

WISDOM FROM THE WASTELANDS

Issue #16:
Robots Part 2



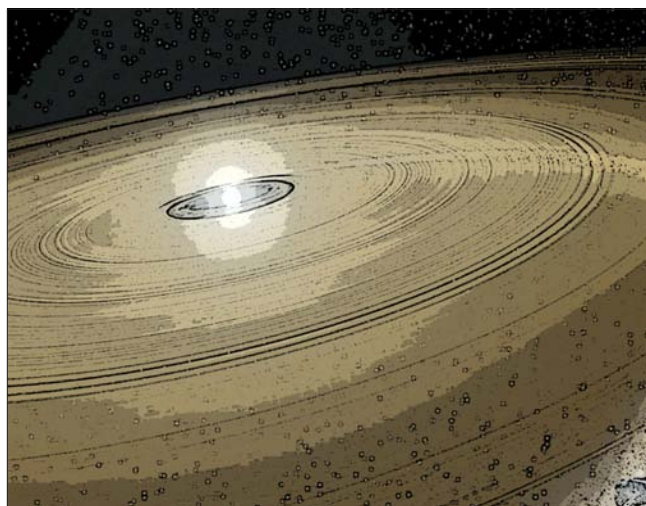
By Derek Holland and the Skirmisher Game Development Group

Robots are just as important to *Mutant Future* as biological creatures. They can be antagonists, sources of information, or even slave labor. In this second installment of four robot-themed issues there are eight new robots, as well as several new accessories, a new weapon, and a new form of locomotion. Only a few of the machines in this article have precise dimensions; the examples here are intended as *types*, not specific models. Mutant Lords are encouraged to customize their machines, and provide fine details to fit their settings.

Flying Film

A 45' diameter disc, the flying film was Ancients' version of the bard. The robot would search out paying customers and provide them with interactive entertainment and news holograms. The users would either walk below or upon the robot, depending on the model. In the *Mutant Future* world, they are even more important because each acts as a lifeline of information between many communities and prevents language drift. A few mad flying films use their abilities to hypnotize and dominate people, or spread false information and drive people to their doom.

Hit Dice: 10
Frame: Armature
Locomotion: Inductor [300' (100')]
Manipulators: 4 Basic Hands
Armor: Duraplastic (AC 5)
Sensors: Nerve Web
Mental Programming: AI



Accessories: Vocalizer, Holo Screen, Tool Mount, Self Repair Unit
Weaponry: None

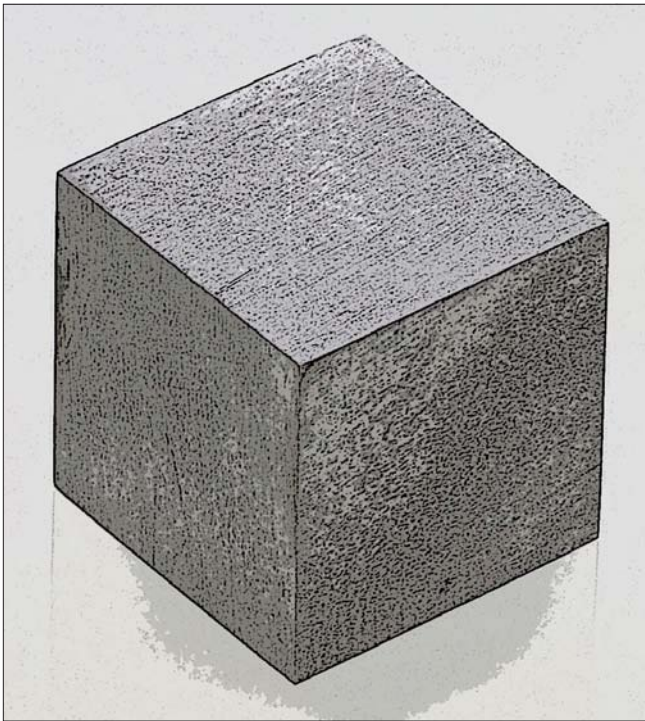
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Gravbot

The Ancients used gravity manipulation extensively for controlling the weather, producing art, and creating a more Earth-like environment in the off-world colonies. A large part of what made these things possible was the invention of gravbots, flying boxes able to change gravity. Some of these robots redirected rivers to flow through the air, some kept the floating cities flying, while others made possible mantle-deep mines, and then there were those that juggled objects for peoples' amusement. Gravbots are dumb as stones: they were controlled remotely and then kept doing their last command until they ran out of power. Also, the only way they could be dangerous is if someone encountered a

This publication is dedicated to providing useful information, game content, and ideas to players of modern, science fiction, and post-apocalyptic table-top and role-playing games in general and to fans of Goblinoid Games' *Mutant Future* RPG in particular. The material contained herein are compatible with it and any others that use the "Basic" system introduced in the most popular role-playing games of the early 1970s and are easily adaptable to many other games (especially successor systems, to include those covered by the Open Game License).



reactivated unit and wandered into an active gravity field much different than the Earth's. People might fly off the planet or be squashed flat.

Hit Dice: 25
Frame: Armature
Locomotion: Magnetic Drive [180' (60')] (new)
Manipulators: None
Armor: Reactive Armor (AC 1)
Sensors: Class III
Mental
Programming: Basic Programming
Accessories: Remcon, Gravity Manipulator (new)
Weaponry: None

Lumber Cutter (Tree Eater)

These robots were developed in response to earlier pharm crop or geoengineering programs that allowed the release of poorly understood genetically-engineered plants. Lumber cutters are programmed to stay in a specific area and kill any plants not in their databanks. They collect genetic samples and then produce tailored herbicides that soak into the soil and prevent a seed bank from forming. They used to spread seeds given to them by their original operators, but that was long ago.

Tree eaters are 10' tall and 20' long with 10 legs. To cull plants, the robots have 10 30'-long tentacles with cutting surfaces, and four basic hands that can pluck seedlings or take genetic samples. In the current era, lumber cutters find their job difficult. As their old-world charges die off, the lands they patrol have are losing species diversity; as mutant plants arrive, the robots' work comes under assault. Speaking plants confuse tree eaters, but culling them would only provide a moral conundrum if the robots had AIs.

Hit Dice: 30
Frame: Armature
Locomotion: 10 Legs [240' (80')]
Manipulators: 4 Basic Hands
Armor: Duralloy (AC 3)
Sensors: Class IV
Mental
Programming: Ecological Programming
Accessories: Vocalizer, DNA Scanner (new)
Weaponry: 10 Cutting Tentacles (reach 30', damage 4d12), Herbicide Spray (range 5', damage [to plants only] death/4d8)

Mad Laboratory

In the Ancients' world, research robots were commonplace, monitoring air, soil, and water quality, or studying ecology, geology, astronomy, and even psychology. With the fall of civilization, most of these machines went insane; they could not understand the new world because it is so different. Some continue their studies, but most attempt to impose their version of order upon the world. Generalizing this type of robot is difficult mostly because each is an individual in thought and action, but many have also had to alter themselves as their parts failed and replacements became impossible to find. Mad laboratories are a great source of information on their particular area of expertise, but surviving an encounter with them can be difficult.

Hit Dice: 15
Frame: Armature
Locomotion: 8 Legs [180' (60')]
Manipulators: 10 Basic Hands, 4 Advanced Hands, 10 Various Tools and Probes
Armor: Duraplastic (AC 5)
Sensors: Class VI and Nerve Web
Mental
Programming: AI
Accessories: AV Recorder/Transmitter, Vocalizer, Various Scanners, 10 Tool Mounts, plus d6 that relate to field of study
Weaponry: d4 random weapons relating to field of study



Marine Hunter

When the cataclysm approached, many people hid in the oceans. Marine hunters were created to protect national borders as well as find and destroy enemies beneath the waves. In the *Mutant Future* world, as during the Ancients' time, these machines are the top predators in their hunting grounds; some remain in one small area, waiting for the enemy to arrive, while others patrol a border or wander the oceans search for people long dead. These 40' long autonomous submarines move silently through the water by using magnetic drives to push against the Earth's magnetosphere, and are streamlined so that the only holes in the hull are the plasma rifle and torpedo weapon mounts, and the maintenance shaft entrance.

In addition to their longer-range weapons, the hunters are equipped with a charge screen for aggressive close-defense work. Though extremely useful, the screen is a major drain on the robot's resources and can only be used 6 rounds per day. Some hunters have allied with small refueling stations on the ocean floor, which allows them to restock torpedos. Those who do not have such an alliance used up their torpedos long ago and could be running out of power.

Although there is a very limited amount of space inside the hull, intended for repair crew access, these vessels do not have an air supply and are not intended to transport personnel. However, if the riders had gills (either mutations or masks) it would be possible to carry a few passengers.

Hit Dice: 75
Frame: Armature
Locomotion: Magnetic Drive [300' (100'')] (new)
Manipulators: None
Armor: Improved Megatanium (AC -4)
Sensors: Class IV
Mental
Programming: Military Programming
Accessories: 2 Weapon Mounts, Hardened Circuits (new)
Weaponry: 20 Lightning Torpedos (range 2 miles, damage 150), 4 Plasma Rifles (range 150'/450', damage 4d6), Charge Screen (range 50', damage 100) (new)



Medbot/Vetbot

Medicine was extremely advanced and quite accessible among the Ancients, with many different medbot designs of varying capabilities on hand in wealthy homes and wherever people congregated. This particular model was rather sophisticated and, in one round, is able to change between its two forms: a human-looking physician and a spider-like surgeon. It can scan/heal any pure human and most mutant humans, and create all the drugs it needs—as long as it has access to some basic raw materials.

Some medbots went insane, and use these drugs to control, harm, or mutate their patients. In fact, most mad medbots are a source of new mutations and tend to be at the centers of cults that spring up to worship them. The mutants attempt to curry favor and gain magnificent new powers in exchange for sowing death and destruction.

Vetbots look like medbots, have analogous abilities, and can heal most mutant animals. Although both medbots nor vetbots may be able to treat mutants, neither have the ability to remove mutations, as they do not have the laboratory facilities required to engineer the necessary viruses—which is probably a very good thing considering how many insane units inhabit the wastes.

Hit Dice: 5
Frame: Biomorph and Armature
Locomotion: 2 Legs [240' (80'')] (new)
Manipulators: 4 Advanced Hands and 8 Probes
Armor: Duraplastic (AC 5)
Sensors: Nerve Web
Mental
Programming: AI
Accessories: Vocalizer, Medical Scanner (new), Drug Synthesizer (new), Polymorphic Frame (new)
Weaponry: 1 Stunner (range 10', damage stunned for d4 hours)



Nightmarebot

Horror was a popular form of entertainment before the fall and the nightmarebots were one method of scaring the crap out of people for fun. They were used for interactive games, allowed to “hunt” people in specific areas and usually during certain times of the year. The robots used stunners to “eliminate” their targets, who would then be marked with paint or other pigments. The last to be “killed” by the robot would win prizes, as would anyone who actually managed to slay the beast. All nightmarebots have a weakness to specially-designed rifles: just one shot from these firearms and the nightmarebot will shut down for d6 days (or 11 months if the ML wants a recurring monster). The weapons were realistic toys, and otherwise useless; most of them molder in ruins as junk. Treat these special rifles as carbines and consult page 111 in the *Mutant Future* corebook for other stats.

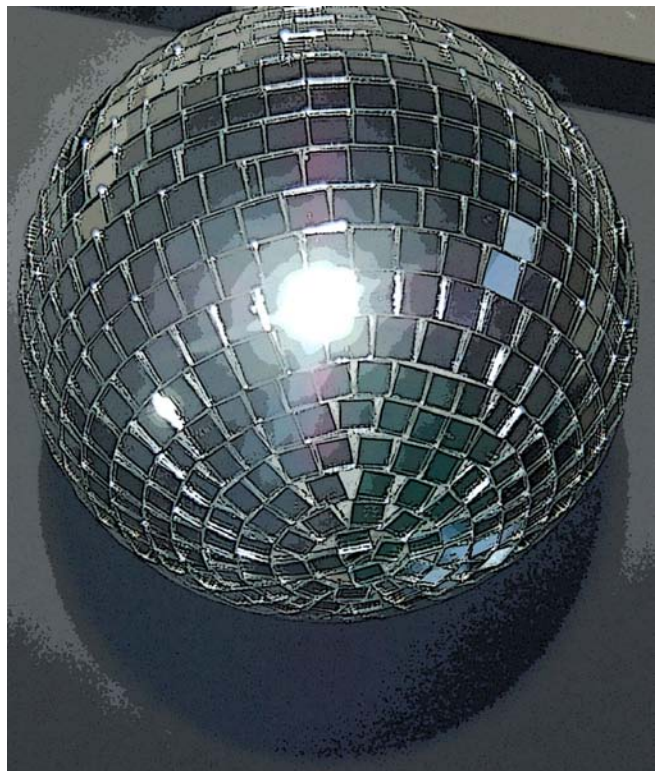
Hit Dice: 20
Frame: Armature and Biomorph
Locomotion: Variable Legs [180' (60)]
Manipulators: 4 Claws (damage 2d6 each), Variable Others
Armor: Duralloy (AC 3)
Sensors: Class V
Mental
Programming: Entertainment Programming

Accessories: AV recorder/transmitter, Vocalizer, Polymorphic Frame (New)
Weaponry: 2 Stunners (range 50', damage stunned for 2d4 rounds)

NuStar

These 50' diameter spheres, covered with flood lights, were created to illuminate large areas, particularly off-world colonies. Using only their own power, fully functional NuStars could provide light to a sphere 1 mile in diameter. If hooked up to a powerbot (see the third installment of the *Wisdom from the Wastelands* Robot series), this increases to 10 miles and everything with eyes in 500' is blinded. A failed save versus death means the blindness is permanent. Artifacts that protect the eyes provide a bonus to the save but, usually, do not prevent the temporary blindness. The wars and passage of time have not been kind to these machines, so currently active NuStars have d% functional flood lights, which is also the percentage brightness currently available (i.e., if the NuStar has 50% of its lights still functioning, the light pool would be 1/2 mile in diameter).

Hit Dice: 25
Frame: Armature
Locomotion: Inductor [600' (200')]
Manipulators: None
Armor: Crystal Carbon Armor (AC 1)
Sensors: Class III
Mental
Programming: Basic Programming
Accessories: Remcon, Flood Lights
Weaponry: None

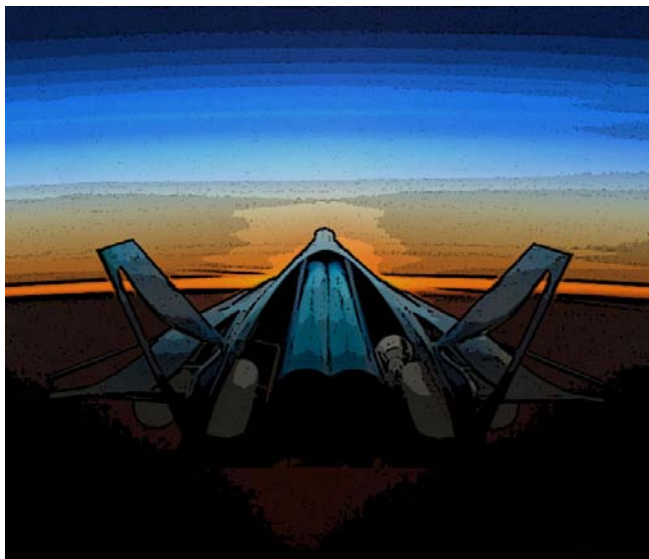


WISDOM FROM THE WASTELANDS

NEW LOCOMOTION

Magnetic Drive

This method of movement uses the Earth's (or other planet's) magnetic field. It repels the robot in the direction the machine wants to travel. The robot flies as though it has an inductor but has no exhaust and is not capable of space flight.



NEW ACCESSORIES

DNA Scanner

This device allows the robot to determine the mutations and traits of sampled organisms. This usually takes 1 round per creature.

Drug Synthesizer

Medbots use these devices to produce medicines. Anything



in the *Mutant Future* corebook's *Advanced Drugs and Chemicals* section (page 125) can be made with the right raw materials.

Gravity Manipulator

This machine can do three things: increase gravity up to ten times normal, reduce gravity to 1/10th normal, or create spots of normal or altered gravity that are not up or down—i.e., sideways or diagonal in a certain direction.

Hardened Circuits

This accessory makes a robot or other machine immune to EMP effects. Some versions also reduce damage from electrical attacks by 1/2.

Medical Scanner

Medbots use these devices to determine the health of their patients. A person must be in contact with the robot for 1 minute for a complete scan.

Polymorphic Frame

Robots with this accessory can change form. Most have two forms to choose from but some machines can have as many as five. Robots that need more than five will have the liquid state frame.

NEW WEAPON

Charge Screen

Charge screens are defensive and do damage to everything within range, which depends on the type of robot. When used in combination with a force field, a charge screen can detonate explosives before they can damage the field and robot. Most charge screens do electrical damage but some do thermal or even radiation.



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Content posted on the site includes material tying in with specific issues of this publication, Chris "Outlander" Van Deelen's ongoing feature on "Monsters from Movies, Games, and other Media," and more!

Just go to <http://skirmisher.com/forum/38> to see everything that is there and to post your own content for other readers.

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