

WISDOM FROM THE WASTELANDS

Issue #10: Monsters
That Improve with Age 2



By Derek Holland and the Skirmisher Game Development Group

The age chart is a powerful tool for Mutant Lords who want to scale monster encounters with the powers and artifacts of the player characters. These charts describe how a creature's characteristics change over its lifespan, using three columns: the age of the creature, its hit dice, and notes. Notes might include damage, mutations, drawbacks, or anything else that affects the creature in and out of combat.

Though the first Age Charts article (*Wisdom from the Wastelands*, issue #2) introduced the basic idea and structure, there are still plenty of other possibilities that go far beyond that starting point. This issue presents example charts for creatures that weaken during the last stages of life, giant creatures (kaiju), plants, and truly odd creatures that go through metamorphoses as they age.

Elder Age Charts

Gageling

No. Enc.:	1 (d6)
Alignment:	Variable
Movement:	120' (40")
Armor Class:	Armor
Hit Dice:	See chart
Attacks:	2 (weapons)
Damage:	By weapon
Save:	L (HD)
Morale:	9
Hoard Class:	VI, XII

Gagelings are sapient creatures descended from humans who were somehow infected with rattlesnake genetic material soon after the cataclysm, and then mutated by hard radiation into several different species. Sometime during this process, the main Gageling species, described here, gained the ability to understand technology just by looking at it. They also developed a smaller pair of arms beneath their main arms, small scales, pointed teeth, and a carnivorous diet. Adult



Gagelings also grow distinctive head crests containing organic wires, which allow telepathic contact. As they age, these wires expand throughout the crests, increasing communication range.

Most members of this Gageling species are ruin scavengers who combine odd bits of junk into useful (if bulky and semi-unreliable) tools and other equipment. Gagelings will trade some gadgets for food and clothing, but most are for their own use and protection. Some people call them "ratters," since the stench of rodent can be nearly overpowering in a Gageling home — the result of skinning and cooking these animals.

Mutations: *aberrant form (extra body parts, xenomorphism), increased sense (hearing), intellectual affinity (tinkerer).*

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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).

Age (Years)	Hit Dice	Notes
0-6	1/2	Non-combatant
7-12	2	Weapon damage -4
13-16	4	Weapon damage -2, gains <i>increased sense (sight)</i> , gains variant of <i>telepathy</i> with range of 1/2 mile
17-24	6	Gains <i>natural armor</i> mutation (AC 6)
25-35	8	Weapon damage +2, increased <i>telepathy</i> range (1 mile)
36-50	10	Increased <i>telepathy</i> range (2 miles)
51-70	7	Loses <i>natural armor</i> mutation, weapon damage -2
71+	3	Loses both <i>increased senses</i> , weapon damage -4, gains increased <i>telepathy</i> range (5 miles)

Uplift Hunter

No. Enc.:	2d4 (4d4)
Alignment:	Neutral
Movement:	180' (60')
Armor Class:	6
Hit Dice:	See chart
Attacks:	1 (bite)
Damage:	See chart
Save:	L (1/2 HD)
Morale:	6 (12 versus uplifts)
Hoard Class:	None

Uplifts were animals modified by the Ancients to possess human-level intelligence and abilities. During the early years of those projects, precautionary regulations ensured the creatures were kept in strict quarantine. These rules were lifted after the uplifts had most of their atavistic behaviors removed, and proved themselves capable of safely entering human society. But, as with any great change, there were some who felt threatened by this—and created the Uplift Hunters as a safeguard. Two groups separately developed different, though mechanically identical, varieties of the creatures from large dogs, such as deerhounds. The government-created Hunters were intended to contain and police, rather than kill; those created by various ideological factions (racist, religious, luddite, and others) were meant to help wipe out uplifts completely.

Although they are also genetically engineered like uplifts, the Hunters are not sapient (so, not uplifts themselves) and can be powerful pets for pure humans. The emphasis on



“pure” humans is important, because mutants of all kinds, even those that are not uplifts, make Hunters tense and aggressive. As they age, the creatures learn new tricks for finding and killing uplifts, with the adults even able to strip mutations from their prey. It is for this reason that Hunters are feared, since otherwise they are fairly weak creatures, intended to assist their masters more by detecting mutants than killing them.

Mutations: *improved sense (smell)*, *know direction*, *increased willpower*.

Age (Years)	Hit Dice	Notes
0-1	1	Bite does d4
2-5	2	Bite does d6, gain <i>unique sense (detect physical mutations, range 500')</i> mutation
6-10	3	Bite does d8, gain <i>unique sense (detect mental mutations, range 500')</i> mutation
11+	2	Bite does d6, gain <i>ancestral form</i> mutation in all bite attacks

Kaiju Age Charts

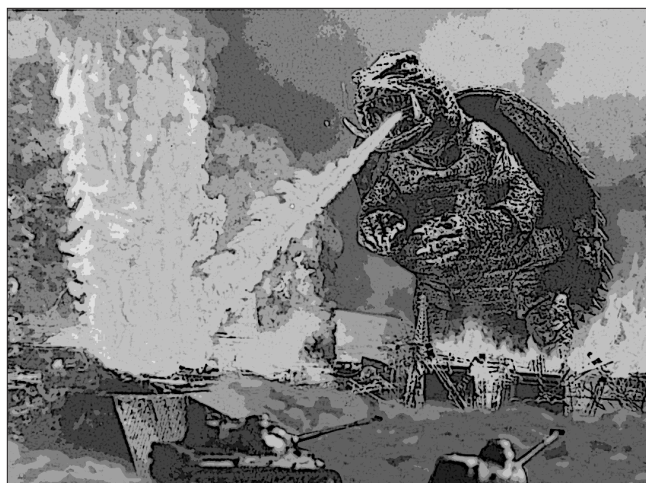
Sun Eater

No. Enc.:	1 (1)	Attacks:	1 or 1 (bite or energy ray)
Alignment:	Neutral	Damage:	See chart
Movement:	120' (40')	Save:	L (HD)
	Swim 300' (100')	Morale:	12
Armor Class:	-2	Hoard Class:	None
Hit Dice:	See chart		

Sun Eaters are the gigantic, intelligent descendants of loggerhead sea turtles, which now terrorize the planet's warm waters, preying on ships as well as other large aquatic monsters and plants. Besides their great size (two feet in diameter per hit die) and strength (they can bite into a ship's hull), these creatures are feared for the powerful beam weapon they can fire from a cranial horn.

Although individual Sun Eaters have different forms of this *energy ray* mutation (see the New Mutations section below for suggestions), all use photosynthesis to charge it — and the more sun they get, the more powerful the heat ray becomes. For each hour of sunlight a Sun Eater is exposed to, double the damage from the beam for the initial attack only. For example, an Eater that has had three hours of light does eight times normal damage for its first beam attack; with four hours exposure, the damage is 16 times normal. Damage from the energy ray then decreases to normal until the Eater can rest and absorb more light. This energy storage is fleeting though: during darkness, or if a Sun Eater dives into deep water, the energy (and damage multiplier) dissipates at the same rate it was collected. The *energy ray* ranges listed in the chart below is for the heat ray fired through the air; halve these underwater.

While finding the corpse of a Sun Eater could make a community very wealthy, since its shell could be adapted to



recharge non-nuclear power cells, even creatures immune to the heat ray are extremely unlikely to hunt these turtles. Hunting for Sun Eater eggs and domesticating the young is possible, if the problem of providing huge amounts of food can be overcome. And, since typical control mutations will not work (the animals are simply too large and powerful), training must be done by hand.

Mutations: *aberrant form (xenomorphism), energy ray, epidermal photosynthesis, gigantism.*

Age (Years)	Hit Dice	Notes
0-15	25	Bite does 5d6, <i>energy ray</i> does 4d10, range 250'
16-50	50	Bite does 5d8, <i>energy ray</i> does 5d12, range 500'
51-100	100	Bite does 6d10, <i>energy ray</i> does 8d12, range 1,000'
101-250	200	Bite does 8d12, <i>energy ray</i> does 10d12, range 1,500', armor class decreases to -6
251+	500	Bite does 10d10, <i>energy ray</i> does 15d12, range 2,500'

Smoking Ruin

No. Enc.:	1 (1)
Alignment:	Neutral
Movement:	180' (60')
Armor Class:	2
Hit Dice:	See chart
Attacks:	1 (bite)
Damage:	See chart
Save:	L (HD) -1
Morale:	11
Hoard Class:	XXII

Smoking Ruins are massive serpents (4-5' long per hit die) that live in demolished cities and large complexes. They are named for the great clouds of smoke they produce, which are so dense they block most kinds of vision. However, this does not hamper the creatures, which are blind and rely on

smell or hearing to find food. The smoke is also a breathing hazard: anything within the cloud without protective gear must save versus poison or suffocate to death within d6+4 rounds. Those who leave the cloud before dying will survive, but will be unable to do anything but walk for d4 turns. Smoking Ruins are obvious, because they can be seen or smelled from as far away as the smoke travels, and cannot hide their presence like other kaiju, who often disguise themselves as hills. Although they eat mainly plants and trees, Smoking Ruins are omnivores, happy to track down and eat explorers attempting to scavenge the ruins the serpents claim as home. As parthenogenic females, they require no mate, and produce one young per decade. The offspring are allowed to live in another part of the ruin as long as there is enough food for both parent and spawn.

Mutations: *gigantism, increased sense (hearing, smell, touch), sensory deficiency (blind), special (smoke generation).*

Age (Years)	Hit Dice	Notes
0-25	10	Bite does 3d6, cloud is 50' in diameter
26-75	25	Bite does 5d6, cloud is 150' in diameter, armor class decreases to 0
76-150	50	Bite does 7d6, cloud is 250' in diameter
151-250	75	Bite does 9d6, cloud is 500' in diameter
251+	100	Bite does 12d6, cloud is 750' in diameter

Plant Age Charts

Slick Vine

No. Enc.:	d4 (d4)
Alignment:	Neutral
Movement:	Swim 90' (30')
Armor Class:	5
Hit Dice:	See chart
Attacks:	1 (slam)
Damage:	See chart
Save:	L (1/2 HD)
Morale:	8
Hoard Class:	None

Before the final wars, the Ancients designed intelligent machines to take over conservation work. After the apocalypse, the survivors forgot this failed mission to protect the planet, but the machines soldiered on and began acting on their own initiative. Slick Vines were one ironic result, an engineered plant species created by the unsupervised machines to feed and maintain other, dying, engineered species: pollution-eating fish, birds, and oozes that had begun to starve in the cleaner environment.

The Vines are marine plants and reproduce through division as bits break off, float away, and start to regrow into masses up to 50' long and weighing 75 pounds. They work by capturing other organisms, both plant and animal, and



turning them into oil, with the resulting slicks' diameter equal to 10' per consumed hit die (e.g., a 2-hit die creature provides a 20-foot diameter slick). Smaller Vines are forced to make smaller slicks because they do not have the organ capacity to convert all the prey into oil. The oil is a class 1 poison that is difficult to remove, requiring lots of soap or EP technology, and causes damage every round until cleaned off. Some communities "farm" Slick Vines, using the oil for fuel or flamethrower ammunition, or keep floating Vine masses in place to "mine" nearby waters, driving off pirates with fire.

Mutations: *chemical gland (new), natural armor (plant).*

Age (Months)	Hit Dice	Notes
0-1	2	Damage is d4, slick is up to 50' in diameter
2-5	3	Damage is d6, slick is up to 100' in diameter
6-10	4	Damage is d8, slick is up to 250' in diameter
11-15	5	Damage is d10, slick is up to 500' in diameter
16+	6	Damage is d12, slick is up to 1,000' in diameter

Tap Root

No. Enc.:	0 (1)
Alignment:	Neutral
Movement:	0'
Armor Class:	5
Hit Dice:	See chart
Attacks:	2 per trunk (branches)
Damage:	d6 to 2d6 (see description)
Save:	L (1/2 HD +1)
Morale:	11
Hoard Class:	XII

Tap Roots are mutant aspen trees that grow multiple trunks



from the same root system. An aspen forest could result from one huge Tap Root, or several smaller ones. The plants are fairly docile and will not attack unless they suffer damage. Trunks grow up to 80' tall and each has 5-25 hit dice of its own. Those with 5-10 hit dice do d6/d6 points of damage. Those with 11-20 hit dice do d10/d10 points of damage. Those with 21-25 hit dice do 2d6/2d6 points of damage. To permanently destroy a Tap Root requires a class 15 or better poison (herbicide), or ripping up and burning all the roots (which could take months for a huge Root system). Should just the trunks be destroyed, the Root simply grows more.

Mutations: *natural armor (plant), natural vegetable weapon, regenerative capacity.*

Age (Years)	Hit Dice of Root	Notes
0-5	5	One trunk
10-25	10	Three trunks
26-50	25	10 trunks
51-100	50	25 trunks
101-150	100	100 trunks
151-200	250	500 trunks
201-250	500	1,000 trunks
250+	1,000	5,000 trunks

Other Age Chart

Bad Juju Cow

No. Enc.:	3d6 (0)
Alignment:	Neutral
Movement:	120' (40')
Armor Class:	6
Hit Dice:	See chart
Attacks:	1 (gore)
Damage:	See chart
Save:	L (1/2 HD)
Morale:	12
Hoard Class:	None



Despite adults weighing over a thousand pounds and having large horns, these herbivores do not seem very physically threatening. But, Bad Juju Cattle are able to affect probability, so anything foolish enough to attack them will suffer for their efforts. Young Cattle are not especially dangerous, but those over a year old can cause catastrophes. In addition to being larger and more powerful, bulls are even more likely to cause serious trouble (+25% on effects chance roll).

Minor effects are things like falling prone, or dropping

a weapon. Moderate effects include a power cell becoming drained, falling and suffering d6 points of damage, or breaking a melee weapon. Major effects include falling and suffering 3d6 points of damage, ranged weapons breaking, or attracting a large predator. Catastrophic effects include everything from a laser rifle exploding to the *natural armor* mutation failing (i.e. the mutant's shell falls off). A save versus death negates or halves the effects (ML's decision).

Mutations: *special*.

Age (Months)	Hit Dice	Notes
0-4	1	Gore damage is d6 (d8 bull), there is a 15% chance of minor effects per attack on the cow
5-8	2	Gore damage is d8 (d10 bull), there is a 25% chance of moderate effects per attack on the cow
9-12	3	Gore damage is d10 (2d6 bull), there is a 50% chance of major effects per attack on the cow
13+	4	Gore damage is d12 (4d4 bull), there is a 65% chance of catastrophic effects per attack on the cow.

NEW MUTATIONS

Chemical Gland

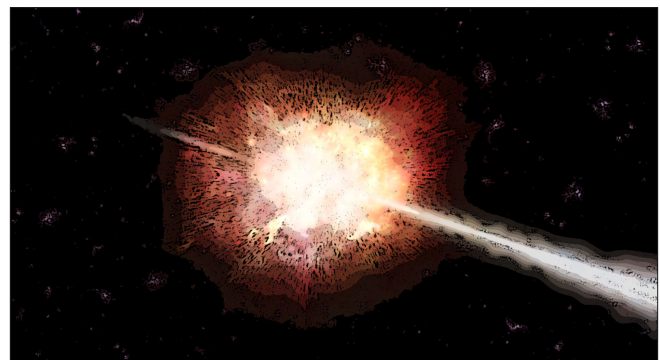
The mutant has a new organ allowing it to produce one substance. This material could be industrial (like glue), medicinal (like stim-shot A), or a toxin, etc. The GM and player must work together to decide which substance is created. The number of doses produced per day equals three plus the mutant's power score modifier, with a minimum of one dose.

Energy Ray Variants

Coherence Beam: A form of *energy ray* that uses visible light. The target takes 3d6 points of heat damage and must save versus poison or be blinded for d6 minutes.

Energy Helix: The mutant produces an *energy ray* that moves like a corkscrew. If used correctly, it can bypass cover. Any use requires a to hit roll and does only 2d6 points of damage. Attacking someone behind cover, which must be no wider than 10', induces a -4 penalty to the roll. Otherwise, this is identical to *energy ray*.

Oscillating Ray: The mutant produces an *energy ray* that goes up and down the electromagnetic spectrum. When the wavelength most damaging to the target is reached, it stays there. In game terms, this means the mutant must hit



the target d4+1 times, doing d6 points of damage each time. Once that number of hits is reached, the damage becomes 6d6 points. Unlike the normal *energy ray*, the oscillating ray can be used every round.

X-Ray Beam: This *energy ray* can pass through some objects without harming them. Though this applies mostly to stone, concrete, and other mineral-based objects, the ML may decide others are also unaffected.

Loss of Trait (D)

The mutant has lost a mutation or species trait that is not vital to survival.

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