains 2 bonus mutation points.

Swimming

Most mutated animals can swim, though with some difficulty. If a fractional value is listed, the character is capable only of the Easy Swim rate (unless she gains ranks in Movement—*swim*), and even then her movement rate is determined by multiplying the Easy Swim (or Swim) rate by the fractional value listed.

If Full is listed, the animal can move at the Easy Swim or Swim rates. If Double is listed, the animal can move at double the Easy Swim or Swim rates and gains a -2 step bonus to any Movement—*swim* skill checks. 

Learn more about Andy Collins on page 18.

Owl (Bird): Natural Attack (claws, beak). Bonus mutation—Night Vision. -1 mutation point.

Porcupine (Mammal, small):

Bonus mutation—Natural Attack (quills). -2 mutation points.

Rabbit (Mammal, tiny): Character's ground movement rates multiplied by $\frac{3}{4}$, not $\frac{1}{2}$ as listed in Table 1

Raccoon (Mammal, small): Bonus mutation—Night Vision. -1 mutation point.

Salmon (Fish): Can breathe air normally. (This trait is common to all mutated fish characters.)

Skunk (Mammal, small): Bonus mutation—Stench Attack (inhaled irritant). As Poison Attack, but lasts until washed off (maximum of 48 hours). Bonus drawback: Attraction Odor. -2 mutation points.

Snake, nonvenomous (Reptile): Natural Attack (fangs). Maximum Strength is 15.

Snake, venomous (Reptile): Natural Attack (fangs). Bonus mutation—Poison Attack (hemotoxin). -3 mutation points.

Spider (Bug): Natural Attack (sting). Bonus mutation—Poison Attack (necrotoxin). Gains -1 step bonus to Athletics—*climb*. -3 mutation points.

Squirrel, flying (Mammal, tiny): Can Glide at listed rate. If Gliding mutation selected, upgrade to Fly at no extra cost. If Flying mutation selected, gain 2 bonus mutation points. Gains -1 step bonus to Athletics—*climb*. -2 mutation points.

Toad (Amphibian): Gains -1 step bonus to Athletics—*jump*. Does not have drawback of Environmental Sensitivity, slight (arid). -1 mutation point.

Turtle (Reptile): Bonus mutation—Dermal Plating (replaces Natural Armor). -3 mutation points.

Wolf (Mammal, canine): Natural Attack (teeth). Bonus mutations—Improved Senses (hearing and smell only), Improved Speed. -1 mutation point.

Wolverine (Mammal, small): Bonus mutation—Improved Natural Attack (claws, teeth). -2 mutation points.