

Palladium Books® Presents:

Rifts® Bestiary™

Volume One

By Kevin Siembieda and Others

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Violence, War, Magic & the Supernatural

The fictional worlds of **Rifts®** are violent, deadly and filled with aliens, war and supernatural monsters. Other-dimensional beings often referred to as “demons” torment, stalk and prey on humans. Alien life forms, monsters, vampires, ghosts, ancient gods and demigods, as well as magic, insanity, psychic powers and combat are all elements in this book. *All of it is fiction.*

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Rifts® Bestiary™, Volume One
is an epic sourcebook for **Rifts®** and the **Megaverse®**

Dedication

To Charles “Chuck” Walton. A cohort in creature creation and unbridled imagination. Artist, confidant, muse, and friend.

– Kevin Siembieda, Summer 2019

The cover, by *Charles Walton Jr.* and *Eduardo Dominguez S.*, depicts a furious Corvial Battler giving chase to a pair of adventurers, praying on the run that their teammates come to their rescue. Fast.

PDF Edition – April 2020

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Rifts® Bestiary™

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Written and Created by: **Kevin Siembieda**

Additional Writing and/or Ideas:

**Carmen Bellaire
Wayne Breaux Jr.
Matthew Clements
C.J. Carella
Carl Gleba**

**Chris Kornmann
Peter Murphy
Patrick Nowak
Charles Walton Jr.
Todd Yoho**

Editors:

**Alex Marciniszyn
Wayne Smith**

Proofreader: **Julius Rosenstein**

Interior Artists:

**Robert Atkins
Nick Bradshaw
Wayne Breaux Jr.
Kent Burles
Michael Dubisch
Scott Johnson
Jim Lawson
Kevin Long
Martin McKenna
Michael Mumah
Apollo Okamura
Ramon K. Perez Jr.
R.K. Post
Jeffrey Russell
Kevin Siembieda
Charles “Chuck” Walton Jr.
Michael Wilson**

Cover Illustration:

**Charles “Chuck” Walton Jr.
Eduardo Dominguez S.**

Art Direction: **Kevin Siembieda**

Typography and Layout: **Wayne Smith**

Maps: **Wayne Smith** and **Kevin Siembieda**

Based on the RPG rules, writings, characters, settings, concepts and Megaverse® created by **Kevin Siembieda**.

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– *Kevin Siembieda, July, 2019*

Megaverse® Insiders

Inside Help

Affexion, Matthew Betverdeh, Stephan Betverdeh, Matt Burch, Peter Holmes, Alexander Horrace, Jessica Horrace, Robert Horrace, Adam Hutchens, Frank Loose, Daniel Luna, Wayne Maynard, Richard T. Moreno, Kyle Osterberg, Mike Pyatt, Matt Reed, Robert Slaughter, Robert Slaughter Jr., Ervine Julia Villanueva, Jared Villanueva Dauag, Jewel Sky Villanueva, Jhowhelle Sledge Villanueva, Wayne Walter Waldmann, Zakk Werner, Barry Wright, Mike X

In Memoriam

MSG J. Michael Akins, Wayne “Rogue 7” Benson, Brenda Casavant, Etienne Casavant, Marie Casavant, Michael Fantin, Jeremy Fox, Charles “CJ” Frederick, Tina B. Harris, James Allyn Horrace, Chad Howard, David T. Jermyn, Shayne Loizides, Joshua Newton, Colin Osterberg, Maria Rafaat, Steven Raver, Erick Wujcik

A Real Character Tribute

General Claw, Jedrious Drækendørfer, Dr. John Dynamic, Honaw “Bear” Hope, Kerry Havern AKA “Clank”, Mr. Jays, Radical Larry, Mack-33, MadMex Macias, Vincent Taylor’s “Regulators”

Cyber-Insiders

John V. Adams, Sabrina Akins, Edward Arias, Nathaniel Baker, Marc Breaker, James “Sgt. Mushroom” Briggs, Larry Brown, Brent Burnett, Renato Caputo, Bruno Cerbelaud, Cameron Cleveland, Willys Cortez, Greg Diaczyk, James Diefenderfer, Phillip Dill, Bryan Downing, Peter DuBois, Elder Black Eagle, Michael Estrada, Dewey Feltz, Tony Ferrannini, Allan Fierro, Andrew Gillespie, Dan Gimelli, Travis Guerrero, Roger Harvell, Alexander Heck, Eric J. Heckathorn, Ian Herbert, Jeff Jensen, Alan Jones, Chris Kluge, James Koski, Terrance Labriola, Glenn Lints, Evan Lusky, Chris M., Joseph MacIsaac, Sean Masters AKA Beacon, Jeffrey Meyer, Chris Miller, J. Moran, Steph Morency, Christopher Murray, Aaron Nelson, Matthew Newton, Jim O, Steve O’Brien, Joseph Olewnicki, Monica Paprocki, Primeval Atom, Curtis Ricker, Tim Robertson, Adam Rootsey, James S., Erich Schleper, Jesse Seaton, William Shuster, Trent Slater, Mike “Laserburn” Smith, SPL, Will Sproul, C.J. Stott, Charles Taylor, Todd Torkelson, Tom Weatherly, Che Webster, Dustin Wentworth, H. E. Werkheiser, Thomas Winningham, Jeff Young

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Chesser, Donald Cleary, David J. Coker, Rodney Culpepper, DarkFlite, Jeremy Dore, Jeff Farrar, Cory “DM Cojo” Gahsman, Paul Herbert, Mark Holtzapple, Jerkface, Tracy Kohlstedt, Chad Lasecki, Adrian Levine, Dr. Eric C. Lovely, Michael A. Macias, Jason Martin, Jeff Meadows, Chris Miller, Evan Oden-sky, James Phillips, Chris Porter, Prof. Mathew A. Powers, Jesse L. Reed, Curtis Ricker, Albert Rosado, Daniel B. Schaefer, Stephen Schneider, Timothy Shepherd, Steven T. Thomson, Jared Lee Trulock, Nicky Warren

Crimson Beast Insiders

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Alekzandyr, Dylon Amerasinghe, JD Chapman, Timothy L. Dixon, Timothy Gilhool, Joshua L. Harris, Hendrik Härterich, Dennis Hughes, Alton Lawson, Donovan Pan-kratz, Victor Peterson, Benoit Provencher, Peter Schlott, Charles Viaud, L. Allen Wallis, Michael David Walters, Matt “Catapult” Wang

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Brent Casavant, David Cowden, Peter Dorney, Robb Dunn, Martin Eichman, Marc Ferrari, Andy Fundingier, Andy Gammons, Andrew Grimes, Kendrick Hudon, John Kallil, Dennis Kelley, Derrick “Omote” Landwehr, Branden Loizides, Ryan Mahoney, David Nemoseck, Richard J. Perez, A. Martin Peterson, Peter Porcaro Jr., Ryan Rawlings, Ammon Redman, Chris Shackelford, Michael Silva, David Snell (aka: Fillibar), Robert Steiner, Aaron Terwilliger, Chad Trantham, Wayne Walter Waldmann

Ultimate Insiders

Kevin M. Barnes, Daniel Bearce, Jim & Jessica Beutler, Spike E. Dog, Jason Dvorchak, Dr. Matthew Eagles, Brett Easterbrook, Daniel Frederick, Jason Gunter, Peter Hire, Chris Isberg, Jason Jarrell, Kenny Johnson, Tim Krason, James Lowman, Jason Mendoza, Father Morpheus, Douglas Rood, Edward Sauerland, Jeff Smithcamp, Jerome Thielen, John Williams

Benefactors

Annatherin, Derek R. Boudreaux, Jeremy Bryie, John Dorch, Ryan Fuerst, Chris Gravel, Joshua Hill, Todd Spenceley, J. Patrick Walker, Brad Whitcomb

Ultimate Benefactor

Federico Franceschi

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Erin Tarn on the Savage Wilderness

Rifts Earth is a living environment, with flora and fauna from a thousand different alien worlds.

I sometimes think that future generations and even people of our own present day will never understand how we live or what our world here, on the old American continent, is like. Every place, every continent, sometimes the corner around the block, is a completely different world unto itself. None of us, not even those of us educated in such things, can truly imagine the idyllic life of our ancestors before the Great Cataclysm and the Coming of the Rifts.

Here, in what was once the American, Canadian and Mexican Empires, we huddle in safe haven communities afraid to stray from their sheltering walls and borders.

You hear about the Coalition States, Northern Gun, the Manistique Imperium, the Federation of Magic, Tolkeen, Free Quebec, Lazlo, the Pecos Empire, Kingsdale and other population centers, and must think our countryside is positively tamed and safe. You hear about grand cities and populations numbering in the tens of thousands, and even millions of citizens in the case of the Coalition States, and you think, surely they must have conquered the wilderness and slain all of the monsters. If only that were so. I'm afraid nothing is further from the truth.

These places, even the sprawling technological cities, are tiny oases of comparative safety, surrounded by what I like to call the **Savage Wilderness**. Unmapped and ever-changing wild lands, filled with terrible beasts and monsters from the Rifts. Even the mighty Coalition States and their much vaunted technological army reigns over vast expanses of hostile wilderness that they neither truly control nor do they know what exactly lurks within their shadowy confines.

There are no open highways and lampposts of old, or roads anew that offer safe passage from one cluster of humanity to

another. All are traveled at your own peril. And there is plenty of peril.

The people of fabled Chi-Town, Iron Heart and other Coalition "fortress cities," hide behind towering walls and crowded skyscrapers made of thick Mega-Damage steel and concrete. Battle stations and weapon towers are everywhere. The skies over the fortress cities are filled with armed Sky Cycles, SAMAS and other combat vehicles, patrolling not just the perimeter of the city, but the skies overhead and the streets below. They are joined by troops on the ground, law enforcement and soldiers, who guard their community around the clock. They do this for a reason: Our world is endlessly dangerous and no place is safe.

Inside these fortified cities, whether protected by technology or magic, or both, life is comparatively safe for its inhabitants. At least safe from most simple-minded animals and monsters. That's why people flock to the Chi-Town 'Burbs despite their deplorable conditions. It's why they endure the unfair rules and laws of the Coalition States and the festering urban jungle that is the 'Burbs. Because life in the tangle of streets and squalid alleys of these crime-ridden tent cities and refugee camps are safer and better than living almost anywhere else. Certainly better than trying to survive in a wilderness village or town. Trust me, I know. I was born in a little farm village in what was once the State of Iowa. That's why other people also flock to Tolkeen or Lazlo, or join the Federation of Magic, for protection. Protection by armed troops, technology and magic.

It's why small independent communities always have a protector or group of champions, mercenaries or lawmen. And why some people accept being ruled and protected by an evil dragon, coven of witches, Necromancer or vampires whether they treat them kindly or oppress them. In such cases, it doesn't matter whether the residents agree with the politics or rules of their

protector. They have to accept whatever such a powerful tyrant may impose, because they have no means to oppose him, and life is probably safer, if not better, to have him or them and their protection, than nothing at all. In many cases, a town's champion or protectors may be the only thing that keeps them safe from the wild animals and dangerous people that live in the Savage Wilderness just beyond their doorstep. At least until some new group rides into town and decides to take it for themselves.

These communities, even our biggest and grandest, are nothing like what our ancestors knew before the Great Cataclysm and the Coming of the Rifts. Our towns and cities are armed camps and tiny specks of civilization surrounded by the dense wilderness and the unknown lurking beneath its branches.

Unknown because unlike the days of our ancestors, we cannot truly map or know what lies beyond the first row of trees. The Rifts and blue ribbons of ley lines are forces at work to constantly change our world. Sometimes our very reality. Even during the quietest of times, we never know what new predators and D-Bees, or magic and hostile army, have moved into the neighboring wilderness.

It is worse along the ley lines. Whenever I walk along a ley line, I swear I can feel the enchantment in the air. The flowers and trees seem to be a deeper green, and the air sparkles with light and energy as if walking along a rainbow. These glowing rivers of magic energy are usually a mile (1.6 km) or more wide, and may run for just a mile or two or stretch on for as far as the eye can see. Here the fabric of our world, our reality, is tissue paper thin. Allowing creatures from an alien existence to easily tear through the fragile dimensional fabric and enter into our world.

Where two or more rivers of glistening blue magic cross, doorways to an endless array of alien worlds and supernatural realms open and close as easily as changing the frequency on a radio. As if this weren't trouble enough, people with the right know-how deliberately create and open Rifts to travel across our world or to cross the threshold of one reality to enter another. No matter how skilled the mage or dimensional traveler, you never know what you may unleash into our world whenever a Rift is opened. Anything might walk through the doorway you just opened, just as flies and mosquitos scoot inside your house when you leave your door or window open for more than a second. I am told that at least a few invisible Entities sneak through the dimensional gate every time a Rift tears through space and time. The longer the tear remains open, the greater the number of new, alien or supernatural life forms enter our world. New animals, people, magic, and strange energy that didn't exist just moments earlier slip through that open door. Sometimes a few. Other times in thronging multitudes. Each one representing a potential resource, new danger or enemy.

I have seen entire forests and prairies replaced by an alien landscape: a desert, pillars of stone, a forest filled with strange plants and animals never before seen on our planet, and others replacing whatever was there before it. Alien vistas that may last for days, weeks, months, years or centuries, or which may be gone by nightfall. An entire area of land replaced by something new and otherworldly.

Even when our natural landscape remains as we have always known it to be – if there is such a thing anymore, I honestly don't know – it may be inhabited by people or animals not of our world. Some beautiful and wondrous, others living nightmares. Things that have climbed, run or soared out of a dimensional Rift. Creatures that, even if benign or friendly, could disrupt the

existing ecosystem and cause strife and change. Wiping out indigenous animals or plant life. Bringing new diseases or monsters that hunt people.

Dinosaur Swamp is what was once known as the American States of Florida, Georgia and the Carolinas. Some of it would be familiar to our ancestors, but most of it would not. As we all know, even if we haven't seen it with our own eyes, the region is populated by dinosaurs. Animals from our planet's distant past or what scholars and scientists call a "parallel dimension" or "parallel world." A world like our own planet where such animals still exist while those of our Earth perished millions of centuries ago.

But you don't have to look to far away Dinosaur Swamp to see a different world than the one our human ancestors once knew. You need but look out your own window, wherever you live. Your oasis of hope, whether tiny, medium or large, is where you stay huddled. Afraid to venture out beyond what you know. For good reason. We don't know what awaits beyond. We don't know if the forest or meadow we visited yesterday is still a quiet peaceful place, or filled with new danger. Just as we don't now what lurks in the river or where the river may now lead. Every day is a new day. Every day our environment may have been changed by a Rift or magic or by a new invasive species of animal.

So we stay where we know we are safe. Well, where we believe we are safe. Huddled with other people and protected by technology or magic. Hoping they will be enough to protect us from whatever might crawl out of the Savage Wilderness. We believe it when our parents and heroes tell us it is not safe to enter the woods. And pray our protectors, our magic, our technology will be enough to hold back the doom when it creeps out of the wild and into our havens.

I feel horrible writing these words, because I hate that we live in such an uncertain world filled with fear. I don't want to contribute to the existing fear and paranoia. It's fear and hate, after all, that has driven the Coalition States and others who respond to what they don't understand with violence. They have taken fear and uncertainty and weaponized them. Making tyranny, lies and wickedness acceptable if it means we are safe and happy. Or to turn a blind eye to cruelty and injustice, and pretend the outside world or people different from us are not important. I hate it. But fear is a powerful motivator and weapon.

During my many years, I have traveled through the untamed wilderness more times than I can count. For me, it is always an exhilarating and harrowing experience. I always see and learn so much that it is difficult for me to put into words. The lush splendor and exotic creatures I have seen can make you forget about the dangers of your surroundings. There is so much beauty out there, it's breathtaking. There are many times when you get lost in the moment, like when you look upon a rainbow and marvel at its simple splendor, and forget there may be danger just beyond the next tree grove. Shaken back to reality by a roar or belch in the distance. Hopefully, far in the distance. Or by a startled animal bolting away from you in the underbrush.

Whenever traveling in the wilderness, it has been my experience that you try to hurry from one outpost, village, or town, to another, especially as night begins to fall. It's better to stay at an unknown community than to sleep under the stars at night in the wild. Even with a vigilant guard posted, you and your party might fall victim to any number of monsters or animals. I found it ironic that our best protector was always another animal – a dog, a horse, a Dinostang or Riding Lizard – because their keen

senses often detected the approach of a dangerous animal long before it was upon us.

It may sound strange, but we often did without a campfire. If we needed one, to cook food or stay warm, we either kept it small, or went large and kept it burning all night. We would do without a campfire because fire attracts predators, curious animals, and bugs that even if they are not a direct threat to you or your animals, or your supplies, they might attract predators to your location. Beasts that might decide you or your pack animals were a better choice for dinner. We found digging a trench or pit to huddle down into was safer than building a fire or a raising a tent. You are hidden from sight on the horizon, and your scent is dampened by the moist earth. Of course, a trench does not work when in a heavy downpour or a long-lasting rain. I was astonished by how quickly my safe trench collected with water. Regardless of whether you spent the night in a shallow hole, tent, or sleeping bag under the stars, you still have to contend with creepy crawlies. Mainly snakes and insects that might find you and your sleeping accommodations just as warm and cosy as you do. And if you removed your boots, which I found necessary to give my aching feet some comfort, you must shake them out before you put them back on. Otherwise you might be bitten by the bug, spider, snake or little animal that decided to take refuge inside one of them.

I also learned it is best to travel along paths and dirt roads rather than forge your own trail or to go off on your own into uncharted and rugged wilderness. A trail, even if only an animal trail, is faster and presumably safer than plunging into the depths of the unknown. Anything can be lurking behind the next tree or up in the branches of that tree, or circling in the sky overhead. In some woodlands, the tree canopy is alive with animals, birds and insects. In other places, the ground may erupt from underneath you from a burrowing animal that may want to eat you or that is just passing through. Humans and D-Bees are NOT at the top of the food chain in the Savage Wilderness. We are prey to be hunted by more animals than I care to think about. And not just that, but if you go off a nicely worn path or trail that is free of tangles of vegetation, you don't know what the terrain ahead may have in store for you.

Off the beaten path, the land is not flat, manicured and maintained like it is in and around cities and towns. Even traveling villages and mercenary camps are made at the best location, not just anywhere. Out in the wild you travel across lumpy, bumpy ground and deal with all sort of obstacles. Your foot may sink into a mole mound, or you twist your ankle in a groundhog's hole, let alone something terrifying like a Burrower Bruin. Animals aside, there are tangles of weeds and vines, it's easy to trip over stones and fallen tree branches, and even walking through tall grass slows you down and catches your foot. Pushing through vegetation you might suddenly find yourself standing before a ravine, or stream, or mud pit, or crater that requires you to climb down it and back up, or forces you to travel around it. Sometimes vegetation and trees are so thick it is faster and easier to find a way around it than to chop your way through it.

City people like us, and even country folk used to their farms and fields and dirt roads, do not understand how the tangle of vegetation can slow down travel even for cyborgs and those clad in power armor. Dense woods, underbrush, vines and tall grass become an impediment tangling your feet or becoming a wall or field you must chop your way through or go around. Even large animals may be forced to go around such barriers. Walk-

ing through tall grass takes effort, makes noise unless you are moving very slowly, and slows you down. A field of wildflowers is lovely, but traveling through it or any tall grass is akin to trying to run in waist deep water. Stumble and you might fall prey to a wild animal, or sprain an ankle or break a limb, hobbling travel further. Carry too much bulky gear and you are constantly snagging on something and getting jerked and pulled, or stuck on something. Again, slowing travel and making noise. Noise that may scare away game animals you may be hunting or attract a dangerous animal or bushwhacking lowlifes. Something as simple as cutting your way through a woodland path makes noise. And you don't want to do that. Noise and commotion attracts the attention of animals and monsters, or people in the area. Attention you probably don't want from any of them.

Be warned, there are plenty of animals that are invisible as they prowl or lurk in the tall grass until you are nearly on top of them. Many a time was I startled by a fleeing rabbit, coyote or pheasant bolting from its hiding place in the grass or weeds. And just as many times there was a dangerous predator lurking, watching, waiting to pounce should it get the chance.

Ravines, dirt mounds, boulders, wreckage, abandoned vehicles, loose rocks, toppled trees, dense vegetation, marshland, a pond, a river, a grove of standing trees that form a barrier, to overflowing rivers and flood plains are all common and frequent obstacles that may force you to change course, sending you into the unknown and in a direction you had not intended. Or it may force you to camp so you can scout ahead several miles before your entire party can move on. I quickly learned not all dangerous animals are predators. Some are so large they may hurt you by accident. It's ironic to be trampled by a herd of animals trying to flee from you, but you are still injured or dead. Or perhaps you are attacked by the herd's protector trying to defend its flock, or a parent charges because it thinks it needs to protect its young from you, even though you have no intention of harming any of them. On one excursion, we lost precious hours because our native guide, a Psi-Stalker who should have known better, got a little too close to a mammoth Canadian Duckbill. To avoid a pummeling from the giant beast, she took refuge inside our truck, ducking behind the seats. That was not good enough for the Duckbill. The huge creature leapt onto the roof of our vehicle and stomped, and squawked, and put up such a fuss that we were certain the entire world must know our location. When it decided it had taught her it was the boss, it leapt down and thundered off to join its mate and young. A display that had blown all the tires and broken the axle of our truck. Not a good day.

All reasons why I think of permanent communities, be it a farm, town or sprawling city, as *oases of humanity*. Pockets of civilization scattered amidst a seemingly endless wilderness fraught with challenges and danger. And why I'm so glad to live in an age of relative stability. People often look at me like I'm crazy whenever I say that. Oh, they don't usually call me crazy to my face, of course, but I know they are thinking it. I can see it in their startled expressions.

The reason I say that we live in an age of comparative stability, is because we have not endured a cataclysmic event in more than a hundred years. Yes, we have our share of struggles and war, but nothing like the Demon Plagues, invading armies of D-Bees, swarms of monsters, magical upheavals or changing landscapes spoken of in the myths and legends of the **Two Hundred Years Dark Age** that came after the Great Cataclysm. It

has been this absence of constant change and world-shattering events that has enabled humanity to finally exit the Dark Age and rebound enough for us to establish pockets of civilization like Lazlo, the Coalition States, and the Federation of Magic, among others. All rising up, literally, from the ashes of the Great Cataclysm and establishing themselves as footholds of a resurging human civilization. It does my heart good to see a new community sprout up and last for more than a year, because most do not. Places like Arzno, Nowhere, and the Colorado Baronies, and even rogue nations like the bandit ridden Pecos Empire, offer new hope for humans and D-Bees alike.

Wherever we call home, it's all most of us ever know. Even Chi-Town is crammed into a small geographic area surrounded by the unknown. Its citizens, like most communities, never leave the safety of their city. What they know of the outside world is only what they hear from rumors or what they are told by strangers and by their ruler. It was the same for me. As a girl, I grew up in a small farming village. It was a hard, but good life, and my home was a happy place. My childhood a happy time. Mostly. Until tragedy struck.

For a time after that, I lived in a small town near Chi-Town. A dream come true for me, because I could run free through the Library of Chi-Town and read. Read as much as I could. I devoured books and learned about our history before the Coming of the Rifts, but that only made me want to know more about our own modern world.

There in the State of Chi-Town, seat of the recently formed Coalition States, our future seemed grand, yet my world remained surprisingly small. Confusing. Frightening at times. I would see D-Bees and wild animals brought in from the wilds. I would hear countless tales about people and monsters, and exotic places, but the stories about the same people and places were conflicting and often outrageous. Colored by personal experience and bias, or wild exaggeration. It left me to wonder which part of the stories were true.

Not knowing the truth ate at me until I couldn't take it anymore. I needed to know the truth. To see for myself the wonders and perils of the Savage Wilderness and visit as many oases of civilization as I could find.

That's why I continue my long trek across as much as much of our continent as possible. I want to learn, firsthand, what is over the next hill. I try to keep an open mind and to share with you what I have seen and learned in as honest and straightforward a way as I can. I want my exploration and letters to you to help shed light upon the world beyond our own oases of hope. I pray that you find my exodus to be as endlessly fascinating and thrilling as I do, because to me it represents hope. I feel as if the truth has made me stronger and wiser, and I want to share that with you and everyone I can. I especially hope to show you that D-Bees are not so very different from humans, and that there is no reason to fear them as so many people do. Though some are strange and frightening in appearance, I have found most to be charming and loving people with the same hopes and dreams as any of us.

Having said that, I don't encourage just anyone to attempt what I am doing. As thrilling and mind-expanding as my travels and adventures have been, I have lost comrades every step of the way, and I've come close to death myself, more times than I could have ever imagined. But for the grace of God and the sacrifice of others to keep me safe, I would not have survived to keep sending these letters. I have, of course, more details and

sketches in my journals, as well as I don't know how many hours of video. I can't wait for you to see them when I finally get back.

— An Excerpt from Erin Tarn's book,
Traversing Our Modern World; published circa 100 P.A.



Note: *Traversing Our Modern World* is an unauthorized collection of Erin Tarn's notes and letters to an unidentified friend. Presumably a fellow scholar or possibly someone within the Co-

alition States before it became the militant and repressive regime it is today.

The book has been published and sold by the Black Market since at least 100 P.A. An instant bestseller, it has not been out of print since its release. The book is available in various forms of print, audio books (read by a woman who is not the real Erin Tarn), documentary style videos, and most recently, several different filmmakers movies reenacting the fabled historian's journey in serial form like a television series.

Overnight, the release of the book thrust Erin Tarn into the unwanted spotlight of celebrated historian and speaker of truth. A truth that frequently clashes with the rewritten history and propaganda of the Coalition States. This has branding Erin Tarn as a liar and criminal by the CS, and has earned her the dubious honor of *Enemy Number One of the Coalition States*. It is a miracle that Erin has not yet been captured by the CS, put on trial and publicly executed.

As her most popular and widely read book was an unsanctioned publication, an unexpected and unwanted level of fame and infamy was foisted upon the courageous woman. Erin Tarn has not seen any direct financial reward from the many publications of *Traversing Our Modern World*, but she is so beloved and respected by so many, that people in all walks of life gladly help, hide and protect her, even when it threatens their own lives. For many people, meeting the famous Erin Tarn, Speaker of Truth, is considered one of the greatest moments a person can achieve in life.

To her credit, Erin has accepted her fate with courage and aplomb. More than ever she tries to use her voice to help people and to champion truth and justice. When Erin Tarn speaks, everyone listens. Much to the disdain of Coalition leaders who have put a bounty on her head and have the army actively hunting her.

She is a known associate (a dear friend and respected colleague, really) of the ruling council of Lazlo. Beloved and cherished by all citizens of Lazlo, she is rumored to have been given sanctuary by this kingdom of magic and learning, where she is said to teach and reside.

The Rifts® Bestiary™

Welcome to the first in a series of **Rifts® Bestiary™** books. Each a compendium of exotic and otherworldly creatures for the Rifts Earth role-playing game setting. The first two or three volumes focus on the many notable beasts of *Rifts North America* – the United States, Canada and Mexico. Of course, being **Rifts®**, we only spend time on a handful of ordinary animals indigenous to our planet. The vast majority herald from across the Megaverse®. Creatures that have helped to reshape our world into a dangerous, alien landscape.

The Rifts® Bestiary™ series collects the hundreds of amazing creatures scattered across dozens of Rifts® books. Even as the guy who wrote most of the animals in the first place, I didn't realize we had created *hundreds of monsters* until we decided to collect them all for easy reference. Of course, I couldn't stop there with just gathering them all up into a couple of books. The stat blocks

are now standardized and consistent, maps added so you know at a glance where a beast is found, and each creature updated and expanded. Rewritten and, in a few cases, redefined into an easy to use, fun and comprehensive reference guide of "known" monsters and animals of Rifts® Earth. A guide designed for use by both *players* and *Game Masters*.

Familiar beasts. Many of the creatures in the Rifts® Bestiary have appeared in previous World Books and Sourcebooks, but never in such depth and detail. Each description in the Bestiary has been dramatically expanded and updated with a wealth of new information. The stats, abilities, M.D.C., damage capabilities, and expanded descriptions in the **Rifts® Bestiary™** books should be considered the *definitive ones*, and the final word on these beasts.

New creatures from across the Megaverse®. In addition to the creatures you think you know, are numerous new ones that run the full gamut of possibilities. Beasts that crawl, run, fly and swim. Creatures that have value and use for adventurers, and those that hunt and eat people. Some are cute and delightful. Some cute and deadly. Some are friendly and helpful, while others are slobbering monsters or bizarre alien life forms. Every critter designed with *you in mind* to offer players creatures that benefit or offer opportunities, and beasts Game Masters can use to provide players new challenges, surprises, combat situations and avenues of adventure.

I hope you'll be surprised and pleased to find beasts for every setting and environment, and that many of the creatures are not strictly limited to the wilderness. That some have adapted to live and hunt within Rifts Earth's urban environments to stalk pets, livestock and your characters in the streets and alleys of towns and cities. As you might expect, many of these large and alien beasts have developed a taste for human and D-Bee flesh, while others can be tamed and used as guard animals, bloodhounds, riding animals and pets. Some are insects, others dinosaurs, and many are alien nightmares from other worlds thanks to the ever present and shifting Rifts. Wherever they originate, all of these beasts breathe more life and color into the Rifts® setting.

Our goal: To give you a book with more than just snarling, nameless monsters to kill. We give you monsters with attitude and unique behavior. Creatures that make sense and bring something new to the gaming table. Beasts that fit into an ecosystem and offer a wide range of uses and adventure opportunities. Monsters and animals that wow and grab your imagination by the throat. I think we've accomplished that. You be the judge. And enjoy.

– Kevin Siembieda, Writer, Publisher & Monster Maker

What qualified for this book?

The creatures in **Rifts® Bestiary™ Volume One** (and Two) are, with some exceptions, beasts – flesh and blood *animals* – whether that animal has S.D.C. and Hit Points or M.D.C. As an animal, it must be driven by instinct and look like an animal. No D-Bees (dimensional beings with human intelligence and humanoid appearance). And no supernatural beings or intelligent creatures of magic like dragons and Faeries, or ghosts, spirits/Entities or intelligent supernatural beings.

Of course, there are a few exceptions. Creatures that defy easy classification and straddle the line between animal and sentient being. A few beasts, for example, possess near human intelligence, but behave and function *more like an animal* than a human. A creature that looks very much like an animal, but has a level of sentience and awareness that is something more, but does not quite rise to the level of human or D-Bee. In other cases, the

beast may have a bipedal or somewhat humanoid form, as do apes and monkeys, but is driven by instinct and preys upon other animals and people. These include creatures like the *Black-Winged Monster-Men*, *Caterpillar People*, the *Darkhound*, *Devil Unicorn*, *Dragon Ray*, and the *Mothman Monster*, as well as a few that are demonic animals such as the *Death Weaver Spider*, *Demon Bear* and *Demon Beaver*. All are clearly *animalistic monsters* in both appearance and behavior, so they are included in the Bestiary. Ultimately, if the creature seemed more animal than humanoid, it has been included in the **Rifts® Bestiary™ Volume One and Two**. Please note that we anticipate a volume in the future to include supernatural Entities, ghosts, spirits, and demonic supernatural beings, especially if they are not part of a larger pantheon or realm of Hell. We have also been knocking around the idea of a Rifts® Book of Dragons and creatures of magic.



Stat Block Terms & Notes

Rifts® Bestiary™ Volume One (and Two) focuses on creatures of North America – Canada, the United States of America and Mexico – as well as notable sea animals found within its coastal waters. (Deep ocean creatures are not included. See **Rifts® Underseas** and **Lemuria** for them.)

We have standardized the stat block for all animals. Below are the stat block terms and common words used to describe the many beasts.

Name: The name by which the creature is best known.

Also Known As: Other common names by which the creature is known.

Allies: Most animals only see members of its own species as an ally, though there may be other animals that it accepts around it or which it likes to associate with. In some instances, there are other animals or people that the beast likes or accepts as allies.

Remember, Psi-Stalkers, Simvan Monster Riders and Psi-Droids can calm and control, ride and command, many – but not all – animals via their own innate psionic ability and natural empathy with wild animals. An ability that usually makes the animal see them as one of its own, and as a dominant leader, but that does not necessarily mean such a person is the animal's ally/friend.

Alignment: This category is from the perspective of people and how they perceive the animal. Many beasts are considered *Anarchist/Selfish* while predatory animals, man-eaters and those considered to be savage “monsters” are generally considered to be *Miscreant* or *Diabolic* evil. Domesticated and trained animals

often reflect the alignment of their owners/masters/handlers, and may be different than the norm that is common for wild animals. For example, a Miscreant animal that is domesticated and tamed (as much as possible) may have a selfish or good alignment instead of evil.

Attacks per Melee: Varies with each creature. The number listed is for the adult animal. Baby animals typically have only one or two attacks. Juveniles have half the number of the adult (round up). Or as stated under this stat block or elsewhere in the specific animal description.

Attributes and Stats: Animal attributes and other stats are very consistent among animals and offer a smaller range of attribute variation than what you see among humans and D-Bees.

High Animal Intelligence is not the same as human intelligence. The animal cannot learn to read or write or perform mathematics, but is able to understand words and simple commands the same as a dog or horse. (**FYI:** A dog is believed to know nearly 200 words.) Many animals, especially predators, are cunning and know when to be stealthy, hide, retreat, etc., and may be able to recognize a likely trap or ambush, and the danger represented by a weapon or a particular suit of armor, or type of hunter, such as Splugorth Slavers. Very few are smart enough to use simple tools or weapons, or to speak, but some use basic strategies and tactics, and a pack of predators often work as a team.

High Mental Endurance means the animal does not scare easily.

High Mental Affinity means people find the animal to be very appealing for one reason or another; cute, cuddly, charming, and otherwise likeable or desirable.

Physical Strength of the animal. S.D.C. animals are on the same scale as humans. Many monsters and Mega-Damage creatures possess higher levels of P.S.

Supernatural Strength does not mean the creature is, itself, a supernatural being, but rather that it has the strength equivalent of Supernatural Strength. This level of P.S. is common among Mega-Damage creatures and monsters from other worlds. Other animals may have ordinary P.S., the same as humans, or the equivalent of *Augmented* or *Robotic Strength*. Supernatural beings always have Supernatural P.S.

The same applies to *Supernatural P.E.*

Speed indicates how fast an animal can run. Most animals can run much faster than humans and most D-Bees. Unless stated otherwise, the animal can run at its listed speed for 20 to 30 minutes. Animals built for running, such as canines, horses, dinosaurs, and many alien creatures, are the exception and may be able to sustain their running speed 30-60 minutes or even an hour or two.

A *short burst of speed* is a brief increase in speed in which the animal runs at full tilt to either catch prey or escape danger. This is the animal's maximum speed in those short, few minutes. A burst of speed is usually measured in minutes, sometimes less.

A *comfortable trotting speed* is a steady traveling speed over a period of several hours. It is, generally, one third the animal's running speed. A common, trotting pace for most medium to large animals is 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km), sometimes faster, other times slower. Trotting can be maintained for 3-6 hours. Longer for animals built for running, such as canines and horses, among others. Speed levels and how long a run or trot can be maintained is listed in the stats of most animals.

A *comfortable walking speed* for most medium to large animals is 3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km) and can be maintained for 8-12 hours.

Note: A fast walking pace for humans and most D-Bees, without

becoming a jog or trot, is 3-3.5 mph (48 to 5.6). This speed can be maintained by the average person for 1-2 hours before they need to stop and rest. 4-6 hours for people used to doing a lot of walking. A slow, casual walking pace for people is 1-2 mph (1.6 to 3.2 km).

Average Life Span: Varies greatly from animal to animal and is usually 20-30% longer in captivity. This stat typically presents the mating behavior, birth information, when the animal reaches full size and sexual maturity, and related data.

Baby Animal: See Young Animal.

Blood Scent: The smell of blood or decaying carcass/body(s) will attract predators and scavengers. You will notice that most predators and scavengers get a bonus to follow a blood scent/blood trail. To mitigate this, injured people who are cut and bleeding need to stitch wounds (when possible) and bandage the wound to stop the bleeding and reduce the scent. The smell of antiseptics also helps to cover the smell of blood. This helps to avoid attracting new trouble. Animals that smell a hint of blood but see a strong animal or person will think twice about attacking. Most predators are looking for easy prey, and most scavengers will wait until the injured prey actually dies.

Likewise, the sounds of an animal in distress – injured, thrashing about in a trap, wailing, whining – will also attract predators. Also see Noise.

Bonuses: Namely combat bonuses of adult animals, which vary from creature to creature. Don't forget to include the creature's attribute bonuses with the bonuses listed here.

The bonuses of baby and young animals is usually reduced by 70% compared to those of an adult.

The bonuses of juvenile animals is usually half those of an adult.

Carcass: The body of a dead animal is a carcass. A “dressed carcass” is the body of an animal that has been skinned and prepared for butchery and consumption or preservation by people.

Carnivore: A meat-eater that hunts, kills and eats other animals. Sometimes that includes people, pets, cattle and livestock. Most, but not all, carnivores also eat carrion. Many carnivores also scavenge and eat the meat and bones of dead animals, as well as meat scraps and processed meat-based people food.

Carrion: The carcass/body of a dead animal. Scavengers and carrion-eaters feed upon the remains of the dead. Road-kill is carrion.

Carrion-Eaters: These are animals that do not usually hunt and kill prey for themselves. Rather, a carrion-eater is a scavenger that eats the remains of dead animals, including people, left behind by predators or that die from some other cause like disease, starvation, injury, murder, etc. Such scavengers include vultures and buzzards, and some, like hyenas, actually follow larger carnivores and wait until the beast has made the kill and is done eating to pick at the remains of its kill. The boldest carrion-eaters, typically those that run in packs, may try to steal hunks of flesh, a leg, even the whole carcass, and run off with it while the predator is still trying to eat its kill. Many predators such as wolves, coyotes, wild dogs, hawks, eagles, ravens, other animals and insects also feed upon the remains of the dead when they come across it.

Though carrion-eaters are scavengers that do not normally hunt and kill their own prey, they might when an animal, or person, is in a weakened state or near death. A starving scavenger might also attack and try to kill to eat.

Den, Lair, Burrow, Home: Many animals have a “home” – a place where they hole up when they sleep or find shelter during inclement weather and/or to protect young. Some make nests in trees,

others may make a home inside caves, tunnels, ruins, the inside of hollow trees or the wreckage of a vehicle or giant robot, or underneath a bridge or in the rafters of a building, and so on. Many mammals dig a burrow or den underground. This is not just limited to obvious burrowers such as rabbits, moles, groundhogs and badgers, but also bears, wolves and many other animals, especially when a pregnant female is getting close to giving birth. Once the babies are born, the burrow serves as a home and refuge for rearing young.

In most cases, such a den or lair is someplace away from people and not obvious. The entrance is a tight squeeze for the adult animal and often obscured by rocks, a fallen tree, and debris. Someplace that is off the beaten path and in an out of the way, dark corner and difficult to see or gain entrance. Some animals give up the burrow after the young are old enough to keep up, while others make it their permanent lair/den/home.

When a den/lair/burrow is invaded by an intruder, the animal attacks to defend its home and its family just as you would. This is one of the times the animal may fight to the death, especially if protecting its mate, young or fellow pack members. Think about how you would react to an intruder that entered your home. The animal responds similarly and with brute force, tooth and claw.

Dinosaurs: Creatures most people consider to be dinosaurs are either animals from Earth's prehistoric past or beasts from an alien world that look like what we humans consider to be a “dinosaur.” Both are the product of the Rifts. Brought to Rifts Earth via the tears in space and time known as the Rifts. Whether an actual dinosaur from the past or an alien being from another world, most dinosaurs appeared two or three hundred years ago during the Two-Hundred Years Dark Age and have managed to adapt to the post-apocalyptic environment. Today, they are a common part of the landscape. While many can be found across North America, most “dinosaurs” are found in greatest numbers in *Dinosaur Swamp* (Florida and the American Southeast) and the Great Plains of the American *New West, Southwest, Northern Mexico* and parts of Canada, especially *lower, Western Canada*.

Disposition: This stat indicates the animal's common behavior, personality traits and instincts.

Dive: Birds can dive down from above at great speed. Similarly, sea monsters, sea mammals, some fish and other aquatic animals can dive down hundreds, sometimes thousands of feet quickly. In both cases, a dive counts as two attacks (or as indicated in the description). A dive is typically used to attack prey, but sometimes to flee and escape a danger or adversary.

Domesticated Animal: First, not all animals can be tamed or domesticated. In fact, *most* cannot. Some are too wild and too driven by instinct to be tamed. Surprisingly, many plant-eating dinosaurs can be domesticated on par with horses and used in a similar manner as a work animal to plow fields, haul wagons and cargo, and/or as a ponderous riding animal.

A domesticated animal means it has been tamed and conditioned to live and breed among people and depend on people for its survival. Dogs, house cats, horses, donkeys, camels, and cattle are examples of domesticated animals that have, through selective breeding, become notably different than their wild cousins and are used to living with people, and function as work animals, riding animals, pets, or a food source (e.g. chickens, cattle, pigs, sheep, etc.). **Note:** If an animal in this book can be domesticated or trained to be harmless to people, it will state as much in the description or under the **Value** stat.

Some wild animals, such as wild horses, rabbits, some birds, etc., can also be *tamed* and in effect become domesticated, but

often require getting the animal as a baby or at a very young age to do so. Adult animals cannot usually be tamed.

Some wild animals, such as a lion or bear, can never be completely tamed or domesticated. So while its handler or people that it knows, trusts and feels a connection with may be able to command such a *wild beast*, it is never completely domesticated, and usually kept in a cage or pen when it does not have its handler available to control its actions every minute. Ultimately, a tamed wild animal is still driven by its instincts. That means it does not trust strangers and may attack them, it still wants to stalk and kill and that may include pets, livestock and people, and it resorts to its instincts under duress, fighting to kill or running away.

Enemies: As a general rule of thumb, any creature or person that wants to hunt, capture, hurt, kill and eat the animal is an enemy. However, in many cases, an animal has a handful of specific recognized or notable enemies/hunters. People are almost always among them.

Sometimes an animal considers a specific species to be a *natural enemy*; a beast that instinct demands it hunts and kills, or avoids.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Many animals possess abilities similar to people skills such as Climbing, Land Navigation, Prowl, Swimming, Tailing, Tracking and so on. Which skills and the level of skill proficiency depends on the nature of the specific animal and varies from animal to animal.

Fear of Fire: While it is true that many animals are afraid of fire (it burns and causes forest fires that destroy their homes and the environment), some are not. It is also true that in the hostile and savage wildernesses of Rifts Earth, fire signals to many M.D.C. predators as well as bandits and evildoers that people/prey are in the area and can be found where the smoke rises.

Fight or Flight Response: In a nutshell, herbivores usually choose flight, predators fight, but few animals, even the most aggressive predator, will fight to the death unless they are backed in a corner and left with no other choice.

Survival Instinct of Animals: When it comes to animals, most do not share human emotions such as hatred or desire for revenge, or wicked intentions. Most animals, even so-called “monsters,” including predators and big animals, *will NOT fight to the death* unless cornered or defending their mate or their young. Even then, the creature is likely to flee with its mate or young at the first opportunity. This is a simple survival instinct that drives self-preservation. As a result, if prey or an attacker proves to be too strong, too dangerous, or too many, the animals, even predators and monsters as terrifying and powerful as the *Tyrannosaurus Rex* or *Corrival Battler*, give up and flee to lick their wounds and fight another day.

In game terms, this occurs when the animal has lost 50-60% of its M.D.C. (or Hit Points, as the case may be). Sometimes sooner depending on the animal and the situation. That said, if a predator thinks its opposition is weaker, seriously injured, crippled, or near death, it probably continues to fight to make the kill. Game Master discretion.

Predatory carnivores/meat-eaters are always more aggressive than herbivores and may see people as prey. Some may even come to regard people to be easy prey and become so-called “man-eaters.” Predators are always more likely to fight, at least for a time, than to take flight. The larger the predator or the size of the pack, the more they are likely to be unafraid and aggressive toward humans and D-Bees, instinctively knowing they have power in size or numbers. Some animals even use basic strategies and tactics when hunting.

Herbivores/plant-eaters tend to flee and keep their distance from potential danger such as predators, hunters, and people, in general. Most also dislike and avoid loud, noise-making machines and vehicles. The knee-jerk reaction of these animals is *flight*, not fight. However, they fight to defend themselves, a mate and their young, but are usually satisfied with the threat – predator or people – being chased away and keeping their distance, rather than killing them outright. Moreover, most fight only long enough to make their escape. Some herd animals have one or several defenders of the herd, usually males that step out of the herd to approach and chase away perceived threats like predators and people. If attacked, the bulls fight back until the rest of the herd has run a safe distance away and/or the threat has been chased off or neutralized, before rejoining the herd.

Fight to the Death: Unless cornered, protecting young or engulfed by rage, most animals do NOT fight to the death. Also see Fight or Flight, above.

First Appearance: A notation indicating the book where the creature first appeared.

Habitat: Specific geographic regions where the animal is most commonly found, as well as the general environment (e.g. forest, plains, marshlands, desert, mountains, hot environments, cold environments, etc.).

Herbivore: Animals that eat vegetation – grass, leaves, fruit, vegetables, and all too often the food crops of people – are plant-eaters or herbivores.

Hit Points: The Bestiary series focuses mainly on exotic animals and monsters, most of them from beyond the Rifts. Which means the vast majority are Mega-Damage creatures, but not all. Some are Hit Point and S.D.C. creatures. Some creatures have so much S.D.C. they count as minor Mega-Damage creatures that are affected by both S.D.C./Hit Point weapons and M.D.C. The description will indicate when this is the case.

Horror Factor: This is how most humans and D-Bees respond to the creature. Some H.F. may seem higher than they should be based on the power level of the animal. However, some animals like spiders, insects, rats, snakes and other reptiles, have strong psychological impact on people and give them the creeps. That aspect may provide the beast with a higher Horror Factor.

Hunting Instinct: Though there are a few exceptions, animals do not share the same depth of emotions as people. Animals do not kill out of pleasure, hate, love, envy, to steal a possession, or most other emotions and reasons people do. As a rule, they hunt out of necessity – to eat and survive. And they only kill and eat what they need.

As a result, a predator does not usually attack if its belly is full. Most animal predators hunt and attack only when they or their young are hungry, and when they feel threatened and must defend themselves.

An instinctive reaction to fight occurs when the beast is cornered or defending its young or a mate, and sometimes when startled. This means if the animal(s) is not hungry, a predatory feline or pack of wolves or raptors hiding in the shadows among the verdant foliage will let people and animals pass by unmolested, provided they offer no danger to them. When hungry, hurt or cornered, all bets are off.

Insectivore: A predatory animal that eats insects. For example, many bats and some birds are insect-eaters or *insectivores*. On Rifts Earth, that could mean the animal eats ordinary bugs or giant insects, to insect people/insectoids.

Juvenile Animal: Unless stated otherwise, a juvenile is an adolescent animal; not a baby but not a fully matured adult. (By human standards, a teenager.) Juvenile beasts are 50% to 20% smaller and less powerful than a physically mature adult. Reduce their **Size**, **Weight**, **M.D.C.** (round up), the number of **Attacks per Melee** (round up), **Damage** (round down) and **Bonuses** (round down) by half, unless stated otherwise in the description, AND reduce **Speed**, **Endurance**, **leaping distance** and **Equivalent Skill Abilities** by 30%. **Natural abilities** are the same as an adult unless stated otherwise. Animals closer to being physically mature adults may see all the stats, above, reduced by only 20%. Game Master discretion. **Note:** Some animals reach sexual maturity, the ability to impregnate and breed, a year or a few years after physical maturity.

Most juveniles tend to be more curious and reckless, and less confident and aggressive than an adult, though in some cases they are more aggressive. Most juveniles give up the fight and flee when their M.D.C. is reduced by 30-40%.

Magic: Most animals do not possess magic or spell casting abilities, but a few do. These are usually innate abilities in a similar vein to Natural Abilities. Unlike people, the animal cannot learn additional magic spells, nor does it understand the principles of magic.

Man-Eater: This is an animal or monster that has developed a taste for people above all other types of potential prey, and has made them its first choice to hunt and feed upon. Some man-eaters have learned that humans and D-Bees are comparatively easy prey to hunt. Some animals, like the Devil Serpent Tongue, have adapted to living and hunting in urban environments where humanoid prey is abundant, as are places to hide. The abundance of people and the ease of killing ordinary people sometimes attracts aging and injured predators who can no longer chase and catch faster animal prey, so they resort to easier prey, such as picking off lone individuals or slaying drunks, the homeless, the elderly, children and other humanoid prey that cannot put up much of a fight. Some people will tell you this is the case with most man-eaters, but that's not true, especially on Rifts Earth. As noted, some animals develop a preference for human and/or D-Bee prey. Others, like the Devil Unicorn, simply like to hunt and kill humans and D-Bees either for the taste of their meat, their sweet emotions, or for the sheer pleasure of it. Yes, some animals and monsters kill for pleasure. It is rare, but such monsters do exist.

Maps: The maps show you, at a glance, exactly where to find the beast, and show the animal's most common range of habitat. Of course, any of these creatures might be found almost anywhere on Rifts Earth as an escapee from a zoo or a slaver's operation, a gladiatorial arena, or swept away via a dimensional Rift and deposited where they do not normally exist or voluntarily go.

M.D.C. by Location: Small and human-sized animals are likely to only have a listing for Main Body or Main Body and a few other body locations. Large and exotic animals with multiple appendages such as tentacles, arms and legs, wings, tail, etc., may have several listings under M.D.C. by Location.

In all cases, reducing the M.D.C. number of the **Main Body** or the **Head** to zero or less kills the creature regardless of the M.D.C. of other limbs or body locations, unless stated otherwise. To attack the head or specific areas of the body (leg, arm, tail, etc.) often requires a *Called Shot*. Small or difficult targets will indicate a penalty to strike. Usually -3 or -4 to strike.

Natural Abilities: Notable abilities such as being able to leap, fly, Bio-Regenerate, Nightvision, track by scent alone, and so on. Many animals have additional special abilities that are listed and described in detail under this heading.

Noise: The sounds of an animal in distress, injured, trapped, moaning, wailing, or trashing about, is never a good thing. It is likely to attract predators. Likewise, the sounds of battle chase most animals away during the actual conflict. However, predators, scavengers and monsters know that battles leave carrion and injured that are easy to kill and devour. As soon as the sounds of battle are over, they are likely to come to investigate and stalk the battlefield, feasting upon the dead and killing riding animals and the injured. This is especially true if there is a strong scent of blood and death. Smart predators and scavengers (and wilderness people) may also notice vultures and buzzards circling the sky, indicating something dead or dying, and come to investigate. The more buzzards overhead, the bigger the animal or greater the number of dead.

Certain monsters, like the Burrower Bruin, Corvial Battler, Devilsaurus, T-Rex, and others, are attracted to the sounds of combat and may attack during the battle! Picking off people on the fringe or separated from the main group, or tending to the wounded. Likewise, hostile people, enemies, and evildoers may also be attracted to the sounds of battle or distress. They may come to join the battle and kill enemies or to capture slaves, or to rob the survivors, or plunder the battlefield, scavenging valuables from the corpses of the dead and injured.

Omnivore: Humans, apes, pigs, and many other animals are omnivores. Meaning they eat a wide variety of food. Humans, for instance, hunt and raise live animals, kill them and eat them, but also may eat bugs, plants, fruits, nuts, vegetables, and all kinds of processed grain and foods. For omnivorous animals, food may include, to varying degrees, garbage, decaying plants, roots, bulbs, leaves, grass, bark, twigs, insects, rotting meat, carrion, bones and any of the things on the list for humans, above. Being an omnivore improves the animal's survival chances because it is not limited to one particular type of meal. There are some animals and insects, for example, that eat only live prey, or a particular range of plants or even just one or two types of plants or animals.

P.P.E.: Varies. Animals with high P.P.E. may possess special abilities. They are also suitable for use in magic rituals that require a *blood sacrifice*, the killing of an animal (or person) to use its P.P.E. (doubled at the moment of death) to power the magic.

Also see the *P.P.E. Reference Guide* for additional details on the P.P.E. and Hit Points of common S.D.C. animals.

Psionics: But for a few, most animals do not possess psychic abilities. When they do, the beast uses them in the same instinctive way that it uses any ability.

Speak: Most animals do not have the capacity to speak. This is due to both the way they think and their speech organs. Some birds, such as parrots, can mimic human speech. However, there are a handful of creatures from beyond the Rifts that possess near human or low human intelligence, and can understand language to some degree. A few are even able to communicate by speaking simple words and phrases.

Speed Burst: Most animals are able to exhibit a short burst of speed that lasts for one to several minutes. These bursts of speed are for chasing down prey or to make a quick escape. It cannot be maintained for more than a few minutes.

A speed burst can be performed two times an hour, or as often as stated in a specific animal's description. Typically once every 30 minutes, because a speed burst takes a tremendous amount of energy and cannot be performed often. **Note:** Each animal stat block describes the different levels of speed typical for that creature.

Speed: Walking: A brisk walking speed for humans and most D-Bees is 3-3.5 mph (48 to 56 km). A comfortable walking/trot-

ting speed for most ground animals is 3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km). Larger animals and animals built for speed, like horses, may be faster, but even when running, animals instinctively know to pace themselves, varying their speed, up and down, to avoid exhaustion.

Value: If the animal has any recognized market value for its meat, hide, fur, etc., this stat block will indicate what it is.

If an animal can be *domesticated* or trained to be harmless to people and function as a work animal, riding mount, pet, etc., it should state as much under this stat.

Vulnerabilities: Vary. Most animals have their strengths and weaknesses, so a vulnerability may be lack of a Climbing or Swimming ability, or a fear or vulnerability to fire or cold, to being too curious or too aggressive. Unless stated otherwise, Mega-Damage beasts suffer damage from all weapons and attacks that inflict M.D.

Young Animal: Generally, *baby animals* are less than 12 months old, and are small, weak and vulnerable. Reduce their **Size**, **Weight**, **M.D.C.** (round down), the number of **Attacks per Melee** (round down), **Damage** (round down), **Bonuses** (round down), **Speed**, and **Endurance**, by 70%, unless stated otherwise in the description. Reduce **leaping distance** and **Equivalent Skills** by half. Most young animals give up the fight and flee when their M.D.C. is reduced by just 20%.

P.P.E. Reference Guide for Animals

Below are the P.P.E. and typical Hit Points of S.D.C. animals. This is vital information when the animal is attacked by a creature that feeds upon P.P.E. rather than, or in addition to, flesh and blood. P.P.E. vampires are more common among supernatural beings, but some mortal creatures also feed upon P.P.E., Psi-Stalkers and Death Springers, being two examples.

Animals with high P.P.E. levels are also used in magical rituals requiring one or more blood sacrifices to work the magic.

The numbers listed below are for the average, adult creature in that category or species. Baby and young animals (lambs, calves, piglets, chicks, ducklings, etc.) have 50% more P.P.E. than the typical adult animal. And remember, the P.P.E. number doubles at the moment of death, so a bug with half a P.P.E. provides one whole point. These P.P.E. numbers also apply to Blood Sacrifice required by some magic rituals. **Note:** Insects and fish are never used in such rituals. Higher animals are required, and sometimes a specific animal.

Specific animals and monsters described in the **Rifts® Bestiary** books include the P.P.E. for that specific animal.

- Apes - 3D6 P.P.E. – 3D6+4 Hit Points (double H.P. for gorillas).
- Birds, Small (sparrow, wren, etc.) – One P.P.E. – 1D4 Hit Points.
- Birds, Medium to Large/Chicken/Duck/Goose – 1D6 P.P.E. – 1D6+1 Hit Points.
- Birds of Prey – 2D6 P.P.E. – 1D6+8 Hit Points.
- Bug/Insect/Spider larger than a bee, no larger than an index card – Half of one P.P.E. point – One Hit Point.
- Bug, apple-size up to the size of a microwave – 1D4 P.P.E. – 1D6 Hit Points or more.
- Bug, Giant – 1D6 P.P.E. – 5D6 Hit Points or more.
- Canine, Small - 2D4 P.P.E. – 3D6 Hit Points.
- Canine, Large - 3D6 P.P.E. – 4D6+10 Hit Points.
- Canine, Wild/Wolf - 3D6+3 P.P.E. – 5D6+10 Hit Points.
- Cat, Domestic/House Cat – 2D4 P.P.E. – 2D4 Hit Points.
- Cat, Wild Cats (Predator) - 4D4 P.P.E. – 6D6 Hit Points.
- Cat, Wild/Large/African Lion/Tiger - 3D6+1 P.P.E. – 6D6+20 Hit Points.

- Dolphin/Porpoise – 4D6 P.P.E. – 6D6+10 Hit Points
- Fish, Small (at least 6 inches/15 cm long) - One P.P.E. – 1D4 Hit Points.
- Fish, Medium - 1D4 P.P.E. – 2D4 Hit Points.
- Fish, Large/Tuna/Shark - 1D6 P.P.E. – 4D6 Hit Points or more.
- Horse/Pony/Mule/Donkey - 4D6 P.P.E. – 6D6+10 Hit Points.
- Human or D-Bee, Baby or Young Child (under 10 years) – 5D6+20 P.P.E. – 1D4 Hit Points.
- Human or D-Bee, Teen (12-17) – 3D6+10 P.P.E. – 2D6 Hit Points.
- Human or D-Bee, Adult – 1D6 P.P.E. – 3D6 Hit Points.
- Livestock: Medium/Sheep/Goat/Pig - 2D6 P.P.E. – 3D6+6 Hit Points.
- Livestock: Large/Hog/Cattle/Bison, etc. – 3D6+2 P.P.E. – 4D6+20 Hit Points.
- Monkey - 2D6+1 P.P.E. – 2D6 Hit Points.
- Mustelid/Weasel/Ferret/Badger - 2D6 P.P.E. – 4D6 Hit Points.
- Raccoon/Possum – 1D6 P.P.E. – 3D6 Hit Points.
- Reptile, Small Lizard/Turtle/Snake - One P.P.E. – 1D6 Hit Points.
- Reptile, Medium Lizard/Turtle/Snake - 1D4 P.P.E. – 1D6 Hit Points.
- Reptile, Large Lizard/Alligator/Python, etc. - 1D6 P.P.E. – 4D6+10 Hit Points.
- Rodent, Small/Mouse/Mole & Other – One P.P.E. – One Hit Point.
- Rodent, Medium/Rat/Rabbit/Squirrel & Other – 1D4 P.P.E. – 1D6 Hit Points.
- Rodent, Large, the size of a coyote or bigger – 2D4 P.P.E. – 3D6+10 Hit Points.



A Creature Anywhere

There are scores of other strange beasts and monsters that might appear across North America and anywhere. Creatures from other parts of Rifts® Earth may be brought to North America (and vice versa), intentionally or unintentionally, by people on boats, by magic or via the Rifts. An exotic riding animal or pet brought from elsewhere in the world or from an alien dimension may be let loose and find itself masterless when its owner meets an unfortunate fate. Others may arrive as the result of a magical summoning or the opening of a random Rift. Whatever the case, that single animal (or a few) may manage to survive in its new location for years. Depending on what it is, it may even become a creature of legend to the people in that region who manage to catch a glimpse of it or whom it menaces.

Beautiful and exotic animals and strange or horrifying monsters arrive via the Rifts on a regular basis. Most arrive in small numbers (2D6), but even when a large number of a particular creature, say 5,000-20,000, arrive through a Rift in a single event, most have considerable trouble surviving in the hostile and ever-changing environment of Rifts Earth.

First, the animals are likely to separate and scatter in all directions, eliminating any advantage they may have had in numbers.

Second, the animal(s) needs to find food and shelter; places to hunt, scavenge and hide. Which, depending on what part of the country they find themselves in, may or may not be suitable for their survival. The newly arrived animal(s) may perish in a matter of a few days to several weeks. **For example:** A hot weather, desert animal from another world appears from a Rift somewhere in Canada or the Northern United States during the winter. It probably dies within a few days from the extreme cold and unavailability of familiar food. That same animal may manage to survive for many months if it arrives in the spring or summer, even though a grassy or forest environment is not its ideal setting. However, it perishes during the harsh, long winter. The odds of a desert beast surviving a long trek across the landscape until it manages to stumble upon a desert habitat is slim to none. Even if it does, the type of prey or vegetation that it requires to survive may not have an equivalent on Earth, so it still dies.

Third, some animals have a wide range of food they can eat, but others require a very specific type. Without it, or an acceptable equivalent, the beast dies of starvation in a matter of a month or two.

Fourth, many are the obstacles to survival. Other creatures may not be able to compete with the existing fauna, or fall victim to disease and die out over time.

Fifth, people. Beasts that clash with people or that are perceived as dangerous monsters may be hunted to extinction within a matter of months or a few years. The Coalition Army is infamous for obliterating hostile and strange-looking monsters *before* they are able to find their niche, breed and become a problem. Better to be safe than sorry, is the mindset behind such practices. And that practice does not stop with the CS. People everywhere do the same. A similar fate befalls animals perceived to have an intrinsic value. Many a Wilderness Scout, trapper, huntsman and mercenary have relentlessly hunted certain animals into oblivion for their meat or other value.

Even those beasts that manage to survive for a decade or two – a mere blip in the grand scheme of things – may have little impact on people beyond the small, isolated region they inhabit. If the animal becomes known at all to the world at large, they are probably for-

gotten as soon as the last dies. Most new animal life forms perish within the first few years, or so few survive, dispersed across a particular geographic area, that nobody notices the animal, especially if it's something inconsequential, nonthreatening and few in number. Such an animal may never be discovered by people before it fades from existence on Rifts Earth. Or is a mere oddity that dies in captivity at a zoo, or science lab, or wilderness community.

Sometimes even astonishing and powerful creatures fail to survive and are quickly forgotten or never known to anyone but the people who lived in the 30 mile (48 km) radius where the creature – good or evil, beautiful or ugly – appeared for a summer or a few years. Relegated to local yarns and tall tales. (“You remember that big feathered bear that used to live in the deep woods a while back? A whole brood of them. Maybe a dozen, for what, Steveo? Four or five years? Never hurt nobody. Strutted around with its big feather tail displayed like a turkey during mating season. Strangest damn thing you ever did see. Friendly Frank bagged one after it kept raiding his chicken coop. Skinned it and cooked it up at the Fall Festival that autumn for all of us to share. Some folks was too afraid to eat it, but I did. Deelicious. Went back for seconds three times. Tasted like prime veal if you ask me. Wish there was more around so we could hunt them, but they disappeared. Ain’t seen one of them in maybe three years now.”)

The creatures presented in the **Rifts® Bestiary Volume One** and **Two** are animals and monsters that have successfully adapted to life at various locations in North America and have been around for decades. Though they may be mostly found in one or two geographic regions, remember, one or a few can find their way to almost anywhere via the Rifts or any number of ways. This happens so often that the Coalition Army and most people outside urban population centers take it in stride. They are seldom surprised by the appearance of a weird new beast, and are glad when it is only one or a few that can be dealt with, and not something to plague them for generations.

In terms of game play, the fun thing about **Rifts®** is that any creature from anywhere on the planet or across the Megaverse® can appear almost anywhere on Rifts Earth – provided the Game Master so desires it. Such a beast may be one-of-a-kind or many. It may be something helpful or a new threat. It might originate from one of Palladium’s other game settings, or any game, TV show, movie, novel, comic book, etc., that inspires the G.M. and keeps players guessing. Such an oddity may not be common to that part of the world or Earth at all, but may be presented to cause mayhem or create challenges for the player group. Please have fun with this truly unique aspect of the **Rifts®** setting, and the unpredictable power of the Rifts themselves.

Aegis Buffalo

By Charles Walton Jr. and Kevin Siembieda

These musk ox- or bison-like creatures are massive herbivores larger than an elephant. Rifted from an unknown, alien world, the Aegis Buffalo have thick, loose skin that droops off of their muscular bodies and wield large, thick, curved horns. The males also have a nose horn reminiscent to that of a rhinoceros. More unusual is their mane of long, golden porcupine-like quills that cover their heads, necks and shoulders. It is these quills that earned them the name “Aegis Buffalo,” a reference to Greek mythology. Upon seeing the great beasts for the very first time, they reminded the scholar of *the Aegis* – an animal skin used by the goddess Athena as a



shield and considered to be both a weapon and symbol of power and strong protection. One ancient passage said "... a hundred tassels of pure gold hang fluttering from it, tight-woven each of them, and each worth a hundred oxen."

According to big game hunter and explorer extra ordinaire, *Joshua Hill*, a typical herd numbers into the hundreds (1D4x100) and when running, can be heard up to 3 miles (4.8 km) away. Sometimes kicking up clouds of dust that can also be seen on the plains of the American New West and Southwestern Canada up to six miles (9.6 km) away. Without their natural predators, the Aegis Bison population has exploded, with herds that migrate from Southwestern North America up into the northern tundra of Canada to the edge of the Canadian dense forests and tundra of the northern Arctic. Their broad hooves are ideal for walking and running on grasslands, tundra, and snow, but they can handle most environments, including rocky deserts. Only dense forests are avoided because the trees and vegetation makes it difficult for the Aegis Buffalo to maneuver or to see predators from a distance.

Aegis Buffalo graze from sunup to sundown, stopping for periods of rest or to wallow in water, mud or dust to stay cool and rid themselves of any parasites and flies. The bulls patrol the perimeter of the herd, keeping it closely grouped and defended from

predators and bachelor Aegis looking to take a female for themselves. On Rifts Earth, the primary predators that hunt the giant buffalo are dinosaurs and other large predators, pack hunters, and humanoids. When the herd is threatened by a predator or humanoid hunter, the bulls and adult females gather in a tight circle with quills erect to protect the young. The Aegis are extremely protective of their calves and create a wall of horns and quills that encircles their calves when facing predators or threats that they choose not to run from.

When left alone, Aegis Buffalo tend to be quiet, docile and lazy grazing animals. However, they become aggressive and charge, or flee, when they feel threatened, with the bulls taking up the charge. Moreover, males, especially testosterone fueled young males, can behave in an unpredictable and dangerously aggressive manner. If a fully mature, young bull feels threatened or challenged for any reason, or just takes a disliking to someone, it faces them and takes an aggressive posture. Best to stop and hope the behemoth changes its mind after eyeballing the subject of its ire for 1D4 minutes. With luck, it will finally turn and walk away, probably kicking up dirt in their direction with its back legs as it leaves. A final act of defiance and display of who's the boss and warning to keep your distance.

If the giant buffalo decides to attack, it snorts, bellows and begins to paw at the ground with its front hooves. A moment later, it charges, head down low to ram and gore large opponents or to snare and toss smaller ones. (**Note:** Snagging and tossing human-sized opponents with a sideways jerk of its head hurls its victim 1D6x10 feet/3-18.3 m, inflicts 4D6 M.D. and the victim loses two melee actions and initiative. See combat for damage from other attacks.)

A lone, angry or aggressive male has been known to charge groups of soldiers, T-Rex, dragons, large robot vehicles, tanks and aircraft. Sometimes such charges encourage 1D6 other males to step out of the herd to join the attack or to chase off or engage others in the area, as suddenly everyone who is not one of their own kind feels like a potential threat, and they too feel they need to display their strength or to protect the herd. Thankfully, several Aegis Buffalo seldom gang up on the same foe. Instead, they each challenge their own opponent in one-on-one combat. That said, they may attack one after another, with other bulls waiting to take the place of a fallen or defeated herd members as it limps away.

A spooked herd can be just as dangerous. When a herd of Aegis Buffalo flee in fear, they knock down and trample everything and everyone in their path. You need to dive for cover and pray, or better yet, get out of their path entirely by whatever means necessary.

Being so large, they face few genuine threats, and rarely fear anything smaller than themselves. As a result, other bovines, horses, herbivorous dinosaurs and other animals can be found grazing with them or nearby. They even tolerate (read, ignore) most humanoids, despite the fact that humans and D-Bees represent the greatest danger to them. Both hunt the giant buffalo for their meat, hides, horns and quills.

The creatures associate in groups as small as 3-18 animals to herds that can exceed a thousand (3D4x100). Herds of Aegis Buffalo migrate seasonally in search of better pastures, but follow the same path of migration as previous generations every year. This has left a network of wide, hard-packed trails that people unfamiliar with the beast might mistake for wide roads made by people. Native Americans, Simvan, Psi-Stalkers, locals, and even merchant caravans and travelers use these paths as landmarks and roads. In most of their range, however, since the massive buffalo do not eat grass down to their roots, the vast amount of natural fertilization these large herbivores produce, replenishes and maintains millions of acres of wild grasslands and the floors of light forests.

Aegis Buffalo – Giant Herbivore Animal

Alignment: Anarchist.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+2 (low animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+6, M.A. 1D6+6, P.S. 1D6+33 (equal to Robot Strength), P.P. 1D6+12, P.E. 1D6+18, P.B. 1D6+4, Spd 2D6+28 or 22.5 mph (36 km) for up to an hour. 30 mph (48 km) in a short burst lasting 1D4 minutes, but a trotting speed of 8 mph (13 km) can be kept up for up to 6-8 hours. Grazing speed is a casual 1-2 mph (1.6 to 3.2 km).

M.D.C./S.D.C. by Location (unless stated otherwise): As a minor Mega-Damage creature (or heavy S.D.C. creature), they are subject to damage from both M.D.C. and S.D.C. weapons.

M.D.C./S.D.C. by Location (unless stated otherwise): As a minor Mega-Damage creature (or heavy S.D.C. creature) they are subject to damage from both M.D.C. and S.D.C. weapons. Quills (2D6x100) – 30 S.D.C. each (Only 1D4 S.D.C. dried out after the animal dies.)

****Legs (4) – 1D6+15 M.D.C. each (equal to 1,600-2,100 S.D.C.)**

***Bull Horns (2) – 1D4x10 M.D.C. each (equal to 1,000-4,000 S.D.C.)**

***Central Horn (1; males only) – 1D6+6 M.D.C. (equal to 700-1,200 S.D.C.)**

***Eyes (2) – 20 S.D.C. each.**

*****Head – 1D6x10 M.D.C. (equal to 1,000-6,000 S.D.C.)**

Main Body – 1D6x10+40 M.D.C. (6,000-10,000 S.D.C.)

* A single asterisk means a small and/or difficult target to strike and requires a Called Shot to hit, but even then the attacker is -4 to strike.

** Destroying one leg reduces speed by half. Crippling two legs renders the animal completely immobile.

*** One or more head shots that reduce the M.D.C./S.D.C. to zero or less kills the animal, but requires a Called Shot to hit with a penalty of -4 to strike as this is a moving target protected by horns and quills.

Note: *On S.D.C. Worlds*, the Aegis is a creature with S.D.C. as listed above, except divide the S.D.C. of the Main Body in two, half represents S.D.C. for the main body and half are Hit Points. It also has a Natural A.R. of 11. *The S.D.C. equivalents per location* are listed above in parenthesis after the M.D.C. The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D., so its bite that does 1D6 M.D. on Rifts Earth does 1D6 S.D.C. on S.D.C. Worlds, etc.

Horror Factor: 13

Size: 16-18 feet (4.8 to 5.5 m) tall at the shoulder hump, 24-26 feet (8 m) long.

Weight: 12-18 tons for adult bulls, 10-12 tons for adult females. 4-6 tons for a calf.

Average Life Span: 15-24 years. Cows give birth to a single calf after a gestation of 12 months. Calves remain with their mothers for up to three years and reach full maturity in four years.

P.P.E.: 5D6

Disposition: Docile and complacent when left alone, but fiercely aggressive and protective of the herd and young when they feel threatened or challenged.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Dowsing 60%, Land Navigation 98%, and Swimming 75% (5 mph/8 km maximum speed).

Natural Abilities: Can run at top speed (22.5 mph/36 km) for 1D4x10 minutes before reducing speed by half. Running creates a thunderous rumble that can be heard up to three miles (4.8 km) away. The Aegis Buffalo can attain 44 mph (70 km) in short bursts lasting 1D6 melee rounds for quick getaways and charging attacks. Good day vision same as cattle, nightvision 100 feet (30.5 m), good sense of hearing and smell – can smell humans, D-Bees and animal predators upwind up to a mile (1.6 km) away, and recover lost M.D.C./S.D.C./Hit Points at a rate of 1D6 M.D.C. per 24 hours.

Quills and Quill Defense (special): The quills store a cooling gel that serves as an assisting thermoregulatory system to help cool the creatures when they are hot or running.

The quills also provide a bit of armor protection, giving the Aegis Buffalo an Armor Rating (A.R.) of 11 against even Mega-Damage predators, melee combat and S.D.C. weapons. A.R. 11 means the attacker must roll a 12 or higher to successfully strike and inflict damage. Any strike rolls 11 and below do NO damage to the Aegis. **Note:** This A.R. is NOT applicable to M.D. energy weapons or M.D. explosives, which are presumed to hit and damage the Main Body unless a specified Called Shot is made to a different location.

Attacks per Melee: Three.

Mega-Damage: As per equivalent Robotic P.S. of 36-39 that does 2D6 M.D. from stomps, body bumps and headbutts, 3D6 M.D. from rear leg kick, 4D6 M.D. from a goring attack with horns, 1D4x10+6 from a charging attack with horns but counts as two attacks. Charging power ram horned attack does 1D6x10 M.D. and has a 01-85% likelihood of knocking down opponents as tall as 30 feet (9.1 m) and weighing as much as 15 tons! Uses up ALL attacks for that melee round. Victims of such an attack lose initiative and two melee attacks. Those under 20 feet (6.1 m) tall are thrown 2D4x10 feet (6.1 to 24.4 m).

Trample from a lone individual does 1D4x10 M.D.

Trample from a herd of 10 or more does 2D6x10 M.D.

Trample from a herd of 25 or more inflicts 3D6x10 M.D. plus the character is stunned (if he survives at all) for 1D6 melee rounds.

Trample from a herd of 50 or more inflicts 5D6x10 M.D. plus the character is stunned (if he survives at all) for 2D6 minutes.

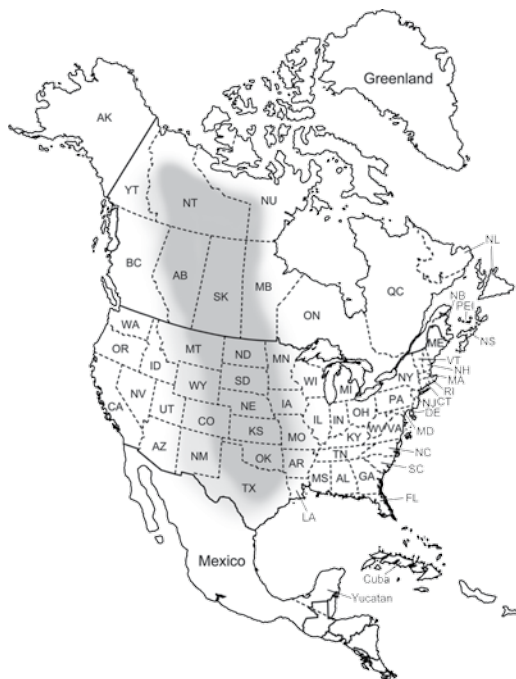
Trample from a herd of 100 or more inflicts 2D4x100 M.D. plus the character is stunned (if he survives at all) for 4D6 minutes.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls to notice approaching predators and danger, +1 on initiative for females and young, +2 for mature bulls, +2 to strike, +1 to parry with horns, +2 to dodge when running and taking evasive action, +2 to roll with impact/fall, and +1 to save vs poison and disease.

Vulnerabilities: Extreme heat (more than 100 degrees Fahrenheit/38 Celsius or higher) can cause heat exhaustion which inflicts the following penalties: Reduce speed by half, combat bonuses by half and -1 melee attack.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.



Habitat: The central plains from Texas into the Tundra of Canada.

Enemies: Animal predators, especially large predators like the Allosaurus, Devilsaurus, T-Rex, Gwylack and other pack hunting animals, and creatures such as the Panthera-Tereon, Frost Panthera-Tereon, and Dragon-Cat. Human and D-Bee hunters are the greatest danger to the animal, but they do not attack hu-

manoids unless they feel threatened or are attacked first. Aegis Buffalo hate being controlled or enslaved and do not like nor willingly serve Simvan, Psi-Stalkers, Shifters or Druids. Aegis Buffalo and Rhino-Buffalo have taken an immediate dislike to each other's species and regard them as aggressive rivals and natural enemies. The Aegis do not like the massive, full grown Fury Beetles either.

Allies: Only its own herd members, but tolerate other herbivore species and even non-threatening humanoids. **Note:** Even Simvan Monster Riders and Psi-Stalkers have trouble controlling these strong-willed beasts for more than a short while.

Value: The following are wholesale prices, i.e., what a merchant will pay to butcher or use to create retail products for resale. One of the problems is most of the animal parts are not in high demand and because the creature is so large and plentiful it commands a low price.

Hide (whole animal): 100-400 credits depending on the buyer. Tends to be heavier and tougher than cowhide and is used to make rawhide strips, rawhide rope, belts, saddles, saddlebags, tarps, other basic leather goods, and S.D.C. leather armor, but not clothing due to the weight. A full suit of human-sized armor weighs 40 pounds (18 kg, has a Natural A.R. 13 and 65 S.D.C., and sells for 800 to 1,200 credits).

Meat (whole animal): 300-600 credits depending on the buyer. The meat tastes like beef, but it is tougher/chewier than domestic cattle or bison. Another problem is there is so much, that the meat goes bad unless used or preserved or refrigerated quickly. The meat of an *Aegis calf* nets the same amount even though there is one third the amount of meat because it more tender and the equivalent of typical good cattle beef. Getting a calf is very dangerous as they are protected by adult males and females.

Large Horns: 100 credits each for their ivory. Used in creating all types of jewelry, clasps, belt buckles, carvings, statues, drinking cups, mugs, etc. The problem is the horns are the size of a man and weigh 1D4x100 pounds (45 to 180 kg). Tribal people also make arrowheads, knives, needles, etc., carved from the horns. The nose horn of the males has no value.

Quills: No value to most people. The Quills are hollow, lightweight and have no value to most advanced people. After the animal is killed, the quills quickly become brittle and easily crack and break, so they are no good for spear or arrowheads, nor as javelins, weapons or armor of any kind.

However, to tribal people such as Native Americans, Psi-Stalkers, Simvan, Wilderness Scouts, artisans and other knowledgeable woodlands people, the quills are used to make flutes and whistles, drinking straws and simple snorkel tubes, or trimmed down to make knitting needles, skewers for roasting food over an open fire, and used as temporary toy swords and toy rods for children (inflict one S.D.C. damage) that break within 1D6 melee rounds, but are fun to play with, nonetheless. May also be used to make simple jewelry and decorations, particularly for head-dresses, necklaces, and ceremonial adornment.

Cannot be Domesticated: Even a young Aegis Buffalo fights to the death rather than be taken captive. If captured, the creature refuses to eat and starves. Until then, it attacks and fights anyone who comes near it. They are just too wild, unpredictable and aggressive to be tamed.

Note: New. It appears for the first time in this book.



Agenor River Serpent

By Kevin Siembieda

The rivers, lakes and oceans of Rifts Earth are filled with what can only be considered sea serpents and sea monsters. Some are dinosaurs brought back through time by the Rifts, many others are creatures from alien worlds and dimensions. Some are intelligent, but most are simply animal predators that feed on whatever looks like prey to them. All too often, humans and D-Bees fall into the “prey” category.

The Agenor River Serpent is one such animal from another dimension. They have adapted to Earth since the Coming of the Rifts and are common to the many rivers of Mexico, the Yucatan, Central America, and South America. They are seldom found north of the Rio Grande and have never been reported in the Mississippi, and seem to prefer rivers, even shallow ones, rather than deep lakes, and are never encountered in swamps and marshlands. The Agenor Serpent is long and able to navigate rivers and water as shallow as five feet (1.5 m) deep.

Agenor River Serpents eat all types of marine life, including young Agenor, but also prey upon humanoids, cattle, horses, deer, otters, seals, other large mammals and dinosaurs that come to the water’s edge. The Agenor is happy to gobble up swimmers, but is likely to ignore an individual swimmer or rafter, unless the individual is splashing around and making a commotion. Instinct has the River Serpent looking for schools of fish and groups of animals, from flocks of waterfowl and animal herds to groups of people and large prey. Aggressive, but dull-witted, Agenor River Serpents are quick to attack first without thinking about whether the target is suitable prey or not. As a result, power armor clad

travelers, giant robots, fishing boats, barges, submarines, and other water vessels are often assailed by these creatures. Agenor may be dumb, but they are smart enough to have figured out that “boats” have food (e.g. people and livestock) onboard, so the monster may pop up and try to snatch crew members and passengers from the deck. There are many reports of the serpents even slithering up onto boats, through open doors and into the belly of the vessel to find people to eat. Agenor River Serpents are aquatic, but can breathe air and survive on dry land or the deck of a boat for 1D4 hours. Bad news if it eats crewmen Steve and Jeff without much of a commotion, and then curls up to take a nap. Because if disturbed or when it wakes up hungry, you may be next on its meal ticket.

People, especially in Mexico and Central America, who live near, on and in the water to avoid vampires, are constantly on the lookout for Agenor and other sea monsters.

Agenor River Serpent – Aquatic Carnivore

Alignment: Animal predator, considered to be Anarchist or Miscreant.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6 (low animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+6, M.A. 1D4, P.S. 1D6+34 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+14, P.E. 1D6+22, P.B. 1D6+6, Spd swimming is 2D4+61, or 45 mph (72km or 39 knots).

A maximum speed slithering on dry land like a snake is 22 mph (35 km), can only be maintained for 20 minutes. A more comfortable land speed is 8 mph (12.8 km) and can be maintained for up to five hours before requiring the beast to rest; ideally in a body of water even if it’s a shallow marsh or a pool of cool mud.

M.D.C. by Location (adult):

Head – 2D6+60

Fins (6) – 1D6+34 each

Tail (1) – 1D6+70

Main Body – 1D6x10+180 **Note:** Females have an additional 40 M.D.C., less for young. Juveniles only have 110 M.D.C., and young 60.

On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Agenor has a main body of 1D4x10+50 S.D.C., 1D6x10+80 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 12. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (2D6+60 M.D.C. = 2D6+60 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D.

Horror Factor: 14 for most encounters with an adult, but only H.F. 10 to characters inside a giant robot or armored vehicle.

Size: 1D4x10+30 feet (12.2 to 21.3 m) long, can be twice as thick as a man's body. Females are 20% larger, young/juveniles are half the size, but just as aggressive.

Weight: 4-6 tons.

Average Life Span: Uncertain; 1D6+40 years, quite possibly longer. The Serpent mate in early autumn and give birth to 1D6+3 live young eight months later. The young stays with their mother four years before going off on their own, at which point they are 20-24 feet (6.1 to 7.3 m) long and should be able to take care of themselves. It takes 10 years for the young to reach full size and maturity.

P.P.E.: 4D6

Disposition: Agenor are calm and easygoing, even sluggish, when they have a full stomach, ignoring potential prey completely. Seeing one snoozing or basking in the sun on a rock, beach or shore probably means a traveler is safe. Though where there is one, there are probably others. And if the creature slides into the water upon seeing you, expect an attack to be coming. When hungry, provoked or attacked first, Agenor River Serpents can fight with furious intensity.

When the serpent attacks prey it goes into a hyper-feeding frenzy for 1D6+2 melee rounds, attacking over and over until the prey is dead, swallowed, entangled and drowned, or torn into chunks and eaten. One of its favorite tactics against larger opponents is to entangle or latch onto its victim with its mouth and drag it under the water to drown the prey before trying to eat it. If the prey – like a giant robot, vessel or dinosaur – can survive the onslaught, or puts up too much of a fight, and appears strong after the 1D6+2 melee round tussle, the serpent gives up and swims away in the opposite direction in search of easier prey. However, if a battle ensues and the Agenor River Serpent loses half or more of its M.D.C. in the skirmish, it goes berserk and fights to the death – its own or its intended prey. This applies to large individual targets and groups of man-sized prey. The Agenor keeps attacking until it has eaten its fill of small prey, like humanoids or until they are all eaten, or until it is killed in combat, or the prey manages to escape and hide. Again, Agenor are dull-witted and impatient, so if people under attack can hide for 1D4+5 melee rounds, the leviathan becomes discouraged and swims away in search of new prey. An Agenor almost never has the patience to wait out its prey or to lurk in the shadows for another opportunity to attack. They have three modes of activity: swimming, sleeping or eating.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Dowsing 91% (can sense and locate water up to two miles/3.2 km away), Land Navigation 60%, Swimming 98%, and track by scent 50% (+10% to follow blood

or the scent of rotting meat; or +15% if the blood or meat is in the water).

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 2,000 feet (610 m; hunts day and night), polarized second eyelids drop down to filter out sunlight and glare, keen vision underwater, even in murky waters, as well as good vision above the waves. Recovers from damage at a rate of 6D6 M.D.C. per 24 hours.

Agenor River Serpents can and do, on occasion, come onto dry land and travel as far as 20 miles (32 km) inland, usually to hunt or because they smell carrion/dead bodies or the carcass of a large animal. The creature can breathe air and survive on land for up to four hours without adverse effect. After that time, the serpent begins to experience difficulties: reduce speed, equivalent skills, attacks per melee round and bonuses by half, but can survive another 1D4 hours before it becomes severely dehydrated and too weak to fight (one attack per melee, no bonuses and reduce speed by 80%). It will die shortly thereafter.

Attacks per Melee: Three on land, four in the water.

Mega-Damage: The Agenor's primary attack is biting and head butts, as well as body slams, slashing tail, and constriction. Arguably its easiest attack is to capsize and sink small river vessels and gobble up survivors in the water and devour those who drown.

Bite, Restrained – 6D6 S.D.C. or 1D4 M.D.

Bite, Full Strength – 5D6 M.D.

Head Butt, Restrained – 1D6 M.D.

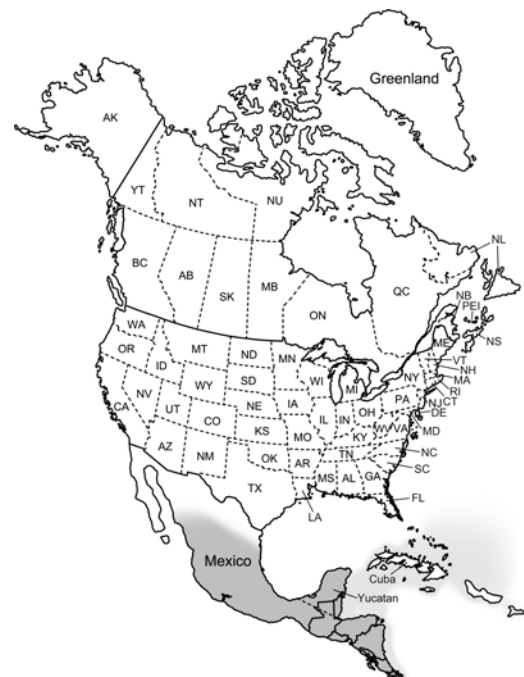
Head Butt, Full Strength – 3D6 M.D.

Tail Strike – 3D6 M.D.

Body Slam/Ram – 4D6 M.D. on dry land/shore, the deck of a ship, and counts as one melee attack, but has a 75% chance of knocking down victims as tall as 20 feet (6.1 m) and weighing up to three tons. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and two melee attacks.

High-Speed Water Ram (special) – 6D6+8 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks. 45% chance of capsizing water vessels 20-30 feet (6.1 to 9.1 m) long; 70% chance if smaller than 16 feet (4.9 m) long.

Constriction/Crush/Squeeze (special): 2D6 M.D. for the initial attack in which the serpent wraps itself around its target



– person, power armor, robot, boat, etc., which uses up three of the serpent’s melee attacks. 3D6+2 M.D. per each constriction of its body to inflict damage after it has wrapped its body around its prey to crush it/him. Each crush/squeeze constriction counts as one of the serpent’s melee attacks. There is a 60% chance of pinning the arms and legs of a entangled prey preventing it/him from being able to attack/fight back. **Note:** The Agenor Serpent can still bite prey it has entangled, but can either crush or bite, not both at the same time.

Suffocation (special): Coils or bites and holds on to drag prey underwater and keeps it there until it drowns.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 on initiative underwater, +6 to strike while in the water, but only +2 to strike on dry land, +8 to automatic dodge underwater (the act of dodging does not use up a melee attack), but only +3 to dodge on dry land, +4 to entangle, crush/squeeze attack in water, half on dry land and each constriction counts as a melee attack, +8 to save vs poison/drugs, +8 to save vs magic, +3 to save vs psionics, +8 to save vs Horror Factor (too dumb and aggressive to be afraid) and is difficult to mind control because it is too wild, aggressive and hungry.

Vulnerabilities: All Mega-Damage weapons and attacks inflict their normal damage. The Agenor Serpent needs to keep wet, usually by taking frequent dips in bodies of water or rolling around in shallow pools. When left out to dry, it becomes weak after four hours and will die within 1D4 hours unless it is able to immerse itself in water.

Magic: None, but is +3 to save against the *Repel Animal spell* and most forms of magical mind control.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Prefers to live in fast-moving bodies of water, mainly rivers, but can survive in oceans and seas if it must (-2 on all bonuses and saving throws in saltwater environments). Despite that, Agenor River Serpents are only known to exist in the rivers of Mexico, Central America, and South America. Occasionally sighted off the coast of Northern South America, and the Caribbean Sea around Cuba, the Caribbean islands, and the Demon Sea, but no farther north than the *Demon Sea* (the Bermuda Triangle). **Note:** The Agenor are NOT found in the Gulf of Mexico nor the Rio Grande, Colorado River, Mississippi or any northern rivers.

Enemies: Humanoids and most animals larger than a coyote are seen as prey, but will eat smaller prey if it is easily available, and eats fish of any size, gobbling up schools of them whenever it can.

Allies: None. A solitary hunter, they don’t even associate with their own species except during mating season and to hunt younger, smaller Agenor.

Value: None. The serpent’s rubbery, eel-like, M.D.C. hide quickly deteriorates after its death, and the monster is not good eating for humans or most D-Bees.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 1: Vampire Kingdoms™, 1st Edition**, page 176, depicted on pages 155 and 156.

Aishwarra

By Kevin Siembieda and Ramon K. Perez

The Aishwarra (pronounced eye-sh-wahr-rah) is a deadly creature from beyond the Rifts. It originates from the alien home world of the *Grackle Tooth D-Bee*. There, the Grackle Tooth call themselves “Jin-Ro,” where the Aishwarra are considered to be demons of destruction and a plague to all life. They are not actually demons, but horrible monsters that eat people, swallowing them whole and destroying entire villages and towns.

Aishwarra are giant creatures that hunt and devour virtually everything in their path. On the Grackle Tooth’s world, the monsters damage their environment by permanently draining their surroundings of ambient magical energy (P.P.E.). These massive, dinosaur-sized predators tower 100 feet (30.5 m) tall and are constantly on the hunt for food. First, they feed upon ley lines where they breed, and absorb the magic energy. When the ley line energy is drained (or kept at barely measurable levels due to the presence of so many Aishwarra), these P.P.E. vampires fan out, often in large herds, looking for other sources of P.P.E. Their primary targets are creatures of magic and magic practitioners. However, ALL sentient and animal life forms possess some amount of P.P.E., making them targets as well, even if they possess only a tiny amount of P.P.E.; and a rampaging herd is nearly unstoppable.

On the Grackle Tooth’s home world the Aishwarra have been systematically hunted and wiped out to the point of near extinction. But somehow, pockets of the monsters resurface to cause death and destruction, leaving some to wonder if the creature can travel using the Rifts, and come and go to other worlds and dimensions. These giant monsters have no natural predators and indiscriminately kill just about anyone or anything they see as prey or who tries to oppose them. The exception being dragons, Greater Demons, Demon Lords, Elementals and gods, which they instinctively ignore as too powerful and large to fight without a life and death battle; and just too big (in their natural form and full size) for the Aishwarra to swallow and store in its belly sacks to nurture and grow the young inside its egg sacks.

The unluckiest victims are not killed outright, instead they are swallowed whole and stored in feeding sacks located under the female’s abdomen where the victim’s P.P.E. and life energy are slowly drained away to nurture the female’s unborn young still inside their eggs. The monster swallows practitioners of magic, Shamans, Priests, Faerie Folk, Lesser Demons, and other beings with high amounts of P.P.E., whole, and stores them, alive but unconscious, inside her body, so that the beast may procreate and lay eggs. Females needs the P.P.E. batteries of living sorcerers and creatures of magic to spawn new Aishwarra; the ambient energy from ley lines is not sufficient. This also enables the monsters’ numbers to grow quickly and take over new environments.

Once gorged on sufficient magical energy (P.P.E.), the Aishwarra spawn and lay eggs that are, themselves, batteries of magic. Before these eggs hatch into young Aishwarra, they can be used by practitioners of magic for powering magic spells, rituals, wards, circles, Techno-Wizard devices and virtually any other type of mystical enchantment. The eggs can also be tapped by P.P.E. vampires such as Psi-Stalkers to feed upon. However, the P.P.E. that can be drawn from Aishwarra eggs vanishes as soon as the creature hatches from it, and draining the P.P.E. stored within an egg kills the creature inside and permanently negates the energy of the egg.



Young Aishwarra that hatch instinctively search out a source of ambient magic energy, e.g. ley lines, and hunt people, killing them for their P.P.E.

If there are enough Aishwarra – several hundred or thousands – living along a ley line, the beasts absorb enough of the P.P.E. that they, in effect, negate the available ambient energy, rendering the ley line useless and diminishing the power of nexus points by 1D4x10+40%.

Few people, not even the scientists and leaders of the Coalition States and other nations, know the full danger the Aishwarra represent, but all Grackle Tooth know about the creatures via stories and legends passed down by their ancestors. Likewise, only some mages and dimensional travelers know much, if anything about the Aishwarra. Thankfully, it is enough that the creatures are terrifying, gigantic, devouring monsters that they are destroyed by the CS and others whenever the great beasts are encountered. The only true expert on this animal is one the most unlikely of people, **Doctor Desmond Bradford**.

Doctor Bradford once held a captured Aishwarra at the Lone Star Complex, studied and analyzed it, cloned a dozen young Aishwarra and created a smaller, different, genetic offshoot of the creature that he dubbed the *Omega Beast* (described elsewhere in the Bestiary series). All were kept secret deep within the labyrinth of the Lone Star Complex until the Doctor was forced to secretly let them loose and destroy all evidence that they had ever existed.

Unknown to even high ranking members of the Coalition States government, Doctor Bradford regularly engages in secret, unsanctioned, Doctor Frankenstein-like genetic experiments in the name of science and the Coalition States. Experiments and creations that disregard morality and stray far outside the legal boundaries of even the CS. Desmond Bradford enjoys playing god with the genetic codes of other living creatures. Though the man is human, many would say he is a monster that should be listed in this “Bestiary.” (See **Rifts® World Book 13: Lone Star** for more details about Doctor Bradford, Dog Boys and some of his other mutant creations.)

Some years ago, several Aishwarra emerged from the **Devil’s Gate** at the Saint Louis Archway. The Devil’s Gate is an active Rift where every few days, the Coalition soldiers and scientists stationed there fight, and often obliterate, the *things* that crawl out of that Rift before they can slither off into the world. On the day the giant Aishwarra appeared, as is often the case, all but one of the emerging creatures were destroyed. The one survivor captured and quietly crated and shipped – off the record – to the **Lone Star Complex**. The long reach of the illustrious Doctor Bradford, creator of the famed CS Dog Boys, has many loyal agents working for him. Men and women who procure new, exotic specimens for his secret experiments at the Lone Star Complex. One of the commanders at the Devil’s Gate and a cadre of soldiers under her command have been providing Bradford with specimens, off the books, for years. A lucrative sideline that has earned them all promotions, position, benefits and money.

Not long ago, a ragtag group of heroes stumbled across Doctor Bradford’s scheme to unleash an army of Aishwarra and Omega Beasts into the notorious **Magic Zone**. His plan being that the creatures would wash over the land and bring down the Federation of Magic and other mages. Over time, he hoped they would grow to sufficient number to drain the many ley lines within the Zone.

Long story short, the intervention of this group of heroes, followed by the advent of the Minion War, has thwarted Bradford’s secret agenda, but the danger still looms. Some Aishwarra slipped

through the Coalition’s net around the Devil’s Gate and have found their way into the Magic Zone. In addition, Doctor Bradford unleashed a dozen young Aishwarra into the wild, as well as a few thousand of his Omega Beasts. Whatever mad dreams the Doctor had for his mysterious Project Omega have been ruined, but his initial handiwork remains with the creatures he let loose. With a dramatic increase in the number of military forces sent to operate out of the Lone Star facility, and much more oversight by his superiors, Doctor Bradford felt it necessary to completely destroy all evidence of the existence of the Aishwarra and his creation of the Omega Beasts. To do anything less could jeopardize his position of power and make him face a number of serious charges.

The scarcity of the Aishwarra and Omega Beasts makes them of minimal concern for most communities in North America, particularly the fortress cities of the CS. But the appearance of even one or two can be a huge problem for practitioners of magic and any travelers who encounter one in the wild. And who knows what the future might hold should their numbers grow?

Aishwarra – P.P.E. Predator

Pronunciation: eye-sh-wahr-rah

Also Known As: The “Jin-Ro’s demon” and “Demon Plague.”

Alignment: Animal predator generally considered Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+2 (Low animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+2, M.A. 1D4, P.S. 2D6+38 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+9, P.E. 2D6+21 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D4, Spd 1D6+52 running, or 37.5 mph (60 km). The beast is able to run at this speed for three hours before needing to stop and rest. 56 mph (89.6 km) for a short burst lasting 1D6+10 minutes. A trotting speed of 10-20 mph (16 to 32 km) can be maintained without stopping for an astonishing 36 hours straight! Walking speed is 4-6 mph (6.4 to 9.6 km) and can be sustained for 48 hours straight.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Antennae (4; back) – 200 each

*Eyes (2; recessed) – 75 each

*Ears (circles on head and back; 6) – 120 each

Head – 1D4x100+330

Tri-Beak/Mouth – 1D6x10+200

*Nostril Spikes (2; extendible) – 40 each

Cheek Tusks (2) – 200 each

*Mouth Tentacles (1D6+4; mouth) – 20 each

Mantis Arms (2) – 1D6x100+250 each

*Throat Hands (2; under neck) – 1D4x10+20 each

Legs (2) – 2D4x100+400 each

Clawed Feet (2) – 1D4x100+300 each

*Storage Sacks (32-42) – 2D6+10 each

Main Body – Young Aishwarra (size of a bear) – 4D6x10+60 M.D.C.

Main Body – Adult *male* – 2D4x100+500

Main Body – Adult *female* – 2D6x100+800 M.D.C.

* A single asterisk indicates a small or otherwise difficult target to strike. From a distance an opponent is -4 to strike even with a “Called Shot” or careful aim.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the adult Aishwarra has a main body of 1D6x100 S.D.C., 1D4x100+50 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 14. All other locations have S.D.C. at half of that listed above. The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D.

Horror Factor: Adult Male: 16. Adult Female: 18. Young: 11-14 depending upon age and size.

Size: Females: 100-150 feet (30.5 to 45.7 m) tall and about the same length. Males are 20% smaller.

Weight: Females: 2D6+10 tons! Males: 2D4+7 tons.

Average Life Span: 3D6+20 years. The fertilized female hunts and swallows a sufficient number of people with high amounts of P.P.E. to nurture the eggs (one egg per each of the 32-42 egg sacks) inside of her. See the *Spawning Process* under *Natural Abilities* for details. When the young in the eggs are well fed and close to hatching, the female lays the eggs and buries them inside a hole or inside a cave, and wanders off; her job is done.

When the eggs hatch, the young Aishwarra must fend for themselves and sometime hunt in pairs or trios until they are one or two years old. Babies are extremely aggressive because the more prey they kill and eat, the faster they grow. Most reach 20 feet (6.1 m) tall within one year's time, but need another four years to reach full size and physical maturity; sexual maturity in 7 years.

P.P.E.: 1D4x50

Disposition: The Aishwarra is a single-minded monstrosity consumed with eating (people!) and devouring *practitioners* and *creatures of magic*. Male Aishwarra will simply devour their prey, while females may do the same, or they might swallow them whole for storage, as they are needed to bear young.

1. Aishwarra are solitary creatures and hunt alone. Juvenile and adult animals NEVER team up for any purpose, work together, or function as an organized group or pack. The only contact they have with each other is either when competing for food, mating, or when one Aishwarra encroaches on the hunting ground of another, resulting in a battle over territory. Even after mating the male leaves after 1D4 days, never to be seen again by the female.

The exception to the rule about gathering in groups is when there are so many Aishwarra in an area that they seem to gather in what may appear to be massive herds, usually along ley lines. However, this is not a true herd. There is no herd mentality, society or pack leader. The creatures do not, generally, move as a herd, but rather each goes about its own business, with the largest females being the most aggressive. So while they may graze on the ambient energy of a ley line, the Aishwarra do so as individuals, not as a group. Such individuals wander off to explore or hunt on their own. That said, sometimes large numbers of individuals wander off, again creating the sense of a herd or pack, but each monster has only its own best interest at heart and hunts only for itself. Moreover, they regard each other as rivals, so two or more may fight each other over the same humanoid/magic using prey. When such a battle between competing Aishwarra happens within a humanoid community, their scuffle can cause massive amounts of damage, collapse buildings, trample vehicles, livestock and people, and kill hundreds before the dumb beasts get to gobble them up. Other times, competing Aishwarra do just that, run around gobbling up people before their competitors can get to them. It is no wonder the Grackle Tooth consider them to be devouring demons.

The Hunger Plague: One reason the Jin-Ro/Grackle Tooth consider Aishwarra to be demons is that they eat *people* for food. Lots and lots and lots of people. The monster plows through everything in its path and eats anything that moves or gets in its way. While the monster will eat large dogs, goats, cattle, horses, and other large animals, its main food of choice is *people*, humans and D-Bees. And it attacks entire towns and cities, cracking open vehicles and tearing down the sides of

buildings to get at and devour the people inside. The monster requires 20-80 people a week to live, and while it can go two weeks between feedings, it typically gorges itself, eating two or three times as many people whenever the opportunity presents itself. Females eat four times as much per week when pregnant!

2. Aishwarra are cannibals. Generally, the Aishwarra young that hatch first instinctively run for the hills, otherwise one of their brothers or sisters may eat them for their P.P.E. Young Aishwarra, in turn, become prey for adults, particularly adult males. When Aishwarra sense each other, they generally fight, with the result being that the stronger of the two feeds upon the weaker, smaller creature. If both are of similar strength, the fight is over territory, with one eventually giving up and leaving the area. If it is a battle for dominance, the loser is allowed to live provided it is always submissive to the other, or runs off to live elsewhere. Some battles between Aishwarra are battles to the death. In the latter case, the loser serves as a meal for the winner, and whatever is left of its carcass left for the carrion eaters. Slain Aishwarra quickly deteriorate into S.D.C. material suitable for other animals. Only its massive bones remain M.D.C. and may be used by intelligent beings, especially giants like the Poptal Dragon Slayers, as weapons.

Aishwarra young that survive attacks from adults, flee ley lines inhabited by one or more elder Aishwarra for a safer place to hunt and live away from ambient magic energy. This is bad news for humanoids in the area, because it means without ley line energy, the young must find other sources of magic energy, such as practitioners of magic with high P.P.E. and large numbers of people with low P.P.E.

3. The Aishwarra are not smart creatures. With the equivalent of low animal intelligence, Aishwarra are driven by instinct, hunger and the need to procreate. That's it. They kill, eat, spawn and repeat. As dumb animals, they frequently engage in battles they cannot win, and often fight to the death.

They do not adapt to new environments so much as they bulldoze their way through them. That means the same animal repeatedly falls for the same trap, tricks, or tactics. It is very seldom that an Aishwarra can learn from experience.

Immensely formidable and dangerous, however, the dumb brutes are more like weapons of mass destruction or a force of nature that comes sweeping through an area before moving on.

Natural Abilities: Climbing 55%, Swimming 30% (poor swimmers and dislike deep water), keen sense of smell and hearing, excellent vision, nightvision 500 feet (152 m), and is able to leap 120 feet (36.6 m) high and 260 feet (79 m) across.

Bio-Regeneration (special): The creature recovers 1D6 M.D.C. per hour as part of its natural healing process. It also regenerates a lost tentacle, spike, egg sack, toe, foot, eye, or ear within 2D6 days, and a leg or arm within 2D6+20 days.

It may also draw upon the living beings held inside its feeding/storage/egg sacks to heal itself. For every one P.P.E. point the monster drains from one of its victims, one M.D.C. point is restored to the monster.

Furthermore, similar to the Ley Line Walker ability, the monster can regenerate 1D6x10 M.D.C. per hour by resting on a ley line or nexus.

Tunneling (special): The creature tunnels at 14 mph (22.4 km). Aishwarra are natural diggers and burrowers (80% skill) and, on the rare occasions they are frightened, may tunnel underground to elude their pursuer. They also dig their nest into the ground where they lay clutches of 1D4 eggs per burial loca-

slows down. They reach full size in two years' time, though they don't reach physical maturity till the end of four years.

Attacks per Melee: Six.

Mega-Damage: Punch/Slap/Jab with Mantis Arms: 1D6x10 S.D.C. on a restrained strike, 6D6 M.D. on a full strength strike (+6 M.D. by females), 2D4x10 M.D. on a Power Punch but counts as two melee attacks.

Head Butt or Body Bump/Nudge: 5D6 M.D., 1D6x10 M.D. on a Power Butt, or 1D6x10 S.D.C. on a restrained strike.

Punch from Small Throat Arms: 3D6 M.D., 6D6 M.D. on a Power Punch, or 1D4x10 on restrained punch. And by "small" we mean the hands are only about the size of a human's entire body!

Stomp or Kick: 1D6x10+12 M.D., Bite with Beak: 1D4x10 M.D. The feet and preying mantis-like arms are also used for digging.

Gore/Stab with Face/Cheek Tusks: 2D4x10 M.D., but counts as two attacks. These horns are 10-15 feet (3 to 4.6 m) long. Also used for digging and burying eggs.

Stab Attack with Nostril Spike (1): 4D6 M.D. or the spike can unleash an electrical blast that does 1D6x10 S.D.C. damage. This may be used to subdue opponents the creature wants to swallow whole or to zap people and creatures who are minor annoyances.

Mouth Tentacle Swallow Attack (special): No damage. 1D4+1 tentacles shoot out, grab and pull the snared victim into the mouth and he is swallowed. Tentacles have a 25-30 foot (7.6 to 9.1 m) reach. The entire attack takes less than 3 seconds and counts as one melee action.

This attack is designed entirely to grab and swallow prey and opponents whole! People with high P.P.E. are usually funneled around the gullet and into an empty food storage sack. The victim is immediately stunned and once dropped into a sack (takes one melee round/15 seconds), he is completely immobilized in a coma-like stasis. *Food* is channeled into the stomach where the victim, alive and conscious, is dropped into a vat of stomach acid that does 1D6x10 M.D. every melee round (15 seconds).

Humanoids as large as 16 feet (4.9 m) tall can be swallowed whole. 20 feet (6.1 m) may be possible by the largest females, nothing bigger.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +4 on Perception Rolls involving finding food/sources of P.P.E., and caves. +3 to strike with bite, feet and arms, +6 to strike when up close with its mouth tentacles, +2 to parry, +4 to pull punch (can regulate the amount of M.D. it inflicts when it wants to, but never in a panic), impervious to Earth diseases, and +4 to save vs magic attacks.

Vulnerabilities: Fire. Aishwarra suffer double damage from fire. However, its fear of flames is out of proportion to the damage it actually inflicts. Aishwarra have been known to flee in panic from fires no larger than a bonfire. Setting fires to drive away the Aishwarra was a standard Grackle Tooth tactic, however, a panicked and stampeding Aishwarra becomes extremely unpredictable, running in any direction and through buildings and walls, trampling vehicles, crops, livestock and people, and creating carnage. Consequently, it may be wise to relegate the use of fire to preemptive tactics to keep them away or as a last-ditch defense against a group of attacking monsters if everything else fails. Furthermore, the one thing the monster will brave fire to get at is people with high P.P.E. (70 points or greater), gobbling

up as many of them as it can in a few minutes before running away.

Also a terrible swimmer (30% skill) and dislikes deep water, and can be drowned in 2D4 minutes when dragged underwater, but doesn't mind wading through water as deep as 60 feet (18.3 m).

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Prefer deserts and arid environments, but can be found anywhere during summer months, migrating south in the winter.

Enemies: None, per se. All other creatures are regarded as prey.

Allies: None, not even each other.

Value: The eggs are worth 1D4 million credits as magic batteries and the Splugorth love to use them in their Bio-Wizard creations whenever they can acquire them.

Note: Originally appeared in the **Rifts® Machinations of Doom™ Sourcebook and Graphic Novel**, page 110.

Alien Rex Dinosaur

By Kevin Siembieda and Todd Yoho

This scary bipedal monster has the same basic shape as the Tyrannosaurus Rex or Allosaurus, but it heralds from a different planet, and is an unwanted import via the Rifts to the forests and marshlands of Dinosaur Swamp.

The Alien Rex is smaller, faster and more mobile than Earth's Tyrannosaurus, but it is just as deadly and more intelligent. The Alien Rex stands 15-19 feet (4.6 to 5.8 m) tall, has a pair of powerful legs made for running and leaping, and a tail that sticks straight out and is used as a rudder for balance. The upper arms are proportionately longer than Earth's T-Rex or Allosaurus and more resemble those of a Raptor or even a human. Its large head and gaping maw can easily bite a man in half, and its four, almond-shaped eyes, two large, two small, on each side of its head, only add to its frightful alien appearance. Its hands have two fingers and an opposable thumb, all of which end in sharp, curved black claws the size of a man-made sickle. Its arms and hands are able to grab and hold prey as well as use its sickle-like claws for slashing attacks in combat and later, for slicing up the meat of its slain prey.

The monster's thumb may be opposable, but it is much less flexible and articulated than a human's, but sufficient enough to allow the Alien Rex to use primitive tools like a tree branch as a lever or a probe, or a rock to bash open a door, lock or skull. The Alien Rex uses simple tools in a similar way as a chimpanzee might for rudimentary tasks, but not with human-level intelligence. It does not make tools, and the monster cannot use modern weapons, computers or other tech devices, nor is it smart enough to operate machines. However, the clever beast may figure out how to open a door, figure out how to turn a doorknob or push down or pull up on a lever, especially if it has observed others doing so. It is also known to recognize certain weapons, body armor and vehicles, and can even formulate simple plans and strategies, like hide in ambush and strike when its prey is distracted or injured.

The massive, rock hard head rests atop a thick, but flexible neck. The maw is filled with dagger-sized teeth ideal for biting and tearing flesh. The largest cluster of teeth is in the front of the mouth for biting off hunks of meat, while the teeth along the jaw are smaller and widely spaced, reminiscent of an Earth alligator,



and are for biting and holding prey while the Alien Rex cuts it to shreds with its claws.

A pair of large, almond-shaped eyes are located on each side of the head. This gives the great beast superior peripheral vision to the side; can see 180 degrees like a bird. HOWEVER, the monster must turn its *entire head* to see what is directly in front of it. This means the Alien Rex can lose sight of prey or an enemy standing directly in front of it, but is seldom surprised by an attack or motion off to the side or toward the back. Thus, when the Alien Rex pursues prey, it often runs with its head cocked to one side, and may suddenly switch its attack to another target off to the side or behind it. The strange positioning of the eyes makes it an ideal predator for attacking packs and herds of smaller animals, enabling the behemoth to charge in and grab the nearest prey. Animals that travel in groups usually scatter when attacked, with some falling back, others veering left or right. The Alien Rex's side and back vision enables it to see these evasive side actions and to quickly swing its giant head to snap closed on the nearest animal. Consequently, the Alien Rex often swings its head from side to side and makes sharp maneuvers as it switches from one target to another. The attack may seem helter-skelter, but it is very effective.

A line of small, black or dark brown horns run from the center of the head down the back of the skull. The skin of the Alien Rex is thick and lumpy, providing protection from the horns and teeth of the monster's prey. Its skin color can be a wide range of various shades of green to greenish brown, with a dark underbelly. The bones of the head and jaw are thick and hard as Mega-Damage concrete.

Thankfully, the Alien Rex is not one of the dinosaur-like creatures who uses magic or exhibits true human intelligence. Bad enough that they often travel in pairs and packs of three or four. These small hunting groups work together and use simple tactics to herd and chase large prey into the arms of a fellow hunter. Every member of a small pack shares in the kill.

The Alien Rex may also be encountered as a solitary hunter. In fact, most juvenile Alien Rex and bull males hunt alone. While females are more likely to hunt in pairs or small groups.

Alien Rex – Carnivorous, Alien Dinosaur

Also Known As: The Smart Hunter and Demon Allosaurus.

Alignment: Animal predator, considered Miscreant or Diabolic.

Attributes: Animal attributes are very consistent and offer a smaller range of attribute aptitude. I.Q. 1D4+6 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+6, M.A. 1D6+6, P.S. 1D6+24 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+16, P.E. 1D6+16 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6+4, Spd 1D6+40 running or 30 mph (48 km) for up to 20 minutes before needing to slow down to something more manageable. A top speed of 40 mph (64 km) is possible in short bursts lasting 1D4+1 minutes to chase down prey or make a quick escape. It can trot 12-15 mph (19 to 24 km) for up to nine hours before needing to rest. Walking speed is 5-7 mph (9 to 11.2 km).

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 175

Neck – 110

*Eyes, Large (2, on each side of head) – 12 each

*Eyes, Smaller (2, on each side of head) – 7 each

*Forearms (2) – 75 each

*Clawed Hands (2) – 25 each

Legs (2) – 130 each

Tail – 100

Main Body – 1D6x10+340

* A single asterisk indicates a small and/or difficult target to strike. It may be protected by armor plating, boney ridges, or just located in an a place that is hard to target. The shooter or attacker must make a Called Shot to hit at a penalty of -4 to strike.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Alien Rex has 1D6x10+120 S.D.C., 1D6x10+120 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 11. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (75 M.D.C. = 75 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D.

Horror Factor: 14

Size: 15-19 feet (4.6 to 5.8 m) tall; the tail is another 8-12 feet (2.4 to 3.7 m); the reach of its forearms is about 6 feet (1.8 m).

Weight: 2-3 tons.

Average Life Span: 25-35 years. The Alien Rex mates in the winter and females lay 1D6+4 eggs in a nest of twigs, grass and rock. The female stays near for the next four months, checking in regularly, and standing guard at night. She can tell when the eggs are going to hatch within 24 hours and makes sure there is a fresh kill waiting for her ravenous babies when they hatch. Young are only a foot (0.3 m) tall when they hatch, but grow four feet (1.2 m) tall within three months. Babies are ravenous and start to hunt under the watchful eyes of mamma nearby after only six weeks old. By 14 months the young are 8 foot (2.4 m) tall juveniles who hunt with mother until age two, but start to go off farther on their own or in pairs or small groups of their siblings more and more. Alien Rex reach full size and maturity at seven years of age.

P.P.E.: 2D6

Disposition: While aggressive on a hunt, Alien Rex are smart enough not to press an attack against prey that proves to be tougher than they thought. The creature is not cowardly, but retreats when M.D.C. is reduced by 50-60%. The Alien Rex is intelligent enough to wound large, dangerous prey then retreat to a safe distance or trail it to see if it dies from its injuries without risk of further combat, or wait until the prey weakens from blood loss and becomes more vulnerable to a later attack. The Alien Rex is also known to pick off stragglers and target the injured as well as lay in ambush and use the element of surprise.

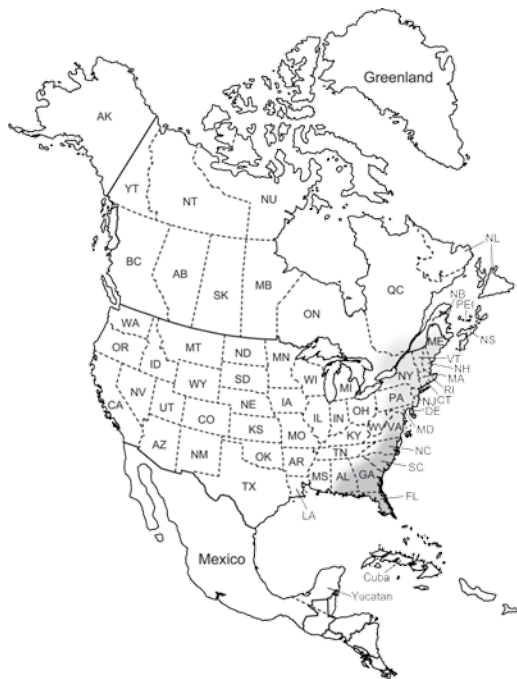
Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 20%, Detect Ambush 35%, Detect Concealment 35% (also see Track by scent, below), Land Navigation 75%, Prowl 42% (+10% in forest), Swimming 30%, Tracking 70% (by sight; humans and animals), and Tailoring 85%.

Natural Abilities: Excellent sense of smell enables the Alien Rex to Track prey by scent at 65% (+20% to track the scent of blood) and can smell blood or fresh carrion up to two miles (3.2 km) away. The Alien Rex is something of a scavenger that is happy to eat fresh carrion no older than 48 hours old, or take the kill of another animal away from it if it is stronger or healthier. Bio-Regenerates at a rate of 4D6 M.D.C. per 24 hours and regrows fingers and pieces of its tail within 2D6+10 days.

A nimble and swift runner for its size, the Alien Rex is also able to Leap 10 feet (3 m) high and 15 feet (4.6 m) across; 50% greater with a running start. The monster's leaping ability is used to leap up and over obstacles like fallen trees and burned out vehicles without missing a step or losing speed. It may also leap to pounce on potential prey.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Mega-Damage: Fights tooth and claw, with its massive and powerful bite representing its primary method of attack.



Bite, Restrained – 1D6 M.D.

Bite, Full Strength – 5D6 M.D.

Bite, Power Bite – 1D6x10 M.D., but counts as two attacks.

Head Butt (blunt) – 2D6+2 M.D.

Claw Strike, Forearms, Full Strength – 3D6 M.D.

Claw Strike, Hind Legs – 4D6 M.D.

Stomp – 3D6 M.D.

Tail Strike – 3D6 M.D. with a 50% chance of knocking down human-sized targets under 10 feet (3 m) tall. A victim of knock down loses initiative and one melee attack.

Pounce Attack (special): 4D6 M.D. with an 75% likelihood of knocking victims up to 15 feet (4.6 m) tall and weighing up to three tons, off its feet. A victim of knockdown from a pounce loses initiative and two melee attacks, plus there is a 35% chance of the monster pinning its opponent to the ground, meaning its victim is unable to fight back as long as the monster desires to keep him pinned. A pounce attack counts as two melee attacks. Keeping the prey pinned and unable to physically fight back uses up four of the monster's attacks per melee leaving it one bite attack to use on its pinned victim, should it desire to attack him. **Note:** A cat and mouse pounce in which the Alien Rex knocks down and/or holds its victim down but does not want to inflict serious damage inflicts only 2D6 M.D. from the beast's controlled impact. During these kinds of games, the monster is likely to show its teeth, snorts, growl in a threatening manner, bellow, or lick its victim to scare the crap out of him, as if to say, "I can kill you any time I wish to do so." As always, a pinned victim is still able to cast magic and use psionics if he possesses them.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 to Perception Rolls, +2 on initiative, +2 to strike with claws or tail, +3 to strike with bite/jaws, +2 to dodge, +2 to roll with impact, +7 to save vs Horror Factor, and a +2 to save vs poison.

Vulnerabilities: All Mega-Damage weapons and attacks inflict full damage to the Alien Rex. Even though the beast resides in Dinosaur Swamp, it is a poor swimmer (30%). The shallow waters of the marshlands are not a problem, but dislikes water deeper than 6 feet (1.8 m) and is not likely to enter it. The animal has difficulty in deep water and strong currents and is easily drowned.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Primarily the forests and marshy lowlands throughout Dinosaur Swamp, mainly Florida, Alabama, Georgia and the Carolinas. Over the last few years, there have been rumored sightings of the creature as a lone hunter, pairs and small groups further north along the forests of the Eastern Seaboard as far as lower Ontario and Quebec, Canada, but such encounters that far north are rare. There have also been reports of Alien Rex in the Magic Zone (Ohio Valley), but this is likely to be the result of Shifters summoning the beast and others bringing them to the area, and not the creature expanding its range. Alien Rex do not like extreme cold and are likely to travel back south during the winter months where the winter is less extreme.

Enemies: Other predators, including the Razorback Rhinoceros, T-Rex, Allosaurus and other large predators and pack hunters. The Alien Rex preys mainly on large animals, including humans, and will attack and eat anything that won't eat it first.

Allies: None per se, other than a mate or other members of its own species. The Alien Rex typically ignores or tolerates members of its own race. Frequently hunts alone, in pairs, threes or four-somes. Rarely more than that, but groups of six and seven have been reported.

Value: None, only Shifters, Simvan Monster Riders and Psi-Stalkers have any chance of using the Alien Rex as a riding or as an attack animal, and even they have trouble controlling mature adults. The Splugorth sometimes use the monsters in the gladiatorial arena and will pay 1,000-2,000 credits for young and 4,000-6,000 for an adult, provided they are in the market for one at the time.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 27: Adventures in Dinosaur Swamp™**, page 27.

Allosaurus Dinosaur

By Todd Yoho and Kevin Siembieda

It remains a mystery as to whether or not dinosaurs and prehistoric creatures are actually from Earth's past or from a parallel Earth where such beasts still roam the land. Whatever the case, they emerged from the Rifts and have adapted well to the savage wildernesses of Rifts Earth. In North America, dinosaurs are found predominantly in the American West and Southeast. So numerous are dinosaurs in the Florida, Georgia and Carolina region that those old American States have become known as *Dinosaur Swamp*. Among the most notable apex predators of the Atlantic Southeast is the Allosaurus.

At first glance, many adventurers unfamiliar with dinosaurs confuse the Allosaurus with a small or juvenile Tyrannosaurus Rex. An easy mistake when a slobbering, tooth-filled maw is racing toward you, and the finer points of dinosaur identification are largely unimportant. While they are both carnivorous theropods of similar builds, the adult Allosaurus is a smaller, leaner theropod than the Tyrannosaurus Rex which is more massive and powerfully built. The T-Rex is easily 5 feet (1.5 m) taller and outweighs the Allosaurus by 3-5 tons. The adult Allosaurus is also differentiated with a pair of small horns, fins and bony ridges decorating its skulls. Its hide is covered in an intricate camouflage pattern of greens, browns and dark red patches and the forearms are longer than the T-Rex. In fact, its forearms are extremely dexterous and used to grab and hold onto prey before

making the kill with one or more bites from its massive maw filled with serrated teeth.

Allosaurus are typically solitary hunters and scavengers, though they have been known to congregate in *small packs*, especially females. 1D4+1 adult females may adopt and mentor 1D6+2 juveniles. Such groups may include a few young males, but are often all female. When males gather in a group, it is usually one or two older adults and 1D6 submissive juveniles, males or female, but overall male Allosaurus tend to be loners and solitary hunters. Lone males are notoriously single-minded and known to pursue a specific prey or opponent that has earned its enmity to the exclusion of all else.

For generations there have been unconfirmed reports of a breed of Allosaurus that can turn invisible at will, but such stories are widely dismissed as folklore. Many point to the Allosaurus' camouflage patterning and stealth abilities which make them deadly hunters who can "seem" to appear out of nowhere. It has only been recently that the existence of the so-called *Ghost Allosaurus* has been proven. See details immediately after the Allosaurus stats.

Allosaurus – Carnivorous Dinosaur

Also Known As: The Deadly Hunter, Big Al and Little Rex.

Alignment: Animal Predator, considered Miscreant or Diabolic.

Attributes: Animal attributes are very consistent and offer a smaller range of attribute aptitude. I.Q. 1D4+4 (medium animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+4, M.A. 1D6+6, P.S. 1D6+30 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+15, P.E. 1D6+19 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6+5, Spd 1D6+34 running, or 27 mph (43 km) for up to 30 minutes before needing to slow down or stop and rest. The beast

can trot at a speed of 12-18 mph (19.2 to 29 km) for up to eight hours. Walking speed is 5-8 mph (9 to 12.8 km).

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 100

Forelimbs (2) – 40 each

Hind Limbs (2) – 150 each

Tail – 90

Main Body – 1D4x100 (+60 for the larger females).

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Allosaurus has a main body of 3D6x10 S.D.C., 2D6x10+30 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 12. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (30 M.D.C. = 40 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D.

Horror Factor: 15

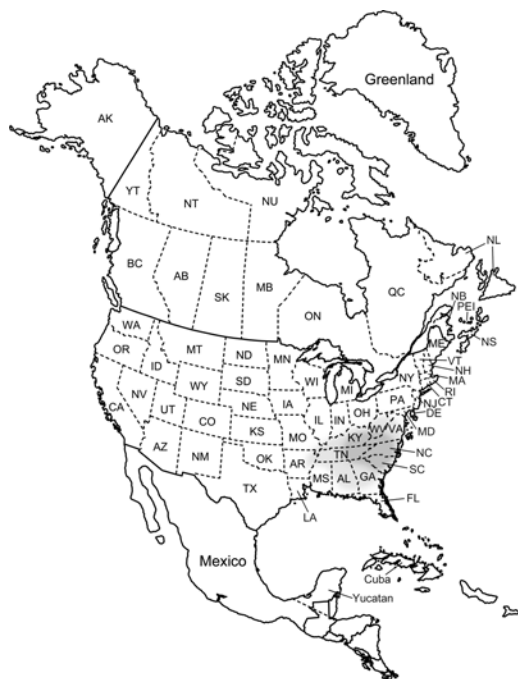
Size: 20-35 feet (6.1 to 10.7 m) long from snout to tip of tail, 10-15 feet (3 to 4.6 m) tall.

Weight: 2-3 tons.

Average Life Span: 20-30 years. The Allosaurus mates in winter.

Females lay 1D4x10+60 eggs sometimes all in one clutch, other times spread out among 2-4 nests. She covers them in mud and leaves and leaves them to fend for themselves. Eggs that are not found and eaten by other Mega-Damage predators, hatch 60 days later. The babies scurrying into the underbrush where they immediately begin to hunt insects and small amphibians and each other. Within three months the young Allosaurus has grown to three feet (0.9 m) tall and by year's end will have reached 4-5 feet (1.2 to 1.5 m) tall and 8-11 feet (2.4 to 3.4 m) long. Highly competitive, young prey upon each other. How-





ever, that changes by age three, when the large, strong beasts stop hunting each other and seldom fight to the death among themselves. Juvenile Allosaurus reach full size and physical maturity by age 11.

P.P.E.: 3D6

Disposition: Patient and persistent – an Allosaurus is a patient, crafty hunter willing to lay in wait for hours until the exact right moment to ambush its prey. The beast is known to pursue specific prey (and people) for great distances, and seldom backs down from a fight. If any monster is going to fight to the death, especially when angry or out for blood vengeance, it is the Allosaurus and its cousin, the Ghost Allosaurus. Thinks the movie *Jaws*, only with the Allosaurus on land instead of a shark at sea.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Camouflage 75% (coloring enables them to blend in with their surroundings and ambush prey; coloring and detail vary), Land Navigation 90%, Prowl 60% (+10% in leafy forests) and Tailing 70%. Cannot Swim or Climb. **Note:** Will not enter water that is more than 4 feet (1.2 m) deep!

Natural Abilities: Swift runners for their size, they can maintain their top speed for 30 minutes. Excellent day vision, fair night-vision 300 feet (91.5 m). Have an excellent sense of smell, can smell prey up to 2,000 feet (610 m) away, double the range to smell and track blood and fresh carrion (less than 48 hours old), and can Track by smell alone at 70% (+10% to follow scent of blood and death).

Accelerated Ley Line Healing (special): Under normal conditions the beast recovers from damage at a rate of 2D6 M.D.C. per 24 hours. However, it Bio-Regenerates at the amazing rate of 6D6 M.D.C. per hour when on a ley line or nexus point. Moreover, it can completely regenerate lost limbs and portions of tail within 48 hours, an entire tail, arm or leg in 72 hours when on a ley the entire period. A fact that the Allosaurus understands and uses to its full advantage. Why this is the case is anyone's guess.

Sense Ley Line (special): An Allosaurus can sense the location of one or more ley lines from 30 miles (48 m) away. As noted above, it uses ley lines to heal in a matter of hours and regenerate lost limbs in a matter of a few days. Thus, the mon-

ster likes to live near a ley line when possible, and know where a few are located when it needs one.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Mega-Damage: Fights tooth and claw, with its massive and powerful bite representing its primary method of attack.

Bite, Restrained – 1D6 M.D.

Bite, Full Strength – 5D6+3 M.D.

Bite, Power Bite – 1D6x10 M.D., but counts as two attacks.

Head Butt (blunt) – 3D6 M.D.

Claw Strike, Forearms, Full Strength – 3D6 M.D.; short reach.

Claw Strike, Hind Legs – 5D6 M.D.

Stomp – 2D6 M.D.

Tail Strike – 4D6 M.D. with a 60% chance of knocking down human-sized targets under 10 feet (3 m) tall. A victim of knock down loses initiative and one melee attack.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls to notice prey, danger and ley lines, +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, +2 to dodge, +1 to roll with impact, and +9 to save vs Horror Factor, it's hard to scare or intimidate this relentless hunter.

Vulnerabilities: All Mega-Damage weapons and attacks inflict full damage to the Allosaurus. The hunter cannot swim and will not enter water that is more than 4 feet (1.2 m) deep, not even to pursue prey. The animal is easily drowned in deep water or water with strong currents.

Magic: Heals at a rate of 6D6 M.D. per hour when on a ley line. See Natural Abilities for complete details.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Forests and marshy lowlands, though tends to stay on the fringes of wetlands. Most common to the forests of North and South Carolina, but its range has increased to the forests of Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee, and occasionally in Georgia, Alabama and Arkansas. Dislikes the colder climates of the North, but one or a few might make their way farther north in the summer months, but head back south when temperatures drop below 50 degrees Fahrenheit (10 Celsius) on a regular basis.

Enemies: Other predators, anything that might be a food source.

Allies: None, except for members of their own packs when they form them, and which may include 1D4 *Ghost Allosaurus*, described below.

Value: None, though Simvan sometimes use them as war mounts and the Splugorth as monsters in the gladiatorial arena.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 26: Dinosaur Swamp™**, page 15.

Ghost Allosaurus Dinosaur

By Kevin Siembieda

The rumors are true. There are Allosaurs that are able to turn invisible. This *mutant sub-class of Allosaurus* is included here because they are identical in appearance and behavior to the classic Allosaurus in every way except a few. Those differences – P.P.E., slightly higher Attributes, skill equivalents, other magic – are noted below.

Ghost Allosaurus – Carnivorous Dinosaur

Alignment: Considered Miscreant or Diabolic.

Also Known As: The Invisible Allosaurus and Devil Dinosaur.

Attributes: There are some differences between this species and the classic Allosaurus. I.Q. 1D4+6 (predatory animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+6, M.A. 1D6+6, P.S. 1D6+30 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+15, P.E. 1D6+17 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6+5, Spd 1D6+34 running, or 27 mph (43 km) for up to 30 minutes before needing to slow down or stop and rest. The beast can trot 12-18 mph (19.2 to 29 km) for up to eight hours. Walking speed is 5-8 mph (9 to 12.8 km).

M.D.C. by Location: Same as Allosaurus, above.

Horror Factor: 15, same as Allosaurus, above.

Size: Same as Allosaurus, above. 20-30 feet (6.1 to 9.1 m) long, 10-15 feet (3 to 4.6 m) tall.

Weight: 2-3 tons.

Average Life Span: 30-45 years.

P.P.E.: 5D6+20

Disposition: Same as Allosaurus, above, a patient and persistent hunter.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Camouflage 75% (coloring enables them to blend in with their surroundings and ambush prey), Detect Ambush 40%, Detect Concealment 35%, Land Navigation 95%, and Prowl 60% (+20% when invisible!) and Tailing 70% (+15% when invisible). Cannot Swim or Climb. **Note:** Will not enter water that is more than 4 feet (1.2 m) deep.

Natural Abilities: Same as Allosaurus, above, plus the ability to turn invisible, below, and the ability to cast two spells.

Accelerated Healing (special): Same as the Allosaurus, above.

Sense Ley Lines (special): Same as Allosaurus, above.

Turn Invisible (special): Ghost Allosaurs are able to turn invisible at will and maintain invisibility for up to an hour at a time when hiding and stalking or tailing prey. When the monster hears or smells potential prey approaching (up to 2,000 feet/610 m away; double the range to smell the scent of blood), it turns invisible and waits to ambush prey from the shadows, or it slowly sneaks closer before it charges out of nowhere to attack. As soon as the Ghost Allosaurus attacks or begins to run to attack, the invisibility ends and the beast is revealed in all of its fury and terror. **Bonus:** This initial surprise attack provides a

bonus of +1 on initiative and +1 to strike. P.P.E. Cost: Turning invisible costs 4 P.P.E. points; no cost when on a ley line.

Also see, *Magic*, below.

Attacks per Melee: Four, same as Allosaurus, above.

Mega-Damage: Same as Allosaurus, above.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): Same as Allosaurus, above, except for the additional +1 on initiative and +1 to strike when appearing out of nowhere (was invisible).

Magic: In addition to healing at a rate of 6D6 M.D. per hour when on ley lines, and the ability to turn invisible at will (cost 4 P.P.E.), the Ghost Allosaurus can also cast the following spells upon itself: Death Trance (1), See the Invisible (4), and Resist Fire (6; self only, half damage). Cannot learn additional magic spells and does not speak any discernible language, it is an animal. P.P.E. for use of magic: 5D6+20. The Ghost Allosaurus recovers P.P.E. at a rate of 1D6 per hour, double along a ley line or at a nexus point. **P.P.E.:** 5D6+20.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Same as Allosaurus, above, but are drawn to ley lines, and to the Magic Zone in the summer.

Enemies: Same as Allosaurus, above.

Allies: Same as Allosaurus, above. Ghost Allosaurs may hunt alone or in a pack of 1D4+1 fellow Ghosts or be counted among the members of an ordinary Allosaurus pack.

Value: Same as Allosaurus, above.

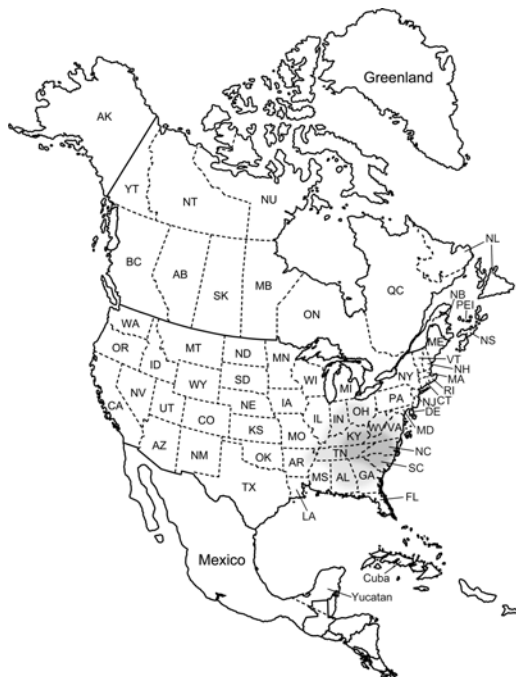
Note: New, described for the first time in this book.

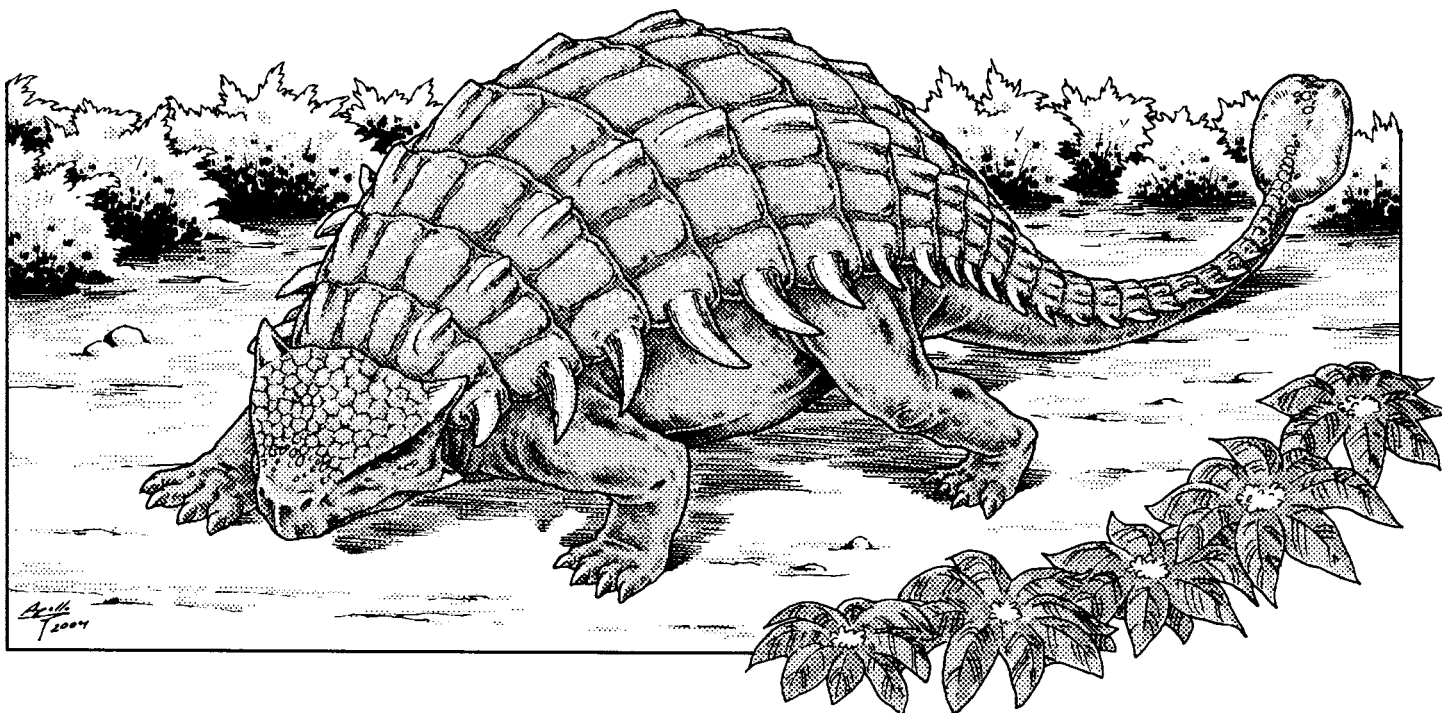
Ankylosaurus Dinosaur

By Todd Yoho and Kevin Siembieda

The Ankylosaurus is a walking tank as long as a bus. It somewhat resembles a turtle, but exhibits the same calm, slow behavior. A four-legged plant eater that walks low to the ground, it is protected by a thick hide and heavy armor plates that cover the animal's head, stubby neck and entire back, right down to the tip of its tail. Ankylosaurus have been known to shrug off repeated rail gun bursts, not even feeling the impact under the dense, bony plates that cover their body. A line of sharp spikes runs along the sides of the body to provide additional protection to the beast and discouragement to predators. An Ankylosaurus defends itself with a heavy club at the end of its prehensile tail that is able to deliver devastating, clubbing attacks to anyone who threatens it.

Ankylosaurus are slow-moving ground browsers that graze on grasses, leaves, fruit, berries and plants rather like a cow, including farm crops, which can become a problem. The creature often gathers in small family groups of 1D6+6 animals; typically the mother, father and one or two generations of young. As they plod along munching on vegetation, they appear to be oblivious to anything going on around them, including people walking as near as a few feet (a meter or two) away. The Ankylosaurus is more aware and alert than it may seem, however, and reacts with brutal swiftness when it feels threatened. The first thing it does is turn sideways or diagonal to the threat, head hung low. Then it arches its back and raises the club-like tail in a threatening manner and hisses. If in a group, young and juveniles cluster near the other adult(s) and mimic the same behavior. All of them ready to fight to protect themselves and their fellow members of the pack. This stance and hiss is a warning. Anyone who slowly backs away now and gives the creature a wide berth avoids a beating with that heavy, bone-crushing club at the end of the tail.





People or predators who attack or make a sudden movement toward the creature are fought. If within striking range, the adversary is clobbered by the tail. If the Ankylosaurus needs to close distance to strike, it charges, head hung low, like a bull, and barrels into its opponent with the intent of knocking it down. The walking tank then swirls around faster than you would expect and strikes with its tail 1D4 times, before taking a few steps back and waits. This is to give its opponent the chance to get up and leave. Enemies unable to get up after a beating are considered to a nominal threat and left alone, so playing dead is a good tactic against this behemoth. After the threat is over, the creature(s) go back to grazing. If the Ankylosaurus fears danger continues to lurk in the area, the alpha male gathers up its flock and they scurry away at least a few hundred feet (1D4x100 meters) where it/they continue to eat.

If several opponents attack, the armored dinosaur deals with them the best it can. If a member of a family pack falls under attack, the others charge forward barking and hissing to join the fight. (Yes, Ankylosaurus bark and growl, like dogs, as well as hiss.) The dominant males lead the charge and fight as long as necessary to eliminate the threat, one way or another. When a predator lingers after a fight, the Ankylosaurus backs away in the underbrush, the adults never taking their eyes off their assailant(s) until they have put some distance between them.

Like most herbivores, Ankylosaurus fight only long enough to chase away attackers and/or to make good their own escape, not kill. Of course, when necessary the beast does not hesitate to kill, especially when protecting a mate or young. It usually takes something quite significant to threaten these tranquil, armored behemoths enough to cause them to attack.

Despite their turtle-like appearance, Ankylosaurus are not amphibious. Their large, oval bodies and immense weight make them unsuited for life in the wetlands, and they sometimes get stuck in the marsh or the mud of a riverbank. As a result, they favor forests and to a lesser degree, grasslands.

Ankylosaurus – Herbivore Dinosaur

Also Known As: The Great Turtle and Combat Tortoise.

Alignment: Animal, considered Anarchist.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4 (Extremely low animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6, M.A. 1D6+2, P.S. 1D6+40 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+11, P.E. 1D6+24 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6+6, Spd 1D6+16 running, or 14 mph (22 km) for up to 20 minutes before the animal needs to rest or slow down. A more comfortable trotting speed of 6-8 mph (9.6 to 12.8 km) can be maintained for eight hours. Grazing speed is a lazy 1-2 mph (1.6 to 3.2 km). Cannot swim!

M.D.C. by Location:

*Head – 1D6x10+200

*Body Spikes (typically 20) – 25 each

*Forelimbs (2) – 190 each

Hind Limbs (2) – 225 each

Tail – 300

*Bone Club Tail – 300

**Underbelly – 200

Main Body – 1D6x100+600 for mature adults.

Note: 1D4x100+500 for young adults age 13-18, 6D6x10+200 for juveniles ages 4-12 (half the size of an adult), and 2D6x10+100 for babies age 1-3 years old.

* A single asterisk indicates a small and/or difficult target to strike. It may be protected by armor plating, boney ridges, or just located in an a place that is hard to target. The attacker must make a Called Shot to hit, but at a penalty of -3 to strike.

** To hit the underbelly the creature must be flipped on its back or the attacker is underneath the beast, except there is only one foot (0.3 m) clearance under the animal.

Note: On S.D.C. worlds, the Ankylosaurus has a main body of 2D6x10+300 S.D.C., 2D6x10+400 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 17. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (200 M.D.C. = 200 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D., so if a bite does 2D6 M.D. it does 2D6 S.D.C.

Horror Factor: As a general rule, none, but an angry Ankylosaurus is scary, with a Horror Factor of 10, and three or more angry beasts has an H.F. of 13.

Size: 25-35 feet (7.6 to 10.7 m) long from snout to the tip of the tail, 4 feet (1.2 m) tall at the hips, 5-6 feet (1.5 to 1.8 m) to the

top of the beast's back, and 4-5 feet (1.2 to 1.5 m) wide, its spikes contributing to its width. Its tail is nearly as long as its body, 11-16 feet (3.4 to 4.9 m) depending the size of the individual animal.

Weight: 4-7 tons.

Average Life Span: 50-70 years. Ankylosaures mate for life. Sexually mature females lay 3D6+2 eggs every spring in a shallow pit it covers with dirt, often under a fallen tree or other out of the way location. Young hatch within four months and are the size of a toaster when born and have 1D4x10+30 M.D.C. Baby Ankylosaures take to the forest where they instinctively hide and graze. After one year, they are already the length of a love seat but are considered a baby until they reach age four. It is the animal's baby and juvenile years (juveniles are age 4-12), that the animals are in the greatest danger. At age 13 the animal is a young adult but with 1D4x10% less M.D.C. than a mature adult. Ankylosaures do not reach full size and sexual maturity until they reach 18 years of age.

Oddly enough, Ankylosaures are not recruited and adopted into small family packs of 1D6+6 animals until age six. Once the juveniles are accepted into the clan, all members of the group forge strong ties and fight to protect each other. The largest group reported had 20 members in its flock.

P.P.E.: 3D6

Disposition: Placid and calm most of the time. It is difficult to startle or provoke this peaceful, easygoing animal. However, these gentle giants transform into fierce brawlers in an instant when there is a serious threat. An angry, cornered or under siege Ankylosaurus (or small pack of them) attacks threats by charging, ramming, trampling and smacking them down with their tail weapon.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Dowsing 65%, Land Navigation 70%, Identify Plants and Fruit 95% (by sight and smell; though the creature can eat most any plant, fruit, nut or berry, including those toxic to people and other animals). Cannot Swim or Climb. **Note:** Will not enter water that is more than three feet (0.9 m) deep.

Natural Abilities: Extraordinary endurance and resistance to pain and poison. Can travel for 1D6+4 days without rest or water and derives most of the water it needs from the plants it eats. Excellent day vision, nightvision 100 feet (30.5 m), but sleeps at night. Average sense of smell, but can detect the scent of a Qink plant (loves to eat them) from up to 5 miles (8 km) away. Another favorite food is berries and fruit of all kinds, making them quite literally, a huge problem for farmers.

One peculiar fact has been discovered about Ankylosaurus is that they are incredibly resistant to pain and seem to be immune to most toxins and poisons. They have been known to devour some of the most poisonous plants found in Dinosaur Swamp, and in quantities that would kill a full-grown sauropod, without suffering ill effect. How they accomplish this is, as of yet, unknown. Ankylosaurus are notoriously fond of eating the dangerous Qink plant. They are the only known animals able to resist the lashing tendrils and poisonous spines to get to the fleshy center of the plant.

Toxin Immunity (special): Impervious to most chemicals, poisons and toxins, and any toxins that might affect the animal does only one-third damage and its effects have one third the usual penalties and duration.

Attacks per Melee: Three (four for the alpha male and beta female).

Mega-Damage: Fights primarily with its tail and charging attacks.

Bite, Restrained – 6D6 S.D.C. or 1D4 M.D. depending on the damage the animal wants to inflict.

Bite, Full Strength – 1D6+1 M.D.

Head Butt, Restrained – 1D6 M.D.

Head Butt, Full Strength or Body Bump (blunt) – 2D6 M.D.

Body Block with Spikes – 4D6 M.D.

Running Body Block/Ram – 6D6 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks. Has a 75% chance of knocking down an opponent under 12 feet (3.7 m) tall or weighing less than two tons; 30% chance against larger foes up to 20 feet (6.1 m) tall. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and two melee attacks.

Tail Strike, Restrained – 4D6 M.D. with a 40% chance of knocking down an opponent under 12 feet (3.7 m) tall.

Tail Strike, Full Strength – 1D6x10 M.D. with a 90% chance of knocking down an opponent under 12 feet (3.7 m) tall or weighing under two tons; 50% chance against larger foes up to 20 feet (6.1 m) tall. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and two melee attacks.

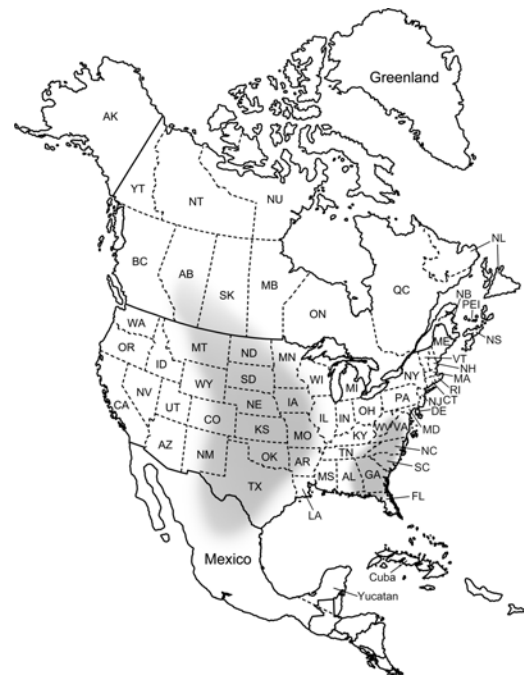
Stomp Attack – 1D6 M.D.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +10 vs Horror Factor, +10 to roll with impact, but -1 on initiative.

Vulnerabilities: All Mega-Damage weapons and attacks inflict full damage to the Ankylosaurus, but highly resistant to poison, chemicals, and disease.

Temperatures colder than freezing reduces the animal's speed by 30% and it dislikes the cold and hates deep snow. If trapped in a frigid or snowbound area that it cannot escape, the Ankylosaurus finds a place that offers a bit of shelter and hibernates for up to two months. However, after two months the animal is weak and starving (reduce speed, attacks per melee and bonuses by half) and will seek to travel south as soon as that is feasible; dies within another 1D4+2 weeks. The problem in snow is the large, heavy lumbering beast cannot travel through snow deeper than 5 feet (1.5 m). Those in the North try to head South before winter or the first snowfall.

Cannot swim and refuses to enter water deeper than 3 feet (0.9 m), even when pursued by a predator. The animal is easily drowned in shallow water, let alone deep water.



Magic: Impervious to all poisons, toxins, drugs, acid and disease when on a ley line and heals from them (lost M.D.C. caused by the poison restored) within one hour, and all penalties and side effects are negated instantly upon reaching the ley line.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: In the East, they are most commonly encountered in the forests south and east of the Appalachian Mountains, particularly in the Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia and northern Florida, but can also be found in Alabama and Tennessee, though in much smaller numbers. Their numbers are increasing in the New West where they travel along the Great Plains states into Mexico. Much fewer in Canada, where the animal is found in small numbers in southern Saskatchewan and Alberta. Travels in mated pairs or small family units of 1D6+6; half will be juveniles with half the M.D.C. and half the size of the adults.

The creature prefers light to medium forests, grasslands, and open, grassy plains. Their bulk makes it difficult to maneuver between the trees in dense woodlands, but they can trample over saplings and underbrush.

Enemies: Large predators, packs of small, swift Mega-Damage predators, humans and D-Bees. While people and Ankylosaurs are not usually a threat to each other, they come to blows when one invades the other's space (comes to feast on farm crops, blocks a street, plows through a fence or wall, etc.), or wants the same food, namely fruit, vegetables and farm crops.

Allies: None per se, other than its own kinds. Tolerates most other creatures and can be seen grazing with other herbivores. The beast can be domesticated and some folks use it as a work animal to haul cargo, plow fields, and similar heavy work.

Value: Varies. 100-800 credits for those in the market for the animal's meat or armored plates. 1,000-4,000 for a domesticated animal trained for farm work, namely plowing fields, pulling stumps, removing rocks, and hauling cargo. Juvenile animals are most often used as work animals, though most are slaughtered and butchered as food by age 17, before their meat gets too tough and less tasty, and the animal needs to eat too much.

The meat of juveniles and young is quite tasty and beef-like, though it is a chore to cut through the animal's tough underbelly to get to it. Their bony plates would make fantastic armor if it was not for the weight. Even as vehicle armor, Ankylosaur plates are much heavier than comparable composite, man-made materials. Their weight reduces the speed of robots and vehicles by 1D4x10%+20%.

A full suit of Ankylosaur armor has 260 M.D.C., but weighs 600-800 pounds (270 to 360 kg) making it unsuitable for use by normal humans and most D-Bees. Even Juicers, Crazies, Headhunters and other augmented beings suffer considerable penalties wearing such heavy and cumbersome armor. Penalties: -1 melee attack, no initiative, reduce all combat bonuses (strike, parry, dodge, etc.) by half, and also reduce the speed and physical skills by half for characters with Augmented, Bionic and Robotic P.S. by 50% and normal humans by 80%! No penalties to beings with Supernatural Strength.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 26: Dinosaur Swamp™**, page 17.

Aqua-Hydra

By Patrick Nowak and Kevin Siembieda

The Aqua-Hydra is something of an enigma. It is more than an animal, but less than human and certainly less than a dragon. It is an aquatic serpent with a long, slashing tail, four short legs with webbed feet, a pair of long arms with clawed, webbed fingers, and fish-like fins strategically located along its body. As the name suggests, the Aqua-Hydra has many heads – *five* to be exact. Each able to function and attack independent of the others. This sea serpent is considered by some to be a dragon. Indeed, it may be a very primitive cousin to true dragons, but it has a low intelligence, is driven by instinct, and has a temperament that can be summed up as brutish, mean and murderous.

The Aqua-Hydra is very territorial, always spoiling for a fight, and enjoys killing. Although it is a hunter that feeds primarily on fish, mammals and other sea creatures, its favorite prey are *humans* and *D-Bees*. The Aqua-Hydra often hunts and attacks people for the sheer sport of it. Killing them for pleasure more often than for food. The aquatic beast delights in sinking and capsizing ships and drowning and/or capturing sailors who it toys with or tortures over a period of time. The horrid beast has been known to stalk and play cat and mouse games with lone sea vessels for hours, sometimes days, snatching victims from the deck, one or two at a time, before finally leaving them alone or deciding to sink the ship and plunge everyone into the drink. Vessels found at sea without crews are often assumed to have fallen victim to the likes of the Aqua-Hydra, Dragonfish or a Devilsaurus.

Humans and D-Bees are not its only targets. The creature does not hesitate to lash out at power armor troops, cyborgs, small groups of demons, a lone dragon or other sea monsters. Such is the surly and aggressive nature of this murderous creature. Moreover, it is ready to fight with little or no provocation. Look at the Aqua-Hydra the wrong way and it may attack.

While those unfamiliar with dragons may mistake the Aqua-Hydra as one, it is not a True Dragon. Rather it is a wicked and distant cousin of dragons at best, or perhaps something alien and reminiscent of dragons. This is evident by its shockingly low I.Q., aggressive nature and extremely limited range of innate magic abilities like those of a Mystic. And though the Aqua-Hydra can perform metamorphosis, it is limited to one aquatic form. While true dragons can metamorph into any animal, including people, this beast cannot. Aqua-Hydras do gather and keep a treasure trove in their lair at the bottom of the sea or lake (typically worth 6D6x1,000 credits), have breath weapons, bio-regenerate, and speak a crude dialect of Dragonesse, all of which seem to suggest a connection of some sort with dragons. Or does it mean these brutish beasts emulate dragons in an effort to fool people or because they admire them? Whatever the case may be, dragons regard them as beasts to be pitied and ignored. Moreover, true dragons insist there is no common lineage between them and these sad plunderers of the deep.

Aqua-Hydras exhibit cunning and can be skillful and resourceful hunters when they put their heart into it. However, they are lazy in the extreme, happy to eat carrion and are always in search of *easy prey*. As scavengers, Aqua-Hydras consider eating just about anything that looks edible. One Coalition report tells of witnessing an Aqua-Hydra dig up and try to eat an anti-tank mine – blowing one of its heads to smithereens in the process. After a few minutes of shock, the monster's other heads began eating the pieces of the exploded head.



The animal is suited for life in water or on land, but it is most powerful in water. The Aqua-Hydra has both gills and lungs, so it can live underwater or on dry land indefinitely. It doesn't matter the type of water either. Fresh or salt water, toxic/polluted water, deep or comparatively shallow water are all just fine. It does, however, become uncomfortable if forced to go long periods (more than a week) without immersing itself in water at all. For this reason, Aqua-Hydras prefer to live in or near swamps, lakes and other bodies of water. The more daring or foolish Aqua-Hydra establish their lairs in the sewer systems of the Chi-Town 'Burbs and other cities, or even Chi-Town itself, to hunt and scavenge for food, coming out at night to pick off unsuspecting citizens.

Aqua-Hydra – Carnivorous Predator

Player Note: More animal than an intelligent dragon, but it is not recommended as an optional player character or even as a pet.

Also Known As: Lake Hydra or Sea Hydra or just Sea Serpent.

Alignment: Anarchist (20%), Miscreant (50%) or Diabolic (30%).

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+4 (low human intelligence, but driven by the instincts and cunning of a predator), M.E. 1D6+9, M.A. 1D6, P.S. 1D6+24 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+15, P.E. 1D6+18 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6+3, Spd 1D6+32, or 25 mph (40 km) running on dry land. Running at full speed can be maintained for 40 minutes before it needs to slow down or stop and rest. A trotting speed of 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km) can be maintained for up to six hours before. Walking speed is 4-5 mph (6.4 to 8 km).

Swimming speed is 50 mph (80 km or 43 knots) and the serpent is able to swim at full speed for up to 8-10 hours before

needing to slow down or rest for awhile. At 30 mph (48 km or 26 knots) or slower, the serpent can swim indefinitely. Maximum depth tolerance is 2 miles (3.2 km).

M.D.C. by Location:

*Heads (5) – 290 each

*Tail – 320

*Neck (5) – 250 each

*Legs (4, short) – 160 each

Main Body – 1D6x100+500

* A single asterisk indicates a small or difficult target to strike. The attacker must make a Called Shot to hit, but does so with a penalty of -3 to strike.

Note: On S.D.C. worlds, the Aqua-Hydra has a main body of 1D6x100 S.D.C., 1D4x100+100 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 12. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (90 M.D.C. = 90 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D. (i.e. 2D6 M.D. = 2D6 S.D.C.).

Horror Factor: 15

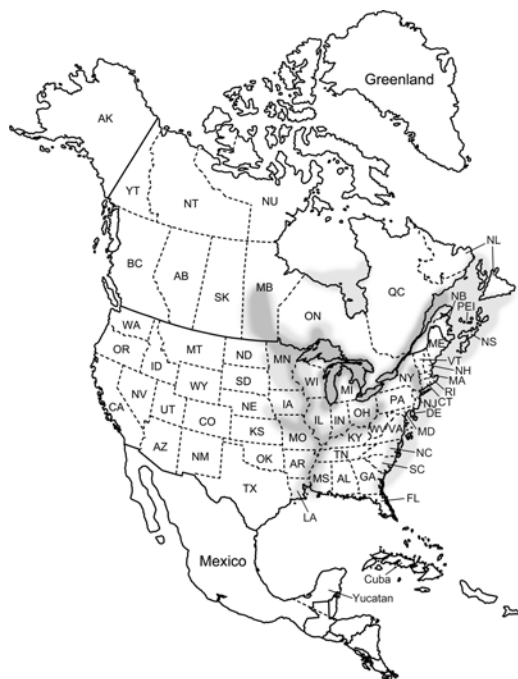
Size: 15-20 feet (4.6 to 6.1 m) tall, 40-70 feet (12.2 to 21.3 m) long.

Weight: 6-10 tons.

Average Life Span: 900-1,200 years.

P.P.E.: 1D6x10+120 base P.P.E., plus an additional 2D6 P.P.E. per level of experience.

Disposition: Brutal, cruel, vindictive and murderous, but also lazy and slothful. The Aqua-Hydra is a murderous fiend driven by



emotion and instinct. It enjoys the suffering of others and may engage in cruel cat and mouse games, torture and bullying. Territorial and possessive of anything they perceive to belong to them, including stolen goods.

Average Level of Experience: 1D4+2. Since Aqua-Hydras lack ambition, adults and even ancient serpents are not usually very high level.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 55%/10%, Camouflage 35% (+20% underwater), Land Navigation 45%, Prowl 40% (+10% underwater), Swimming 98% (swims like an eel), and Tailing 45%. All skills improve at a rate of +5% per additional level of experience starting at 4th level of experience.

Natural Abilities: Natural swimmers who breathe both air and water, and can live underwater or on dry land indefinitely. Those serpents that prefer dry land still live near a swamp or other body of water, and their lair and treasure are almost always kept underwater, where most humanoids are ill-equipped to easily gain access.

The serpent is resistant to M.D. cold, heat and fire (half damage), impervious to poisons, disease and radiation, has nightvision 300 feet (91.4 m), can see in murky waters 300 feet (91.4 m), has excellent normal vision, sees the invisible, magically understands all languages 80%, and is able to eat almost anything, from the remains of the dead to bones, rubber and toxic waste.

Bio-Regeneration (special): This strange serpent regenerates 1D6 M.D. per melee round, but only when submerged in water. Regeneration is not possible on dry land! Entire severed limbs (tail, fins, legs, feet, eyes, etc.) regenerate within 2D4 hours. Only the entire head cannot be regrown. If destroyed, that particular head is gone forever (and so are its two attacks).

Chemoreceptors (special): Similar to a shark, the sea monster has chemical sensitive receptors in the mouth that enables the Aqua-Hydra to detect minute changes in the salinity and chemical components of the water. Identify chemicals by taste: 65%. Track by Taste Alone: 55% (+20% to follow blood trail), Range: 2 mile (3.2 km) radius.

Chameleon Color Change (special): Can instantly change color at will; primarily blotchy browns, tans, grays, white and reds. +20% to Prowl when trying to hide or wait in ambush.

Metamorphosis (special): Can transform into a giant (20 foot/6.1 m long) eel with a single head. Duration: One hour per level of experience. It can also reduce its true size as a Hydra or eel by half for two hours per level of experience. This is the full range of its metamorphosis abilities.

Water Affinity (special): Knows the time of day and location scanning the heavens and feeling the tides, 60% +3% per level of experience. It is also able to sense the direction and speed of water currents and tides, changes in the currents and tides, and dramatic underwater disturbances within 10 miles (16 km) at a skill proficiency of 60% +3% per level.

Also see Mega-Damage, below, for special *Breath Weapons* of the five heads, as well as Magic for spell casting abilities.

Attacks per Melee: Ten! Two per each head. When it loses a head, it loses its attacks and the head does not regenerate.

Mega-Damage: Fights tooth and claw, and via breath weapons or magic.

Bite, Restrained – 1D4 M.D.

Bite, Full Strength – 4D6 M.D.

Bite, Power Bite – 1D4x10 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks.

Head Butt, Restrained – 2D6 M.D.

Head Butt, Full Strength – 4D6 M.D.

Body Block – 3D6 M.D.

Swimming or Running Body Block/Ram – 6D6 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks. Has an 80% chance of knocking down an opponent under 15 feet (4.6 m) tall or weighing less than three tons; 30% chance against larger foes up to 30 feet (9.1 m) tall. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and two melee attacks.

Tail Strike, Restrained – 2D6 M.D.

Tail Strike, Full Strength – 5D6 M.D. with a 75% chance of knocking down an opponent under 15 feet (4.6 m) tall or weighing under two tons. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and two melee attacks.

Stomp – 2D6 M.D.

Breath Attacks (special): All Aqua-Hydras are immune to the effects of their own or a fellow Hydra's breath attacks.

Saving Throw: 16 or higher to save vs non-lethal toxin.

Note: Underwater, the vapors create an opaque cloud that covers a 20 foot (6 m) diameter, but range is reduced by half.

1. Acid Spray: Typically one head spits acid. To save, a character must roll a 15 or higher. A successful save means half damage.

Range: 50 feet (15.2 m) distance, and six foot (1.8 m) wide spray.

Damage from Acid: 1D4x10 M.D. per spray attack.

Duration: The acid droplets continue to eat at the target, inflicting 1D6 M.D. per melee round for 1D4 melee rounds after the initial attack and damage.

Saving Throw: 14 or higher. A successful save means half damage.

2. Breathe Fire: Typically one or two heads can breathe fire.

Range: 120 feet (36.6 m), six feet (1.8 m) wide; 20 feet (6.1 m) underwater and does half damage.

Damage: 1D6 M.D. per level of experience.

Duration: Instant. Each fire blast counts as one attack.

Saving Throw: Dodge.

3. Toxic Vapors. One or two heads can breathe forth a highly irritating chemical similar to tear gas. It reacts with the eyes, nose, throat and skin of everyone who is sprayed. The va-

por causes eyes to sting and water, impairing vision. It also burns the throat and nasal passages, making breathing difficult. Characters dressed in environmental body armor or wearing gas masks are immune to this attack.

Range: 100 feet (30.5 m). Six foot (1.8 m) wide spray.

Damage/Effects of Toxic Spray: Mild corrosive inflicts 2D6 S.D.C. damage per melee round. Victims are temporarily blind and -10 on initiative, -10 to strike, parry, dodge, disarm, -2 attacks/actions per melee round and reduce speed by 25%.

Duration of Penalties: 1D6+1 melee rounds in air 1D6+3 rounds underwater.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): In ALL cases, *reduce by half on dry land (round down)*. +4 on Perception Rolls to recognize easy prey and valuables, +3 on initiative underwater, +4 to strike underwater, +4 to dodge underwater, +2 to roll with impact on land or underwater, +1 on all saving throws, and +4 to save vs Horror Factor. Remember, impervious to poisons, disease and radiation, and resistant to M.D. cold, fire and heat (they inflict half damage).

Vulnerabilities: Reduce bonuses by half on dry land or the deck of a ship. Cannot regenerate unless submerged in water (salt or fresh) giving it a huge disadvantage on dry land. Its foul temper and vile nature also tend to work against the serpent. Weapons made from the branch of a Millennium Tree inflicts double damage.

Magic: Has a limited number of *Ocean Magic* spells, including Change Current (15), Grow Tentacles (30), Sense Direction Underwater (4), Sonar Hearing (10), Speak Underwater (10), Water Envelope (10), and Water Pulse (2). See **Rifts® Underseas™** or **Rifts® Book of Magic™** for spell descriptions.

Plus these spell invocations: Call Lightning (15), Float in Air (5), Repel Animals (7), Sense Magic (4), Spoil (30, in this case, water only), Tongues (12), and Water to Wine (40). **Base P.P.E.:** 1D6x10+120 P.P.E., plus an additional 2D6 P.P.E. points per each level of experience.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: The Aqua-Hydra seems to prefer cool, freshwater lakes, large rivers and marshlands and infest the Great Lakes, particularly Superior, Michigan and Huron, as well as the Hudson River, Ohio River, Mississippi River, Lake Nipigon, Lake Winnepegosis, Lake Winnipeg, Lake Manitoba, and the Saint Lawrence Seaway. They are also found, to a lesser degree, in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, Chesapeake Bay, and Albemarle Sound. A few have even been reported in the icy waters of the Hudson Bay, James Bay, and along the Atlantic coast/eastern seaboard from Labrador to the coast of Georgia. They are rarely seen in warm waters like the Pacific Ocean, Caribbean, or Gulf of Mexico, nor extremely cold waters. However, 3,000-4,000 are estimated to inhabit Lake Superior alone!

Enemies: The only instinctive enemies of the Aqua-Hydra on Earth are the Horn Whale, Demon Fish, Devil Kraken and similar large, predatory sea serpents. Of course, the monster frequently clashes with people, particularly the CS Navy who feel it is their unofficial duty to exterminate them. As well as with true dragons of whom they are jealous. Hatchlings are favored targets – adults are too powerful and deadly. Other enemies include Water Serpents, Dragonfish, and Crab Warriors.

Allies: They sometimes associate with other powerful, evil beings, including Horune Pirates, Minions of Splugorth, and especially demons, pirates and evil sorcerers operating in and around the Great Lakes. As long as the serpent has plenty of

opportunities to hunt, kill, and torture, it is a happy and willing “partner.”

Value: None, alive. They are too mean, stupid and willful to be enslaved without becoming a serious problem. Necromancers might pay anywhere from 1D6x10 to 1D6x1000 credits for various pieces of an Aqua-Hydra’s body. Teeth and claws get the least amount, while a whole skull is worth the most. It is interesting to note that the serpent’s blood is often used in the process to create or help maintain the infamous *Dragon Juicers*, though harvesting their blood is a dangerous prospect as it must be fresh from a captive beast or from a recent kill.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® Sourcebook 4: Coalition Navy™**, page 98.

Armored Slayer

By Kevin Siembieda

The origin of these bizarre, quasi-humanoid creatures remains a mystery. One’s first impression is that the creature is some sort of armored soldier or alien being reminiscent to the Bio-Wizard creations of the Splugorth of Atlantis. However, it quickly becomes evident that these armored juggernauts are some strange, semi-intelligent monster from the Rifts.

The Armored Slayer is a barrel-chested, walking mound of organic plates, spikes and gnarled bone. A humanoid thing clad in rough and jagged armor not unlike an anthropomorphic rhinoceros wearing bulky, multifaceted plate armor. Upon closer inspection, the armor plating appears to be a composite of fragments made from metal, stone, wood and bone that has been covered and built upon with a light grey resin that is hard as rock. The Armored Slayer typically has two thick, stumpy legs, a pair of thick arms, huge 2-3 fingered hands, broad shoulders, hunched back, and a thick, short neck with the head shoved into its shoulders. Protruding from what is assumed to be the mouth are six, prehensile tentacles. Each is roughly ten feet (3 m) long, can act in unison or independent of the others, and ends in a spear-like tip that is used for slashing and stabbing. The fingers of the oversized hands are usually made of jagged chunks of M.D. metal or swords (including Vibro-Blades or magic swords), or the barrels of inoperative rail guns. They are connected to the hand by the resin and used to cut, stab, jab and hit rather than to use as articulated digits; that’s what the tentacles are for.

Just as the Hermit Crab of Earth finds an empty shell to use for its body, this alien being uses scrap armor and debris glued together, strengthened, built upon and molded with a secreted resin into the shapes and body plates of its artificial body.

Why a roughly humanoid shape is chosen is unknown. The genuine creature is a large, pale red mass of flesh that resembles a giant brain with two yellow eyes and a mass of six tentacles extending from underneath the front part of the body mass. The eyes are on short stalks located above the tentacles. Without its armor the creature resembles the Metztla of Atlantis, but there is no relation. This *tentacled brain* is the size of the upper torso of a human (roughly three feet/0.9 feet tall and 4 feet/1.2 m long; not counting tentacles). It sits in the chest of its armored body with the glowing yellow eyes peering out of the armor-plated head and the tentacles protruding from what appears to be the mouth. It controls its artificial body through a network of thread thin tendrils that extend from its own body into its artificial construct much like the



network of nerves in a living animal. It is further assisted by Telekinesis and other psionic powers.

If its armored body is destroyed, the actual flesh and blood creature is vulnerable to attack, as it is only a minor M.D.C. being, and crawls along using its tentacles at a painfully slow pace, though it often climbs up into trees (if available) where it can move faster and can disappear and hide among the branches and leaves. Without the armored shell, the creature is much less formidable, but far from helpless with its tentacles and psionics to defend itself.

Despite the massive size and weight of its artificial body, most Armored Slayers move and battle with the grace and lethal efficiency of a Juicer. They move much faster than their size and bulk would suggest, and they can perform back flips, somersaults, leaps and karate-style strikes at lightning speed and with astonishing fluidity.

Armored Slayers never eat flesh or any other type of physical food. The monsters feed by absorbing Potential Psychic Energy (P.P.E.) and psychic energy (I.S.P.) from other living beings similar to the Psi-Stalker. Like the Psi-Stalker, the Armored Slayer must capture and incapacitate its prey, then cover them with a slimy yellow substance secreted from the tentacles and mouth area. This slime has no negative effect on its victims other than somehow allowing the monster to absorb their P.P.E./I.S.P. through it. The tentacles weave and slide through the slimy goo, painlessly sucking up the slime and at the same time, the victim's psychic energy. When all the slime is removed/reabsorbed, the victim will have lost $1D4 \times 10 + 60\%$ of his P.P.E. and/or I.S.P., up to 100 points at a time. Of course, the victim will naturally regenerate said energy, so any loss is only temporary, and potentially

dangerous only if the individual needs to defend himself with magic or psionic abilities.

As a result, the monster's favorite prey are beings with high P.P.E. or I.S.P. such as demons, dragons, Faerie Folk, psychics and practitioners of magic. In the case of demons and opponents whom the Armored Slayer plans to fight to the death, the creature will slime that foe just before killing him. At the moment of death, the yellow substance captures *all* escaping P.P.E. energy, doubled at the time of death, even if the body vanishes, leaving only the goo behind, which is then devoured as usual. (When slain, demons and many other supernatural beings usually disincorporate.)

The creature gets its name from the fact that it seems to hate supernatural beings (demons, vampires, Entities, Alien Intelligences, etc.) and goes out of its way to destroy them. As an armored "slayer" of demons and monsters, the creature should be accepted by other D-Bees and humans, except that it is so alien and has a great deal of trouble comprehending humanoids, their language, behavior, society, science and laws. Thus, Armored Slayers are at best the equivalent of a monstrous, mentally challenged child who understands and communicates to a limited degree. It is easily distracted and confused, does not understand technology and tends to respond to, and with, emotions and instinct.

The Coalition States have been responsible for killing thousands of these "nightmarish monsters" over the decades, so Armored Slayers have learned to recognize the Death's Head symbol representing savage destroyers and enemies to be feared and avoided. This has also made them leery of humans in general and to avoid cities and large towns where they are likely to cause a panic and get attacked. Sadly, this makes the Armored Slayer one of the most

feared and misunderstood of all alien life forms in North America. That changes slightly as a result of the Minion War when it becomes obvious that demonic beings are the natural enemy of the creature and therefore it is an ally of humanity by default. **Note:** Technically, the Armored Slayer is not actually a D-Bee and is regarded by most people to be a monster, which is why it is here among animals and monsters in the **Rifts® Bestiary**. The term *Dimensional Being* is usually reserved for intelligent, bipedal humanoid aliens with at least a vaguely human body shape. The alien organism that is the Armored Slayer isn't even remotely human, humanoid or bipedal. It is a multi-tentacled blob that creates an artificial, armored body that has a humanoid shape. An appearance it intuitively takes for its massive artificial body in a feeble attempt to fit in with the dominant life forms on our world, humanoids.

This hunter of supernatural evil from an alien world seems to act on animal instinct, but only kills those who threaten it or who are its instinctive enemies, like demonkind. At times it exhibits near human intelligence and can be surprisingly clever and cunning, especially in combat. An Armored Slayer exploits any advantage that it sees, including taking advantage of confusion or distractions, uses surprise attacks, strikes from the cover of invisibility, uses the cover of night, sets ambushes, sets simple traps by using other demons as bait (or things that they want), and even feigns injury or confusion to trick its enemies!

Despite being misunderstood and attacked by humans and D-Bees, Armored Slayers *may* join bands of humanoids, particularly those who hunt and battle supernatural evil, dragons, and dangerous creatures of magic. That includes the Minions of Hell and the Splugorth and their Minions. The problem is that the clever but simplistic monster is difficult to direct and control, and has trouble understanding such concepts as teamwork and subterfuge. Likewise, it seems to have no comprehension of human laws, regulations, politics or society. Consequently, if it recognizes a demon (perhaps metamorphed in human form) through a window in a bar or in a crowd of people in a town square, the Armored Slayer's natural instinct is to bellow, charge and kill; knocking innocent people out of its way and smashing displays and merchandise. It is very much a bull in a china shop. Likewise, it quickly grows bored with lengthy discussions of strategy and will suddenly turn and charge or go off to fight on its own rather than wait while the group talks. Additionally, it cannot implement elaborate plans and usually takes a direct approach to everything – a locked door, kick it in; a damsel in distress, rush in to save her; a monster threatens or challenges, attack it; and so on. **Note:** Armored Slayers can learn to understand several languages, but never at better than 70% comprehension, and rituals, laws and tradition are always lost on it. They can even speak simple words and phrases in a soft, hissing voice that sounds like air escaping from a radiator or air hose.

Before the Minion War comes to Rifts Earth, the Armored Slayer is most common around the Hudson Bay, Nunavut, the northern islands, and the coast of Newfoundland where the creatures are most likely to be encountered as lone individuals, pairs or small groups of 3-6. When not hunting humanoid prey of their magic or psychic energy, they seem to be most frequently found in the ruins of cities, forests and marshlands. They have great difficulty navigating rugged land and avoid mountains as well as inhabited cities. The Armored Slayer was also occasionally encountered as a lone hunter and in pairs (rarely groups of its own kind) in the old Provinces of Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Upper Michigan, and around the Great Lakes (Wisconsin, northern Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York) – rarely any farther south or west. They seemed to

favor being around bodies of water, especially large rivers, lakes, bays and seas, despite the fact that they are not particularly good swimmers and seem to dislike the water.

Since the Minion War, Armored Slayers have moved west and are found fighting the Minions of Hades and Dyval everywhere. While still rare and exotic beings, their numbers seem to have increased. This leads some to wonder if those on Rifts Earth have somehow reached out to Armored Slayers on other worlds to come join the fight here on Earth and specifically the battle for North America. They still tend to avoid Coalition troops, but will assist them in combat against demons and monsters, leaving as soon as the battle is over. Armored Slayers seem to gravitate toward other groups, most notably the Native American warriors and Shamans, Cyber-Knights, Lynn-Srial Sky-Knights, Tundra Rangers, Atlanteans, Lemurians and warriors and mages from Lazlo.

Armored Slayer, Alien Demon Slayer

Player Note: Whether or not an Armored Slayer is allowed as a player character is left entirely to the G.M. If allowed, remember to play the character with simple and direct-mindedness and lack of understanding about human society, laws, morals, etc. Use the same experience table as Dragons and add 2D6 I.S.P. per level of experience.

Also Known As: Crab Warrior, Tentacle Warrior, but will become known as the Armored Demon Slayer as the Minion War goes on for several years.

Alignment: Any, but typically the equivalent of Scrupulous (55%), Unprincipled (25%) and Anarchist (15%). Only a tiny percentage are evil.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+5, M.E. 1D6+12, M.A. 1D6+8, P.S. 1D6+25 (Supernatural) or 17 for each tentacle (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+16 for tentacles and the armored body, P.E. 1D6+15 for the organism (Supernatural), P.B. 2D4 for both the blob and its artificial body, Spd 2D6+20, or 15-23 mph (24-37 km) running in the armored body.

Only 1-3 mph (2-5 km) for the living organism outside its armor, but an impressive speed of 50 mph (80 km) when it leaves its armor behind and goes arboreal, swinging through the branches of trees via its tentacles. That speed can be maintained for one or two hours at a time, but a move comfortable pace of 10-15 mph (16 to 24 km) can be maintained for up to six hours at a time.

Swimming speed in armor is only 5 mph (8 km), but 12 mph (19 km or 10 knots) when the tentacled creature swims without its armor. Maximum ocean depth tolerance is 2,000 feet (910 m).

M.D.C. by Location of the Armored Body:

Hands (2) – 100 each

Arms (2) – 150 each

Legs (2) – 225 each

Head – 180

*Tentacles (6) – 20 each

*Eyes (2) – 8 each

Main Body – 2D6x10+300 in armor

M.D.C. of the Tentacle-Creature without its Armor (a blob with two eye stalks and six tentacles): 2D6+30 M.D.C. for the main body of the organism, 20 M.D.C. for each tentacle, 8 M.D.C. for each eye stalk. (On S.D.C. worlds it has a Main body of 1D4x10 for S.D.C., 5D6+30 Hit Points, and a Natural A.R. of 8.)

get at the same time), and multiple tentacle simultaneous strikes counts as two attacks.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 on initiative, +3 to strike, +6 to parry (includes use of the tentacles), +6 to entangle, +6 to pull punch, +3 to disarm, +6 to save vs Horror Factor and +6 to save vs possession.

Vulnerabilities: The alien's lack of understanding about people, society and the laws of civilization can get it into trouble, as can its rash actions and monstrous appearance. The latter changes to a large degree during the Minion War, in which people realize this beast should be named the *Armored Demon Slayer*, and is one of the good guys.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Psychic powers are limited to Death Trance (1), Detect Psionics (6), Empathy (4), Intuitive Combat (10), Impervious to Cold (2), Impervious to Fire (4), Meditation (0), Mind Block (4), Sense Magic (3), Telekinetic Lift (6), Telekinetic Push (6), and Telekinesis: Super (10+). **I.S.P.:** 56 and is considered to be a Major Psychic requiring a 12 to save vs psionic attack.

Habitat: Before the Minion War, anywhere, but primarily Eastern Canada and USA, and all around the Hudson Bay. With the advent of the Minion War, Armored Slayers are found across the US and Canada, often joining other demon slayers and heroes, particularly Native Americans, Inuit Shamans, Cyber-Knights, Lynn-Srial Sky-Knights, Tundra Rangers, Atlanteans, Lemurians, warriors from Lazlo and heroes of renown. Few have ventured into Mexico to fight vampires, as the Minion War is seen as the most immediate and overwhelming danger.

Enemies: Demons and evil supernatural beings are enemy number one, but Faerie Folk, creatures of magic, practitioners of magic and psychics are all considered prey and often slain by these strange beings. Only those of good alignment may be spared, as well as those who are members of a group with whom the Armored Slayer joins or associates. However, if threatened, challenged or attacked by such a teammate, or if that individual is seen consorting with the enemy, the Slayer will attack and fight him to the death. CS soldiers are also considered dangerous enemies (or untrustworthy allies) best to be avoided. Generally, takes no crap from anyone who threatens it. It should be noted that ALL evil supernatural beings are on the Armored Slayer's hit list, including the Splugorth and their minions. Nor do they trust Shifters or Witches or anyone who enslaves and manipulates others.

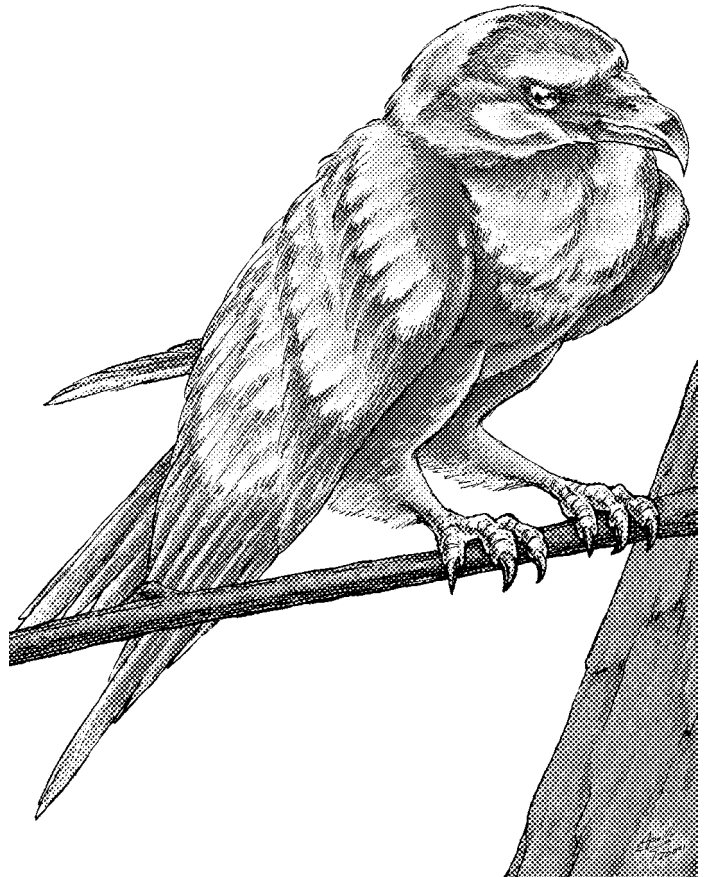
Allies: Fellow Armored Slayers and Demon Slayers, Inuit, Native Americans, Shamans, Cyber-Knights, Lynn-Srial Sky-Knights, Tundra Rangers, Atlanteans, Lemurians, warriors from Lazlo and heroes of renown. Since the advent of the Minion War, Armored Slayers are known to join groups of heroes and associate with humans and D-Bees to protect the innocent and stop the demonic invasion.

Typical Gear and Equipment: They can use simple melee weapons such as clubs, swords and spears, but rarely do so. Never use guns, technological devices or vehicles, though they will ride on vehicles or inside vehicles piloted by others. The creature has no need for any valuables or possessions other than salvage and scrap material to repair and improve its artificial armored body.

Value: A few have been captured and sold to Atlantis for arena combat, something the Slayers hate but are uniquely suited for. The noble creatures hate Slayers almost as much as supernatural evil and will intercede to free slaves whenever they can.

Whenever enslaved, the Armored Slayer will try to work out a way to escape and free as many other slaves as it can with it, or come back with other heroes to rescue them.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 20: Rifts® Canada™**, page 140.



Azhure, Bird of Prey

By Todd Yoho and Kevin Siembieda

Sometimes lost among the larger, spectacular dinosaurs is the majestic beauty of the Azhures. An alien species of bird, they have adapted well to life in Dinosaur Swamp. They have come to be as synonymous with the SteelTree forest as the *Iron-Hoof dinosaurs*. Azhures are hawk-like birds of prey that live among the topmost branches of the SteelTree forest where they make their nests, and have access to their favorite treat, the seeds of the SteelTrees. Eating the seeds is believed to be what gives the birds their metallic coloration and makes them minor Mega-Damage creatures. The Azhures' link to the SteelTree suggests they probably come from the same alien world or dimension as the trees, though no one knows this for certain.

The Azhures are a striking metallic blue, with scintillating shades of blue reflecting off their feathers when in flight. Though the creatures eat the seeds of the SteelTrees, unusual for a predator to eat seeds, they are clearly birds of prey with sharp talons on their feet and a short, midnight blue, hooked beak. Their primary food sources include mice, rats, squirrels, rabbits, moles, chipmunks, weasels, and occasionally other birds, snakes, and insects. The seeds of the SteelTree are a delicious, seasonal treat.

Early adventurers mistakenly thought the birds to be robot spies or some kind of cyborg, and those not familiar with the fauna of





Bears

By Kevin Siembieda

Bears are massive beasts that are certainly a potential danger to humans and D-Bees. The shy Black Bear is not particularly aggressive, nor do they prey upon people. However, large bears such as brown bears, the Grizzly, Kodiak, Polar Bear and others, are very aggressive, cantankerous and prone to attack humanoids with little or no provocation. Their size, bulk, and strength make them dangerous when the animal is startled, cornered, protecting its young or provoked to attack, and they can easily kill a man.

I felt it important to include bears in the Bestiary as well as canines and feline predators, even though they are S.D.C. creatures. They are common across North America, and represent a threat to ordinary humans, D-Bees and heroes without M.D.C. armor. In the case of North American bears, they are among the most impressive, large and powerful, land mammals indigenous to Earth. And fun for characters to encounter when they are *not* clad in M.D.C. armor or armed with S.D.C. weapons. They play a prominent role in the myths of Native Americans, and if you ever stood face to face with one, particularly a Polar, Grizzly or Kodiak bear, you would consider it to be a monster from Hell.

Notes About Bears

Alignment of Bears: Varies. *Anarchist* for Black Bears and most young bears. *Miscreant* and *Diabolic* for the largest and most aggressive bears such as the Grizzly, Kodiak, Polar and Mutant Bears. Mainly because they prey on livestock, cattle and people. Large bears see people as prey, rivals and dangerous intruders to be slain and eaten, or driven away.

Partially domesticated or trained bears are likely to be dangerous but gentle giants that reflect the alignment of their trainer or owner/master from evil to Scrupulous, Unprincipled and Anarchist alignments. Never Principled.

Attributes of Bears: Varies with the breed and size of the animal, but here are some *general guidelines* for bear.

Attributes (general): I.Q. 1D4+5 (medium animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+8, M.A. 1D6+13, P.S. varies (typically 1D6+24 for large bears), P.P. 1D6+11, P.E. 1D4+19, P.B. 1D4+12, Spd varies with the breed of bear. Speed is addressed in the individual stat block for each type of bear but is generally 15-22 mph (24 to 35 km).

The bear's strength has been factored into the Damage stats.

All bears are considered to be reasonably smart and resourceful hunters and scavengers, but not on par with canines. Brown Bears, Grizzlies, Kodiak (both a type of Brown Bear), Polar Bears, and other big bears are all considered to be *large bears*. The Black Bear is not. It is the smallest bear in North America and the least aggressive and hostile to people, but nearly as dangerous when cornered or compelled to attack.

Bears are wild animals and cannot be domesticated. A bear trained as a cub can learn to understand around 130 words and phrases, but remains a wild animal driven by instinct, and is difficult to command and control. It is not obedient like a dog and can easily maim or kill people, even its master, when frightened, angered, or provoked. Trained bears do not work well with other trained or domesticated animals, and horses, livestock, and most animals are afraid of them and want to run to a safe distance away from them. Bears may look friendly and cuddly, but they are big, powerful, and dangerous. Only people seem to be foolish enough to take their chances with this huge predator.

Average Running Speed: Bears have a decent speed for a big animal. Typical running speed is 20-30 mph (32-48 km) and can be maintained for 30 minutes. A comfortable trotting speed of 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km) can be maintained for as much as four hours, before the bear needs to stop and rest. A casual walking pace is 3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km). Each bear description includes the animal's speed.

Swimming Speed: 4 mph (6.4 km), on average. The Polar Bear is the exception at 6 mph (9.6 km), because it is an adept and fast swimmer. All bears are good to excellent swimmers.

Climbing: For some reason, most people believe all bears climb trees. Not true. Only the comparatively small, common Black Bear, with its sharp claws, is a prolific tree climber. That said, *young* and *juvenile bears* of all breeds can climb trees to get at prey or to seek refuge. *Adult large bears* (Brown Bears, Grizzlies, etc.) do not have claws for tree climbing, and are too large and heavy to climb trees. When such a large bear tries to climb a tree it only has a 20% chance of success; roll for every 10 feet (3 m) climbed to a maximum height of 20 feet (6.1 m) for large adult bears. All bear, however, are good to excellent *swimmers*, especially the Polar Bear.

Food/Feeding/Hunting: Bears are classified as predators, however, they are omnivorous and scavengers as well as hunters. Like humans, bears eat a wide range of foods including fruit, berries, nuts, vegetables, honey, insects, fish, carrion, most people food, and medium to large animals. The latter, depending on the bear, includes otters, seals, deer, caribou, elk, cattle, livestock, pets and *people*. Yes, people are prey and threaten rivals to large bears. As such they may be hunted, their bellies torn open, and internal organs eaten. However, like most animals, bears only hunt and kill when threatened, cornered, or hungry. As a rule, they'll ignore people who keep their distance. Fortunate victims of a bear attack are only chased away or mauled a bit and left alive. Bears need to eat only once or twice a day, or every two or three days when they

are able to periodically gorge themselves. Fish is the main staple for most bears.

Hibernation: Most North American bears hibernate during the winter. They find or dig their den in October and go into hibernation with the first measurable snow. Typically hibernate from November till April. Depending on the region, sometimes hibernation begins as early as mid-October and may end as soon as mid-March.

Horror Factor of Bears and Combat: Generally, a single large bear has a Horror Factor of 10, +3 when it is snarling, aggressive, attacking or there is more than one. Increase H.F. by +2 if the person is afraid of bears. **Note:** Large bears have little to no fear of humans and most D-Bees.

Bears are solitary creatures usually encountered as one animal, a mated pair, or a mother and 1D4 cubs or juveniles. That said, a strong smell of food – the carcass of a large animal, many dead, cooking food, etc. – may attract several individual bears at once or several over a period of a few hours. This is true of other predators as well.

An aggressive threatening bear can be dangerous to people inside full environmental M.D.C. body armor, power armor, or is a full conversions cyborg. While a bear may do no or minimal damage to the person inside the armor, they are big enough, heavy enough, and strong enough to bowl over an opponent, knock him down to the ground and otherwise engage, smack around, shake, and pin/entangle/bear hug the person. Like canines, the bear is likely to grab and hold onto, or pull on gloves, boots, belts, bags, backpacks, cloaks, clothing and limbs (hands, arms, legs) to hold or knock down its opponent. The big animal is likely to wrestle and push its weight down on top of people as well as shake and drag opponents, and otherwise engage, distract and confound their victim.

Damage may be minimal, 1D6+1 S.D.C. to the person inside the armor for a brawl or wrestling match with a bear, but the experience is terrifying, and keeps an M.D.C. opponent off balance or knocked off his feet for several melee rounds to several minutes. Moreover, the aggressive big animal is likely to repeat the attack every time its opponent starts to get up. This is why playing dead and not moving until the bear leaves after it eats available food or 1D4 minutes after a fight, can be very effective.

Bears may not be able to hurt a completely armor-clad opponent, cyborg, or M.D.C. adversary, but they cause all the problems above and then some. For example, it may run off with food or backpack containing food and other supplies and valuables. A bear is also likely to knock aside a person(s) to go after livestock, riding animals and people not in armor. Moreover, such a noisy, violent battle, as well as loss of blood by the person/prey or the bear, may attract other predators, monsters and hostile people who may want to capture, hunt or hurt the character and his/her teammates.

Bite and Maul: Bears instinctively claw and bite at their prey. Delivering crippling attacks to the legs to prevent the animal from running away, and going for the throat and head to make a quick kill. A large bear often uses its superior size and weight against its opponent. This is done either by, a) rising up on both legs and coming down on top of its prey, or b) a charging prey with a running body block and a series of heavy claw strikes to knock the prey down and climb on top of it. The bear usually finishes its kill with bite attacks or biting and shaking prey, tearing ligaments and flesh, breaking bones, and bashing its victim into the ground and against rocks and trees.

Charging Body Block from a Large Bear (special): 4D6 S.D.C., but counts as two melee attacks. It has a 65% chance of knocking down human-sized to horse-size prey up to 10 feet (3.7 m) tall and weighing under 700 pounds (315 kg). Victims of knockdown lose initiative and two melee attacks. The bear has the initiative and is likely to continue to bite or claw.

Bear Hug/Pinning and Crushing Attack from a Large Bear (special): 2D6+6 S.D.C. per melee round (+6 S.D.C. for the Kodiak). The victim of a bear hug means the bear has its victim knocked to the ground and is on top of him under the beast's crushing weight, or the bear, on two legs, has grabbed the victim with its two forelegs to hold, squeeze and crush. In either case, crushing, pinning and shaking are involved in this wrestling maneuver.

A bear hug has a 60% chance of pinning the arms of a humanoid victim (or two legs of animal), so its victim cannot fight back. In addition the wrestling and thrashing action prevents people from casting spells or speaking other than screaming in fear and pain. However, psionics can be used by someone in a bear hug.

Optional: While the bites and claw strikes may only scratch the heck out of the armor and inflict small dings and dents, the person under this brutal and terrifying attack is dazed, shaken and batted around like a life-sized rag doll and suffers the following penalties. At the Game Master's discretion, a particularly savage or long-running attack may *temporarily stun* the person inside for 1D4+1 melee rounds (30-75 seconds); 20% chance. The stunned individual has only one melee attack/action, no initiative, no combat bonuses, speed is reduced by 80% and skill performance is -60%. **Injury Note:** In reality, such an encounter is likely to result in 1D6 broken ribs and head or neck trauma such as a concussion, neck or spinal injury, and possibly dislocated or broken bones with pain, combat and movement penalties (same as those above at a minimum) lasting 2D4 weeks, but we won't impose that on player characters. **Note:** Much of these combat notes can be applied to many large predators at the G.M.'s discretion.

P.P.E. of Bears: 2D6 P.P.E. points on average; varies slightly from breed to breed.

Sensitivity to Supernatural Evil and Potential Psychic Energy (P.P.E.): Half the sensitivity to the supernatural as canines. See page 76 under canines for details.

When supernatural evil is present, the bear becomes nervous, jumpy, and agitated. The closer the source of evil or great magic, the more tense the animal becomes, inducing it to pace back and forth, whine and growl in warning. When face to face with the supernatural evil, the bear will either turn and run or roar and attack. It will always fight to defend itself, its den, its mate, and young. Once a bear has engaged supernatural evil in combat, it fights until the creature retreats and runs off, is killed or until the bear or those it is protecting are able to run away.

Sense the Presence of Supernatural Evil. Range of Sensitivity: 600 feet (183 m).

The bear can also sense ley lines, nexus points, and places of power, as well as incredibly powerful creatures of magic (1,500 P.P.E. or more). Range of Sensitivity: 300 feet (91.5 m).

The Influence of Vampires on Bears: None.

The Influence of Werebeasts on Bears: None, though they consider feline werebeasts as dangerous rivals and may threaten or attack them in an effort to drive them away.

Territory: Bears are not territorial, but gather in areas where food and prey are plentiful. They are protective of their food, dens, mates, and young.



Black Bear

Alignment: Considered to be Anarchist.

Attribute Note: Speed Running: 20 mph (32 km) and can be maintained for an hour. 35 mph (56 km) in short bursts lasting 1D4+4 minutes. A comfortable trot is 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km). Walking speed is 3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km), the same for its swimming speed.

Hit Points: 1D4x10

S.D.C.: 1D6+20

A.R.: 5

Horror Factor: 8

Size: 5-5½ feet (1.5 to 1.7 m).

Weight: 250-320 pounds (112 to 144 kg).

Average Life Span: 20-30 years.

P.P.E.: 2D6+2

Disposition: Black Bears tend to be laid back and easy going, even playful, attacking people only when it feels threatened or cornered.

This creature feeds largely on leaves, roots, fruit, nuts, honey, insects, fish, small mammals, and carrion. They are solitary beasts and are most active during the night. In autumn they consume large quantities of food to fatten up for their winter hibernation. Litters of 1-4 young are born in February after a gestation of 7 months. The young remain with their mother for about one year.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 85% (likes to climb trees and climbs them whenever frightened or in danger, and sometimes to sleep), Land Navigation 65%, Prowl 35%, and Swimming 80% (a good swimmer).

Natural Abilities: Digs and burrows a den to hibernate in the cold winter months, can hold breath underwater for up to two minutes, nightvision 120 feet (36.6 m), and track by smell 66% (+14% to sniff out food up to a mile/1.6 km away).

Attacks per Melee: Two.

Damage (S.D.C./Hit Points): Bite: 1D6+2 S.D.C. damage. Head Butt: 1D4 S.D.C. Claw Strike Restrained: 1D6 S.D.C. Claw Strike, Full Strength: 1D6+6 S.D.C. Body Block: 2D6 S.D.C. Charging Body Block: 3D6 S.D.C., but counts as two melee

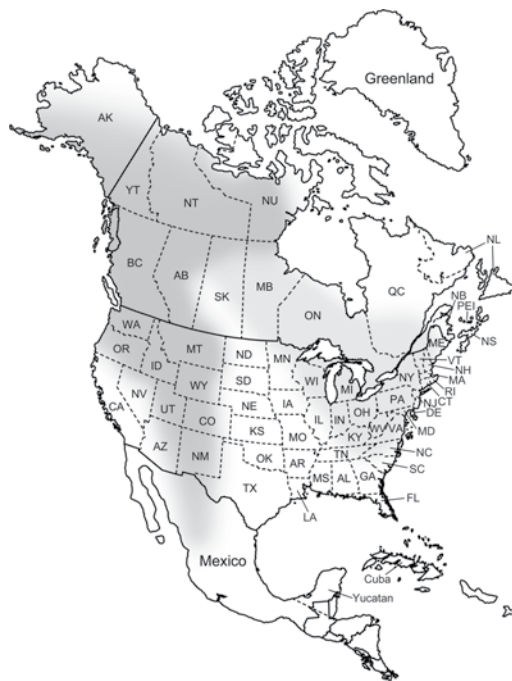
attacks, and has a 40% chance of knocking down human-sized opponents weighing under 300 pounds (135 kg). Victims of knockdown lose initiative and one melee attack.

Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +2 to strike, +2 to parry, and +3 to save vs poison and disease.

Vulnerabilities: All S.D.C. weapons do damage. Mega-Damage weapons inflict grievous damage and may vaporize part of the animal.

Habitat: Forest, mountainous and arctic areas up to 10,000 feet (3,048 m) elevation, and found throughout Riffs North America, particularly the Old American Empire and Canada.

Value: Fur Pelt: 150 credits, typically turned into blankets, rugs, boots, gloves, capes, and other articles of clothing. Meat (whole animal): 100-150 credits. Teeth: One credit for each fang to those interested in such things, the same for their claws.



Brown Bear

Alignment: Anarchist or Miscreant depending on the individual animal.

Attribute Note: Speed Running: 25 mph (40 km) for as long as twenty minutes. 37 mph (59 km) in a short burst lasting 1D4+1 minutes. A comfortable trot is 8-12 mph (12.8 to 19 km) and can be sustained for as long as 5-6 hours. Walking speed is 3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km). 4 mph (6.4 km) swimming.

Hit Points: 1D6x10

S.D.C.: 3D6+22

A.R.: 6

Horror Factor: 10

Size: 5-6 feet (1.5 to 1.8 m).

Weight: 600-1,000 pounds (270 to 450 kg).

Average Life Span: 20-30 years.

P.P.E.: 2D6

Disposition: Brown Bears are much more aggressive and prickly than its smaller Black Bear cousins. It may attack people when it feels threatened, cornered, annoyed and to take (or keep) food.

This creature feeds largely on leaves, roots, fruit and nuts, but is known to kill and eat deer, elk, bison and small animals as well. If the brown bear feels threatened or is angered, it does not back down from humans, will attack, and may fight to the death.

These solitary creatures are normally active during the day. In autumn they consume large quantities of food to fatten up for their winter hibernation. Litters of up to 3 young are born in February or early March after a gestation of 6-8 months. The young remain with their mother for about one year.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 65%, Land Navigation 70%, Prowl 25%, Swimming 80% (good swimmers) and Tailing 40%.

Natural Abilities: Digs and burrows a den to hibernate in the cold winter months, nightvision 120 feet (36.6 m), can hold breath underwater for up to two minutes, and track by smell 66% (+14% to sniff out food).

Attacks per Melee: Three.

Damage (S.D.C./Hit Point): Head Butt or Body Block: 1D6 S.D.C. damage. Swatting Claw Strike: 1D6 S.D.C. Full Strength Claw Strike: 2D6+5 S.D.C. Bear Hug: 2D4+4 S.D.C. per melee round. Bite: 2D4+2 S.D.C.

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +4 to strike, +2 to parry, +4 to save vs Horror Factor and +2 to save vs poison and disease.

Vulnerabilities: All S.D.C. weapons do damage. Mega-Damage weapons inflict grievous damage and may vaporize part of the animal.

Habitat: Anywhere in Rifts North America from Canada and the Old American Empire to Mexico. Prefers forest and mountainous areas up to 10,000 feet (3,048 m) elevations. Brown and Grizzly bears are found mainly in the American Northwest – Southern Alaska, the Yukon, Northwest Territories, British Columbia, Alberta, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and along the entire length of the Rocky Mountains and into the mountains of Northern Mexico. They are less common in the forests of the Midwest and eastern USA, but Brown bears are sometimes found in Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Michigan and the eastern United States, while the Grizzly is rare in these parts.

Value: Fur Pelt: 250-350 credits. Meat (whole animal): 200 credits. Teeth: One credit for each fang to those interested in such things, the same for their claws.

Grizzly Bear

Alignment: Most people consider the Grizzly to be dangerous and belligerent with a Miscreant alignment. Others consider them to be Anarchist.

Attribute Note: Speed Running: 30 mph (48 km) for as long as thirty minutes. 40 mph (64 km) in a short burst lasting 1D4+4 minutes. A comfortable trot is 8-12 mph (12.8 to 19 km) and can be sustained for as long as 8 hours. Walking speed is 3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km). 5 mph (8 km) swimming.

Hit Points: 1D4x10+40

S.D.C.: 1D4x10+30

M.D.C.: The equivalent of roughly 1 or 2 M.D.C., but S.D.C. and M.D. weapons inflict damage.

A.R.: 7

Horror Factor: 11

Size: 6-9 feet (1.8 to 2.7 m).

Weight: 800-1,400 pounds (360 to 630 kg).

Average Life Span: 20-30 years.

P.P.E.: 2D6

Disposition: The Grizzly Bears is an aggressive apex predator that is not easily intimidated and is likely to attack people when it feels threatened, cornered, annoyed and to take their food.

These large creatures vary in color from a yellowish-brown to brown-black. They are generally solitary animals and have home ranges of up to 20 square miles (51.8 sq. km). They can be active at night or day and feed on plant material, fish, small animals, and carrion as well as kill and eat the occasional deer, elk, horse, bison, and humanoid! Most Grizzly bears are too large and slow to bring down large, hoofed animals unless the creature is sick, caught in a trap, tethered or penned. This bear is also too large and heavy to climb trees. Females breed every 2 or 3 years and produce litters of 1-4 young after 6 to 8 months.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 25% and cannot climb trees, Land Navigation 75%, Prowl 30%, and Swimming 75% (good swimmers).

Natural Abilities: Digs and burrows a den to hibernate in the cold winter months, nightvision 120 feet (36 m), can hold breath underwater for up to two minutes, and track by smell 70% (+15% to sniff out food).

Attacks per Melee: Four.

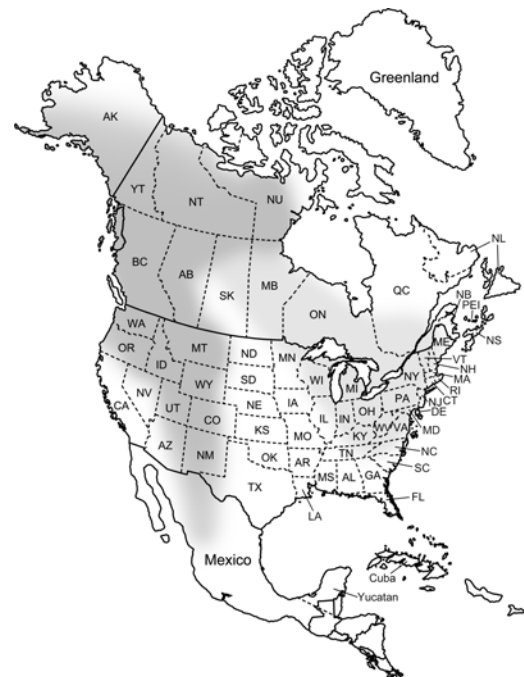
Damage (S.D.C./Hit Point): Head Butt or Body Block: 1D6+2 S.D.C. damage. Swatting Claw Strike: 1D6+2 S.D.C. Full Strength Claw Strike: 2D6+10 S.D.C. Bear Hug: 2D6+4 S.D.C. per melee round. Bite: 2D4+4 S.D.C.

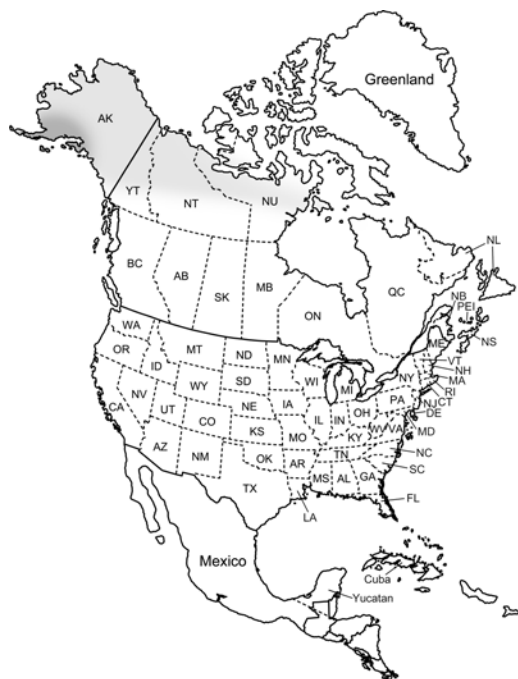
Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +4 to strike, +3 to parry, +2 to pull punch, +6 to save vs Horror Factor and +4 to save vs poison and disease.

Vulnerabilities: All S.D.C. weapons do damage. Mega-Damage weapons inflict grievous damage and may vaporize part of the animal.

Habitat: Forests and tundra throughout Rifts North America, same as the Brown Bear.

Value: Fur Pelt: 250-400 credits. Meat (whole animal): 300-400 credits. Teeth: One or two credits for each fang to those interested in such things, and the same for their claws. Necromancers may be willing to pay 1D6x10 credits this bear's body parts, claws and head/skull in particular.





Kodiak Bear (rare)

Alignment: Most people considered the Kodiak to be Diabolic and deadly. Others think of them as Miscreant or Anarchist, but all agree they are dangerous in the extreme.

Attribute Note: Speed Running: 30 mph (48 km) for as much as twenty minutes. 40 mph (64 km) in a short burst lasting 1D4+4 minutes. A comfortable trot is 8-12 mph (12.8 to 19 km) and can be sustained for as long as six hours. Walking speed is 3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km). 5 mph (8 km) swimming. Maximum depth is 12 feet (3.7 m).

Hit Points: 1D6x10+30

S.D.C.: 1D6x10+30

M.D.C.: The equivalent of roughly 1D4 M.D.C., but S.D.C. and M.D. weapons inflict damage.

A.R.: 7

Horror Factor: 13

Size: 9-14 feet (2.7 to 4.3 m) long or when standing upright on hind legs; 5 feet (1.5 m) tall at the shoulders on all fours.

Weight: 1,000-1,600 pounds (450 to 720 kg). Females are 20% smaller.

Average Life Span: 20-30 years.

P.P.E.: 2D6

Disposition: The Kodiak is an aggressive and hostile apex predator that is not easily intimidated and quick to attack people and other predators at the slightest provocation.

These huge animals are among the largest of the land carnivores. They fear nothing alive, not even humans and D-Bees, and are avoided by most animals. These solitary creatures are active during the day and feed on a variety of plant material, carrion, fish, and mammalian prey, small and large, including deer, elk, moose and humanoids! They may or may not hibernate during winter and are aggressive predators. Females give birth to a litter of 2-3 cubs after a gestation of 9-10 months. Cubs don't leave their mother until age three. Juveniles are ages 3-5 years, and reach full adult size and maturity by age six. Hibernate from November till April.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 35% and cannot climb trees, Land Navigation 85%, Prowl 35%, and Swimming 80% (good swimmers).

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 120 feet (36 m), can hold breath underwater for up to two minutes, track by smell 70% (+15% to sniff out food), and usually dig and burrow a den to hibernate in during the long, cold winter months though some male Kodiaks may forego denning and stay awake all winter!.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Damage (S.D.C./Hit Point): Head Butt or Body Block: 1D6+4 S.D.C. damage. Swatting Claw Strike: 2D6 S.D.C. Full Strength Claw Strike: 3D6+10 S.D.C. Bear Hug: 2D6+6 S.D.C. per melee round. Bite: 2D6+2 S.D.C.

Bonuses: +3 on initiative, +5 to strike, +2 to parry, +2 to pull punch/claw strike, +8 to save vs Horror Factor and +4 to save vs poison and disease.

Vulnerabilities: All S.D.C. weapons do damage. Mega-Damage weapons inflict grievous damage and may vaporize part of the animal.

Habitat: Originates from the forests of Kodiak Island and Alaska. Still found on Kodiak Island, Alaska, the Yukon Territory and the northernmost Canadian tundra. Rarest of the big bears.

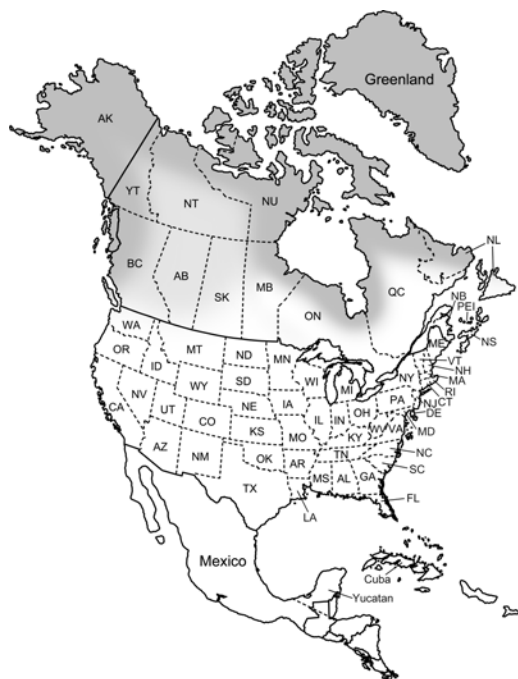
Value: Fur: 500-800 credits. Meat (whole animal): 300-500 credits. Teeth: 2D6 credits for each fang to those interested in such things, the same for their claws. Bones: May be used to make arrowheads, spearheads, needles, and small tools. Necromancers may be willing to pay 2D6x10 credits for each of this bear's body parts, claws and head/skull in particular. Native Americans leave the head of the Kodiak and Grizzly bear in the field as a sign of respect to the spirit of the bear.



Polar Bears & Grolar Bears

With the exception of the rare *Kodiak Bear* originating on Kodiak Island (southeast of the Alaska Peninsula), the Polar Bear is the largest and most aggressive of the North American bears. Moreover, they are one of the most numerous, since the Coming of the Rifts turned the north back into a lightly populated wilderness with long winters, especially during the first few decades of the Two-Hundred Year Dark Age.

Polar Bears (and the Kodiak) have no fear of man and will stalk human prey as food. They simply see humans and similar-sized or smaller D-Bees as another food source, along with seals, fish, penguins, seabirds, caribou, musk oxen, pets and livestock, among other animals. Excellent hunters on the land and in the sea, Polar Bears are also scavengers who eat fruit and the leaves of tundra plants, but are also attracted to the scent of garbage and stored



foods, particularly meats, kept by humanoid travelers, outposts and settlements. This is dangerous, because once the bear is attracted, it is likely to linger in this well-stocked hunting range. That means when it gets hungry, it will turn to hunting human and D-Bee prey as well as penned livestock, horses and pets. The bear may also follow a blood trail in search of a wounded animal, human or D-Bee.

Grolar bears, also known as Pizzly Bears, are Polar Bear-Grizzly Bear hybrids. They have the shape and features of both bears, usually with brown fur, but have the same stats, hunting habits and behavior as the Polar Bear because most hybrids are given birth and raised by a Polar Bear mother.

Alignment: Most people consider the Polar Bear to be dangerous and aggressive with a Miscreant alignment. Native Americans and others consider them to be both Anarchist and Miscreant, and sometimes Diabolic, depending on the specific animal. Also see the **Demon Bear**, page 140 of this volume, which is a demonic and wicked Mega-Damage Polar Bear.

Attribute Note: Speed Running: 25 mph (40 km) for a much as thirty minutes. 30 mph (64 km) in a short burst lasting 1D4+3 minutes. A comfortable trot is 12-15 mph (19.2 to 24 km) and can be sustained for as long as four hours. Walking speed is 5-6 mph (8 to 9.6 km) and can be maintained for 8-10 hours before the bear needs to stop and rest. 6.2 mph (10 km) swimming and can swim for 8-10. Polar Bears love the water, are excellent swimmers and spend half their time in water.

Hit Points: 1D4x10+55

S.D.C.: 1D4x10+35

M.D.C.: The equivalent of roughly 1-3 M.D.C., but both S.D.C. and M.D. weapons inflict damage.

A.R.: 6

Horror Factor: 12

Size: 7-10 feet (2.1 to 3 m) long, 4 feet (1.2 m) at the shoulders.

Weight: 800-1,100 pounds (360 to 495 kg), 30% smaller and lighter for females.

Average Life Span: 20-30 years.

P.P.E.: 3D6

Disposition: The Polar Bear and Grolars are a large, bold, aggressive predator unafraid of people. It is likely to attack people

when it feels threatened, cornered, wants to take their food or hunt them as prey. A hungry Polar Bear or Grolar hunt people as prey.

These large bears have a creamy white coat and a black snout and claws. They are solitary animals but during mating season, may gather in small groups of 3D4 Polar Bears.

They have home ranges of up to 50 square miles (129 sq. km). Polar Bears can be active at night or day (true of all bears), and feed on a large range of animals small and large (as noted above), but favorite prey are seabirds, seals, arctic hare, caribou and musk oxen. They are able to bringing down large, hoofed animals and chase away wolf packs. Females breed every 2 or 3 years, during the mid-summer, and produce a litter of 1-4 young after nine months of gestation. Young typically stay with their mother for four years.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climb 35% including trees and ice flows, Land Navigation 90%, Prowl 50%, Swimming 98% (masterful swimmers) and Tailing 60%.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 120 feet (36 m) and track by smell 70% (+15% to sniff out food and blood scents), superb swimmers and can seal their nose to keep out water and hold breathe underwater for up to four minutes. Do not hibernate! Unlike Black and Brown bears, Polar bears do not hibernate or make a den, though a pregnant female will dig a burrow in the snow or ice to give birth and keep her young for the first few months.

Swimming (special): 6.2 mph (10 km). Polar Bears love the water and can swim constantly for days at a time if necessary at a consistent speed. It can easily travel 40-50 miles (64 to 80 km) in a day before needing to rest by floating on the water or riding a piece of ice. Maximum depth underwater is 20 feet (6.1 m).

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Damage (S.D.C./Hit Point): Head Butt or Body Block: 1D6+2 S.D.C. damage. Swatting Claw Strike: 1D6+3 S.D.C. Full Strength Claw Strike: 2D6+6 S.D.C. Bear Hug: 2D6+4 S.D.C. per melee round. Bite: 2D6 S.D.C.

Bonuses: +3 on initiative, +4 to strike, +3 to parry, +7 to save vs Horror Factor and +4 to save vs poison and disease.

Vulnerabilities: All S.D.C. weapons do damage. Mega-Damage weapons inflict grievous damage and may vaporize part of the animal.

Habitat: Forest and tundra of Alaska, Northern Canada, Newfoundland, Greenland, Scandinavia and Russia. They are found throughout the Arctic from Siberia and Alaska and down along the pacific coastline into the Yukon Territory, British Columbia and occasionally down into Alberta and Saskatchewan, but only in the winter months.

Value: Fur Pelt: 300-500 credits. Meat (whole animal): 200-300 credits. Teeth: One credit for each fang to those interested in such things, the same for their claws. Necromancers may be willing to pay 2D6x10 credits for this bear's body parts, claws and head/skull in particular.

Mega-Damage Bears/Mega-Bears

Mega-Bears are Mega-Damage bears with Supernatural Strength that may be a bear-like creature from another world or dimension, or a prehistoric bear from Earth's Ice Age that arrived through space and time via a Rift or other magic. Of greater concern is the increasing number of Earth bears, particularly the largest species, *Grizzly*, *Kodiak* and *Polar Bears*, that become light

Mega-Damage creatures. This suggests mutation caused by an un-earthly source, but what? And where is it located?

Some have suggested it could be from prolonged exposure to ley line energy or more likely, a strange mutagenic energy or substance leeching through a Rift from another dimension.

Others point to the genetic experiments of the infamous Doctor Bradford, creator of the Dog Boys and many other experiments upon animals at the Lone Star Complex in Texas. However, that too seems unlikely. Coalition States protocol requires *defective genetic experiments* to be destroyed, not released into the wild. Of course, Doctor Bradford often plays by his own rules and has created the semi-intelligent *Ursa Warrior* for the Coalition Army.

Others speculate this could be the handiwork of other forces that dabble in genetic engineering and manipulation. According to Native Americans, this is the work of woodland spirits trying to give nature's children a fighting chance against invasive Mega-Damage alien species.

Whatever the cause, large, Mega-Bears and bear-like animals are being reported with increasing frequency in the Americas, particularly in the North and along the Rocky Mountains. Some estimate that 5-7% of the Grizzlies and Kodiak have become minor Mega-Damage creatures and 10% of the Polar Bears. **Note:** There has been many an expedition launched by the CS, Tolkeen before its fall, Lazlo, and various others to find the source of these mutations, but without success.

Mega-Bear Stats – Predatory Carnivore

These mutant bears are fundamentally the same as the ordinary animals described earlier in this section, EXCEPT that the M.D. Bear is always on the biggest end of the size spectrum, possesses M.D.C. instead of Hit Points and S.D.C., and has Supernatural P.S. and P.E., which means they *inflict Mega-Damage* from attacks.

Also Known As: Mega-Damage Bears, Super-Bears and Bear Monsters.

Type of Bear: Any (G.M. discretion), but so far seem to always be Grizzly, Kodiak and Polar Bears.

Alignment: Considered to be Miscreant or Diabolic, and many hunt people as prey.

Attribute Notes: P.S. 1D6+19 (Supernatural), P.E. 1D6+20 (supernatural) and fatigue is reduced to one tenth normal.

Running Speed: 30 mph (48 km) for a much as one hour. 40 mph (64 km) in a short burst lasting 1D4+4 minutes. A comfortable trot is 12-18 mph (12.8 to 29 km) and can be sustained for as long as six hours. Walking speed is 4-6 mph (6.4 to 9.6 km). 5 mph (8 km) swimming.

M.D.C. by Type of Bear: Main Body per animal type.

Grizzly – 1D6+48 M.D.C.

Polar Bear – 1D6+50 M.D.C.

Kodiak – 1D6+60 M.D.C.

Note: On S.D.C. worlds, such bears have a main body of 1D6x10+60 S.D.C., 1D6x10+80 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 8. The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D., so a bite that does 1D6 M.D. on Rifts Earth does 2D6+6 S.D.C. damage on S.D.C. Worlds.

Horror Factor: 13

Size: 11-15 feet (3.3 to 4.6 m).

Weight: 1,400 to 2,000 pounds (630 to 900).

Average Life Span: 20-30 years.

P.P.E.: 3D6

Disposition: Mega-Bears are always extremely aggressive, surly, vicious and easily provoked. These hulking, murderous brutes stalk young Mega-Damage creatures and M.D.C. creatures that have low M.D.C. (under 100), as well as large S.D.C. animals like deer, caribou, moose, bison, sometime other bears, and people and their horses, cattle and livestock. Mega-Bears are bold, aggressive predators that see people as slow, easy prey.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: As per the type of bear +5% to all skills.

Natural Abilities: As per the S.D.C. animal described above +5% to all applicable abilities, and heals at a rate of 1D6 M.D. per 24 hours, or 1D6 M.D. *per hour* on a ley line.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Mega-Damage of Mega-Bears: Fights tooth and claw.

Bite, Restrained – 6D6 S.D.C. or 1D4 M.D. depending on the victim and the bear's intentions to inflict damage.

Bite, Full Strength – 2D6 M.D. (+3 M.D. for Polar Bear and Kodiak).

Claw Strike, Restrained or Blunt – 1D6 M.D.

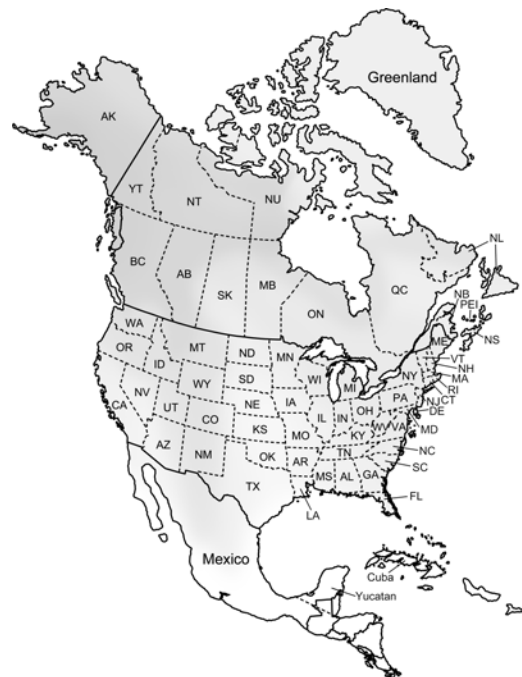
Claw Strike, Full Strength – 3D6 M.D.

Head Butt – 1D6 M.D.

Body Block – 1D6 M.D.

Charging Body Block– 3D6 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks. It has an 80% chance of knocking down human-sized to horse-size prey up to 12 feet (3.7 m) tall and weighing under 1,000 pounds (450 kg). Victims of knockdown lose initiative and two melee attacks. The bear has the initiative and is likely to continue to bite or claw.

Bear Hug/Pinning and Crushing (special) – 1D6+6 M.D. per melee round (+2 M.D. for the Kodiak Mega-Bear). The victim of a bear hug means the bear has it's victim knocked to the ground and is on top of him under the beast's crushing weight, or the bear, on two legs, has grabbed the victim with its two forelegs. In either case, crushing, pinning and shaking are involved in this wrestling-like maneuver. 60% chance of pinning the arms of a humanoid victim (or two legs of animal) so its victim cannot fight back. In addition, the crushing and wrestling and thrashing prevents people from casting spells or speaking other than screaming. However, psionics can be used.



Vulnerabilities: All M.D. weapons and attacks inflict their full damage. Impervious to ordinary S.D.C. weapons.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Across North America, especially in Canada, the Northern United States and mountain ranges. Basically wherever ordinary bears are found.

Enemies: Most large animals and people.

Allies: None per se. Simvan, Psi-Stalkers, Psi-Druids, some Shamans, and Shifters may, from time to time, try to control, command and even ride this beast with varying levels of success, but it is too surly, savage and violent to be controlled with certainty or for long. This is a dangerous animal. Not suitable as a familiar; too large. Cannot be domesticated.

Value: Same as the S.D.C. animal, and the pelt and claws are S.D.C. materials when the M.D.C. mutant bear dies, though they have twice the usual S.D.C. No value for its meat except maybe to feed other M.D.C. animals/monsters, because the tough meat is like trying to eat rawhide. Necromancers may be willing to pay 1D4x100 credits for the entire Mega-Bear's body, or its four claws and head/skull.

Note: See **Rifts® Lone Star**, page 72, for the **Ursa Warrior R.C.C.** and other intelligent, mutant animals created and controlled by the Coalition States. First appeared in **World Book 20: Rifts® Canada**, page 145.

Also see the entry for **Demon Bear**, elsewhere in this book, page 140.

Black Faerie

By Kevin Siembieda

The Black Faerie is a horrible and maleficent monster that hates beauty, goodness and humanity. It is called a "faerie" because it *seems* to be related to the family of creatures humans know as *Faerie Folk*. For example, it is a winged humanoid (though hideous), flies, speaks Faerie, and has most of the same common characteristics as Faerie Folk: a natural M.D. being, high P.P.E., Horror Factor, Faerie Magic, magically understands and speaks all languages, and is said to be immortal. However, it is even more malevolent than the notorious Puck or murderous Kinnie Ger of myths and legends, and has never been previously recorded in human history.

This has led some to believe the hideous creature is from another world or is some sort of demonic faerie come to our Earth through a dimensional Rift. If this is the case, it seems likely that the *Saint Louis Rift*, better known as the **Devil's Gate**, currently cordoned off by the Coalition States, is the port of entry, because Black Faeries are said to have first appeared in droves in Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Arkansas and the Magic Zone. They are still found in greatest numbers in these regions, though they have since spread across North America and seem particularly fond of the Midwest and the eastern part of the country. Canada has comparatively few Black Faeries, with most found only in the southern forests of lower Canada.

The Black Faerie is hideous in both appearance and deed. The body is a huge, bloated, larva-looking lump of pustulent flesh. The arms are long stumps without hands or fingers; instead, they end in hard, tapered points used to jab, slash and stab its enemies. The legs are similar to the arms, ending in tapered points. Its most dangerous weapon is a long, spiny, prehensile tail which can be used like a whip as well as to pick up things and ensnare prey. The

head is a lump of flesh with two ugly maws filled with sharp, jagged teeth. Small spikes and spines protrude from the head and it has three tiny, black eyes that are almost impossible to distinguish from the blotches and boils that cover the skin of its face and upper torso.

The malignant creature's favorite prey are the gentler, kinder Faerie Folk – particularly Faeries, Sprites, Pixies and Brownies, as well as humans, particularly children and teenagers. Black Faeries love to capture and torture Faeries and Sprites, tearing off their wings and limbs before eating them! Black Faeries also seem to hate other creatures of magic and supernatural beings, and will attack or torment them whenever the foul monster thinks it has the upper hand to defeat them. The hideous Black Faerie feasts upon the blood and guts of those it kills, and relishes in their destruction.

When such favored targets are not available, Black Faeries love to hunt *Psi-Stalkers*. The two have been mortal enemies for generations and often attack each other on sight without provocation. In fact, it is known that millions of Black Faeries once swarmed out of the Rifts in the early days of the Two Hundred Year Dark Age, leading many scholars to believe their population is as low as it is today due to the relentless vendetta of the Psi-Stalkers. These mutant humans have the advantage as they often hunt Black Faeries in groups, while most Black Faeries tend to be solitary beings traveling alone or in pairs.

These winged horrors also enjoy torturing and killing humans, attractive D-Bees, and even cute animals just for the sheer pleasure of it. A favorite *game* of Black Faeries is to steal a baby, child or



beautiful young maiden, and hold the person hostage. The monster usually doesn't want money, possessions or favor, it is simply enjoying the panic, fear and suffering the child's disappearance has caused the witless mortals who care about it. The creature likes the chaos and sorrow such a kidnapping creates for loved ones, friends and volunteers searching high and low for the person or people it has taken captive. This, in turn, gives the fiend the opportunity to attack and kill some of the searchers while they are spread apart and distracted. Black Faeries enjoy cat and mouse games, use hit and run tactics and false leads to great advantage, but eventually the monster grows bored of such antics, kills the hostage (typically within 48 to 72 hours, but sometimes longer), and leaves the mutilated body where it is easily found to create more sorrow.

It is important to understand that Black Faeries despise all things that are beautiful or innocent. Whether the object of beauty be a work of art, a field of flowers or an attractive humanoid or animal, the twisted creature will seek to deliberately mutilate, scar and destroy them.

Black Faeries happily engage in kidnapping, blackmail, and the tormenting of others. They can *never* be trusted and anything they say is likely to be a lie designed to cause more torment or misdirection. Worst, their lust for inflicting cruelty and murder is insatiable. Psi-Stalkers and Shifters claim Black Faeries are the embodiment of envy and hatred. Vile, ugly creatures without a drop of goodness or compassion and consumed by an obsession to destroy beauty and all the things they hate. Which is many. Any captives or slaves they may take and keep are playthings to be abused, brutalized and eventually tortured and killed in some terrible way.

Unlike demons and human beings, Black Faeries don't seek glory, conquest, wealth or power. They are satisfied with murder and causing suffering and sorrow. Thus, many observers were shocked and horrified when the leaders of Tolkeen resorted to recruiting Black Faeries, using *Shifters* to summon and control them as best they could. The monsters' hunger for blood and destruction was then unleashed against the invading Coalition Army without constraint, but also fell upon anyone the monsters took a dislike to or had an opportunity to hurt or kill. For a time, Black Faeries were members of Tolkeen's infamous *Monster Squads* let loose as hunter-killers to harass, terrorize, maim, disfigure and kill the enemy. It was this unconscionable use of such horrible monsters that caused many heroes and people who might have otherwise sided with Tolkeen, to stay out of the conflict.

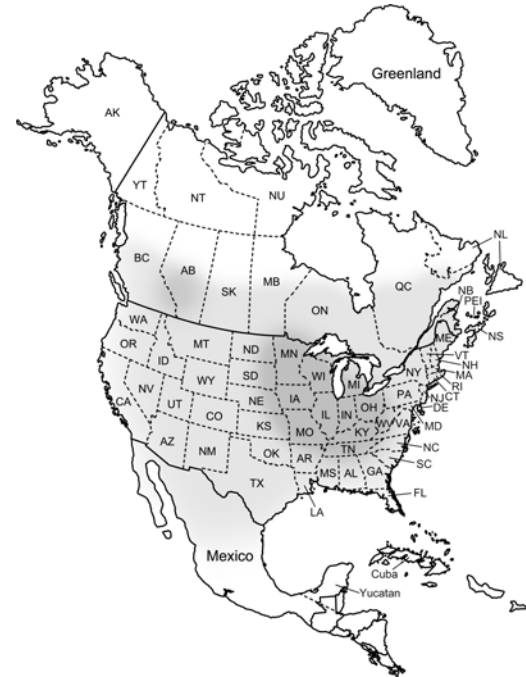
The fall of Tolkeen and the advent of the Minion War has had three unfortunate, lasting results: **1.** Many monsters such as the Black Faeries, Brodkil and Witchlings, once predominantly found east of the Mississippi River, have discovered new lands and new prey across North America.

2. Having been encouraged to fight and release their bloodlust unchecked, many of these monsters are more aggressive, violent and bloodthirsty than ever.

3. Many of the Black Faeries and creatures in the *Tolkeen Monster Squads* found they were stronger and deadlier as a team working together and have remained intact or formed new alliances that were never seen in the past.

It is no surprise then, to see the demonic forces on both sides of the **Minion War** recruiting Black Faeries, Witchlings, Brodkil and other monsters and lesser demons to send them against the forces of humanity and any who dare oppose the armies of Hell. Black Faeries are pleased to work with other monsters and evil beings, especially those who give them opportunities to hurt and destroy mortals. The nightmare that is the Minion War only serves to foster

more such unholy unions, making something that was once a rarity all too commonplace. A regrettable circumstance that is likely to continue long after the Minion War has come to a final resolve.



Black Faerie, a Carnivorous Predator

Alignment: Always Miscreant or Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+6 (low to average human intelligence), M.E. 1D6+12, M.A. 1D4+1, P.S. 1D6+12 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+12, P.E. 1D6+15, P.B. 1D4, Spd 1D4+9, or 7 mph (11 km) crawling on the ground or climbing on the side of a tree, cliff or building.

Flying speed is 60 mph (96 km) maximum, and can be maintained for up to five hours, while a speed of 25 mph (40 km) can be maintained for up to 18 hours before requiring the monster to rest by slowing down to less than 5 mph (8 km) or hovering for one or two hours. It can hover stationary indefinitely. Maximum altitude is 15,000 feet (4,572 m).

M.D.C. by Location:

Small, Spindly Horns (2-4; head) – 5 each

Head – 100

Arms (2) – 40 each

Legs (2) – 45 each

Tail – 90

Wings (2) – 50 each

Main Body – 1D6x10+80

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, Black Faeries have 1D6x10 S.D.C., 1D4x10+60 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. 13. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (i.e. 45 M.D.C. = 45 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature's attacks does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D. (i.e., 1D6 M.D. = 1D6 S.D.C.).

Horror Factor: 16

Size: 4-5 feet (1.2 to 1.5 m).

Weight: 220-300 lbs (99 to 135 kg).

Average Life Span: Immortal unless killed through violence.

P.P.E.: 1D6x10

Disposition: Black Faeries are driven by instinct and lust to torture and kill humans, Psi-Stalkers, D-Bees and all things that

are cute, cuddly or sweet and beautiful. Murderous and sadistic in the extreme, a Black Faerie will go miles out of its way to destroy a beautiful creature or natural scene. Their only true pleasure is in inflicting pain and suffering upon others. Anyone wishing to ally with these creatures must be prepared to supply them with plenty of opportunities for murder and carnage.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 60%/50%, Land Navigation 70%, Intelligence 50%, Prowl 50%, and Tailing 50%.

Natural Abilities: Excellent daytime vision, can see prey from two miles (3.2 km) away, nightvision 900 feet (274.3 m), fly, impervious to poison, normal fire and cold, magically understands and speaks all languages 85%, track by scent 35% (+20% to follow blood scent), Bio-Regeneration at a rate of 6D6 M.D.C. per 24 hours, double on ley lines, triple at nexus points, and can regenerate lost limbs, wings, tail, eyes, etc., within 48 hours.

Blood Identification (special): It can recognize different species of mortals by the scent or taste of their blood 50% (+30% to recognize favorite prey, including other Faerie Folk, Psi-Stalkers, humans, Dog Boys and many different types of D-Bees).

Flying (special): Flying is a natural state for Black Faeries, just as swimming is natural for fish in water. It may chose to land, but hovering or flying is its natural state of being. The monster can fly even with one or both wings destroyed, but only at a maximum speed of 30 mph (48). Can hover and fly at will for an indefinite period of time though it may have to slow down or hover in order to rest for a little while. Maximum altitude is 15,000 feet (4,572 m).

Attacks per Melee: Six physical attacks or by magic.

Mega-Damage: Fights using its bite, horns and tail as well as magic.

Bite, Restrained – 3D6 S.D.C.

Bite, Full Strength – 1D6 M.D.

Head Butt (blunt) – 1D4 M.D.

Head Butt with Horns, Goring – 1D6 M.D.

Stab/Slash with Spiked Arms or Legs: 1D6+3 M.D.

Tail Strike – 1D6+6 M.D. and has a 60% likelihood that human-sized opponents, 7 feet (2.1 m) or smaller, are knocked off their feet and lose initiative and one melee attack.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls regarding recognizing each prey, valuables and escape route, +3 on initiative, +3 to strike and parry, +8 to dodge in the air (only +4 if it should land), +4 to pull punch, +2 to roll with impact, +6 to save vs magic and psionics, +7 to save vs Horror Factor, and +2 on all other saving throws.

Vulnerabilities: Cannot swim and sinks like a rock if forced underwater. All M.D. weapons and attacks inflict their normal damage. As do magic and psionics that inflict damage or which the monster does not save against inflict full damage, including TW weapons, Rune Weapons, Bio-Wizard weapons, Bioman-cy, etc. A weapon made from the wood of a Millennium Tree inflicts double damage.

Silver-coated S.D.C. weapons inflict the equivalent of M.D., so a silver-coated dagger that does 1D6 S.D.C. damage inflicts 1D6 M.D., a silver-plated sword that does 2D6 S.D.C. inflicts 2D6 M.D., and so on.

Magic: Like Faerie Folk, these evil creatures can cast an unlimited number of spells a day without drawing upon their own P.P.E. reserve, HOWEVER, they cannot cast the *same spell* on the same individual more than once per 24 hours.

Spells: Agony, Blind, Chameleon, Fire Bolt (does only 4D6 M.D.), Fuel Flame, and Sleep. The monster cannot learn new spells.

Victims attacked by its magic need a 14 or higher to save vs Black Faerie magic, and its spells are equal in power to a 10th level Line Walker. Note: The thing can choose to make the effects of any of its spell less damaging, usually to taunt and torment its opponent, but never reduces the potency less than 5th level strength. **Note:** Black Faeries are impervious to magic cast by other Black Faeries and Faerie Folk.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: They are presumed to be able to survive in any environment and may be found in grasslands, mountains and lowlands, but prefer forest regions most of all. They were once, mainly encountered in *Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Kentucky* and the *Magic Zone (Ohio & Indiana)*, and to a lesser degree, throughout the eastern half of the Old American Empire and southeastern Canada. While this remains true today, they have expanded their range since the Coalition's War against Tolkeen and the subsequent Minion War. Today they can be encountered throughout the Old American Empire, lower Canada and Mexico. **Note:** They are not fond of tropical jungles nor desert regions.

Black Faeries are often found in greatest numbers near ley lines and wherever Faerie Folk and Psi-Stalkers live. Though most Black Faeries are loners, numerous individuals may inhabit the same particular woodland or area, especially if their favorite prey is plentiful in the region.

As a rule, Black Faeries tend to hunt alone or in pairs. Occasionally they live in small tribes of three to eight. In big battles under the sway of demons, they may gather in swarms of 20-80, something not heard of since the Two-Hundred Year Dark Age (and rumors during the Siege on Tolkeen).

Enemies: Psi-Stalkers are enemy number one, soldiers of the Coalition States number two, pretty Faerie Folk number three (and are also favorite prey), with humans, D-Bees and other attractive beings following in short order. Ugly Faerie Folk and D-Bees are tolerated if they are subservient or just stay out of the Black Faerie's way.

Allies: Evil creatures of magic like Witchlings, Pucks, Witches, Necromancers, evil dragons, and wicked or demonic creatures, among others. Sees more powerful demons and wicked beings as kindred spirits to be spared and applauded for their evil ways.

Any powerful being, from mages to Demon Lords, who gives them a purpose to cause pain and suffering is a potential ally, protector and even a leader, at least temporarily. Ironically, Black Faeries hate anybody who tries to enslave them, including Shifters and demons, but respect power and cruelty which can keep them in line, provided there aren't more than two or three. The more Black Faeries gathered together, the more brazen, defiant and unpredictable they become. With the exception of those Black Faeries who have learned to join forces with like-minded monsters to better wreak bloodshed and suffering, many of these monsters prefer to go through life hunting and hurting others as solitary predators, in pairs or trios. They may join a mixed group of other monsters from time to time, but such allegiances seldom last. It was only in the Dark Age when there were millions of the cursed monsters that they gathered in large swarms. However, under the command of the dark forces of Hell there are rumors of small Black Faerie swarms (4D6+9)

once again. There were such unconfirmed rumors during the Siege on Tolkeen, as well.

Value: None.

Note: Originally appeared in *Rifts® Sourcebook One, 1st Edition*, page 113, and in the *Rifts® Sourcebook One, Revised and Expanded*, page 139.



Black-Winged Monster-Men

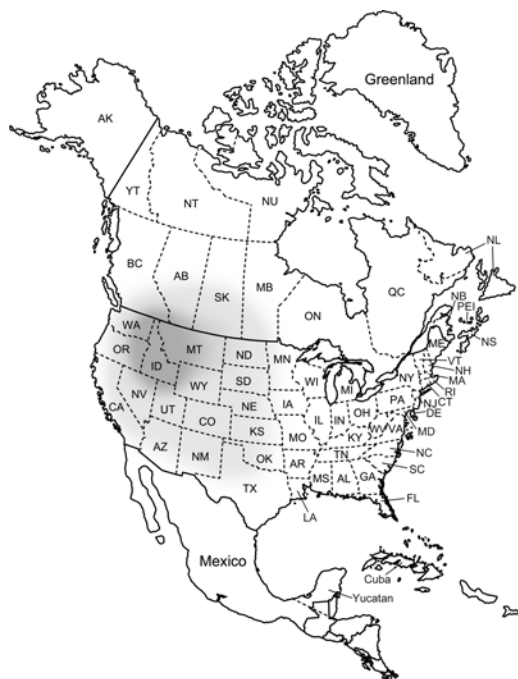
By Wayne Breaux Jr. and Kevin Siembieda

The *Nez Perce* and a few other Native American tribes were the first to encounter these giant, black-skinned, winged monsters and consider them to be evil spirits or demons. The name given to these creatures translates as “Black-Winged Monster-Men.” A name that has stuck for reasons that will become obvious. However, the verdict remains out on whether these creatures are “men” – intelligent humanoids/D-Bees, archaic supernatural demons, alien insectoids or highly intelligent animals with humanoid bodies.

Black-Winged Monster-Men are nocturnal predators that usually sleep during the day unless roused and are active at night. This night activity combined with their leathery, bat-like wings, sometimes leads people to mistake them as some sort of monstrous vampire, but they are not. In fact, though they hunt and work under the cover of darkness, they have no aversion to light and are

not vulnerable to sunlight in anyway. They prey upon humans and mammals, eating people and enslaving them as pets, servants and workers. While D-Bees may be targeted as prey or slaves, especially if they resemble people, these monsters prefer humans and human-looking D-Bees.

The name given them is an apt description as the Black-Winged Monsters are rather demonic in appearance and vile in nature. Their skin is jet black, like polished boots, and large, bat-like wings protrude from their backs, as do a pair of large horns or spikes. Though a bipedal humanoid in appearance, their head and face are anything but human. The top of the head (and cheeks) is a hard, bony arrangement that some have described as two wide, curved horns, but more resembles a war helmet with a center protrusion. These protrusions on the head have been mistaken, from a distance, as large bat ears. The cheeks are also pronounced and made of the same thick, protective bone. This enables the creatures to butt and ram opponents with their head and to survive falls from great heights, as well as engage in combat with little fear of head injury. They do not seem to have a nose, ears or lips, nor teeth. Though it is difficult to see except up close, there are two tiny holes where you would expect a nose. Similarly, there are flat,



reptilian-like ears on the sides of the head below the curved protrusions on the top of the head. The bones around the mouth form a shape of what resembles teeth, but are more like slightly serrated plates giving the creature a robot or insect look. So do the large, sunken, yellow eyes.

Their ebony bodies have a distinct skeletal appearance but seem more like a chitinous exoskeleton than human flesh. The large hands more resemble black bone with long, curved claws coming from the fingertips; three fingers and an opposable thumb. A horn/spike rises up from just behind the shoulders and three blade-like spikes protrude from the sides of the monster's thigh. All of this, their wings and their Supernatural Strength would suggest they are demons, but that is unclear.

Black-Winged Monster-Men are powerful, agile hunter-warriors that thrive on combat. They prefer to fight tooth and claw, but also wield giant, ornate spears and mauls (hammers) in melee combat. The Native Americans of Idaho, Montana, and lower Alberta and Saskatchewan, sometimes assisted by Lynn-Srial Sky-Knights, Cyber-Knights and other champions of good, have been locked in an ongoing war with these monsters. It started when the Nez Perce waged a major offensive against a thriving colony or city of Black-Winged Monster-Men among the ruins of a pre-Rifts city in the New West. Organized forces of the Nez Perce and their Native American allies caught the creatures unprepared and after a series of intense magical assaults, managed to destroy half of the Black-Winged Monster-Men population and freed many captives. Since then, the Monster-Men have never established such a large colony (think hornets or bees) and choose to build smaller colonies spread apart from one another. That is because the various tribes and people of Idaho, Montana and lower southwestern Canada continue to battle the monsters in a long running guerrilla war of raids, hit-and-run strikes and limited tactical battles conducted by both men and monsters. When the entire population of a small town, village, tribe or adventure group suddenly vanish without a trace in these regions, it is safe to assume Black-Wing Monster-Men have taken them. (Remember, they eat people!) Slaughtered cattle may also be their handiwork.

Black-Winged Monster-Men either inhabit the ruins of cities or create tall, smooth structures that resemble the termite mounds

of Australia, only on a giant scale. All of the structures are dark gray, grey brown, or black, and each is separated by a large courtyard of smooth stone. Loud contests of combat and battle skills regularly fill these courtyards. Their nests or colonies, like some bees, hornets and termites, are dug underground. A typical small colony has 1D6x10 inhabitants. A medium-sized one has 2D6x10+30. A large colony has 1D6x100+80. A typical hunting band contains 3D4+1 Black-Winged Monster-Men, while larger war parties seeking human and D-Bee enemies or gathering food stock (people) and slaves are typically 1D4x10. Black-Winged Monster-Men have been reported as far south as Lone Star and as far east as the edge of Arkansas on the borders of the Coalition States, but only in small numbers. Presumably, scouting or hunting parties. They avoid Xitix territory and fight whenever the two should meet.

Black-Winged Monster-Men – Carnivorous Predator

Also Known As: The Black Wing, Black-Winged Monsters and Night Demons.

Alignment: Miscreant (50%), Diabolic (45%) and Anarchist (5%).

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+10, M.E. 1D6+10, M.A. 1D6+5, P.S. 1D4+25 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+12, P.E. 1D6+14 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6, Spd 1D6+19, or 12 mph (19 km) running on the ground.

70 mph (112 km) fly, and can be maintain this top speed for two hours. Can fly 40 mph (64 km) for up to 10 hours straight before needing to stop and rest. 90 mph (144 km) can be attained as short speed burst lasting one minute.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Head – 1D6x10+100

*Arms and Hands (2) – 1D6+30 each

Legs (2) – 3D6+42 each

**Wings (2, large) – 1D6x10+80 each

Main Body – 1D4x100

* A single asterisk means a small and/or difficult target to strike and requires a Called Shot to hit, and even then the attacker is -4 to strike. Destroying the head kills the creature, but requires a Called Shot to strike with a penalty of -4 to strike as this is a moving target protected by large plate-like horns and bone crest in the middle.

** Destroying one wing makes flight impossible, but lost or damaged wings regenerate in 20 days. Half that time at a ley line.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Black-Winged Monster-Men have a main body of 2D6x10 S.D.C., 3D6x10+20 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 14. All other body location have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (1D6+30 M.D.C. = 1D6+30 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D.

Horror Factor: 15

Size: 12-20 feet tall (3.7 to 6 m) with a wingspan of three times their height.

Weight: 500 to 1,000 pounds (225 to 450 kg).

Average Life Span: 500 years, so they are, indeed, mortal.

Average Level of Experience: 3-6, rarely higher, applies to the rare spell caster and to W.P. advancement. Not available as a player character; NPC villain/monster.

P.P.E.: 2D4x10

Disposition: Secretive, cruel carnivores that gather in packs and prey upon humans and D-Bees; large animals and livestock only when humanoid prey is not readily available. They are brutish, aggressive and dominating bullies that enjoy tormenting and torturing lesser beings. They regularly capture humanoids and keep them as livestock in food pens and force other captives into lives of servitude as slave labor, servants and pets. When a Black-Winged Monster-Man becomes angry with his “pet” or slave, the creature torments and tortures the individual for months before finally sending him to the food pens, or may slay him in a fit of rage.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 70/60%, Intelligence 70%, Interrogation 60%, Land Navigation 90%, Mathematics: Basic 80%, Prowl 50% (+20% at night and flying attacks under the cover of darkness), Skin and Prepare Animal Hides 70% (in this case, that “animal” is people!), Tracking (people) 80%, and two W.P.s of choice (typically W.P. Blunt and W.P. Spear, or other W.P. Ancient). These monsters prefer to rely on their natural claws and powers. Language: speak Dragonese, Gobblely, and Demongogian at 94%, but understand most spoken tongues; see Natural Abilities, below. **Note:** Skills do not improve with experience, except for W.P.s.

Natural Abilities: Nocturnal beings, they possess nightvision (can see in total darkness 600 feet/183 m) but can see under moonlight or starlight outdoors for 3,000 feet (914 m); winged flight, impervious to lightning and electricity, Bio-Regenerate at a rate of 3D6 M.D.C. per 12 hours (double at ley lines and nexus points), and seem to somehow (magically?) understand all languages at 70%, but speak in a growling, guttural voice and in short, broken phrases and single words. (No. Yes. Stop. Go. Sit. Bad. Good. Die! Come this way. Stay here. You work or you die. This be problem. No surrender. Tell you nothing. Punish you I must. And so on.)

Discharge Lightning (special): See Mega-Damage for details.

Repel Animals (special and uncontrolled): This is an innate ability that cannot be turned on or off, animals simply have an adverse reaction to these creatures and want to flee and avoid them whenever encountered. (For game purposes, think of this as identical to the spell Repel Animals, but it requires no P.P.E., is constantly in effect and affects all animals of which the Black-Winged Monster-Man comes within 60 feet/18.3 m.)

Upon seeing these monsters, even from a distance of a 100-200 feet (30.5 to 61 m), domesticated work animals, horses, pets and trained animals such as guard or attack dogs, first begin to whimper, then growl and will *want to leave*, anxiously pacing or turning in a circle. Unless told to stay or held by a leash/reins the animal will flee, running in the opposite direction and will not return for 1D4 hours or while even one Black-Winged Monster-Man is present. Even the best trained and most loyal animals will not attack the monster and will turn tail and run away after one melee round. Cattle, livestock and wild animals head for the hills, fleeing for miles and will not return for 2D4 hours, sometimes longer. This includes giant animals like Aegis Buffalo and Fury Beetles.

Wilderness Scouts have learned that when they see a flock, herd or group of animals fleeing in *Idaho*, and sometimes in *Montana* or *southern Saskatchewan*, that a group of Black-Winged Monster-Men are likely to be on the prowl and nearby. Likewise, entering an area devoid of wildlife – not even birds

or insects flying around – means a tribe of the monsters is likely to be living nearby. Perhaps even one of their secret colonies/cities is in the area. Animals try to stay 1D4 miles (1.6 to 6.4 km) away from such colonies.

Note: Whatever this aura or affect is, it makes *Xiticix*, *Dog Boys*, other *Lone Star mutants*, *intelligent animal-people* and *insectoids*, as well as *Psi-Stalkers*, instantly hate, fear and want to attack and destroy Black-Winged Monster-Men! Because they are intelligent, these animal-people can fight the nagging instinct to flee from Black-Winged Monster-Men, but they suffer the following penalties when fighting them: -1 on Perception Rolls, -2 on initiative, -1 to strike and -2 to parry, dodge, disarm, pull punch and save vs Horror Factor.

Attacks per Melee: Six.

Mega-Damage: May use a simple melee weapon, or fight tooth and claw, and unleash its lightning blasts. The creature loves magic melee weapons, especially spears and hammers, and may try to steal them from adventurers.

Bite, Restrained – 1D6 M.D.

Bite, Full Strength – 3D6 M.D.

Claw Strike, Restrained – 3D6 M.D.

Claw Strike, Full Strength – 5D6 M.D.

Head Butt – 2D6 M.D.

Punch, Restrained (blunt) – 5D6 S.D.C.

Punch, Full Strength (blunt) – 3D6 M.D.

Power Punch – 6D6 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks.

Flying Body Block or Kick: 6D6 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks.

Giant Spear – 6D6 M.D., includes Supernatural P.S. consideration.

Giant Hammer – 1D4x10 M.D., includes Supernatural P.S. consideration. These are their two favorite weapons.

Discharge Lightning (special): Black-Winged Monster-Men can fire small bolts of purplish black lightning from their hands and mouth. Range: 800 feet (244 m) +20 feet (6.1 m) per level of experience. Mega-Damage: 5D6 M.D. per lightning bolt. Rate of Fire: Four times per melee round, leaving two attacks per melee for some other type of attack or action.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 to initiative, +2 to strike, +3 to parry, +1 to dodge on the ground, +3 to dodge in flight, +3 to pull punch, +2 to roll with impact, +2 to save vs poison and magic, and +6 to save vs Horror Factor.

Vulnerabilities: The monster cannot swim and panics when knocked into water deeper than 15 feet (4.6 m). Is easily drowned in deep water.

The creature has one significant and weird weakness, but few people in this M.D.C. world know about it: iron. Cold Iron: Pure iron, not alloys of any kind, inflicts Mega-Damage and other effect on these creatures. Simple contact with a handful of it iron dust/filings, ore or raw material imposes a penalty of -1 to all combat rolls (strike, parry, etc.). Being bound in iron chains or a collar, puts the creature in a dazed and stunned state, incapable of any action or coherent thought. Penalties: The number of melee attacks is zero, combat bonuses are reduced to zero (unmodified die rolls only), reduce speed by 90% and skill performance is -60% for the entire period while bound or otherwise diminished by the presence of iron, unless a save vs non-lethal poison is successfully made.

A successful save vs non-lethal poison (16 or higher) means the effects of iron are still presents, but not as severe,

imposing the follows penalties: -3 attacks per melee round, -4 to strike, parry and dodge, -15% to skill rolls, and reduce speed by half for the next 1D4 minutes before the victim must roll to save again. If the second save is successful, all penalties are removed. If the save fails, the penalties, above, continue until the iron is removed and an additional 1D4 minutes after.

Weapons made of cold iron inflict double their normal S.D.C. damage in M.D.; i.e., an iron long sword that normally inflicts 2D4+2 S.D.C. would inflict 4D4+4 M.D. to the monstrous Black-Winged Monster-Men.

Its aggressive, brutal nature and disregard for other intelligent life forms also works against the creature and often gets it into trouble. Most people regard Black-Winged Monster-Men to be dangerous creatures to be slain or run-off whenever encountered.

Magic: Very rare. Among large groups of Black-Winged Monster-Men, one in 400 may be a low to mid-level *Ley Line Walker* or *Necromancer* (never higher than 6th level).

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Clearly they originate from a Rift in Idaho and are most numerous in that State of the Old American Empire. There are at least two termite mound habitats in this region. Each contains 1D4x1,000 Black-Winged Monster-Men, plus slaves and humanoid food stock. They are also encountered in small groups of 4D6, usually nomads or hunting parties, throughout Idaho, as well as Montana and lower Saskatchewan (Canada), but sometimes in other parts of the New West. The creatures are attracted to the ruins of pre-Rifts cities and mountain regions.

Enemies: Cyber-Knights, Sky-Knights (see **Rifts® New West**), Wild Psi-Stalkers, Dog Boys, Xiticix and the Nez Perce of the Nimipu Preserve in particular, but all Native Americans, heroes and champions of good in general. These creatures prey upon humans and D-Bees as their primary food source, treating them like cattle, pets and work animals. They tend to ignore or spare monstrous/inhuman looking D-Bees, however, unless attacked first. For example, they do not attack or enslave Simvan Monster Riders.

Allies: Sometimes associated with other evil beings, including wicked human sorcerers and Shamans. It is interesting to note that Black-Winged Monster-Men do NOT associate with demons or other supernatural beings unless enslaved by them. Despite their reputation, these creatures do not side with the forces of Hell in the Minion War, nor do they associate with demons. They keep to themselves during the Minion War, maintaining their simple predatory lifestyle.

Value: None, except maybe to Necromancers who might want to buy their heads, wings and claws.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 15: Spirit West™**, page 106.



Blood Hawk

By Peter Murphy and Kevin Siembieda

The Blood Hawk resembles an Earth hawk in general shape and appearance and habits, but is the size of an eagle with a wingspan of 4-5 feet (1.2 to 1.5 m)) and is a minor Mega-Damage creature. Most believe it is an import from an alien world, but others think it might be a hideous mutation caused by the Coming of the Rifts and dimensional energy. Whatever it is, it is a power bird of prey that has no fear of humanoids.

Instead of feathers, the creature has a leathery hide that is blood red, and the wings, though shaped like feathers are also red, leathery and featherless. The body is dense and hard like rubber and weights as much as a normal Earth hawk. The eyes glow with an eerie orange or yellow energy and its powerful talons are used to fight and snag prey.

Blood Hawks are fearless carnivores and voracious hunters that feed upon S.D.C. and Mega-Damage prey that ranges from birds, rabbits and racoons to deer, bison, cattle, and light M.D.C. creatures, humans and D-Bees! Actually, any creature, even large animals and humanoids may be targeted, especially if the animal is hungry, angry or its chosen prey is impaired or injured. When hunting is poor and prey is sparse, Blood Hawks have been known to attack groups of people with as many as a dozen members, though they are usually looking to make only 1-3 kills within that group, picking off the weakest or those who break ranks and try to run away. Thankfully, attacks on people are not common, and the creature is much less of a threat to heavily armored opponents and those wielding magic or psionic powers. That said, Blood Hawks regularly swoop down, without warning, to carry off children, house pets, dogs, cats and livestock in rural towns and villages, but sometimes even in cities.

Though most birds of prey hunt alone, Blood Hawks gather and sometimes hunt in small flocks, which makes them much more dangerous than other birds of prey. The larger the flock, the more

Blood Hawks prey mainly upon wild animals, but have learned humanoids and their livestock are often easy to find prey that often congregates at one place for long periods of time (i.e. farms, ranches, villages, towns, and cities). Moreover, they like the taste of human flesh. This makes them a threat on battlefields as well as to merchant caravans, travelers and for wilderness communities where resources are poor and Mega-Damage armor and weaponry are minimal. Some Blood Hawks have also found the ‘Burbs to be excellent hunting grounds, picking off drunks, vagabonds, children and pets. Most big cities, where the creatures are hunted and killed, and communities of magic practitioners and other powerful beings, are usually avoided.

Average Life Span: 50 years. Blood Hawks mate at the end of winter or early spring. Females lay 1D4 eggs that hatch 60 days later. Young are able to fly, poorly, at three weeks old, but need their parents to protect them and teach them how to hunt. Par-



ents and young stay together as a family unit for 1D4+4 months. After which the young are able to hunt and take care of themselves, and leave their parents. Juveniles may stay together, at least for a time and do not usually join a flock until after reaching full sexual maturity and finding a mate at two or three years of age. Blood Hawks mate for life and travel and hunt together. If a mate is slain the survivor mourns for 1D6+1 years and will not consider finding a new mate until after that period is over.

P.P.E.: 3D6

Disposition: Patient and cunning avian predators, Blood Hawks often test potential prey to see if they can get the upper hand before engaging in an all out attack. Most aggressive when protecting a mate or their young. Will starve themselves in captivity and try to escape or kill their captor at every opportunity.

Note: Blood Hawks are completely *untamable* predatory animals, impervious to the influence of even the Simvan, Psi-Stalkers and Psi-Druids. However, they can become familiars via the *Familiar Link* spell invocation with the mage getting double the Hit Point bonus and the Blood Hawk getting one additional M.D.C. point. If the Blood Hawk familiar is slain, the mage to which it is linked takes double the usual damage from the severed link. Likewise, a Blood Hawk can be summoned and controlled by *Shifters*, but +1 to save.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Astronomy 65% (Blood Hawks have excellent sense of direction and can even navigate by the stars and moon), Climbing 40%/30%, Land Navigation 95% (-10% at night), Tailing 75%, and Tracking 75% (by sight, includes tracking people, +10% to follow a blood scent).

Natural Abilities: Hover indefinitely on wind currents and fly for 10 hours before needing to stop and rest. Extremely sharp, hawk-like vision that enables the bird to see a rabbit up to two miles (3.2 km) away, excellent other senses, Supernatural Strength and Endurance, incredible agility and fast. A daytime hunter, but may attack at night if its roost is disturbed or if starving, or easy prey drops in its lap; nightvision 1,000 feet (305 m). Bio-Regenerates at a rate of 1D6 M.D.C. per 24 hours. Also see Psionics.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Mega-Damage: Attacks with razor-sharp beak and talons, usually making swooping and diving attacks.

Bite – 1D6 M.D.

Claw Strike – 1D6+4 M.D.

Swooping Claw Strike – 2D6+6 M.D., but counts as two attacks.

Power Dive (special) – 1D6x10 M.D., but it must be the animal's first attack of the melee round, and uses ALL melee attacks/actions other than the ability to fly away at half its usual speed. Speed remains half for the next melee round (15 seconds), but it has four melee attacks that round. Diving attacks take a lot of energy and cannot be repeated more than every other melee round.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls to notice prey and danger, +5 on initiative, +3 to strike, no parry, +2 to automatic dodge (the act of dodging does not use up a melee attack), +3 to pull punch/strike, Critical Strike on a roll of a Natural 19-20 (double damage), +2 to roll with impact/fall, impervious to disease, +4 to save vs poison, +2 to save vs Horror Factor. Needs a 12 or higher to save vs psionics.

Vulnerabilities: All Mega-Damage weapons and attacks inflict their full damage; -2 penalty to save vs magic and cannot swim.

Magic: None.

Psionics (limited): Psionic abilities are limited to Detect Psionics (6), See Aura (6), Sense Magic (3), Telekinetic Punch (6) and Telekinetic Push (4). Needs a 12 or higher to save vs psionics. Equal to a third level Major Psychic. **Base I.S.P.:** 1D6+50.

Habitat: Temperate Forests, Plains, and Mountain areas of America, Canada and Mexico. They are comparatively uncommon at locations with many ley lines, ley line triangles and strong magic energy or large populations of practitioners of magic like the fallen Kingdom of Tolkeen, Lazlo, New Lazlo, Calgary and the Magic Zone. That said, lone hunters, pairs and small groups may be encountered almost anywhere in North America and are especially common in the mountainous regions.

Enemies: As a predator that feeds on small, medium, and large animals, including humanoids, it sees most creatures as potential prey. Psi-Stalkers, Psi-Hounds, other CS mutant animals, Dark Hounds, and Simvan are regarded as *natural enemies* by the Blood Hawks to be avoided in large groups and killed when alone or in small groups. Psychics, magic practitioners, supernatural beings and Mega-Damage creatures are generally seen as too powerful to make good prey and are generally left alone unless they are sick, injured or dying. Of course, the animal will fight anyone who provokes or attacks it, or threatens its mate or young.

Allies: Only other Blood Hawks and may gather in small flocks of 2D6+1 animals. Blood Hawks sometimes perch and ride on the backs of truly massive creatures such as the Aegis Buffalo, Fury Beetles and some of the giant herbivore dinosaurs, but they are not allies and do not care about the welfare of the animal upon which they are resting or catching a ride.

Value: None. Feared and disliked by most people, especially farmers, ranchers and those living in the wilderness, and considered to be dangerous and bad luck or a bad omen. May be used as a Familiar, via the Familiar Link spell.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 12: Psyscape™**, page 90. Art by Michael Dubisch.

Burrower Bruin

By Kevin Siembieda and Charles Walton Jr.

The Burrower Bruin, i.e. Burrowing Bear, and also known as the Burrowing Beast and Earth Hound, is a creature of contradiction. A shy, ambush hunter that is a massive monster, but which likes to hide and has no passion for drawn out combat. It resembles a cross between the microscopic, *tardigrade* “water bear” and a hulking Mastiff, but with thick legs and large claws for digging and a pair of toothy feelers used for both sensing prey and fighting. The claws serve dual functions of digging and tearing apart body armor and even power armor to get at the human prey inside. Like the microscopic tardigrade, it is a rugged and voracious predator able to survive extreme temperatures and radiation exposure that would kill humans and most other animals. It might even be able to survive in the vacuum of space.

Though Burrower Bruins can live in almost any environment, they seem to prefer temperate forests to steamy jungles and hot deserts, even volcanic environments. They seem impervious to contamination, pollution and radiation, as well as disease and dimensional energy.

Voracious carnivores, these tough, opportunistic hunters are always foraging for food and see most creatures as prey, from

the smallest animal to humans and D-Bees, to prey much larger than themselves. They prefer live prey, but also eat carrion, rotting meat, human meat scraps, bones regardless of age, and insects large and small.

The animals burrow like giant rabbits, and the areas they inhabit are riddled with mounds of earth, uprooted small trees, trenches, tunnels and pits, creating dangerously unstable ground for people and animals alike. This causes many challenges for travelers and wildlife that must cross a Burrower Bruin infested area. Plenty of animals and people hiking through the wilderness have suffered sprained ankles or broken legs by tripping and falling over clumps and mounds of earth, stumbling over roots and toppled trees, or plummeting into a pit trap or collapsed section of tunnel. Such pitfalls can also hamper, hobble or trap vehicles and robots.

Caution required. Traveling across this uneven, lumpy, rocky, root and debris littered terrain requires people and ground animals to **reduce speed by half** while running, walking, or driving across such an environment.

There is a 50% chance of falling victim to such hazards when walking or running faster than a *speed of 10*. That increases to an 80% chance when not paying attention or running at a speed faster than 15. Only creatures like the *Death Springer*, *Dream Butcher*, *Field Reaper* and *Grigleaper* are unaffected by the unsta-

ble ground. Most of the perils of walking across rut filled, lumpy, uneven Burrower Bruin territory is an unintentional consequence of the animal's burrowing, but not deliberate traps. Not that it matters to those who fall victim to a turned ankle, a cave-in or a fall.

Each fall, even if it does no physical damage worse than a scraped knee, makes a thud upon impact, and causes the fallen to lose two melee attacks and initiative as they pick themselves up and collect their senses. There is also a 33% chance the victim of a fall drops anything they were holding in their hand when they fell. **These travel penalties** across Burrower Bruin occupied land apply even to all-terrain vehicles, cyborgs and giant robots that may get stuck in a deep rut or sink down into a soft tunnel or step into a pit trap. All of this makes travel in Burrower territory extremely perilous for humanoids and medium to large animals. And complicated by the fact that the monster also creates pit traps or lies in ambush in a shallow hole waiting to pounce on unsuspecting prey.

A Burrower Bruin Pit Trap is typically 10 feet (3 m) in diameter and 8-12 feet (2.4 to 3.7 m) deep. **Tunnels** are usually half as deep but are still an obstacle if you fall into one, and these tunnels may collapse under the weight of a heavy cyborg, robot and vehicle as they are only 1D4 feet (0.3 to 1.2 m) below the surface and cannot support heavy vehicles or frequent traffic.



Such traps and collapsing burrows have enraged mercenary operatives, CS patrols and adventurers who find their steed made lame, or vehicle, power armor or large robot stuck, damaged or forced to travel slowly and carefully across the Burrower Bruin's turf filled with shallow tunnels and deliberate pit traps. Such unanticipated setbacks or detours around a Burrower's domain can take up a lot of valuable time. Worse, 1D4 Earth Hounds are certain to pop out of a hidey-hole sooner or later, forcing combat. Battle generates sound and movement that inevitably attracts more of the sound and vibration sensitive Burrower Bruins, probably 1D4 more every couple of minutes (see details below). Combat may also attract other monsters and aggressive predators, or alert an enemy or rival to the characters' position.

Unfortunately for the victim, a fall to the ground, sprained ankle, or a tumble into a pit is likely to produce a clamor, an outcry of pain, a call for help, and/or a string of curses. All of which are like the clang of a *loud dinner bell* to the Burrower Bruins in the area. The noise alerts any of the beasts within a 3,000 foot (914 m) radius to their presence and location. 1D4 of the animals are likely to come and investigate, hoping for a nice meal or quick snack. Additional noise such as the sounds of combat, wheels spinning trying to pull out of a trench or get unhooked from debris, the leg of a giant robot crashing through a tunnel and struggling to get out of one, engines revving, repair work, and grunts and shouts all bring more Burrower Bruins to investigate and probably attack. Thankfully, even in groups, these animals do not work together nor use pack fighting tactics. It is every Earth Hound for itself.

Falling into a Burrower Bruin's 8-12 foot (2.4 to 3.7 m) deep pit trap causes 2D6 S.D.C. damage to people and animals, and one S.D.C. point of damage to people *inside* body or power armor. It usually takes 2D4 melee actions/attacks for a person to climb out of the pit because the walls are usually loose earth and crumble as they try to climb up and out. This is especially true of cyborgs and other heavy creatures dropped into a pit. 1D4 melee actions if a teammate can lend a hand or toss in a rope secured to a tree or vehicle.

Large animals have a 50% chance of spraining or breaking a leg (reduce Spd by half, -2 melee attacks and -2 on all combat maneuvers). And the pit is usually just too deep for a deer or other animal from which to easily leap out.

There is a 50% chance that one Burrower Bruin arrives within 1D4 melee rounds (15-60 seconds) to attack any animal or person trapped or present. Motion/vibrations in the earth alert and bring the monster to trapped or struggling prey; i.e. the source of the vibrations. One more of the carnivores arrives every 1D4 melee rounds (15-60 seconds) after the sound of the fall for the next 2D4 minutes, or as long as the trapped creature or person makes noise, stomps, kicks or tries to leap or climb out of the pit; most animals panic and try over and over to leap or climb out. **Note:** As a rule, there is a family of *1D6+6 Burrower Bruins* living in a standard colony that covers 1D6+2 acres of land.

Burrower Bruins see all living creatures as potential prey, from mouse to human to horse and larger. A well fed or cunning Burrower may leave a struggling person or animal in a pit and hide nearby. It does this to let the struggling and squealing/whimpering/grunting animal to attract larger prey or one or more people or predators who come to investigate or to get the trapped animal. This way the Burrower Bruin can attack and devour the new arrival, and leave the trapped animal to be eaten afterward.

Like a rabbit, a Burrower Bruin takes over a particular plot of land – typically 1D6+2 acres – digging and creating a network

of crude tunnels that serves as its burrow and den. Here the creature waits for prey to come to it, but the Earth Hounds also routinely comb the surface around their burrow in search of prey on the surface. A Burrower Bruin on the prowl hunting is primarily looking to target medium to large animals, including humans and D-Bees, but may snag a squirrel, raccoon, possum, fox, goose or other smallish animal as a quick snack. The creature considers the 20 mile (6.1 km) radius around its burrow to be its hunting ground.

When it stops to rest or to set up an ambush point near an animal trail or human road, it usually digs a hole large enough for its entire hulking body, and completely covers itself with loose soil, leaves, twigs and foliage, with only its *prehensile tentacle-feelers* laying across the ground, and/or the topmost part of its massive head breaching the surface. Then, the animal patiently waits for prey to come along and be ambushed. The big creature's ability to hear sound and feel vibrations traveling through the ground enables it to hear every crunch of the brush underfoot and feel every footstep of approaching people, prey or enemies within a 1,000 foot radius (305 m) of its hiding place. Farther if the potential prey is not trying to be quiet or traveling in a group or herd.

The monster's entire body as well as its feelers are sensitive to vibration in the ground. A large animal like a stegosaurus, T-Rex, Fury Beetle, or Aegis Buffalo, or a herd of cattle, buffalo or dinosaurs, can be felt as far away as three miles (4.8 km). So can a company of soldiers on the march or a convoy of merchant vehicles. It can also detect seismic activity caused by earthquakes, volcanoes, explosives, heavy construction and mining.

The Burrower can judge from the vibrations in the ground the exact, current location of the noise maker(s), their direction and speed of travel, to estimate when they will arrive at or near its present location. (**Note:** -20% Prowl skill penalty to people trying to escape the notice of this predator!) Whenever the Burrower Bruin has the time, the monster moves and positions itself in the path of travel, perhaps even digging one or several pit traps, before burying itself to wait downwind for their arrival. As potential prey approaches, the burly creature becomes motionless, but ready to spring when the prey comes within 20-90 feet (6.1 to 27.4 m). And the Burrower almost always has surprise (double damage) and the initiative for its first attack.

Death Underground

When the Burrower Bruin pounces, it springs up out of the dirt and strikes with a biting attack that latches onto the unsuspecting victim. The monster usually goes for one of the legs or other limbs, and often hooks another limb or the upper body with one or both tentacle feelers. When such an attack takes place near its burrow, the beast always attempts to drag its squirming prey below the surface into the burrow or a nearby tunnel. Remember, most tunnels in the animal's underground labyrinth are only 1-4 feet (0.3 to 1.2 m) below the surface and the monster seems to sense or remember, even from the surface, the tunnel's location and is able to dig down and access the tunnel in one melee round (15 seconds) or less even while clutching struggling prey in its powerful maw.

The teeth, strong jaw and thick, dense neck of Earth Hounds provide the creature with a stubborn bite comparable to a bear trap or an alligator. A bite that can injure the leg and break the bones of S.D.C. animals and people, as well as hold tight onto Mega-Damage creatures and armored humans. And once the Burrower

Bruin latches on, it is difficult to break loose. Inflicting 25 M.D. or more to the head or 40+ M.D. to the main body has a 50% chance of causing the beast to open its maw to roar in pain and momentarily let go of its prey.

Even cyborgs and armored warriors are off balance and scared when a Burrower tries to pull them underground. It is best to fight hard before being dragged below, because once pulled inside a tunnel or even a temporary den, the victim disappears and comrades on the surface must follow into the abyss to help him. That requires them to engage in close quarters combat in narrow, cramped tunnels that are the monster's home turf. Underground within a tunnel network, people are vulnerable to attacks by more of the burrowing monsters, with them popping out from the walls, floor or ceiling! Nor can people underground see what's approaching on the surface. This is why instinct tells the carnivore to take prey underground where it has the advantage. Animals almost always panic when dragged into the pitch black labyrinth of crude, narrow tunnels just large enough for the monster that has captured them. Making killing them all easier. The only exceptions are well trained combat and search and rescue animals.

Making a detour to travel around a Burrower Bruin's burrow/tunnel complex is often the smart solution to avoid conflict with one to a dozen of the powerful creatures. However, on the surface it may be difficult to determine where it starts and ends. It may also be a pain in the neck and cost time and energy to go around the suspect area. Still, even a long detour is better than trying to run or weave through the area avoiding a gauntlet of tunnels, pits, and pouncing Burrower Bruins attacking from concealed locations. That said, fugitives on the run and treasure seekers often take that risk, much to their regret. Even if such risk takers survive the deadly gauntlet, when chased by one or more Burrower Bruins, they are likely to abandon whatever weapons, gear and valuables they drop along the way. Likewise, when an Earth Hound kills people, it has no use for their belongings or cargo they may have had with them, leaving it where it falls.

A Deadly Treasure Trove

Loads of equipment, weapons and other artifacts that have been dropped or fallen from a vehicle (as well as vehicles themselves) can be found scattered in the loose soil, tunnels and pits of a Burrower Bruin colony and inside their burrows. Rather than risk more of the monsters showing up and pulling them into the earth, most smart people who fall under attack simply leave dropped gear behind and flee for their lives as fast as they can, never to return. As a result, the warrens of these monsters as well as the surface above them often hold what amounts to a scattered treasure of partial and fully charged E-Clips, a wide range of weapons, explosives, tools, medical equipment, radios, canteens, containers of food, magic items, gear of all kinds, and the occasional Universal Credit cash card. Sometimes even salvageable body armor, power armor, the remains of a cyborg and even a partially buried vehicle! Typically, it is a small vehicle like a motorcycle, hovercycle, jeep, etc., that is found half buried or inside a tunnel, but sometimes larger vehicles that got stuck. In fact, coming across a half-buried wagon, truck, tank or robot, big or small, is often a sign that Burrower Bruins are (or were) in the area. Would-be treasure hunters beware: Burrowers are smart enough to realize that people are attracted to trucks and other cargo carriers, and 1D4 of them are likely to be nearby, waiting for the next group of fools to take a run at trying to get the vehicle or whatever it may have inside.

The Hunt for Prey

Burrower Bruins are nocturnal hunters that most often come above ground at night to prowl and hunt. However, they are hunters of opportunity that respond to travelers/prey who happen upon their territory any time of day or night. As nocturnal and subterranean creatures, they have poor sight in daylight (100 feet/30.5 m), and dislike bright light, but even their nightsight is not great. It is their excellent sense of smell, superior hearing and unique ability to feel and track prey via vibrations in the earth that guide them and make them deadly hunters. Their vibration sensing abilities enable them to pinpoint potential prey anywhere within the 1D6+2 acres of land a small family group considers to be its primary domain/living area. Though they like to stay within their home range, hungry Burrower Bruins have been known to travel and track potential prey up to 20 miles (32 km) from their warren.

Burrower Bruins are very territorial and aggressive, especially when it comes to food. The animal will stand its ground and challenge a large adversary like a bear, humanoid in power armor, or a pack of hungry Raptors – all of whom the Burrower also regards as potential prey. The fierce, massive beast may also attack potential prey that outnumber them by as much as 50 to one. Grabbing one and dragging it away from its herd or pack – and underground whenever it can, because most animals will not pursue it underground.

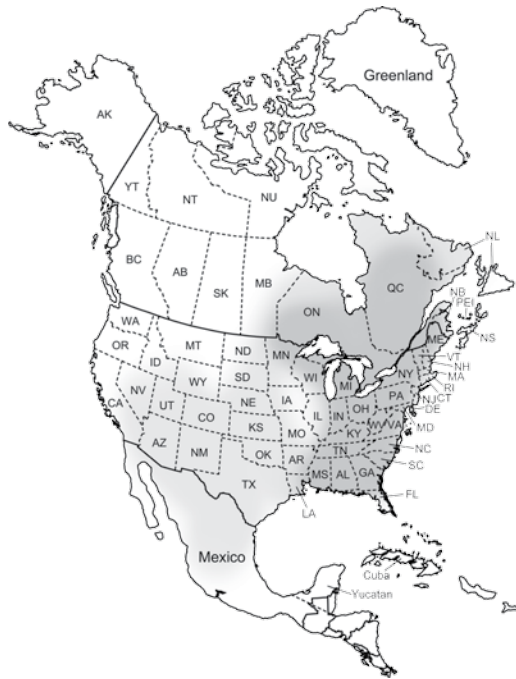
That said, the monsters are not very tenacious and avoid prolonged combat in favor of a quick, easy kill. Thus, a Burrower Bruin typically grabs prey or a dead carcass in its powerful jaws, and runs off with it into one of its many underground tunnels or digs one as it goes. Pulling prey underground inside cramped, narrow tunnels is one of the things that makes the beast so dangerous. As noted earlier, prey dragged underground is at a distinct disadvantage. Worse, wherever there is one Burrower you can bet there are 1D6+6 others. All happy to join in to make the kill and steal the prey for themselves. It is not unusual to encounter groups of 1D4+1 Burrower Bruins, but each is likely to go after its own prey rather than work together to bring down one as a team. And even when only one Burrower is encountered, it is a safe bet that others are nearby.

If an adversary or prey proves to be too strong or quickly inflicts significant damage upon one or more of the Burrowers, the monsters are likely to give up and retreat back underground or into the dark underbrush, vanishing completely in 1D4 melee rounds.

To find one after it goes underground, a person would need to dig up the area, but given how fast the monster is and the many tunnels in a warren, such an endeavor is not likely to be successful. In addition to the beasts' tunnel systems being a labyrinth, Burrower Bruins can burrow into the ground, like a rabbit. Vanishing from sight in seconds. So when one of them wants to hide or make a fast escape, it does so easily. While their tunnels and digging are never very deep – typically only 1-4 feet (0.3 to 1.2 m) below the surface – once they go underground, they cannot be seen from the surface and it's anyone's guess which direction they went or where they might emerge next.

Tunnel Combat

Following a Burrower Bruin down it's the tunnel from behind is difficult and dangerous. Since a tunnel is usually only 5-6 feet (1.5 to 1.8 m) in diameter, large humanoids may have to crawl on their hands and knees, and even regular humans may have to bend over to avoid dragging their head across the dirt ceiling. The low



ceilings and cramped conditions make travel slow (reduce speed by 30%; half Spd if crawling on hands and knees). Since the tunnels of the burrow twist, turn and intersect with others in a maze, surface dwellers are quick to get confused and lost. And of course, intruders run the risk of encountering 1D4 additional Burrowers joining the hunt or battle so they can get their share of the kill when it happens.

Though most Burrower Bruins would rather run than fight large, healthy, combative prey (remember, *everyone* is potential food to them), they all stand and fight when they feel their den or warren of tunnels has been invaded, and they are under attack. Most people are satisfied to have the monster give up and flee, though they still need to be careful of other shallow tunnels and pit traps as well as attacks from other Burrowers willing to make a grab at live prey. As long as people are traveling within the animals' territory, they are in danger of ambush and attack on the surface and from below. And not just new beasts taking a stab, it might be the same Burrower giving it another try from another ambush point.

Burrower Bruin – Predatory Carnivore

Also Known As: Burrowing Beast, Earth Hound and just Burrower.

Alignment: Animal predator generally considered to be Anarchist at best. Miscreant or Diabolic at worst.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+5 (low to medium animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+6, M.A. 1D6+6, P.S. 1D6+29 (equal to Robotic), P.P. 1D6+12, P.E. 2D6+14, P.B. 1D6, Spd 1D4+30 (22 mph/35 km), half that speed digging or tunneling, which is very fast.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 1D6x10+100

*Feeler Tentacles (2, large) – 1D6+35 each

*Feelers (10, small) – 10 each

*Tail – 1D6+24

*Legs (4) – 1D4x10+100 each

Main Body – 1D6x10+140 (an additional +50 M.D.C. for the larger females)

* A single asterisk means a small and/or difficult target to strike and requires a Called Shot to hit. Even then the attacker is -3 to strike. Reducing the M.D.C. of one leg to zero reduces

speed by 30%. Destroying two legs reduces speed by 60%. Lost limbs do not regenerate.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Burrower Bruin has a main body of 2D6x10+40 S.D.C., 1D6x10+80 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 10. All other locations are S.D.C. at the same number as M.D.C., above, i.e. 1D4x10+80 M.D.C. = 1D4x10+80 S.D.C./Hit Points. The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D., so a bite that does 2D6+6 M.D. on Rifts Earth does 2D6+6 S.D.C. damage on S.D.C. worlds.

Horror Factor: 12 for one; 15 for two or more or when pulled underground by one or more.

Size: 4-5 feet (1.2 to 1.5 m) tall at the shoulders, 7-9 feet (2.1 to 2.7 m) long. The males are on the smaller end of the scale.

Weight: 500-800 pounds (225-360 kg). Females are generally 20% larger than the male.

Average Life Span: 18-25 years. Litters of 6-8 are born after a gestation period of 10-11 weeks, and the animal reaches full maturity in four years.

P.P.E.: 5D6

Disposition: Alert and aggressive, but also jumpy and quick to avoid conflict when not hungry. Inquisitive, the animal is known to hide or quietly tail animals and humanoids to watch and listen to what they are doing until it becomes hungry and ready to hunt. Its keen senses, ability to feel vibrations and bury itself to hide makes the Burrower a tricky predator to hunt or capture. It is usually able to stay ahead of any pursuer, and its use of camouflage, ambush and surprise attacks enables it to get the jump on prey and hunters alike.

Friendly and playful among its own kind as well as with those who own partially domesticated Burrower Bruins.

When the big animal is caught off guard or spooked (explosions, bombardments, loud and/or strange persistent noise, machine noise, attacks from above or attacks by an enemy/group), the beast is likely to run away and hide, probably underground. However, when it collects itself after its initial scare, it may return to investigate (50/50 chance). If what startled it is potential prey, the beast may observe for a while and then come up with a plan of attack, usually a pit trap, ambush or other type of surprise attack. If undesirable noisy/seismic conditions persist for more than a week or two, the entire colony is likely to move away, but not too far if there is easy prey to hunt in the area. In the alternative, the Burrower may hunt those responsible for the disturbance to silence them. The beast may also vacate an area if persistently hunted, usually by people.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Camouflage 85% (-20% for young), Climbing 30% (trees and rocks; +20% for the young animal), Land Navigation 85% above and below ground (+10% inside its own underground tunnel network), Prowl 60%, Swimming 30% (dislikes water and is a lousy swimmer) and Tailing 70% (+25% when following sound and vibrations).

Natural Abilities: Poor vision: The animal is near-sighted and unable to see well during the day or night. Daytime/light vision is 100 feet (30.5 m); 300 feet (91.4 m) at night or in darkness. However, it is far from blind or handicapped. Its keen hearing and ability to feel vibrations in the ground more than make up for its poor sight. In fact, it functions so well, most people never realize the beast's vision is so poor.

Keen senses enable it to hear and feel sound and vibrations through its feet, body and feelers (see *Track Sound and Vibrations*, below), as well as smell prey or carrion up to one mile

(1.6 km) away. Track by smell alone 60% (+10% to track scent of blood or carrion), can leap 6 feet (1.8 m) high and 15 feet (4.6 m) long, and like canines can perform a leaping pounce (see Mega-Damage for details).

Recovers from injury at a rate of 3D6 M.D.C. per 24 hours, double at a ley line (and the animal knows this), but its feelers Bio-Regenerate separately at a rate of 3D6 M.D.C. per 12 hours and if destroyed, completely regenerate within 1D4+2 days. If both feelers are destroyed, the Burrower Bruin loses all of its combat bonuses until they are regrown.

Cannot be Blinded (special): As long as it can hear and feel vibrations via its connection to the ground via its feet, body and feelers (often seen dragging or touching the ground), it functions better than if it had perfect vision. It cannot be blinded and functions at 100% in total darkness or in bright light. As a result, it is nearly impossible to sneak up upon, surprise or attack from behind. An aerial attack has the best chance, provided the flying adversary does not flap its wings or have an engine or flight system that makes sound. Even then a fast approach creates air vibrations the beast is almost certain to feel and hear coming, and avoid/dodge (-2 to dodge missiles and aerial attacks).

Also see Vulnerabilities, below.

Digging (special): As described, Burrower Bruins love to dig to bury and hide themselves so they can ambush prey, dig pit traps, live in dens and burrows, and dig tunnel networks that can only be described as labyrinths when they gather in colonies of 3D6 animals.

- Dig Den: Lone or pairs of Burrower Bruins will dig out a den that is a 1D6+6 foot (2.1 to 3.7 m) tunnel that ends in a larger nesting area padded with grass, leaves, and twigs. The tunnel is 1-5 feet (0.3 to 1.5 m) below ground and 6 feet (1.8 m) in diameter. The actual den/sleeping area is 6 feet (1.8 m) tall and 10 feet (3 m) in diameter. Can dig a den in less than an hour.
- Dig Pit Trap: Pit traps can vary in size and shape, but are generally either a roughly circular pit 10 feet (3 m) in diameter and 6-10 feet (1.8 to 3 m) deep, or a trench 10-20 feet (3 to 6.1 m) long, 3-5 feet (0.9 to 1.5 m) wide, and 3-6 feet (0.9 to 1.8 m) deep. Can dig pit trap in 20 minutes (a smaller one in half that time), but takes an hour to scatter the dirt so the pit is not obvious with a mound of dirt next to it. Sometimes even carrying dirt away in its mouth and/or covering the pit with branches and leaves.
- Dig Tunnels: These are only 1-5 feet (0.9 to 1.5 m) below the surface and 6 feet (1.8 m) in diameter. The occasional wider, larger chamber is the den and is covered in nesting/bedding material. Tunnel Labyrinth is the result of a Burrower Bruin colony with 3D6 of the animals (a few being mated pairs, the rest being their young; reduce M.D.C. of young by half and have only 3 attacks per melee, everything else is the same). Spd: 12 (7 mph/11 km).
- Digging Underground: As the name suggests, these creatures love to dig. They can feel moles, voles, rabbits, weasels, badgers and other burrowing animals moving below the ground and happily try to dig them up to eat or play with, especially when young. They dig to cover themselves for ambush purposes and to hide, as well as to stay cool in hot temperatures. In addition to making dens, pit traps and tunnels, the great beast can claw and dig through the earth rather like a mole.

This is performed to escape danger, to make an escape tunnel out of their warren, to pop through the walls of their underground warren to attack intruders or to access another tunnel (probably for escape), to dig their way up and out of deep pits and ravines, and to dig up bones to eat and rocks and objects just for the fun. Spd: 12 (7 mph/11 km).

They also leave dirt mounds and shallow trenches especially around their colonies, unintentionally creating uneven ground, trip hazards, and sign of their presence for humanoids.

Track Sound and Vibrations (special): The Burrower Bruin's ability to hear sound and more importantly, *feel vibrations* is very acute. Its head and entire body is wired to feel and recognize vibration, particularly the two, long feeler appendages and its 10 small feelers.

- 70% up to 1,000 feet (305 m) to track whispering and soft sounds. -50% to track soft sounds and light movement up to an additional 500 feet (152 m). Not possible to track soft noise and quiet movement beyond that range. This applies to animals or people deliberately being silent and trying to move slowly, softly and quietly. People and creatures trying to Prowl and remain unnoticed by the monster or trying to sneak up on one suffer a -20% penalty to Prowl.
- 85% up to 3,000 feet (914 m) to hear/feel and track normal walking and movement, a bicycle or the sound of normal talking.
- 95% up to 5,000 feet (1,524 m) to hear/feel and track animals or people running, marching, dancing, digging, singing or using power tools, light machinery, motorcycle, hovercycle, snowmobile and other light vehicles, as well as full Conversion Cyborgs, power armor and large, heavy creatures simply walking.
- 95% up to 3 miles (4.8 km) away to hear/feel and track a herd of animals, large groups of people (40 or more), one or more heavy vehicles or giant robots, construction work, logging, a convoy or merchant caravan, the sound of a field being plowed, combat, activity in a town and so on.
- 90% up to 10 miles (16 km) away to feel and pinpoint the use of explosives, mining operations, light bombardment and similar.
- 90% up to 60 miles (96 km) away to feel and pinpoint heavy military bombardment, volcanic and seismic activity.

Note: Burrower Bruins dislike the sounds and vibrations of bombardment, active combat and seismic activity, and stay away from them. Likewise, the animal avoids urban areas, seldom entering large towns or small cities. However, a quiet village, farming community, ranch (with a lot of prey!), or group of travelers is a different story and an attractive target. Though the beast might not enter an industrial town or noisy city, the patient hunter is likely to lay in ambush near the side of a road or trail it knows is well traveled outside of town (watching for just a few hours reveals that information). There it attacks lone travelers and small groups (2-12 people), or pack animals or livestock being brought to market. The beast may also visit homesteads, farms, ranches and slaughterhouses on the outskirts of town to hunt the livestock and people there, away from the many distracting and painful sounds of a lively or large community. One, two or a small family group of Burrowers may even set up an underground colony not far from an easy food source like a farm, ranch, trading post, vil-

lage, town, mercenary company, a well traveled road, watering hole, and locations visited or crossed by a large number of animals or people.

Remember, as an ambush predator, the animal likes to hide and wait until prey comes close to attack.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Mega-Damage: As per Robot equivalent P.S. Typically as follows. Can NOT perform a power bite or power claw strike.

Restrained Swat, Head Butt, Body Butt – 1D4 M.D.

Bite or Claw Strike, Restrained – 2D4 M.D.

Bite, Full Strength – 2D6 M.D.

Claw Strike, Full Strength – 3D6 M.D.

Locking Bite and Dragging Prey Underground (special):

Remember, Burrower Bruins instinctively latch onto their prey and drag them into a pit or better yet, one of their tunnels. If the Burrower was waiting for prey, it will have a pit trap or tunnel/den very nearby.

There are several tactical reasons to do this.

a) It separates the prey from the rest of its pack or herd. The rest of which typically flee, leaving the predator plenty of time to finish off and feast upon its captured prey.

b) Most animals panic and struggle to escape when dragged underground, rather than fight to save themselves.

c) Taking prey underground to kill and devour prevents other larger, more powerful predators or pack hunters from taking any part of its kill.

d) Makes it and its prey more difficult to find or attack. Though related to “C,” above, this works best against intelligent prey like humans and D-Bees. (“Hey, where’s Jake?! What happened to Jake?!”) Even if there was a scream and the sounds of combat, once the creature drags its prey underground, it is difficult to find the opening to its hunting den or tunnel, especially in the wilderness. Even if the trail to its underground den is easy to find, most people and animals are hesitant to go underground into a dark tunnel.

e) Going underground gives the Burrower Bruin the combat advantage. For one, humanoid pursuers must face it one or two people at a time in cramped, close quarters. Burrower tunnels and dens are only 6 feet (1.8 m) in diameter – 6 feet (1.8 m) tall, 6 feet (1.8 m) wide. And the Burrower can see in the dark as well as feel and hear them coming.

Pouncing Attack: The predator’s first attack is usually to lunge out of the shadows or up from the ground below to pounce atop its prey. This means the Burrower Bruin has the element of surprise and initiative for the rest of the melee round and instinctively leaps on prey to knock it down, then tears into it with bites and claw attacks. A pouncing leap of the big, heavy Burrower has a 01-75% likelihood of knocking down humanoid prey up to 10 feet (3 m) tall and weighing up to 1,200 pounds (540 kg) and landing on top of them. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and one melee attack as well as suffer 1D6 M.D. pounce damage, and are vulnerable to subsequent biting and claw attacks! Even cyborgs take damage from a pounce attack and characters inside body armor or power armor suffer 2D4 S.D.C./Hit Point damage from the jolting impact, fall and weight on top of them. **Note:** As described prior, if the beast attacked from an underground burrow, it is likely to drag its prey underground before finishing it off. Most animals will not go underground and even humanoid teammates may be hesitant to pursue it below the surface where more Burrower Bruins might await them.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +4 on Perception Rolls involving seismic activity, vibrations in the earth and motion, +2 on initiative (automatically has initiative the first melee of a surprise attack), +3 to strike, +1 to parry and disarm, +2 to dodge, Critical Strike (double damage) from a surprise attack and on a roll of a Natural 19 or 20, and +1 to save vs Horror Factor.

Vulnerabilities: Hates explosions and constant, loud noise, especially if the noise comes from numerous sources and penetrates the ground. Such noise is why the creature avoids industrial towns, factories, cities, and war zones; -30% to Tracking and Land Navigation skills in such noisy environments. Loud noise and vibrations that cause sensory overload confound and hurt Burrower Bruins. It also dislikes water and hates deep or fast moving water. Panics in water deeper than 10 feet (3 m) or in strong currents, and -20% to Swimming in deep water and may drown.

Getting Free from Lock Bite: Inflicting 25 M.D. or more to the head of the beast or 40+ M.D. to the main body has a 50% chance of causing the animal to let go of prey locked in its maw. Jabbing it in the eye or immediate eye area automatically causes it to let go and howl, but also makes it very angry and the attacker is -3 to strike at the eyes.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Mostly the eastern third of the Old American and Canadian Empires, but renowned Wilderness Scout *Bradley Whitcomb* has recently provided evidence that the creature also exists in the deserts of the American Southwest and Mexico.

Enemies: Humans, D-Bees, large predators and aggressive pack hunters.

Allies: Typically, only its own kind. A domesticated Burrower Bruin can be quite affectionate and loyal to its human master/owner along with other domesticated work animals, provided it doesn’t get too tired or hungry. The creature gets cranky and stubborn, like a mule, when tired or unhappy, and may eat livestock, pets or riding animals if deprived of food for more than a few days.

Value: 100-600 credits for a cub, but capturing cubs probably requires killing the parent(s).

Domesticated Burrower Bruins: In a weird way, Burrower cubs are small, cuddly and very cute. They are also very friendly and impressionable, and can be taken away from their parents and domesticated. Training only works, however, if it starts when the animal is a very young cub. **Note:** Adults are not trainable, and attack and kill anyone foolish enough to believe otherwise.

You might think it unlikely, but if trained properly, Burrower Bruins can make loyal and surprisingly gentle and loving companions, work animals and protectors. That usually requires a Psi-Stalker, Psi-Druid, Shifter or skilled animal trainer, patience and care, because even as a cub the animal is a robust powerhouse able to take off a man’s arm, and is driven by instinct to hunt, dig and burrow.

Trained Earth Hounds working with combat troops can be put to work digging latrines, trenches and fox holes, create walls and mounds of dirt, dig tunnels and pit traps, and dig holes with which to bury caches of supplies, weapons, or loot. The predator can also assist in hunting and trapping wild animals to feed the squad, or lay in ambush for enemy scouts and spies. Of course, they also serve as an early detection and warning sys-

tem able to feel the approach of troops or heavy vehicles via their ground vibration sensing abilities from a few miles away.

Beyond military use, trained Burrowers can be used to till the soil, dig out tree stumps, rocks and debris, dig irrigation ditches, dig the foundation for a house or basement, as well as serve as a massive watchdog and guard animal. They are not great at digging wells or mining because the animal seldom digs deeper than 10 feet (3 m), and doesn't like deep or fast moving water. Some slaughterhouses and Body-Chop-Shops use domesticated Burrower Bruins to eat meat and bone waste product that is otherwise thrown away, as well as killing and eating animals that get sick or injured and are otherwise unsuitable for food processing and consumption by people.

The worst criminals, assassins, Cyber-Snatchers and other evildoers have been known to use domesticated and wild Burrowers to make people *disappear* without a trace. Disposing of their victims by letting the great beasts devour them, bones, skull and all.

Trained and domesticated Burrower Bruins have a clownish nature when tamed, and like to nuzzle their master(s) and even crawl into their lap. However, the animal requires sufficient amounts of food and kindness to preserve their loyalty. A mistreated or starved Burrower will either run away or eat its abusive owner.

The animal never learns how to differentiate between one species and another, so while it may be trained by a human, it does not know that other humans or D-Bees are off the menu. Nor for that matter, the family pets or livestock. The animal must be taught that lesson by its handler, and even then it still needs an eye kept on it throughout its entire life. This is another reason to keep such animals *well fed*, so they do not eat some of the livestock, Bessy the milking cow or Grandmother napping in her chair on the front porch. Burrower Bruins only eat live prey, meat and carrion/dead bodies, not grains or vegetation.

Note: This is a new creature appearing for the very first time. Inspired by the art and writing of Charles "Chuck" Walton Jr.



Cadborosaurus, Dinosaur

By Kevin Siembieda

For centuries, even before the Coming of the Rifts, the waters around Vancouver Island have been inhabited by a mysterious aquatic animal. The ancient (and current) Navaho call the beast "Ticholtsodi" – *the water monster*. Modern pre-Rifts people labeled the creature "Cadborosaurus," more commonly known as "Caddie." Pre-Rifts scholars speculated that the beast was some

type of pre-historic animal in the Placodonts or Nothosaurs Family, perhaps even a Macroplata, Elasmosaurus, Plesiosaurus or similar creature.

Since the Great Cataclysm, reports of this marine monster have been confirmed a thousand times. It is known to be some sort of Plesiosaurus-type creature that has prospered in the absence of modern man. Today, thousands are found in the waters of the Pacific Coast, from northern California to the southern tip of the Gulf of Alaska near Juneau. However, Caddie's roosting place appears to be around Vancouver Island, making the Strait of Georgia,



Queen Charlotte Strait and Queen Charlotte Sound some of the most dangerous waters in Canada. An estimated 1,800-3,000 of the animals are believed to live in these waters, with the population doubling during mating season in May and June.

The Coming of the Rifts has also transformed Caddie into a Mega-Damage creature. This superhuman resilience and their large numbers have made the Cadborosaurus extremely aggressive, especially toward humans, who make easy and tasty prey. However, these sea serpents will try to eat just about anything in the water and are known to attack swimmers, boats, ships and even dragons. They may appear in water as shallow as 15 feet (4.6 m) to snatch up careless people from a dock or the shore. Thankfully, they never come onto dry land or in waters less than 15 feet (4.6 m) deep, so there are some areas of beaches and shoreline that are relatively safe. Nobody knows how far out into the ocean they may travel, but most believe it is not more than a few hundred miles.

Caddies find healthy whales and dolphins to be too fast and smart for them, so they leave them alone. In fact, a lone dolphin or whale can swim into the middle of school of Caddies without fear of attack. The only exception is if the whale or dolphin is sick or in distress, or is being a troublesome pest. Daring and foolish young dolphins and whales sometimes bother, play tricks on and pick fights with one or more Caddies for fun.

Unlike whales and dolphins, the Cadborosaurus is a comparatively simpleminded predator. It cannot use magic nor does it possess much of a range in psionics. However, the dinosaur is smart enough to recognize the dangers of magic, and to a lesser degree, technology, as well as its own limits. Thus, whales are too much trouble and dangerous, while humans, seals, walrus, fish and other animals are much easier and preferred prey.

Caddies are a serious danger to seafaring humanoids when the monsters travel in small schools of 3-12 (double during mating season) and they use group strategies and tactics – including feints, flanking actions, encircling, dividing the prey/enemy, tag team assaults and coordinated attacks – to attack ships and prey. They also understand enough about boats to recognize when a vessel is damaged and crippled or sinking. Furthermore, Caddies are patient, and have been known to follow a crippled vessel for weeks hoping

that it will capsize or sink so they can get at the crew. On occasion, one or two may even figure out a weakness in a sea vessel (a patch repair, severely damaged section of the hull, etc.) and attack it, again, sometimes on and off for days to see if they can damage it further or, better yet, sink it.

Caddies are also the first on the scene after a storm, searching for ships that sunk to eat the dead as well as to pick off crew members washed into the sea and trying to survive on floating debris, rafts and lifeboats as they prey for rescue. In this regard Caddie is worse than sharks as the beast not only picks off the living, but sometimes kills a person or animal to attract sharks and other sea creatures so it make, in turn, feed on the creatures attracted by the blood.

Cadborosaurus – Predatory Dinosaur – Omnivore

Also Known As: Caddie, Long-necked Sea Serpent and Tichotsodi.

Alignment: Most consider it to be Diabolic, but it is really probably Anarchist.

Attributes of Note: I.Q. 1D4+3 (low animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+6, M.A. 1D6, P.S. 1D6+29 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+14, P.E. 1D6+20, P.B. 1D6, Spd 1D4+4, or 5 mph (8 km) on dry land; not well suited to dry land.

Speed swimming is a maximum of 25 mph (40 km) and can be maintained for 12 hours before needing to stop and float or ride the waves. A speed burst is 50 mph (80 km) for 1D4 minutes. Swimming is it's natural state and it can swim indefinitely at speeds less than 15 mph (24 km). Can dive 1,000 feet (305 m). Maximum ocean depth is unlimited.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 1D4x10+60
Neck (long) – 1D4x10+60
Fins (4, large) – 1D4x10+20 each
Back Fin (1, top) – 1D4x10
Main Body – 1D4x10+100

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Cadborosaurus has a main body of 2D4x10 S.D.C., 1D4x10+60 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 13. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (1D4x10 M.D.C. = 1D4x10 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D., so the 4D6 M.D. from a bite becomes 4D6 S.D.C. on S.D.C. worlds.

Horror Factor: 13

Size: 40 to 70 feet (12.2 to 21.3 m) long.

Weight: 3-6 tons.

Average Life Span: Unknown, believed to live 60 to 120 years.

P.P.E.: 5D6

Disposition: Patient in the extreme, remorseless, aggressive and always hungry sums up any and all Caddies. These hunter-killers think nothing of spending days on end patiently stalking prey, waiting for the right moment to strike.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Land Navigation 90% (coast lines and underwater markers), Swimming 98%, and Tailing (ships and potential prey) 94%.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 3,000 feet (914 m), keen color vision, impervious to cold (no damage), and Bio-Regeneration 5D6 M.D.C. per day and can regenerate lost portions of tail, fins and entire limbs within 1D6+1 months.

Chemoreceptors (special): Chemoreceptors in the mouth gills enable the Caddie to detect minute changes in the salinity and

chemical components of the water. This effectively gives them the following: Identify chemicals (by taste): 65%, Track (by taste): 65% (+10% to follow a blood trail). Range: One mile (1.6 km).

Depth Tolerance: Unlimited.

Sense Magnetic North: Same as the dolphin, so unless injured or sick, can always tell where magnetic north is precisely located. This is an immense help in navigating the oceans. A powerful blow to the head may temporarily knockout this ability for 3D4 minutes.

Breathing: Aquatic, cannot survive out of water for more than six hours.

Quick Turns & Stops: Can stop on a dime.

Speed Burst: Can swim at 50 mph (80 km; double its normal speed) for 1D4 minutes. This maneuver can be performed three times per hour. This move is performed for a quick dodge (+2 in addition to other bonuses) or a quick strike (+2 in addition to other bonuses), or to move toward or away from somebody or to replace quickly.

Can dive up to 3,000 feet (914 m) during a speed burst.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Mega-Damage: Fights with bites and ramming attacks.

Bite – 4D6 M.D.

Fin Strike (blunt) – 2D6 M.D.

Head Butt (blunt) – 3D6 M.D.

Head Butt Power Strike (blunt) – 6D6 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks.

Body Block/Short Ram (blunt) – 4D6 M.D., counts as one attack.

High Speed Body Block/Ram (special): 1D6x10 M.D., but counts as three melee attacks and has a 70% likelihood of capsizing any boat under 20 feet (6.1 m) long. Anyone standing on the boat is knocked down and there is 50% chance they fall into the water. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and one melee attack.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 on initiative, +3 to strike, +1 to parry, +3 to dodge, +1 to save vs magic, +8 to save vs Horror Factor. All bonuses are in addition to the special combat maneuver bonuses.

Vulnerabilities: All Mega-Damage weapons and attacks, other than cold-based, inflict their normal damage. Caddie can leave the water for short periods of up to six hours to climb onto shore or a sinking ship to get at prey or to relax or look around. However, the aquatic dinosaur but cannot survive on dry land for much longer and the dinosaur instinctive stays near shore. Seldom travel more than a few miles inland. After six hours out of the water the sea monster's breathing becomes labored and it will die within 4D6+20 minutes, unless it returns to the water.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Along the Pacific coast of British Columbia, Washington and Oregon. Most numerous around Vancouver Island.

Enemies: Humans, D-Bees and large aquatic predators.

Allies: None, other their own kind. Tolerate (or more to the point, ignore) whales and dolphins.

Market Value: Teeth fetch 10-20 credits each. Though its meat has no current market value, it is edible and resembles the taste of shark meat. Sometimes hunted by wilderness people and whalers for its meat.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 20: Rifts® Canada™**, page 147. Art by Ramon K. Perez Jr.

Canadian Duckbill

By Charles Walton Jr. and Kevin Siembieda

Believed to be related to the Duckbilled Honkers of **Dinosaur Swamp** and the **New West**, the Canadian Duckbill, or Canadian Honker, is a larger, muscular, more temperamental and jittery cousin. Its entire body is covered in feathers, with brown and black plumage with white and cream accent markings similar to that of Earth Canadian Geese. During warm weather, the mixed coloration helps conceal them on lakes and in light forests. The summer coat of feathers molts into pure white during the winter season, and the change to white plumage helps to conceal them in snow-covered environments, even in open fields or on frozen lakes. Feathers also help to insulate the creature from the cold and wet snow, making it unnecessary for them to migrate to warmer climates unless food becomes too sparse. The feathers also give the Canadian Duckbill a rather majestic appearance compared to its featherless cousins.

Canadian Honkers travel in family clans that consist of a mated pair of adults and their 1D6+4 young. The family stays together for six months after the young have hatched, and may gather in larger flocks after six months with other family clans when the young no longer need their parents' protection. There is safety in numbers and when one finds food, the others are there to share in the bounty. Moreover, like Earth penguins, when it gets too cold or the icy winds become too ferocious, they huddle together in a tight cluster for warmth. **Note:** Though Canadian Duckbills cannot fly, their gatherings are still referred to as flocks.

Canadian Duckbills are very protective of their young and charge with their head hung low like a "shovel." They bite and body butt any predator or intruder they perceive to be a threat. That may include people, cyborgs, vehicles and giant robots. The animals are especially aggressive during mating season in the spring and the entire time their mate is nesting on a clutch of 1D6+4 eggs, and when their offspring are young.

Protecting the family clan or the larger flock falls upon the males. The dominant males in a flock are satisfied with chasing intruders away and keeping them at what the animal considers to be a safe distance. It is usually not sufficient for a person to take only a few steps back. No, these big males chase, nip at, bite, head butt and body block perceived threats with tenacious ferocity until they put at least 300 feet (91.4 m) between the intruders and their young. Further is better and preferred. Even then, the adult male and female keep a wary eye on intruders and nearby predators, and may give chase again to push the interloper farther away. The chase may also occur if an intruder takes just a few steps closer or makes a sudden, aggressive movement or a loud noise. This chasing, biting and thumping continues until the perceived danger leaves the area completely – going half a mile (0.8 km) or farther away – and the Canadian Duckbill feels that its young, mate, or nest is safe. The largest and most aggressive males have been known to chase people as far as one or two miles (1.6 to 3.2 km) before they relent, turn around and head back to their family. Most chases, however, last for only about a quarter to half a mile (1D4x1,000 feet/305 to 1,219 m).

Such onslaughts are accompanied by much head bobbing, squawking, honking, arm flapping, threatening charges, nipping, biting, thumping and body blocks. This is almost never deadly to other Duckbills or most intruders, however, the attack is scary, intimidating, and can cause serious damage even to armored personnel and vehicles! Ordinary, unarmored civilians unable to put

distance between themselves and the Canadian Honker may be killed or suffer broken bones due to the size, weight and power of these big animals.

There are other serious consequences that can result from the Canadian Duckbill's caterwauling and attacks. One is that people who wisely and correctly run away from one of these charging creatures – larger than an elephant – may drop weapons and gear, or crash and abandon their vehicle while trying to make a fast retreat. They may also get lost or lose track of their teammates as they flee through the wilderness from the bellowing beast.

Another, far worse consequence, is that the fanfare is likely to attract unwanted attention from dangerous predators, as well as humanoid threats such as dinosaur hunters, big game hunters, bandits, raiders, and enemies in the area who may come to see what all the noise is about. Such shady individuals may prove more troublesome or dangerous than the Canadian Honker. *Predators* may be large or small — T-Rex and Allosaurus to pack hunters like Raptors, wolves and others, as well as carrion-feeders hoping to feast on the remains of some poor animal or human that gets itself trampled and killed – are all likely to be attracted to the commotion. Opportunistic predators are attracted by the hope of finding easy prey like a lame animal or injured people, and may tail a group of adventurers, waiting for an opportunity to strike. Targeting those who seem most vulnerable and weak.

By the way, one predator that is always attracted to such noise is any *Burrower Bruin* in the area (see page 62). This creature can feel the vibrations of “the chase” as well as hear it from miles away. Bruins arrive in the hope of finding one or more wounded or tuckered out animals (or people) who are not expecting to be jumped by a new menace. The scent of blood is likely to make them and other predators in the area all the more eager to track the injured prey and turn it into a nice meal.

If adventurers or travelers are trying to avoid an enemy in hot pursuit or in the area, the cacophony may bring that enemy – or at least a scout or two, if not their enter force – to investigate. It should be noted that many wilderness people, including *Wilderness Scouts*, *Wild Psi-Stalkers*, *Simvan*, *Native Americans*, and others, can usually tell the difference between the noise Canadian Duckbills make fighting amongst themselves to maintain their pecking order, and the noise they make when chasing off intruders.

Similarly, a flock of Canadian Duckbills unwilling to move or to move along quickly, might force travelers to go around them or make an unwanted detour. Think of a flock of geese slowly waddling across the road, only these are massive, dinosaur-sized “geese.” Big trouble, if the adventurers are on run or facing a serious deadline, as going around or waiting for these beasts to pass by forces them to stop and wait, or try to dart through their line which might (50/50 chance) cause squawking and an attack/chase.

Canadian Honkers do NOT fight with the intention to kill, nor do they eat those they might accidentally kill. However, that does not mitigate the damage they can inflict. When the beast secures a bite, it does not let go easily, because it wants to *scare and punish* any Honker lower in the pecking order or intruder who threatens them, its mate, or young. Bites hurt, but it is the shaking and pummeling with their flailing arms and fists until the interloper can break free and run away that can cause injury or death. So can the body blocks and head butts against ordinary people and other S.D.C. creatures like horses or cattle. Such so-called “thumpings” are to be avoided whenever possible, which is why intruders run when chased. The animal's intention is to intimidate and instill fear so that a fellow Honker or intruder never takes such liberties,

or comes that close, again. And it is a tactic that works. Many people fear these large dinosaurs and avoid them at any cost, and subservient Honkers in the flock scurry away at the angry glance of an alpha or beta male. It should be noted that anyone who threatens, corners or challenges any Canadian Duckbill over food or nesting area, can expect the same treatment. And females fight in the same manner when their male protector is not present and their eggs or young are threatened.

If an intruder, giant robot or heavy vehicle is able to stand its ground and clearly oppose the belligerent alpha Canadian Duckbill, and/or is able to inflict grievous damage upon the creature (reducing its Main Body M.D.C. by 30% or 40%), it is the Honker that backs down and leaves the area, taking its family and perhaps the entire flock with it. However, 1D4 other males may step up, one after the other, but if all are soundly defeated, they too back off or leave, taking the rest of the flock with them. Likewise, whenever an attacker is clearly larger and more powerful, like facing a T-Rex, Allosaurus or Alien Rex, the entire flock, alpha male and all, flee. Similarly, when one of the animals goes down, the rest run away, with the possible exception of its mate, who may attack in a desperate act to rescue its partner or young. Screeching its head off the entire time.

For people who have never encountered a Canadian Duckbill before, the creature may seem harmless, like a giant cow munching on leaves or grass. After all, from a safe distance, they are docile, slow moving, and innocent looking as they slowly graze on vegetation or paddle along the shore of a lake. As a result, many people are caught off-guard when one or two of the beasts break from the flock to charge them. Unprepared for such aggression, the Canadian Duckbill has initiative and people are likely to get hurt being body blocked/rammed, falling down and getting trampled, or pummeled or bitten. Light vehicles may be overturned by such an attack or have trees knocked on top of them. And woe if the Canadian Honker leaps *on top* of a vehicle. Even medium to heavy vehicles might pop a wheel, blow a tire, bend an axle or get pushed down so deep into the mud or ground from the tonnage of such a large creature jumping, standing or sitting on it, that it cannot move until it is physically extricated – pulled or dug out. Hover vehicles pushed into the ground, especially soft ground after a rain, are likely to get their hover jets so packed and clogged with dirt that they cannot fire until they are cleaned out. A process that could take 1D4 hours at a garage, but much longer, 1D4+5 hours, alone in the wilderness without the proper equipment. Remember, these are M.D.C. dinosaurs bigger than an elephant, and should never be underestimated.

A clear warning sign of impending aggression is when the animal's head goes low into a shovel position and it takes a few slow, deliberate steps toward you or a member of your group. Slowly moving back and away at this warning phase, without making any sudden moves or loud noise, can avert a charging attack. The animal does not want to fight, it wants to keep you at what it considers to be a safe distance. Keep slowly moving away until the Canadian Duckbill's head goes back up or it goes back to eating, and you are safe from an imminent attack. At least from that particular Honker. Make sure you have not moved into the zone of another protective Canadian Duckbill or you may have a new problem. That's why moving back and away is the best choice. The more distance between you and them, the better.

Hissing and head-bobbing are other ways these dinosaurs warn others to keep their distance. Another is when a Canadian Duckbill stands erect on two legs and flaps its arms/front legs, honking



loudly. Not stepping back will result in the head hung low and stalking forward movement that telegraphs a charge attack and a chase is coming unless the person provoking this response backs off, NOW.

Only Psi-Stalkers, Simvan, and Psi-Druids, with their powers of animal empathy and control, can safely walk among a family clan or flock of Honkers without fear of attack. A tactic these people often use to avoid their own enemies or to escape a predator that is wary of the Canadian Duckbills. These people can also leap on the back of the dinosaur to ride it bareback, gaining control of the beast within a melee round (15 seconds), and riding off. That said, Canadian Duckbills that are raised after hatching or acquired very young can be somewhat domesticated and used as cattle. They are usually slaughtered before reaching full size and maturity because the smaller, younger animals are more manageable and their meat is lean and tastier. They cannot be domesticated for use as riding or work animals.

Canadian Duckbills can walk on all fours or on their two hind legs. They stand on their hind legs to reach the leaves, berries and fruit of tall trees, but also eat leaves that have fallen, grass and most types of vegetation. They also love most farm crops, especially grain crops such as rice, wheat, sorghum, corn, beans and soybeans, and will eat processed grain, cereal, bread, pies and pastries. All of which makes the large dinosaurs a dangerous pest for farmers and their crops. Though omnivores, Canadian Duckbills never eat the meat or carrion of animals or people, but do eat insects, amphibians and fish, including *Dragon Wasps* and juvenile sea monsters such as the *Giant Waterstriders*, *Dragonfish*, *Cerebro-Scramblers* and baby *Horned Demon-Fish*, *Water Serpents*, *Maelstrom-Makers* and *Devil Kraken*, but only the youngest and tiniest of the latter two creatures.

Canadian Duckbill, an Omnivorous Feathered Dinosaur

Also Known As: Canadian Duckbill, Canadian Honker, Feathered Honker, and Giant Tundra Goose.

Alignment: Anarchist and annoying.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+2 (low animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+2, M.A. 1D6+4, P.S. 1D4+20 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+15, P.E. 1D4+20, P.B. 2D6+6, Spd 1D6+24, or 18 mph (29 km) running on all fours, 9 mph (14.4 km) lumbering on their two hind legs. Maximum running speed on all fours is 26 mph (41.6 km) but can only be maintained in short bursts lasting 1D6 minutes. Swimming speed on the surface of water is 9 mph (14.4 km or 8 knots). Cannot fly, but can leap. See Natural Abilities, below.

M.D.C. by Location (unless stated otherwise):

*Head – 1D6x10+120

*Neck and Underbelly – 1D6+120

Front Legs/Arms (2) – 2D6+80 each

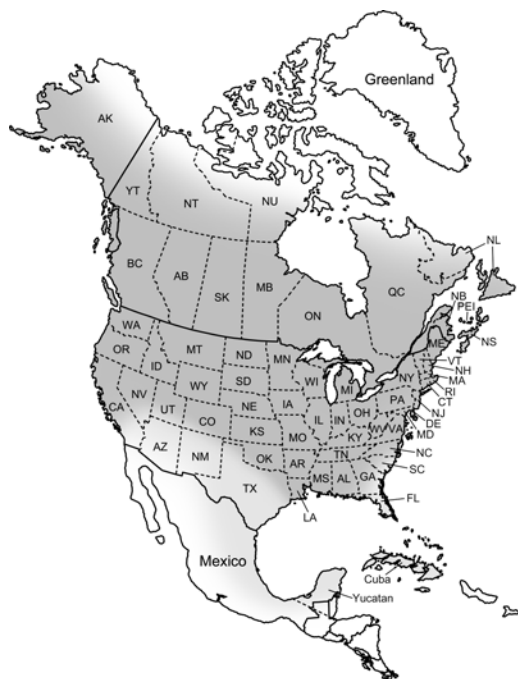
Hind Legs (2) – 1D6x10+140 each

*Tail (1) – 80

Main Body – 1D4x100+112

* A single asterisk means a difficult target to strike and requires a Called Shot to hit. Even then the attacker is -3 to strike. Reducing the M.D.C. of one leg to zero reduces speed by half and attacks per melee round by one.

Note: On S.D.C. worlds, Canadian Duckbill Honkers have 1D6x10+120 S.D.C., 2D6x10+120 Hit Points, and a Natural A.R. of 10. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (6D6+90 M.D.C. = 6D6+90 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D.



Horror Factor: 7 as a single adult or 2-8 young, but one large male charging at you has an H.F. of 12 and three or more have an H.F. of 14.

Size: 22-36 feet (6.7 to 11 m) from snout to the tip of the tail, 18-22 feet (5.5 to 6.7 m) standing erect. Half the size and weight for young animals.

Weight: 2-6 tons.

Average Life Span: 15-21 years. Duckbilled Honkers they mate for life. It is best to avoid mated pairs of Canadian Duckbills, their nests, and eggs in the spring, April through mid-June, as well as young less than 10 weeks old, because the adult parents are hyper-protective of them. Even four months later, male and female parents are protective of their young, which hang around for 6-7 months before instinctively leaving their parents. Though the young may appear to be nearly the same size as their parents in only 12 months (20% smaller until full maturity), they possess half the M.D.C., melee attacks and bonuses until they reach full maturity at three years of age. Females lay 1D6+4 eggs at the end of March or early April, which hatch 6-7 weeks later. The parents guard the nest the entire time, like ducks or geese. One goes off in search of food, while the other stays with the nest to guard the eggs. After the eggs hatch, the family stays together for the initial 6-7 months.

P.P.E.: 3D6

Disposition: Nonchalant, easygoing and lazy. Most ignore humans unless they have young to protect or are attacked by them, in which case these giants simply try to get out of harm's way or threaten and chase away anyone bothering them. They don't like loud noise such as the sound of chainsaws, drills and explosives, and move away from them. The giant feathered dinosaurs become aggressive when startled, cornered or protecting their mate, young, nest, or food, but are happy to simply run off threats. However, these herbivorous herd animals, like cattle or bison, are not fighters and run from serious threats like large predator and giant machines.

When a predator attacks the herd, the animals flee, running away and with the same coordination and movement as a flock of birds, but cannot fly. If water is nearby, they head for it in the hope that the predator in pursuit is unable or unwilling to follow

them into the water, especially deep water. Canadian Honkers are excellent swimmers.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 50/10%, Identify Plants and Fruit 98%, Land Navigation 98%, Swimming 95%, and Tailing 45%.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 400 feet (122 m), water and cold resistant via its down and feathers (half damage), keen sense of smell oriented toward grazing and is 85% to recognize and track food up to 3 miles (4.8 km) away. Canadian Duckbills recover 2D6 M.D. per 24 hours and regrow feathers, tail and webbing lost fighting within 1D4 weeks. Their honks are so loud they can be heard up to one mile (1.6 km) away.

Aquatic Abilities (special): The feathered dinosaur loves water, is an excellent swimmer (Swimming skill at 95%, maximum speed: 9 mph/14.4 km or 8 knots), can hold its breath underwater for 1D4+3 minutes, and dive underwater 30 feet (9.1 m). Consequently, they prefer forest and tundra environments where they can find large bodies of water, mainly freshwater lakes and marshland where they can swim and find fish and freshwater plants to eat when they tire of grass, leaves, fruit, nuts and pine cones. When in the water, they stay on the surface, submerging only to snap up a fish, frog, crustacean or water plant.

Leaping (special): When running on all fours the Canadian Duckbill Honker can leap up to 10 feet (3 m) high and 15 feet (4.6 m) across, half that height and length when on two legs. Though the creature seems to be constantly munching on vegetation, it can go without food for up to five weeks and without water for two, without ill effect. The alpha or beta male or a designated "lookout" will often stand atop of a boulder, ruin or parked vehicle to have the advantage of height to keep look over the flock and watch for predators.

Running Endurance (special): The Canadian Duckbill has good speed for a creature its size and can run without pause for five hours at its basic speed (18 mph/29 km) before needing to slow down to a walk or to rest for an hour or two. Like ducks or geese, they also love the water and can swim on water or slowly walk along, grazing indefinitely. That said, the animal spends at least half of its time on dry land and may unhappily go days or weeks without entering water.

Colors: In spring, summer and most of autumn, the animal is brown with a cream colored underbelly and white and black highlights very reminiscent to Canadian Geese. In the winter, Canadian Honkers molt and turn solid white, like a swan, by the beginning of November.

Attacks per Melee: Three is typical, only the one alpha male and 1D4 beta males in the flock have four.

Mega-Damage: Mainly biting, butting, kicking and tail whipping.

Warning Head Butt or Body Bump/Tap – 3D6 S.D.C.

Full Strength Head Butt – 1D4 M.D.

Closed Mouth Beak Strike – 1D4 M.D.

Biting Nip/Warning Nip – 2D6 S.D.C. damage.

Full Strength Bite – 1D4 M.D.

Front Legs Strike/Arms/Punch – 1D6+2 M.D.

Tail Slash/Whip – 1D6+3 M.D.

Hind Leg Kick – 2D6+3 M.D.

Hind Clawing Leg Stomp – 1D6+2 M.D.

Slight Body Bump – 1D6 M.D. (counts as one attack).

Running Shovel Head Strike/Body Ram or Lunging Chest Thump (full strength; special) – 2D6 M.D. +1 M.D. for every five mph (8 km) of speed by the running creature (+5 at full run-

ning speed on all fours). This attack counts as two melee attacks but has an 80% likelihood of knocking down opponents that are smaller than 15 feet (4.6 m) and/or that weigh less than 2 tons (33% chance against larger or heavier opponents).

Victims of knockdown lose initiative and two melee attacks and are vulnerable to continuing attacks from the beast. **Note:** Fortunately, the Canadian Duckbill does not continue to attack *if the victim "plays dead."* This can be done by simply lying there or curling up into a ball or fetal position and not moving or making a sound if the massive animal nudges or claws at him. Under this circumstance, the feathered dinosaur honks, squawks, bellows and stomps around its prone victim for 1D4 melee rounds before proudly stomping off triumphant. It is probably best if the victim continues to lie still until the creature(s) moves away, and certainly until it turns its back on him, or until a teammate gives the all clear signal. People who can Prowl may try to quietly sneak away sooner. Playing dead does not work, however, as long as the victim/intruder continues to fight, move (unless it is to run away), shout or make any sort of loud noise, as the beast will continue to peck, head butt, and strike with its fists and feet, or give chase biting and thumping, hot on the intruder's heels. Knocked down intruders who put up a strong fight are also likely to be stomped, kicked and clawed by the hind legs which do greater damage.

Pounce or Leap Attack: Fundamentally the same as the Body Ram, above.

Bonuses (in addition to any possible attribute bonuses): +1 on Perception Rolls pertaining to predators and danger, +2 to strike and disarm, +1 to parry, +2 to dodge on land and in water, +3 to roll with impact, +5 to save vs disease and poison and +2 to save vs Horror Factor.

Vulnerabilities: Hates loud mechanical noise like the sounds of drills, chainsaws, power tools and explosions. The use of explosives in the area may cause a Canadian Duckbill Honker to move 1D4 miles (1.6 to 6.4 km) away. If directed at or near them, the herd may panic and stampede; 55% chance! They also dislike desert environments, fire, thunderstorms, lightning, Ley Line Storms and other strange occurrences along ley lines, and try to avoid all of the above. When they cannot, such loud noise and circumstances make them agitated, jumpy and prone to stampede (+10%), as well as -1 on Perception Rolls and -1 on initiative.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: In the spring and summer, they are found across the Canadian tundra and the cooler northern and eastern portions of the Old Canadian and American Empires, but can be found most anywhere in North America.

In the winter, they travel much farther south in search of food, going as far as Dinosaur Swamp and along the Gulf Coast; not so much in the Pecos Empire or deserts of New Mexico, Arizona and California. As semi-aquatic creatures with webbed front and back feet, and goose-like feathers and down, Canadian Honkers prefer regions with lots of lakes, rivers and/or marshland. They are most numerous in the Canadian Tundra, Eastern and Central Canada, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi (and along the Mississippi River), Dinosaur Swamp, and along the Gulf of Mexico. They are also found along most of the eastern seaboard of the Old American and Canadian Empires. In the cold and snow of winter, some flocks of Canadian Duckbills

have been known to go in flocks to feed on vegetation as far as the coastal waters of the southern Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico, and to travel into Eastern Mexico as far as the Yucatan. They have also been reported to visit the islands of Cuba, and on rare occasions, have ventured into the waterways and jungles of Colombia, Venezuela and northern Brazil, but never for long and never farther.

It is believed that migrating Canadian Duckbills are responsible for bringing species of plant life from one corner of the continent to the other via seeds left behind in their fecal waste. This includes alien vegetation and even carnivorous plants from Dinosaur Swamp. The latter may only survive in the North during the warm months and perish during long, harsh winters, but they are an unexpected danger during the summer and early autumn months, because nobody expects to find a cluster of killer plants from Dinosaur Swamp or South American flora in the Northern USA or Canada, and vice versa.

A small family clan of Feathered Honkers is two parents and 1D6+4 young animals. A small herd is 4D4+6. A medium herd is 4D6+20. A large herd is 1D6x10+30. A giant herd of 2D6x10+80 Canadian Duckbills is rare. Small and medium flocks/herds are the most common encounters in most parts of North America; medium, large and giant herds are most likely to be encountered in and around Dinosaur Swamp, the Great Lakes, Eastern Canada and the Canadian and Alaskan Tundra.

Enemies: Alien Rex, Tyrannosaurus Rex, Ghost Allosaurus, Devil-saurus, Dragon-Cat, Frost Panthera-Tereon, and other large predators, pack hunters and humanoids. These large dinosaurs are growing more successful at living near civilized areas, where they have proven to be a problem for both farmers and fishermen. In addition to eating crops (worse than locusts and rodents) and depleting fisheries, they also make large amounts of noise, attract large predators that follow them, and leave plentiful droppings. It is believed that they are losing their fear of humanoids in some places due to their superior size and strength, as well as some humanoids feeding them; Canadian Duckbills will beg for food.

Allies: Despite their territorial nature and aggression during mating season, Canadian Honkers are tolerated by most other herbivores and birds, large and small. Wilderness Scouts and wilderness people like Simvan, Psi-Stalkers and Native Americans consider the animal as a natural alarm, and are able to tell the difference between honks involving internal squabbles among themselves and the honking that warns of danger and predators nearby. Because of this, *Sasquatch*, *Simvan*, *Wendigo* and *Wild Psi-Stalker* tribes sometimes feed and keep small herds around their tribes and hunting grounds as an outer perimeter early warning system. These beings may also ride the animals as well as hunt them for their meat, hide and feathers.

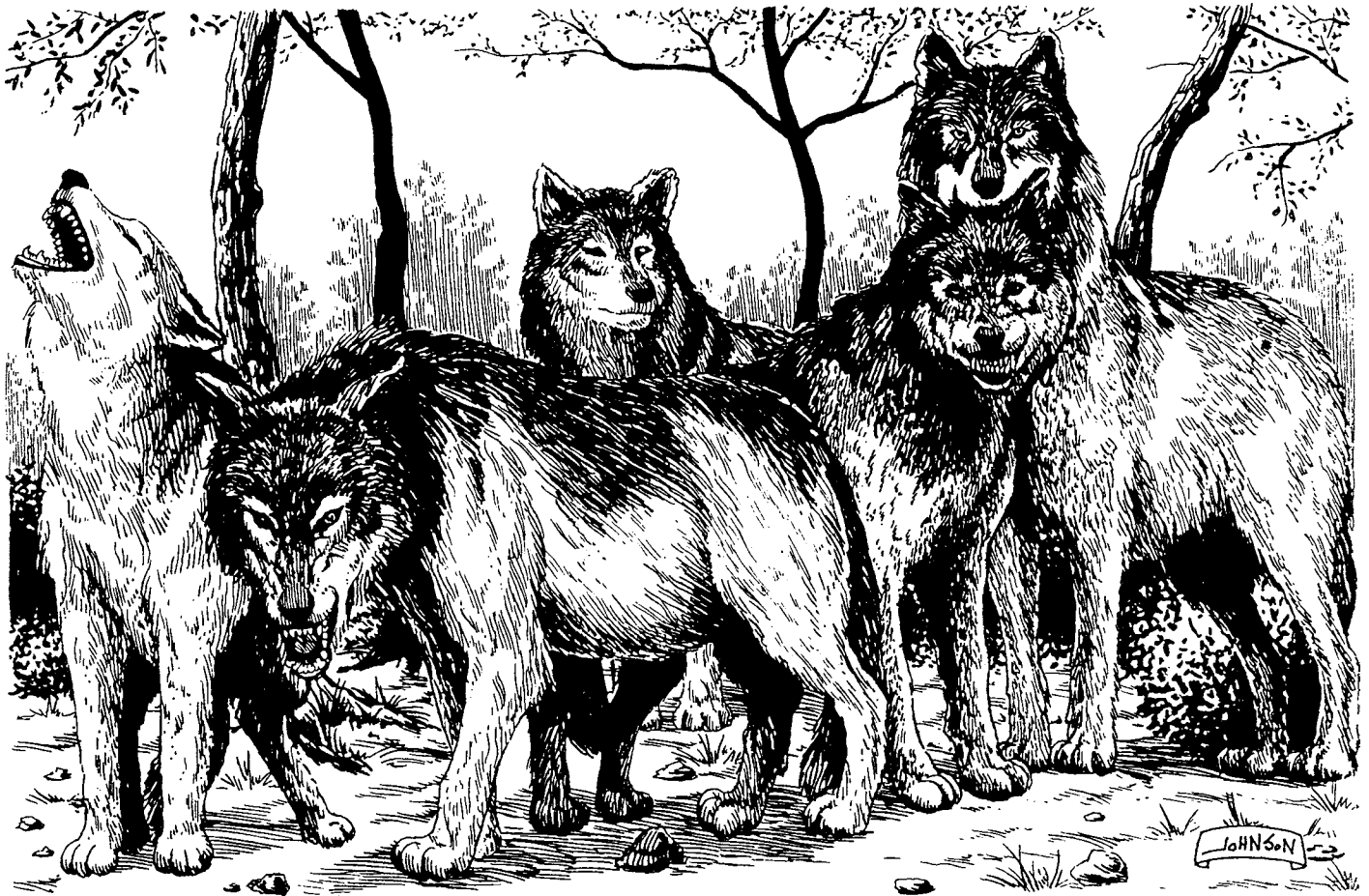
Value: 1,200-2,400 credits per animal. The meat of the Canadian Duckbill is good tasting, although even more fatty than duck and its Honker cousin. Oil extracted from the animal is used in a variety of products, including lamp oil. The water resistant hide can be used to make light M.D.C. fabric, typically a heavy poncho (1D6+5 M.D.C.), cape, cloak or overcoat (1D6+4 M.D.C.), or tent (1D6+10 M.D.C. for a basic tent).

Canadian Duckbills, like their non-feathered Honker cousins, can be partially domesticated. Sometimes used as an exotic riding animal running on all fours or more often as giant cattle, usually slaughtered midway to full maturity (only 10-12

feet/3 to 3.7 m long). They can be trained by Simvan and Wild Psi-Stalkers, among others, as stout steeds and have a smoother ride than their two-legged cousins. However, the animal is easily spooked by predators and loud noises, and riders suffer a penalty of -20% on the *Exotic Animals riding skill*. This penalty applies to most people except Wild Psi-Stalkers, Simvan,

Sasquatch, Wendigo and Psi-Druids. Sasquatch and Wendigo usually ride bareback and are even known to ride wild, untamed Canadian Duckbills, but that has a -20% riding skill even for them.

Note: This is a new creature appearing for the very first time. Inspired by the art and writing of Charles "Chuck" Walton Jr.



Canines

By Kevin Siembieda

Canines of all kinds, both wild and domesticated, are found throughout the Americas and most of the world. What follows are some of the most notable living in North America and can be adapted to most of their cousins around the world. A little, easy research online should help you find a good equivalent. Also see **Monsters and Animals** for the Palladium Fantasy RPG® for a wide array of S.D.C. animals (and monsters) that could find their way to Rifts Earth or have an Earth equivalent.

Notes About Canines

Alignment: Anarchist for wild canine, Scrupulous for the typical domesticated and loyal animal.

Attributes: Varies with the breed and size of the animal, but here are some *general guidelines* for canines.

Attributes (general): I.Q. 1D4+8 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+9, M.A. 1D6+16, P.S. varies (1D6+6 small, 1D6+10 medium, 1D6+16 large breed dogs), P.P. 1D6+13, P.E. 1D6+14, P.B. 1D6+15, Spd varies with breed and listed below. Typically, 25-30 mph (40 to 48 km). Speed is indicated in each of the stat blocks.

All canines are considered to be cunning, domesticated predators with a medium-high animal intelligence. Most canines can learn to understand around 200 words and phrases and are happy to work as a group with fellow canines and people. Most humans find dogs to be attractive, beloved and inspiring animals. Most of you are familiar with dogs, use your discretion.

Running Speed: Dogs, coyotes and wolves are built for running for extended periods of time, although not as long as horses. All canines can maintain their listed speed, the first number listed (typically around 30-40 mph/48-64 km) for *30 minutes to an hour*, sometimes longer, before the animal needs to slow down or stop and rest.

Maximum speed is indicated as a *short burst* of speed than can only be maintained for a 1D6+4 minutes before the animal needs to slow down or pause to rest; or as listed in the stat block. A speed burst is used to catch prey or to make a quick retreat or escape. It can be performed two times per hour and requires a considerable amount of energy.

A *comfortable trotting speed* is a steady traveling speed over a period of many hours. It is, generally, one third the animal's running speed. For most wild canines that is 8-15 mph (12.8 to 24 km) and maintainable for 8-12 hours, or as listed in the stat block each specific animal. 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km) for domestic dogs and can be sustained for as long as 6-8 hours.

A *comfortable walking speed* for most medium to large canines is 4-5 mph (6.4 to 8 km) and can be maintained for 10-12 hours.

Sled Pulling Speed: A team of dogs can pull small wagons and sleds. Three to nine sled dogs can be used for pulling sleds (common in Alaska and the Canadian Tundra), or a small cart or wagon. Maximum sled speed for a team of sled dogs is 10-15 mph (16 to 24 km), and requires prodding to maintain this top sled speed for up to 3-4 hours. Top speed is slower when pulling a sled under difficult conditions such as fresh snow or extreme cold: 5-6 mph (8 to 11.2 km). Average speed pulling a sled is 5-8 mph (8 to 13 km) and can be maintained for 8-10 hours.

Swimming Speed: 4 mph (6.4 km), on average. Most predatory canines like water and are decent swimmers.

P.P.E. of Canines: The average canine possesses 4D6 P.P.E. points; varies slightly from breed to breed.

Horror Factor of Canines and Combat: Generally, a single small or medium canine, when growling and threatening, has a Horror Factor of 6-8. A single, large, snarling, aggressive dog or coyote has a Horror Factor of 10 to most people. An aggressive threatening pack of (4 or more) large dogs or wolves has a Horror Factor of 12 +1 for every 10 animals in the pack. Reduce Horror Factor by half if the character is clad in sealed, full environmental M.D.C. body armor, power armor, or is a full conversions cyborg. Increase by +2 if the person is afraid of dogs.

Note, however, that while a wolf pack may do no or minimal damage to the person inside the armor, they can get under foot or leap at him to trip or knock him down to the ground and otherwise engage, entangle, distract and confound the person. Similarly, large canines are likely to grab and hold or pull at boots, belts, bags, backpacks, clothing and limbs (hands, arms, ankles, feet) to hold or knockdown and pile on top of or drag humanoid opponents, and otherwise engage, distract and confound their victim.

Canines are clever predators and while they may not be able to hurt a completely armor-clad opponent, cyborg, or M.D.C. opponent, they may tangle, hold and/or distract that individual(s) while other members of the pack go for backpacks and containers containing food or go after livestock, riding animals and unprotected people while he is engaged with other members of the pack! And when they can, they go for vulnerable (unarmored?) parts of the body.

A pack may be able to keep an M.D.C. opponent off balance or knocked off his feet for several melee rounds to several minutes.

Pouncing and Leaping: Dogs instinctively leap and bite at their prey. A pouncing leap of a medium-sized canine (25 to 50 pounds/11-22.5 kg) has a 30% chance of knocking human-size prey off balance or even off his feet (victim loses initiative and one melee attack).

A pouncing leap of a large canine 55-100 pounds (25 to 45 kg) has a 60% chance of knocking human-size prey weighing less than 300 pounds (135 kg) off his feet. A victim of knock down loses initiative and one melee attack, and causes 1D4 S.D.C. damage from the impact and fall.

Food/Feeding/Hunting: Dogs can subsist on the same food as humans and love to eat scraps from the dinner table, though a consistent diet of human foods will cause digestive problems, possible illness, and will shorten the dog's life by 1D4+1 years due to improper nutrition. Likewise, most dog breeds can subsist on a diet of only meat, but they are not wolves and such a diet will not provide all the nutrition they need. Food specifically for dogs (i.e. dog food) can be found in more settled regions of North America, specifically the Coalition States and Northern Gun, as

well as places where dimensional travel and trade are common, like the Chi-Town 'Burbs, MercTown, Northern Gun, Lazlo, Free Quebec, and certain areas of the Magic Zone, among others. Away from these areas, any character with the *Breed Dogs skill* has the knowledge to prepare a proper diet for canines that maximizes the health of their animals. Most dogs need to eat only once a day; the amount will be determined by the dog's size, breed and activity level. A general rule of thumb would be that the average dog needs to eat one third the amount that a human adult would per day.

With rare exception, even a pack of dogs, coyotes or wolves will not attack a human unless their prey is sick, injured, or the animals are very hungry or commanded to do so by a humanoid leader as a result of domestication and training or psychic ability or magic.

Wolves and most canines chase their prey with the intention of a) separating the weak and slower animals, and b) to tire their target prey out. Wolves and canines can outrun and outlast most prey animals including, cattle, bison, deer and elk. Food for wild canines ranges from fruits, berries and cactus to fish, frogs, toads, lizards, rodents, beavers, raccoons, ground hogs, ground nesting birds, deer, elk, moose, small and medium dogs and coyotes, and human livestock (from chickens and geese to sheep, goats and cattle). Wolves will attack humans, especially when hungry or in large packs.

Stampede Note: Although canines are very social animals traveling in packs of 6-42, they do not stampede or trample. A dog or wolf may leap or pounce on their prey and engage in coordinated and simultaneous attacks, but they don't stampede. Certain dog breeds, coyotes, and especially wolves can and do chase down and even drive animals to divide a herd and get at prey.

Sensitivity to Supernatural Evil and Potential Psychic Energy (P.P.E.): Canines are among the most sensitive animals in the world when it comes to sensing the presence of immense magic energy and the supernatural, particularly supernatural *evil*. This psychic awareness also enables the animal to see certain invisible, supernatural beings, including Entities/ghosts/spirits, the energy essence of Alien Intelligences, and most demons and elemental beings, but that does not include spell magic-induced invisibility or other forms of invisibility.

When supernatural evil is present, the canine becomes nervous, jumpy, and agitated. The closer the source of evil or great magic, the more tense the animal becomes, inducing it to pace back and forth, whine, growl, bark or howl in warning. When face to face with the supernatural evil, the canine, a natural predator, will defend itself, its home or its master by attacking the creature. The canine will usually flee only if commanded to do so by its master or if its opponent proves to be too powerful. Once a canine has engaged supernatural evil in combat, it fights to the death. This is an instinctive response. **Range of Sensitivity:** 1,200 feet (366 m); 3,000 feet (914 m) when it comes to vampires.

The canine can also sense ley lines, nexus points, and places of power, as well as incredibly powerful creatures of magic (1,500 P.P.E. or more). **Range of Sensitivity:** 600 feet (183 m).

The Influence of Vampires on Canines: Vampires can summon and control canines, including wolves and coyotes. This is done via eye contact and a verbal command (counts as one melee attack). Instantly, the canine becomes an obedient servant of the vampire, and behaves as if it were a trained and loyal pet. The animals that fall are under the complete control of the vampire obey and the monster's every command. Thus, if the undead so desires, the canines will follow him around, surround him, attack anyone

who comes within 10 feet (3 m) of him, attack upon command, give chase or track down and follow anyone the vampire indicates. **Note:** This is **not** the case, however, with canines that are already *your* pet. Pets are loyal to their masters. These animals are resistant to the vampire's mind control due to the bond of love and loyalty between the animal and its mortal master, combined with the dog's natural abhorrence and fear of all things supernatural. This is true of horses and cats as well.

To most ordinary people, a pack of large, aggressive dogs, let alone coyotes or wolves, are scary and intimidating; Horror Factor 12 (+1 for every 10 animals). As note above, against ordinary people without body armor, packs of dogs or wolves are going to inflict grievous injury and kill a number of them. Even heroes in Mega-Damage body armor can be knocked down, dragged down the street, held down on the ground, and disarmed by one or two big canines. Under normal conditions, hurting or killing a few would send the ravaging animals running for the hills, but canines under the vampire's sway fight to the death. A pack of them can easily manhandle an adventuring group, cause delays and create distractions.

Vampires, ever the brutal and cunning opportunists, may not waste their time sending wolves or dogs against well-armed and armored adversaries. They'll send the animals to attack *bystanders* knowing full well that no hero is going to stand idle and allow innocent people to be mauled or slaughtered. Thus, a pack of canines or coyotes can provide a wonderful diversion, misdirection or crisis situation that forces heroes to save lives rather than pursue the undead.

The most important role canines play for vampires is that of guardian of the lair. In the wilderness the canines will be coyotes or wolves. In farm areas, canine protectors may be coyotes, wolves and/or dogs. In towns and cities, they may, again, be any, but more likely than not, the canines summoned will be dogs. In most cases, a pack of dogs, coyotes or wolves is found outside the building or structure that contains the lair. The animals act like this is their territory and chase away or attack and kill anyone who comes within 60 feet (18.3 m) of it. The animals are usually all around the structure, so going around to the back or side door is not an option.

Canine protectors may also be kept inside the lair. Inside, their barking and howling, as well as sounds of combat, are almost certain to wake the slumbering vampires (01-88%), giving the monsters the chance to join the battle, summon other protectors or attempt to escape. As always, the canines fight to the death or their incapacitation.

Animal Saving Throw vs Mind Control & Vampires: Animals require a roll of 16 or higher to save vs psionic or vampire mind control, but *pets* only need to roll an 8 or higher to save. Failure to save means roll percentile dice on the following Canine Reaction Table.

Canine Reaction Table (in response to a *failed* roll to save vs Vampire Mind Control):

01-60% Your pet is under the complete control of the vampire. Until the vampire leaves and relinquishes his hold over the animal, it serves and protects the monster as well as attacks anyone the vampire commands it to, including its owner!

61-90% The dog whimpers and slinks off to hide. It does not serve the vampire, but it will not attack him or protect its owner.

91-00% The animal goes berserk and attacks the vampire! It fights to the death unless dragged away, pinned and held, or rendered unconscious. Until the vampire leaves, the animal behaves like a mad dog that wants to tear the vampire to pieces.

Vulnerabilities: All S.D.C. weapons inflict damage to canines. Mega-Damage weapons inflict grievous damage and may vaporize part of the animal.

The Influence of Canine Werebeasts on Canines: None. Canines recognize them as unnatural beings to be avoided and keep their distance. Supernatural evil, such as the *Loup Garou*, is regarded as a natural enemy to be avoided, or when possible, destroyed.

The Influence of Feline Werebeasts on Canines: None. In fact, coyotes, wolves and other canines see them as natural enemies and dangerous rivals to be destroyed or avoided. Note that in the North, werewolves and the *Loup Garou* regard feline werebeasts as their natural enemy, and hunt and kill them; and vice versa. Perhaps that's why most feline werebeasts are found in Southern Mexico, Central America and South America.

Wild Canine Descriptions

Bears

Bears are distant cousins to canines, but a different family of animal. The descriptions for bears found in North America as well as Mega-Damage Bears can be found on page 47 and page 52 respectively, of this book.



Red & Gray Fox, Predatory Carnivore

Foxes are small and medium-sized canines famous for their red fur, white bellies and markings and luscious, fluffy tails. They are solitary creatures that gather in a small family group (called a *leash* of foxes) when raising their young. As predators, they hunt small animals like moles, rabbits, squirrels and skunks, but are omnivores that also eat carrion, food scraps, and human food. They do well in most environments from arctic snow and tundra, to grass and scrub land to forest, farmland, and cities. In urban settings the foxes feed on rodents, small pets, and garbage.

Alignment: Considered Anarchist.

Attribute Note: Speed: 44 running, or 30 mph (48 km) for up to 30-60 minutes. 35 mph (56 km) in a short burst lasting 1D4+4 minutes. A comfortable trotting speed is 10-15 mph (16 to 24 km) and can be maintained for up six hours. Walking speed is 3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km).

Hit Points: 1D6+10

S.D.C.: 1D6+6

A.R.: Not applicable.

Size: 28-36 inches (0.7 to 0.9 m) from snout to rump, plus a tail that is 12 inches (0.3 m).

Weight: 8-20 pounds (3.6 to 9 kg).

Average Life Span: 10-16 years. Foxes, unlike most canines, are solitary creatures who live and hunt alone, except during mating season – they do not mate for life. They make their homes in burrows. Litters of 1D10 pups are born after a gestation period of 8-9 weeks. Young foxes stay with their parents until seven months old. Juveniles are age 8 months to 2 years old. Reach full size by 14 months and sexual maturity by age two.

P.P.E.: 2D6

Disposition: Playful and curious, they love balls and steal them from people. This versatile, intelligent and resourceful canine can adapt well to many different conditions and environments, including the villages and cities of humanoids! The cunning fox is often seen raiding chicken coops, pigeon coops and rummaging through garbage. They are so clever that they can learn to cross roads after traffic, avoid obvious traps, flip open hook latches, and wait until farmers and watchdogs are gone before making a raid. They prey on birds, birds' eggs, snakes, lizards, rats, mice and other small rodents, as well as carrion and scraps from humans. They avoid coyotes, which hunt and eat foxes, and are shy toward and wary of people.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 55%/0% (trees, rocks, debris, parked vehicles), Land Navigation 90% (+8% to find magnetic North), Prowl 55%, Streetwise 40%, Swimming 55% and Tailing 60%, usually from a distance.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 500 feet (152 m), keen senses, particularly vision, hearing and smell, track by smell 55% (+20% to track scent of blood, food or decay), can leap 3 feet (0.9 m) high and 5 feet (1.5 m) long, and like most canines, can perform a leaping pounce. Can hunt day or night but tend to favor hunting in twilight, the hour or two before and after dawn and dusk.

Sense Magnetic North (special): Like dolphins and some other animals, foxes can always tell where magnetic north is precisely located. This is an immense help in navigating the wild lands and finding prey.

Arctic Foxes (special): Can survive temperatures that drop below sub-zero temperatures and don't even start to feel cold until -94 Fahrenheit (-70 Celsius)!

Attacks per Melee: Two.

Damage: Bite does 1D6 S.D.C. points of damage.

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, +3 to dodge, and +2 to save vs Horror Factor.

Habitat: Found throughout North America (USA, Canada, Mexico) in woodlands, tundra, grasslands, farmlands, ghost towns and ruins, and occasionally in and around villages, towns and cities.

Value: Fur Pelt: 50-100 credits. Tail Alone: 6 credits. Not edible.



Coyote, Predatory Carnivore & Scavenger

Coyotes are smaller than wolves and are actually hunted by them as prey, and killed or run off as rivals. They tend to hunt alone or in pairs or small family groups and prey mostly upon small to medium-sized animals of almost every variety: amphibians, fish, snakes, lizards, and other reptiles, birds, rabbits, rodents, foxes and dogs, but also larger animals such as deer, goats and sheep. Coyotes may temporarily gather into packs of 1D6+10 animals to hunt down larger prey such as deer, elk or cattle, and if desperate, people, especially if the person is injured, sick, or dying. They are canny and stealthy predators that prefer grasslands, scrub land, farmland and forest, but also deserts, towns and cities. Least common in the arctic.

In an urban setting, coyotes avoid garbage and prefer live prey such as rodents, birds, rabbits, squirrels, groundhogs, cats, small to medium-sized dogs and other animals. On farms, small to medium-sized pets, chickens, geese, piglets, lambs, sheep, goats, calves and fruit are all potential food to a coyote. Fruit actually makes up 20% of the coyote's diet. May eat fresh carrion and meat scraps.

Alignment: Considered to be Anarchist by most, though ranchers, trappers, and farmers might consider them to be Miscreant evil.

Attribute Note: Speed: 50 running, or 35 mph (56 km), but can run at 37.5 mph (60 km) in a short burst lasting 1D6+4 minutes. A comfortable trotting speed is 10-15 mph (16 to 24 km) can be maintained for 7-9 hours. Walking speed is 3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km).

Hit Points: 1D6+15

S.D.C.: 1D6+16

A.R.: Not applicable.

Size: 3-3.5 feet (0.9 to 1 m) from snout to rump, plus a tail that is 16 inches (41 cm). Stands 2 feet (0.6 m) at the shoulders.

Weight: 20-50 pounds (9 to 23 kg). Female is slightly smaller.

P.P.E.: 4D6

Average Life Span: 9-12 years. They mate for life and the two work together to hunt and care for young. Litters of 5-8 pups are born after a gestation period of 8-9 weeks. Coyotes associate in family groups until the juveniles go off on their own after

8 months. Otherwise, these canines tend to be solitary predators who hunt alone or in pairs, or in family groups of 1D6+4 animals. They make their homes in dens in the ground, and sometimes small caves or underneath a fallen tree, inside a hollow tree or wreckage, under the overhang of a boulder, under a porch, and other dark, out of the way places that are difficult to access. If away from its den, a coyote sleeps out in the open.

Disposition: Coyotes are shy, stealthy animals wary of people. Coyotes and wolves do not get along. They are rival predators. Wolves will chase away or try to kill coyotes (and dogs), but they are actually able to interbreed with each other and other canines.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 35% (trees and rocks), Land Navigation 90%, Prowl 50%, and Swimming 70%.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 120 feet (36 m), keen senses, particularly vision, hearing and smell, can smell prey one mile (1.6 km) away, track by smell 88% (+10% to track scent of blood, food or decay), can leap 3-4 feet (0.9-1.2 m) high and 8 feet (2.4 m) long, and like most canines, it can perform a leaping pounce.

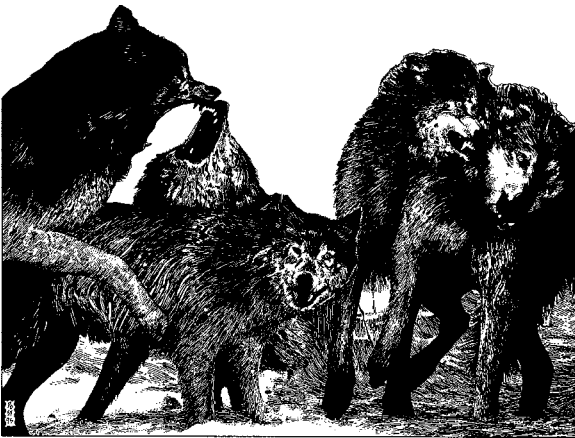
Attacks per Melee: Three.

Damage: Bite does 2D6 S.D.C., claw 1D4 S.D.C. damage.

Bonuses: +1 on Perception Rolls regarding prey, danger and escape routes, +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, +4 to dodge, and +2 to save vs Horror Factor.

Habitat: Found throughout North America (USA, Canada, Mexico) in woodlands, tundra, grasslands, farmlands, ghost towns and ruins, and occasionally in and around villages, towns and cities.

Value: Fur Pelt: 90-150 credits per pelt. Fur color ranges from white and gray to tan and brown. Their pelts are used to make winter coats, capes, cloaks, boots, gloves, and blankets by wilderness people, dress coats and stoles for city folk. Not edible and cannot be domesticated.



Gray Wolf, Predatory Carnivore

Wolves are large, predatory, wild canines that are a warm gray or black in color with hues of brown, a light or white muzzle and underbelly, but are sometimes all or mostly white. They are family oriented and gather in packs to travel and hunt. A typical pack is 6-10 wolves, but packs as large as 24 to 30 animals is not unheard of. They prefer grasslands, scrub, tundra and forest, and tend to avoid farms and urban areas except to raid them, attacking cattle, livestock, pets, and even dogs. Wolves are leery of people but not very afraid of them. A wolf pack will attack one or a few people, especially if injured, sick, or dying.

A highly intelligent animal, the members of wolf packs work together to bring down prey and make a kill. Basic tactics include cutting/separating an animal from the pack, targeting young, weak, sick, and injured animals, using tag-team tactics, and corralling



prey with some distracting their prey from the front while others attack the animal's haunches and legs to hold and impair the animal, while another goes for the throat. The pack is led by an alpha male and a beta female. A kill is shared by the entire pack with the alpha and beta eating first, and then a pecking order of others starting with the hunters that brought down the animal.

Alignment: Anarchist animal predator, though many ranchers, trappers, and farmers might consider all wolves to be Miscreant.

Attribute Note: Speed: 50 running, or 35 mph (56 km), but can run at 37.5 mph (60 km) in a short burst lasting 1D6+6 minutes. A comfortable trotting speed of 10-15 mph (16 to 24 km) can be maintained for 8-10 hours. Walking speed is 3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km).

Hit Points: 2D6+20

S.D.C.: 1D6+22

A.R.: Not applicable.

Size: 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m) from snout to rump, plus a tail that is 12-19 inches (30.5 to 48 cm) long. Stands 2.2 to 2.7 feet (0.67 to 0.8 m) tall at shoulders.

Weight: 55-100 pounds (25 to 45 kg). Female: 50-80 pounds (23 to 36 kg).

P.P.E.: 5D6

Average Life Span: 14-20 years. The female gives birth to a litter of 1D4+4 pups after a gestation of 8 weeks. This intelligent animal usually associates in family groups or packs of 5-30 members, although they often hunt alone or in pairs. The pack hunts together, cooperating to run down prey such as deer, elk, moose, ox, or wild horses, and they also eat small animals. Social standing is determined and maintained by ritualized gestures and postures.

Disposition: High intelligence, loyalty to the pack, possess self-control, patience, and the ability to remain calm and focused. A highly aggressive predator that has little fear of people. The larger the pack, the bolder and more aggressive its members. Mated pairs remain together for life.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 35% (trees and rocks), Land Navigation 90%, Prowl 50%, Swimming 65% and Tailing 70%.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 120 feet (36.6 m), keen senses, particularly vision, hearing and smell, can smell prey one mile (1.6 km) away, track by smell 86% (+10% to track scent of blood, food or decay), can leap 3-4 feet (0.9-1.2 m) high and 8 feet (2.4 m) long, and like most canines, it can perform a leaping pounce. The wolf's howl can be heard up to 10 miles (16 km) away.

Attacks per Melee: Three. The alpha male and beta female have four.

Damage: Bite does 2D6+4 S.D.C., claw 1D4 S.D.C. damage.

Bonuses: +2 on Perception Rolls regarding prey, danger and escape routes, +3 on initiative, +4 to strike, +4 to dodge, and +5 to save vs Horror Factor.

Habitat: Found throughout North America (USA, Canada, Mexico) in woodlands, tundra, grasslands, farmlands, ghost towns and ruins, and occasionally in and around villages, towns and cities. Different species of wolves with basically the same stats are found throughout Europe, Russia and parts of China.

Value: Fur: 40-80 credits. Less desirable for clothing than coyote pelts because the hair is coarser/less soft. Not edible.

Wolves can be partially domesticated, but there is no or little market for them. Nor for large dogs bred with a wolf. Both are considered too spirited and dangerous. Their jaws are twice as powerful as domestic canines, the animal is driven by instinct, and they tend to be larger and more aggressive than domesticated dogs. When a wolf or wolf-dog mix attacks, it does more damage than most dogs and is more likely to go feral if separated from its master. The best price someone like a Wilderness Scout might pay is 100-400 credits for one.

Psi-Stalkers, in particular, and sometimes Psi-Druids, Simvan, and Shifters, keep a wolf or two as a companion and hunter/protector animal. For them, with their influence over animals, the wild wolf, or coyote, or any wild predator, functions very much like a hunting dog with little if any danger to their own safety. A danger to other people remains very real, and the owner of the wild predator companion needs to be careful to keep his "friend" under control.

Mexican Wolf

By Braden Campbell and Kevin Siembieda

These wolves once ranged throughout Central Mexico, Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. By the turn of the 20th Century however, a reduction in natural prey and urbanization caused the wolves to attack domestic livestock, like sheep and cattle. In response, individuals and government agencies hunted and destroyed the animals without mercy. In 1976, the animal was declared an endangered subspecies, and by the dawning of the 21st Century there were only four hundred of them in existence, kept in wildlife preserves and breeding facilities. The Coming of the Rifts changed all that. The Mexican Wolf survived and flourished in the new wilderness.

Today, the species not only covers its traditional range throughout Mexico, in both the mountains and lowlands, but can be found as far north as the Colorado Baronies. They are the smallest subspecies of North American wolves, and have grey fur with light brown accents on their back. Their long legs and sleek body enable them to run very fast. They prefer mountainous forests, grasslands, and scrublands where they live in packs of 6-36 members. Each pack includes a breeding adult pair (the alpha male and female) and their offspring. Between May and June, the females give birth

to a litter of four to seven pups. The pack cares for the newborns for roughly ten months, after which they are grown enough to head out on their own.

In the mystical lore of many Native American tribes, the wolf, as a totem animal and spiritual force, is noble and courageous. Anyone who accepts it as an equal and companion will be protected to the utmost. Regrettably, they offer no protection against vampires, and are often summoned and controlled by the undead, particularly Wild Vampires.

Also Known As: The Southern Wolf and Vampire's Wolf.

Alignment: Anarchist animal predator, though many ranchers, trappers, and farmers might consider all wolves to be Miscreant.

Attribute Note: Speed: 50 running, or 35 mph (56 km), but can run at 50 mph (80 km) in a short burst lasting one minute. A comfortable trotting speed of 8-15 mph (12.5 to 24 km) can be maintained for 8-10 hours. A comfortable walking speed is 3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km).

Hit Points: 2D6+20

S.D.C.: 1D6+20

A.R.: Not applicable.

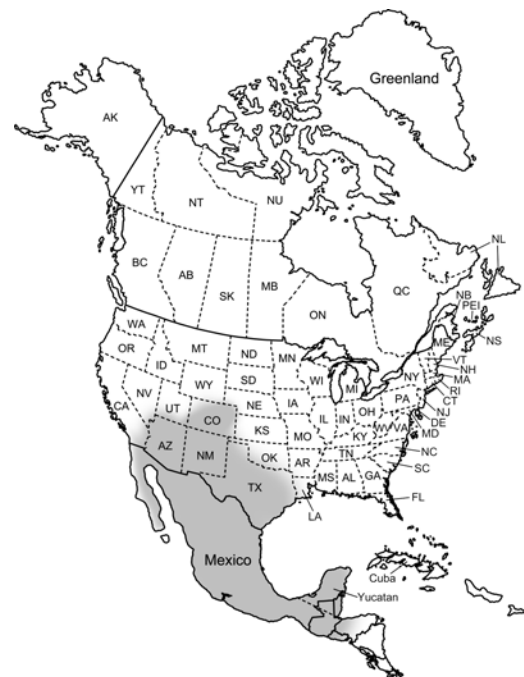
Size: 3.6 to 4 feet (1.05 to 1.2 m) from snout to rump, plus a tail that is 12-19 inches (30.5 to 48 cm) long. Stands 2.2 to 2.7 feet (0.67 to 0.8 m) tall at shoulders.

Weight: Male: 60-80 pounds (27 to 36 kg). Female: 50-70 pounds (23 to 31.5 kg).

P.P.E.: 5D6

Average Life Span: 12-16 years. The female gives birth to a litter of 1D4+4 pups after a gestation of 8 weeks. This intelligent animal usually associates in family groups or packs of 5-30 members, although they often hunt alone or in pairs. The pack hunts together, cooperating to run down prey such as deer, elk, ox, or wild horses, and they also eat small animals. Social standing is determined and maintained by ritualized gestures and postures.

Disposition: High intelligence, loyalty to the pack, possess self-control, patience, and the ability to remain calm and focused. A highly aggressive predator that has little fear of people. The



larger the pack, the bolder and more aggressive its members. Mated pairs remain together for life.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 35% (trees and rocks), Land Navigation 90%, Prowl 50%, Swimming 65% and Tailing 70%.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 200 feet (61 m), keen senses, particularly vision, hearing and smell, can smell prey one mile (1.6 km) away, track by smell 86% (+10% to track scent of blood, food or decay), can leap 3-4 feet (0.9-1.2 m) high and 8 feet (2.4 m) across, and like most canines, it can perform a leaping pounce. The wolf's howl can be heard up to 10 miles (16 km) away.

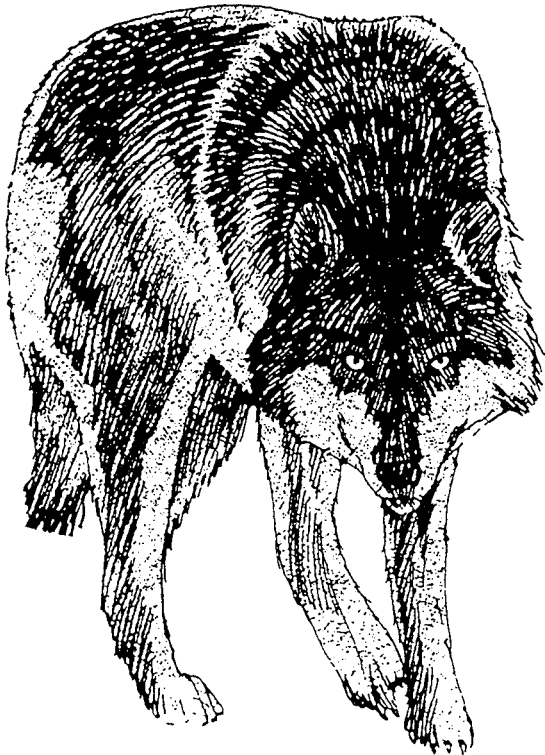
Attacks per Melee: Three.

Damage: Bite does 2D6+3 S.D.C., claw attacks inflict 1D4 S.D.C.

Bonuses: +1 on Perception Rolls regarding prey, danger and escape routes, +3 to initiative, +4 to strike, +4 to dodge, and +5 to save versus Horror Factor.

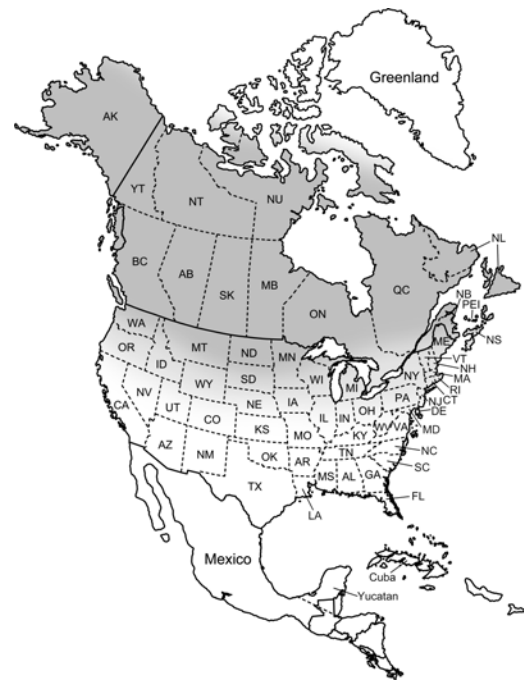
Habitat: Can be found almost anywhere in Mexico, but most numerous in the Sonoran and Chihuahuan Deserts in Northern Mexico. They also range throughout the Pecos Empire (Texas), southern New Mexico, and central Arizona.

Value: Some farmers in northern Mexico offer a bounty of 1D4x10 credits per tail to thin their numbers. However, it is rumored that anyone who does so often suffers a vampire attack shortly thereafter, and so the wolves are usually left alone.



Northern Timber Wolf, Predatory Carnivore

The Northern Timber Wolf is the largest breed of Gray Wolf in the Americas. It prefers to hunt in the tundra and northern forests and grasslands of the old American Empire, Alaska and all of Canada, especially in the North. Big, fast and strong, the Timber Wolf does not hesitate to raid farms and ranches to kill cattle and livestock. They eat small to very large animals including rodents and beaver to deer, elk and bison. Large packs are also a threat to traveling shows and caravans, cowboys and the cattle they drive,



and small groups of people hunting or traveling across the wilderness. Timber wolves have little to no fear of people, and the larger the pack the bolder and more aggressive its members. As always, it is the sick, weak, and dying who are most vulnerable to a wolf attack. That applies to people as well as animals.

It is interesting to note that most Timber Wolves of all Gray Wolves do not usually attack prey, even a lone animal or person, that stands tall and still. However, the pack surrounds the individual and waits for hours or days at a time. Attacking only when the animal or person lays or falls down, goes to sleep or starts to walk, or make a run for it. The wolves then give chase and try to bring it down for the kill.

Otherwise, this highly intelligent predator behaves very much like the Common Gray Wolf.

Also Known As: The Tundra Wolf.

Alignment: Anarchist animal predator, but many consider this large predator to be Miscreant or Diabolic, and especially dangerous in a pack.

Attribute Note: Speed: 55 running, or 37 mph (59 km), but can run at 40 mph (64 km) in a short burst lasting 1D6+10 minutes. A comfortable trotting speed of 10-15 mph (16 to 24 km) can be performed for 10-14 hours. Walking speed is 3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km).

Hit Points: 1D6+28

S.D.C.: 1D6+30

A.R.: Not applicable.

Size: 5 to 5.5 (1.5 to 1.7 m) long from snout to rump, plus a tail that is 14-20 inches (0.3 to 0.5 m). Stands 2.5-3 feet (0.76 to 0.9 m) tall at shoulders.

Weight: 100-180 pounds (45 to 81 kg). Female 80-120 pounds (36-54 kg).

Average Life Span: 8-16 years. Litters of 2 to 6 young are born in dens in the central home territory after a gestation of about 9 weeks. Only the alpha male and beta female in a pack mate for life. Young reach full size in 12-14 months, but not full weight and sexual maturity until two years old.

P.P.E.: 6D6

Disposition: Highly intelligent, alert and ruthless predators. Loyal to the pack, possess self-control and the ability to remain calm and focused. Timber Wolves have little fear of people. The larger

the pack, the bolder and more aggressive its members. That said, like most predators, they kill only to eat and to protect themselves, their mate, young, and pack members. Wolves are not threatening or hostile when their bellies are full. They are territorial and wolf packs may fight each other over territory and food.

These large animals associate in packs of 4-24 members, but often hunt alone or in pairs. Although they tend to shy away from areas of humanoid habitation, some solitary individuals venture into farm areas and towns to attack pets, livestock, and people. They feed on a variety of animals both large and small, but moose, elk, and deer are their favorites.

Large packs of 10 or more Timber Wolves or 15 or more Common Wolves are extremely aggressive and bold enough to attack small groups of humans and livestock. In fact, the cowboys of the southwest and Inuit of the north must always remain wary of wolf packs attacking their cattle, horses, livestock and sometimes, even their sled dogs. Some have even been known to cut a man's horse out from under him to get at his animal, however, this usually happens only when the wolves are extremely hungry, and there is only a 01-30% chance of attacking the rider, being satisfied with the animal, provided the man slowly backs away, flees and does not threaten them.

Mated pairs remain together for life.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 35% (trees and rocks), Land Navigation 95%, Prowl 60%, Swimming 65% and Tailing 85%.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 120 feet (36.6 m), keen senses, particularly vision, hearing and smell, can smell prey one mile (1.6 km) away, track by smell 90% (+8% to track scent of blood, food or decay), can leap 4 feet (1.2 m) high and 10 feet (3 m) long, and like most canines, can perform a leaping pounce. The wolf's howl can be heard up to 10 miles (16 km) away.

Attacks per Melee: Three. The alpha male and beta female both have four attacks.

Damage: Bite does 3D6+4 S.D.C., claws 1D4 S.D.C.

Bonuses: +3 on Perception Rolls regarding prey, danger and escape routes, +4 on initiative, +5 to strike, +4 to dodge and +7 to save vs Horror Factor.

Habitat: Found throughout the Old Canadian Empire, especially in the Canadian tundra, Alaska and the northern and Great Plains States of the Old American Empire. They enjoy the northern tundra, woodlands, grasslands, farmlands, the ruins of civilization and occasionally in and around villages and towns. Tend to avoid cities and large population centers.

Value: Fur Pelt: 60-100 credits. A full set of teeth: 10-20 credits. Not edible and not as desirable for clothing as a coyote due to its coarse fur and dull coloration.

Wolves can be partially domesticated, but there is no or little market for them, nor large dogs bred with a wolf. Both are considered too spirited and dangerous because their jaws are twice as powerful as domestic canines, are driven by instinct, and they tend to be larger and more aggressive than domesticated dogs. When a wolf or wolf-dog mix attacks, it does more damage than most dogs.

Psi-Stalkers, in particular, and sometimes Psi-Druids, Simvan, and Shifters, keep a wolf or two as a companion and hunter/protector animal. For them, with their influence over animals, the wild wolf, or coyote, or any wild predator, functions very much like a hunting dog with little if any danger to their own safety. A danger to other people remains very real, and the owner of the wild predator companion needs to be careful to keep his "friend" under control.



Domestic Canines of Note

By Kevin Siembieda, ideas by Scott Gibbons

Dogs were domesticated by humans in prehistoric times, and since then have been bred into an incredible number of species to serve any number of purposes. The long association of dogs with humans has led to a deep bond that has been strengthened further with the Coming of the Rifts.

It is only natural for players to want a dog for a companion to their characters, or for Game Masters to include them with their NPCs (non-player characters). Having one or more dogs in your campaign can lead to new avenues of adventure and increase the resources the player characters can draw upon.

With this in mind, the following information has been gathered for your use. **Note:** The statistics below are an average and do not represent the vast range of animals that may fall into that particular category. For more information on specific dog breeds, see the section on Dog Boys in **Rifts® Ultimate Edition™**, pages 148-149.

Detection Dogs

Breeds used for detection of explosives, mines, drugs, chemicals, blood and even electronics and contraband items. Detection Dogs used in police work include various types of dogs that possess high intelligence, loyalty, the ability to follow commands and a superior sense of smell.

Also see *Hunting/Tracker Dogs* and *Rescue Dogs* for tracking animals and people.

Detection or Sniffer Dogs are usually trained to detect and locate one particular range of items/objects/threats, such as a number of specific illicit drugs or chemicals or explosive materials, to dead bodies (cadaver dogs), military ordnance, and contraband. In most cases, these intelligent sniffers must work in crowded and noisy cities or hostile environments like the battlefield and other dynamic, noisy, busy places and situations. Most dogs become too distracted, nervous and anxious under these demanding circumstances, so the breeds of dog chosen for this work are those with not just an excellent sense of smell, but also strong character, and



the ability to remain calm, focused and even-tempered regardless of what's happening around them.

Note: The most popular and common breeds for this work include the *German Shepherd*, *Belgian Malinois*, *Labrador Retriever*, and *Beagle*, pretty much in that order.

Also Known As: Sniffer Dog.

Alignment: Scrupulous; loyal and brave.

Attribute Note: Speed: 38 running, or 26 mph (41.6 km), but can run at 30 mph (48 km) in a short burst lasting 1D6+4 minutes. A comfortable trot is 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km) and can be sustained for as long as 6-8 hours.

A.R.: Not applicable.

Hit Points: 3D6+6

S.D.C.: 2D6+12

Size: 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m) long, stands 2 feet (0.6 m) tall at the shoulders, and the tail is 10 inches (25 cm) long.

Weight: 50-90 pounds (23 to 40.5 kg).

Average Life Span: 12-18 years.

P.P.E.: 4D6

Disposition: Breeds used for *detection/vapor work* and *police work* possess high intelligence, loyalty, self-control and the ability to follow commands under duress as well as a superior sense of smell. They remain calm, focused, and obedient regardless of what's happening around them (a bustling city street, screaming panicking people, traffic, gunfire, battlefield bombardment, etc.).

Domesticated dogs do not mate for life, they are a polygamous species. The female gives birth to a litter of 3 to 8 pups after a gestation of 8 weeks.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 35% (trees, rocks and debris), Land Navigation 75%, Prowl 50%, Swimming 65%, Track and Detect specific materials (drugs, explosives, plastic, chemicals etc.) for which it was trained 85%, even if it is concealed (-15% to track people or animals; very specialized training and orientation).

Natural Abilities: Identify and track the chemicals/objects/explosives for which they are trained to identify and find 85% (+5% for Bloodhounds, Basset Hounds and Beagles), and can smell specific odors for which it is trained up to 3,000 feet (914 m) away or buried as deep as 40 feet (12.2 m) underground. Likewise, the Detection Dog/Sniffer can locate materials and chemicals that are hidden or concealed behind a wall, under the floorboards, inside a locked vehicle, locker, trunk, backpack, container, suspended in a tree, tossed onto a first or second floor rooftop, etc. The dog also has excellent day vision and keen senses, nightvision 100 feet (30.5 m), can leap 3 feet (0.9 m) high and 6 feet (1.8 m) long, and like most canines, can perform a leaping pounce.

Attacks per Melee: Three.

Damage: Bite does 1D6+3 points of damage, claws two points of damage.

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, +3 to dodge, and +5 to save vs Horror Factor.

Habitat: Throughout North America and worldwide.

Value: These specially trained dogs are never sold as a pet or simple watchdog; 3,500-8,000 credits as a trained Detection Dog.

Guard Dogs

These dogs are used as guardians and protectors, as well as companions, trained to sound an alarm (bark) when an intruder is detected and to chase them away amid much barking. Guard dogs usually sound fierce and dangerous and behave in an aggressive manner toward strangers. They can be used to guard anything from a prison or warehouse to a farm, vehicle, campsite or person.

Note: Common breeds for this work include the *German Shepherd*, *Doberman Pinscher*, *Rottweiler*, *Pit Bulls*, and *Boxers*, but most any dog can be trained to be a watchdog or guard dog.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Attribute Note: Speed: 38 running, or 26 mph (41.6 km), but can run at 30 mph (48 km) in a short burst lasting 1D6+4 minutes. A comfortable trot is 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km) and can be sustained for as long as 6-8 hours.

Hit Points: 3D6+4

S.D.C.: 2D6+10

A.R.: Not applicable.

Size: Varies but typically 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m) long, stands 2 feet (0.6 m) tall at the shoulders, and the tail is 10 inches (25 cm) long.

Weight: 30-60 pounds (13.5 to 27 kg).

Average Life Span: 12-18 years.

P.P.E.: 4D6

Disposition: Friendly and loyal to, and protective of, their master/owner and others they live or work with; aggressive and wary of everyone else until they get to know and trust them. Protective of their master, guard and attack dogs never completely trust strangers, keep a close eye on them, and become aggres-

sive, barking and growling the moment they make any sudden move or act of aggression toward the people and property or area they protect. Immediately attack the moment their master/property/area is clearly threatened or under attack.

Domesticated dogs do not mate for life, they are a polygamous species. The female gives birth to a litter of 3 to 8 pups after a gestation of 8 weeks.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 35% (trees, rocks and debris), Land Navigation 70%, Prowl 45%, and Swimming 65%.

Natural Abilities: Identify and locate intruders within their home zone/place to guard 80%, track by smell 60%, has excellent day vision and keen senses, nightvision 100 feet (30.5 m), can leap 4 feet (1.2 m) high and 6 feet (1.8 m) long, and like most canines, can perform a leaping pounce.

Attacks per Melee: Three.

Damage: Bite does 2D4+2 points of damage; claws one point of damage.

Bonuses: +3 on initiative, +4 to strike, +2 to dodge, and +3 to save vs Horror Factor.

Habitat: Throughout North America and worldwide.

Value: 100-200 credits as a pet and watchdog, 400-1,200 credits as a trained guard and attack dog.

Herding Dogs/Sheep Dogs

These dogs' natural instinct is to herd and control sheep, cattle or other herded animals, retrieve strays, as well as serve as companions. They are also known to watch over and herd, i.e. keep babies and toddlers in check and where they belong. Will bark and raise an alarm to warn of predators.

Note: Breeds include Collies, Sheepdog, and Shepherd Dogs, among others.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Attribute Note: Speed: 44 running, or 30 mph (48), but can run at 35 mph (56 km) in a short burst lasting 1D6+8 minutes. A comfortable trot is 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km) and can be sustained for as long as 6-8 hours.

A.R.: Not applicable.

Hit Points: 3D6

S.D.C.: 2D6+10

Size: 3 feet (0.9 m) long, 2 feet (0.6 m) tall at the shoulders; tail 10 inches (25.4 cm).

Weight: 30-60 pounds (13.6 to 27 kg).

Average Life Span: 12-18 years.

P.P.E.: 5D6

Disposition: Lively, loyal, diligent and hard working animals that enjoy running and herding. They exhibit patience and tenacity, and like to work and protect sheep and other livestock, as well as young children. They make sure the animals under their charge do not separate and wander away, get lost, etc., and make sure the herd stays together in a tight group and on the right path or in the proper area. Will sound an alarm by barking and howling when a predator or stranger appears and will try to protect the herd but is not likely powerful enough to stop or kill a predator (wolf, mountain lion, people, etc.).

Domesticated dogs do not mate for life, they are a polygamous species. The female gives birth to a litter of 3 to 8 pups after a gestation of 8 weeks.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 35% (trees, rocks and debris), Herding Cattle/Livestock 85%, Land Navigation 85%, Prowl 45%, Swimming 65%, Track Animals that have wan-

dered off 70%, Tailing 90% and Tracking (People) 50% (+20% to track children and people under its charge or considered members of its family/pack).

Natural Abilities: Identify predators and danger that represents a threat to the herd 90%, track livestock it herds by smell or sight 70%, has excellent day vision and keen senses, nightvision 100 feet (30.5 m), can leap 3 feet (0.9 m) high and 5 feet (1.5 m) long, and like most canines, can perform a leaping pounce. Is not spooked or uncomfortable around livestock, cattle, horses, people, and vehicles.

Attacks per Melee: Two.

Damage: Bite does 1D6+1 points of damage; claws do one point of damage.

Bonuses: +4 to Perception Rolls to notice when one or more members of a herd are wandering off and to recognize predators and danger to the herd, +4 on initiative, +3 to strike, +3 to dodge, and +2 to save vs Horror Factor.

Range: Throughout North America and worldwide.

Value: 100-200 credits as a pet and watchdog; 800-1,200 credits for a trained herding dog.

Hunting Dogs: Hounds/Trackers

These are canines bred and raised for the hunting and tracking of small, medium and large game animals from rabbits, quail and pheasant to wild boar, deer, elk, and moose. They are also used to track down predators and dangerous animals such as wolves, coyotes, and wild cats to dinosaurs and monsters. These intelligent sniffers can also be trained to track and hunt humans, D-Bees and demons, or to sniff out dead bodies. They may be used to track down fugitives and people who have gone missing, but there are trained Rescue Dogs that specialize in that sort of work (described later in this section).

Note: Breeds include a wide range of canines, particularly hounds, with the *Bloodhound*, *Basset Hound*, *Beagle*, *German Shepherd*, *Labrador Retriever*, and *Coonhound* being the most desirable, in that order for trackers. Other dogs suitable as hunting dogs include the *Afghan Hound*, *Deerhound*, *Foxhound*, *Greyhound*, and others. The large *Irish Wolfhound* hunts/tracks by sight (so does the *Greyhound*, +8 to speed). The *Wolfhound* and *Staghound* get the following bonuses: +1D6 to damage from bites, +6 to speed, +12 S.D.C., +3 to save vs Horror Factor, and is an instinctive natural enemy of the wolf and coyote.

Alignment: Scrupulous and love to track and hunt.

Attribute Note: Speed: 38 running, or 26 mph (41.6 km), but can run at 30 mph (48 km) in a short burst lasting 1D6+4 minutes. A comfortable trot is 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km) and can be sustained for as long as 6-8 hours.

Hit Points: 1D6+18

S.D.C.: 1D6+16

A.R.: Not applicable.

Size: 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m) long, stands 2-3 feet (0.6 to 0.9 m) tall at the shoulders, and the tail is 10 inches (25.4 cm) long.

Weight: 50-100 pounds (23 to 45 kg).

Average Life Span: 12-18 years.

P.P.E.: 4D6

Disposition: Their keen sense of smell makes them inquisitive and always sniffing around. Love to track and hunt. Friendly and loyal to their master/owners and wary of strangers. Trained to track, find and flush out their prey/game animals for their human masters and to corner/tree them or hold them at bay, but

NOT to attack or kill them unless commanded to do so by their master.

They are most effective against big game animals in packs of 6-12. The female gives birth to a litter of 3 to 8 pups after a gestation of 8 weeks.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 35% (trees, rocks and debris), Detect Concealment 85% (but only if one of the animals the dog is trained to track and hunt is in the concealed area), Land Navigation 90%, Prowl 35%, Swimming 65%, and Tailing 75%.

Natural Abilities: Identify and track the scent of game animals by smell 85%. (+5% to track blood scent, -10% to track people by smell. Moreover, to track a specific person, the hunting/tracking dog needs a recently worn article of clothing, used blanket, possession or recent location to learn and pick up the scent to follow it.) **Note:** +5% to track by smell and Land Navigation for the Bloodhound, Bassett Hound and Beagle.

Hunting dogs can identify and track the scents of the game animals for which they are trained and can detect/identify such scents up to 3,000 feet (914 m) away. The animal can also smell such scents buried as deep as 40 feet (12.2 m, dead body; or animal hiding in a burrow, cave, behind a wall, inside a vehicle or container, etc.). The dog also has excellent day vision and keen senses, nightvision 100 feet (30.5 m), can leap 3 feet (0.9 m) high and 6 feet (1.8 m) long, and like most canines, can perform a leaping pounce.

Attacks per Melee: Three.

Damage: Bite does 1D6+3 points of damage, claws two points of damage.

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, +3 to dodge, and +5 to save vs Horror Factor.

Range: Throughout North America and worldwide.

Value: 200-300 credits as a pet and watchdog; 900-1,500 credits as a trained bloodhound/tracker.

Hunting Dogs: Retrievers & Pointers

These hunting dogs are primarily used for flushing out and retrieving game birds after they are shot (bow and arrow or rifle). Typical game animals include quail, pheasant, ducks, geese and other waterfowl, as well as small to medium game animals such as rabbits, squirrels, raccoons, opossums, foxes (for their fur and tail), and sometimes even wild pigs and boar, though the latter two are dangerous to the dogs. They are usually deployed in pairs, but may be used as a single animal or in a small pack of 3-6.

Retrievers and Pointers may be used to hunt larger game animals, predators and monsters, but it is not recommended and the animals are vulnerable to attack and a quick death. Both Retrievers and pointers are trained to stop, strike a pose and point – standing motionless and looking in the direction of the game animal so the hunter can be prepared to strike/shoot when the game animal takes flight, whether that's running or flying away. On command, be it a word, whistle or physical signal, the dog rushes at the animal to flush it out. When the game animal is shot, the dog does as the name suggests, it goes and retrieves it, carrying the dead animal in its mouth or dragging larger animals out of the water to shore or to an open spot in the terrain.

Note: Includes all breeds of Retrievers, Setters, Pointers, and Spaniels, the smallest of the lot.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Attribute Note: Speed: 38 running, or 26 mph (41.6 km), but can run at 30 mph (48 km) in a short burst lasting 1D6+4 minutes.

A comfortable trot is 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km) and can be sustained for as long as 6-8 hours.

Hit Points: 3D6+4

S.D.C.: 2D6+12

A.R.: Not applicable.

Size: 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m) long, stands 2-3 feet (0.6 to 0.9 m) tall at the shoulders, and the tail is 10 inches (25.4 cm) long.

Weight: 30-90 pounds (13.5 to 40.5 kg).

Average Life Span: 12-18 years.

P.P.E.: 4D6

Disposition: Friendly, loyal, happy canines that love to hunt and chase small to medium animals. Protective of their master.

Behavior: Their keen sense of smell makes them inquisitive and always sniffing around. Love to track and hunt. Friendly and loyal to their master/owners and wary of strangers. Trained to track, find and flush out their prey/game animals for their human masters and to corner/tree them or hold them at bay, but NOT to attack or kill them unless commanded to do so by their master.

They are most effective against big game animals in packs of 6-12. The female gives birth to a litter of 3 to 8 pups after a gestation of 8 weeks.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 35% (trees, rocks and debris), Detect Concealment 70% (but only if one of the animals the dog is trained to track and hunt is in the concealed area), Land Navigation 90%, Prowl 40%, Swimming 75%, Tailing 60%, Track small and medium-sized game animals by smell and sight 85% (-15% to track people) and can find such an animal even if it is concealed and hiding or up in a tree.

Natural Abilities: Identify and track the scent of game animals by smell 90% (-20% to track people by smell, and to track a specific person, the hunting/tracking dog needs a recently worn article of clothing, blanket, possession or recent location to pick up and know the scent and follow it). Can smell specific scents for which it is trained to identify up to 3,000 feet (914 m) away and can smell them buried as deep as 40 feet (12.2 m; hiding or dead body, or behind a wall, inside a vehicle or container, etc.); has excellent day vision and keen senses, nightvision 100 feet (30.5 m), can leap 3 feet (0.9 m) high and 6 feet (1.8 m) long, and like most canines, can perform a leaping pounce.

Attacks per Melee: Three.

Damage: Bite does 1D6+1 points of damage, claws one point of damage.

Bonuses: +3 on initiative, +4 to strike, +2 to dodge, and +3 to save vs Horror Factor.

Range: Throughout North America and worldwide.

Value: 200-300 credits as a pet and watchdog; 600-1,200 credits as a trained hunter/retriever.

Rescue Dogs/People Trackers

Fundamentally the same as *Hunting/Tracker Dogs* except they are specifically trained to track people – fugitives on the run, escaped prisoners, terrorists, people who have gone missing, dead bodies, or a range of specific types of D-Bee, monsters or demons.

Most dogs become too distracted, nervous and anxious under these demanding circumstances, so the breeds of dog chosen for this work are those with strong character, able to remain calm, fo-

cused and even-tempered regardless of what's happening around them.

Note: The most popular and common breeds for this work include the *German Shepherds*, *Belgian Malinois*, *American Pit Bull Terrier*, *Bloodhound*, *Coonhound*, *Border Collie*, *Golden Retriever*, *English Springer Spaniel*, *Labrador Retriever*, *Boxer*, and *Beagle*, pretty much in that order.

The *Bloodhound*, *Coonhound*, *Beagle*, *German Shepherd*, and *Labrador Retriever* are among the best cadaver dogs – finding dead bodies and buried remains, but almost any trained hunting breed can fit that role well.

Alignment: Scrupulous and love to track and hunt.

Hit Points: 3D6+6

Attribute Note: Speed: 38 running, or 26 mph (41.6 km), but can run at 30 mph (48 km) in a short burst lasting 1D6+4 minutes. A comfortable trot is 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km) and can be sustained for as long as 6-8 hours.

S.D.C.: 2D6+12

A.R.: Not applicable.

Size: 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m) long, stands 1.6 to 2.6 feet (0.48 to 0.8 m) tall at the shoulders, and the tail is 10 inches (25.4 cm) long.

Weight: 50-90 pounds (23 to 40.5 kg).

Average Life Span: 12-18 years

P.P.E.: 4D6

Disposition: Breeds used for *tracking* and *police work* possess high intelligence, loyalty, self-control and the ability to follow commands under duress as well as a superior sense of smell. They remain calm, focused, and obedient regardless of what's happening around them (a bustling city street, screaming panicking people, traffic, gunfire, battlefield bombardment, etc.).

Domesticated dogs do not mate for life, they are a polygamous species. The female gives birth to a litter of 3 to 8 pups after a gestation of 8 weeks.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 35% (trees, rocks and debris), Detect Concealment 80% (but only if the person the dog is tracking or trained to recognize is in the concealed area), Land Navigation 90%, Prowl 40%, Swimming 65%, Tailing 80% and Tracking (People) 85%.

Natural Abilities: Identify and track a specific person or type of person, i.e., a specific D-Bee or monster, by smell 85% (+5% to track blood scent, -10% to track animals by smell). To track a specific person or type of D-Bee, the Rescue/Tracking Dog needs a recently worn article of clothing, used blanket, possession or recent location to learn and pick up the scent and to follow it. The dog can find such people even if they are concealed, camouflaged and hiding, or up in a tree or first or second story rooftop. **Note:** +5% to track by smell for the *Bloodhound*, *Basset Hound* and *Beagle*.

All Rescue/Tracking Dogs can smell specific scents for which they are trained to identify up to 3,000 feet (914 m) away and can smell them buried as deep as 40 feet (12.2 m, a dead body, or person hiding behind a wall, inside a hole, cave, vehicle or container, etc.); has excellent day vision and keen senses, nightvision 100 feet (30.5 m), can leap 3 feet (0.9 m) high and 6 feet (1.8 m) long, and like most canines, can perform a leap-jump pounce.

Attacks per Melee: Three.

Damage: Bite does 1D6+3 points of damage, claws two points of damage.

Bonuses: +3 on Perception Rolls regarding the subject of its search/tracking, +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, +3 to dodge, and +5 to save vs Horror Factor.

Range: Throughout North America and worldwide.

Value: 200-300 credits as a pet and watchdog; 1,200-2,400 credits as a trained Rescue/People Tracking Dog.



Sled Dogs

Inuit and other Native Americans as well as trappers, adventurers and Tundra Rangers often use sleds pulled by trained dogs to get around on the tundra during winter and snow-covered months (roughly November thru May). These are hardy animals chosen for their strong backs, legs, tough feet, and endurance. 7-12 animals are required to pull a sled, as many as 22 for races.

Note: Common breeds include all types of Huskies, particularly the Alaskan Husky (also known as the Kugsha Dog), Alaskan Malamute, Canadian Eskimo Dog, Chinook, Eurohound, Alusky, Siberian Husky, Samoyed, Greenland Dog, Tamaskan Dog, and dog-wolf hybrids with any of these breeds.

Also Known As: Sledge dogs, sleighman dogs, and snow dogs.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Attribute Note: Speed: 33 running, or 22 mph (35 km), but can run at 28 mph (45 km) in a short burst lasting 1D6+6 minutes. Average speed pulling a sled is 5-8 mph (8 to 13 km) and can be maintained for 8-10 hours. Maximum speed for a sled team of huskies is 10-15 mph (16 to 24 km) in good to excellent conditions, and can be maintained for 3 or 4 hours; 5-6 mph (8 to 11.2 km) if conditions are poor, such as fresh snow, extreme cold, snowfall, and blizzard conditions.

Hit Points: 3D6+10

S.D.C.: 2D6+16

A.R.: Not applicable.

Size: 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m) long; 2-2.6 feet (0.6 to 0.8 m) tall at the shoulders, tail 10 inches (25.4 cm).

Weight: 40-70 pounds (18 to 32 kg), occasionally a bit larger.

Average Life Span: 12-16 years.

P.P.E.: 5D6

Disposition: Loyal, obedient, ambitious, hard working canines who love to run, welcome teamwork and labor, and are friendly, lively, and enjoy the snow and cold weather.

Domesticated dogs do not mate for life, they are a polygamous species. The female gives birth to a litter of 3 to 8 pups after a gestation of 8-9 weeks.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 45% (trees, rocks and debris), Land Navigation 85%, Prowl 35%, Swimming 55%, and Tailing 60%.

Natural Abilities: Identify predators and danger that represent a threat to its master and the dog team 90%, track by smell 65%, resistant to cold (can withstand temperatures as cold as -60 Fahrenheit/-51 Celsius, are not bothered by snow and ice and thrive in frigid conditions; protected by a thick undercoat of fur), they have tremendous endurance and can run or pull a sled for up to 12-15 hours before needing to stop and rest for the day. They also have excellent day vision and keen senses, nightvision 100 feet (30.5 m), and can leap 3 feet (0.9 m) high and 5 feet (1.5 m) long, and like most canine can perform a leaping pounce. Is not spooked or uncomfortable around other dogs, dogsled teams, livestock, cattle, horses or people.

Attacks per Melee: Three.

Damage: Bite does 1D6+4 points of damage, claws two points of damage.

Bonuses: +4 on initiative, +3 to strike, +3 to dodge, and +5 to save vs Horror Factor.

Habitat: Throughout North America and worldwide, but Sled Dogs are found in tundra and snowy regions such as Alaska, northern Canada from the Yukon to Greenland, Siberia and Scandinavia. Can live in warm climates but prefer cool and cold environments.

Value: 40-70 credits for its pelt, 100-200 credits as a pet and watchdog; 500-1,000 credits as a trained sled dog, an additional 400-600 credits for an experienced team lead dog.

Supernatural Guardian Dog

These dogs are used specifically as guardians against supernatural threats. When a supernatural presence is detected, instead of growling and barking, the dog is trained to silently alert its master by gently taking his hand or arm in its mouth and tugging to orient him toward the threat. This behavior allows the dog's owner to know what is happening without giving away that the supernatural threat has been detected – an important advantage in many situations.

Such dogs are so well trained that they follow commands even under the most stressful of circumstances and wake their master if he is sleeping, a valuable trait when camping in the wild. When the supernatural danger makes itself known or attacks, Supernatural Guardian Dogs attack upon command or when their master is in immediate danger. This canine is also trained to sniff out and track down the supernatural and to point the creature out even if it is in disguise or hiding.

Note: Breeds most often include *German Shepherd*, *Labrador*, *Doberman Pinscher*, *Retrievers*, *Pit Bulls*, *Boxers*, *Wolfhound*, *Staghound*, *Coonhound*, *Saint Bernard*, and even the smaller *Terriers*, among others. Small breeds are fine as Supernatural Guardian Dogs because they are intended to *detect and alert* its master to the presence and location of the supernatural, not attack and fight it. Large breeds may be more suitable for adventurers traversing the wilderness only because they are

hardier animals and can also handle S.D.C. threats, as well as look intimidating.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Attribute Note: **Speed:** Varies with the breed, but on average, has a Spd of 38 running, or 26 mph (41.6 km). 30 mph (48 km) in a short burst lasting 1D6+4 minutes. A comfortable trot is 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km) and can be sustained for as long as 6-8 hours.

Hit Points: Varies with breed. 1D6+20 for small and medium dogs.

S.D.C.: Varies with breed. 1D6+16 for small and medium dogs.

A.R.: Not applicable.

Size: Varies with breed. On average, the body is: 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m) long; 2-3 feet (0.6 to 0.9 m) tall at the shoulders, tail 10-12 inches (25.4 to 30.5 cm).

Weight: 25-50 (11 to 22.5 kg) to 100-150 pounds (45 to 67.5 kg) for the largest dogs like the Wolfhound and Saint Bernard.

Average Life Span: Varies with breed. 12-18 years on average.

P.P.E.: 4D6

Disposition: Friendly and loyal to, and protective of, their master/owner and those they work with, friendly to humans and most D-Bees, but aggressive and hostile toward the supernatural, particularly demons and supernatural evil. These attentive and trained canines immediately attack the supernatural the moment the dog or their master or whoever/whatever they are assigned to protect is clearly threatened or attacked.

Domesticated dogs do not mate for life, they are a polygamous species. The female gives birth to a litter of 3 to 8 pups after a gestation of 8 weeks.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 35% (trees, rocks and debris), Land Navigation 80%, Detect Concealment 70% (or more accurately, detect where a supernatural creature may be hiding), Prowl 55%, Swimming 65%, Tailing 80% and Tracking (supernatural) 85%.

Natural Abilities: Identify and track/follow the supernatural, particularly evil supernatural creatures, 85% (+5% to smell and sense Demon Lords and Alien Intelligences or to follow blood scent). The animal also has excellent day vision and keen senses, nightvision 100 feet (30.5 m), can leap 4 feet (1.2 m) high and 6 feet (1.8 m) long, and like most canines, can perform a leaping pounce.

Attacks per Melee: Three against mortal opponents, four against the supernatural.

Damage: Bite does 2D4+2 S.D.C./Hit Point damage; claws one point of damage.

Bonuses: +3 on Perception Rolls to recognize the supernatural and whether they represent an immediate danger, +3 on initiative, +4 to strike, +2 to dodge, +4 to save vs Horror Factor, and twice as likely to resist the mind control powers of a vampire and other supernatural beings.

The Wolfhound, *Saint Bernard* and *Staghound* get the following bonuses in addition to those above: +1D6 to damage from bites, +6 to speed, +12 S.D.C., +2 to save vs Horror Factor, is an instinctive natural enemy of the wolf and coyote, and has a 70% chance of knocking down with a pounce attack, an opponent up to 8 feet (2.4 m) tall and weighing under 600 pounds (270 kg). Victims of knockdown lose initiative and one melee attack.

The Saint Bernard Mastiff and *English Mastiff* get the following bonuses and penalties in addition to those above: Weight: 2D4x10+100 pounds (54 to 81 kg), add one foot (0.3 m) to

height at shoulders, +1D6 to damage from bites, -5 to speed (about 25 mph/40 km), +20 on S.D.C., +2 to save vs Horror Factor, and has a 75% chance of knocking down with a pounce attack, an opponent up to 8 feet (2.4 m) tall and weighing under 600 pounds (270 kg). Victims of knockdown lose initiative and one melee attack.

Habitat: Throughout North America and worldwide.

Value: Never sold as just a pet or simple watchdog; 1,000-4,000 credits as a trained guard against the supernatural, often two times as much in the vampire infested lands of Mexico and the American Southwest.



Carnosuchid Dinosaur

By Todd Yoho and Kevin Siembieda

The Carnosuchids are primitive dinosaur and alligator/crocodile cousins from the early Triassic that have made their way into the wilds of Dinosaur Swamp from Earth's past or a parallel dimension. They are crocodile-like quadrupeds approximately 8-9 feet (2.4 to 2.7 m) long, stand 3 feet (0.9 m) high at the shoulder, and have a thick, powerful skull and a long, broad, slashing tail. Their thick bodies are covered in layers of reddish brown scales, and their wide feet end in short, hooked claws suitable for digging prey out of burrows, or as anchors for short distance sprinting. While they are lethal over short distances on dry land, Carnosuchids are not built for speed, nor are they ambush predators like alligators and crocodiles. Nonetheless, they are effective mid-level predators and scavengers.

Their real strength lies in the powerful muscles located between the skull and shoulders that provide them with bone crushing jaws

and a vicious head-shaking attack. Augmenting their powerful jaws and neck muscles are the Carnosuchids' specially rooted teeth. Unlike dinosaurs who have shedding teeth, Carnosuchids have long, serrated teeth that are rooted deeply in the jaw and skull, and are woven into place by a taut mesh of ligaments and tendons. With this adaptation, Carnosuchids have no fear of their teeth being pulled loose, and can shake prey into submission much more violently than a crocodile or even a Spinosaurus. It also enables the creature to maintain a grip on prey that could otherwise tear free from the jaws of another predator. Rest assured that when a Carnosuchid latches onto prey, it rarely gets away.

Carnosuchids are solitary predators, seeking out their own kind only during the spring mating season. They are not as intelligent as true dinosaurs, but are still crafty hunters. They prefer to hunt along the forest edge and in water or among the many marshlands, creeks and streams that cut through the *Georgian Piedmont* and elsewhere in Dinosaur Swamp.

Many Carnosuchids have developed a taste for human and D-Bee flesh and often establish lairs near barbarian villages, D-Bee settlements, or well traveled waterways, terrorizing the population and gobbling up travelers. Though they love water and swim well, the creatures spend half their time on land hunting and sunning themselves, and are quite territorial, marking their hunting grounds with a powerful smelling musk excreted in their urine. The scent is strong enough for humans to detect, but just barely, requiring a successful Perception Roll to notice it, and then a successful roll on the *Lore: Dinosaurs* skill. Characters with enhanced senses such as Mutant Barbarians and Dog Boys are able to detect the scent easily at a distance of 200 feet (61 m) away, and recognize it as the mark of a predator. However, without the *Lore: Dinosaurs* skill or personal experience, they will not recognize the threat until the Carnosuchid lunges at them.

Carnosuchid, Predatory Dinosaur Carnivore

Also Known As: Alligator Dinosaur and Large-Mouth Gator.

Alignment: Animal predator, considered Miscreant or Diabolic.

Attributes: Animal attributes are very consistent and offer a smaller range of attribute aptitude. I.Q. 1D4+1 (low animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+2, M.A. 1D6, P.S. 1D6+20 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+14, P.E. 1D6+22 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D4+4, Spd 1D6+19 running, or 15 mph (24 km), but can run at 20 mph (32 km) in a short burst lasting one minute.

Swimming speed is 15 mph (24 km), but can swim as fast as 20 mph (32 km or 17 knots) for a period lasting 1D6+10 minutes.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Head – 95

*Tail – 35

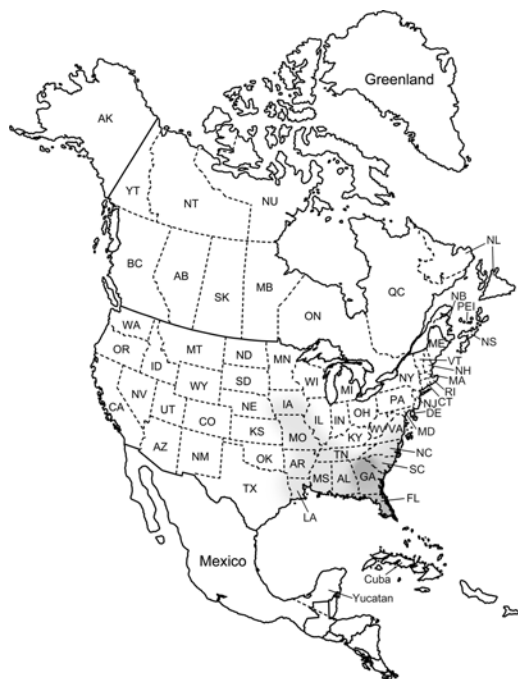
*Neck – 100

*Limbs (4) – 60 each

Main Body – 1D6x10+180

* A single asterisk is a small or difficult target to hit, requiring an attacker to make a Called Shot with a penalty of -3 to strike.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, Carnosuchids have a main body of 1D6x10+40 S.D.C., 1D6x10+70 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 12. All other body location have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (2D6+16 M.D.C. = 2D6+16 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D.



Horror Factor: 13

Size: 8-9 feet (2.4 to 2.7 m) long from snout to tip of the tail, 3 feet (0.9 m) tall at the shoulder.

Weight: 450-550 lbs (202.5 to 247.5 kg).

Average Life Span: 50-60 years.

P.P.E.: 3D6

Behavior: Crafty, roaming predator that hunts alone or in pairs, but may gather in groups along the banks of marshlands, rivers, streams and lakes. Behavior is very similar to alligators and crocodiles.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 30% (trees, rocks and debris), Dowsing 70% (to find bodies of water), Land Navigation 70% (+10% to follow shorelines), Prowl 35% (+10% in water), and Swimming 90%.

Natural Abilities: Supernatural P.S. and P.E., natural swimmer and can hold its breath underwater for one minute per P.E. attribute point, has good day vision, can see in dim light and murky water 600 feet (183 m), nightvision 100 feet (30.5 m), excellent sense of smell and can track by scent at 55% (+20% to track food/prey and blood scents up to one mile/1.6 km away; double underwater).

Digging (special): Carnosuchids are excellent diggers, able to excavate three cubic feet (0.28 m³) of dirt per melee round of digging.

Play Dead (special): The creature will play dead if it is attacked or fears for its life, lying completely still and seemingly not breathing. At the first opportunity, however, it will lunge at anyone poking it or continuing to attack it, or when danger is gone, gets up and walks away.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Mega-Damage: Fights with tooth and claw, and slashing tail, but its primary attack is biting and its bite and thrash attack.

Bite – 5D6 M.D.

Claw Strike with Forelimbs – 1D6 M.D.

Slashing Tail Strike – 2D6 M.D. plus a tail strike has a 25% chance of knocking down a human-sized target. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and one attack.

Sprint Attack (Special): Typically captures prey by charging and clamping down with its powerful jaws. In the first melee

round of combat, a Carnosuchid can sprint after its prey with an incredible burst of energy, providing it with a +4 on initiative, +2 to strike, and +1 additional attack for that first melee round ONLY.

The dinosaur cannot use this ability until it has rested, outside of combat, for at least 2D6 minutes, and cannot run at top speed for more than one minute (four melee rounds). Can swim at top speed for a longer period: one minute per P.E. attribute point.

Bite and Thrash Attack (Special): Because of their powerful jaws and ligamented teeth, Carnosuchids are capable of latching onto prey and shaking it violently into submission. Upon a successful bite attack, the victim must make a *second* dodge roll against the creature's *unmodified* roll to strike in order to avoid being latched onto. If successful, the victim has narrowly escaped and can attack or flee. If the victim *fails* to make the second dodge roll, he is locked in the jaws of the Carnosuchid and is subject to the power of the animal's most vicious attack: Thrashing.

Thrashing Damage: Once the Carnosuchid acquires a firm grip on its prey, it proceeds to shake and bash it against the ground, trees, rocks or other nearby objects until the prey ceases to struggle. Damage is 3D6 M.D. per each thrashing, bashing melee attack. Even characters *inside M.D.C. body armor* or light power armor (armor with less than 200 M.D.C.) take 1D6 S.D.C. damage for every 10 M.D. points inflicted to their armor. (Always subtract damage from S.D.C. first, then from Hit Points.)

While being thrashed about, victims only get *half* of their normal attacks (rounding up) and are extremely disoriented, operating at -6 to initiative, strike, parry and dodge, and skill performance is -25%. Spell casting and psionics are difficult to perform, at best. First requiring a successful saving throw vs Horror Factor (13 or higher), and then it takes *twice* the normal time to cast the spell (i.e., each low level spell cast counts as two melee attacks).

Victims *can* attempt to wrench themselves free by using their melee attacks to make a dodge that's higher than the Carnosuchid's original bite attack roll. Success means that the victim has been flung loose, sailing 15 feet (4.6 m) through the air and taking a final 1D4 M.D. to his armor on impact. The victim is also likely to be *stunned* for 1D4 melee rounds (50% chance; reduce the number of attacks, Spd and combat bonuses by half for being stunned), and the Carnosuchid is not likely to let its meal get away that easily.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute and Sprint Attack bonuses): +1 to strike with claws or tail, +3 to strike with jaws/bite, +1 to dodge, +4 to roll with impact, +3 to save vs Horror Factor and to save vs poison/toxins. All, but the latter two are doubled underwater where the monster is in its natural element.

Vulnerabilities: All Mega-Damage weapons and attacks inflict full damage to this creature.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Anywhere in Dinosaur Swamp, but most numerous in the Georgian Piedmont and the creeks and streams of the *Horror Forest*, however, they can be found throughout the Southeastern USA including *South Carolina, Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi* and in hot summers, up the *Mississippi River* as far north as Nebraska, as well as down some of its southern tributaries.

Enemies: Other predators large enough to battle this monster, particularly fast-moving dinosaurs and pack hunters like Devil Eels and Raptors, as well as the Devilsaurus, Giant Petal Turtle, Saracosuchus, the Spinosaurus and others. People and their livestock are regarded as prey, and most people kill this beast when it attacks.

Allies: None, other than their mate, and only for the two-month mating season in the spring. However, they seldom attack their own kind and are sometimes found along the shore, like crocodiles, in groups of 3D6 animals.

Value: Their tough M.D.C. hides are used by Dinosaur Swamp barbarians and Eco-Wizards to create light and medium Mega-Damage armor (21 M.D.C. per conventional suit or 2D6+38 for Eco-Wizard created armor). The scales are also prized for their decorative value and are often used in conjunction with scales from other animals. An intact hide from a Carnosuchid will fetch 1,000-2,000 credits. The ligaments and tendons that lash their teeth into place are highly prized by Eco-Wizards for their particular strength and durability, paying up to 1,500 credits per head. Necromancers may also have an interest in their bones and skulls.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 27: Adventures in Dinosaur Swamp™**, page 28.

Cats

See Felines/Predatory Cats for descriptions of some wild feline predatory cats, page 225.

Caterpillar Things

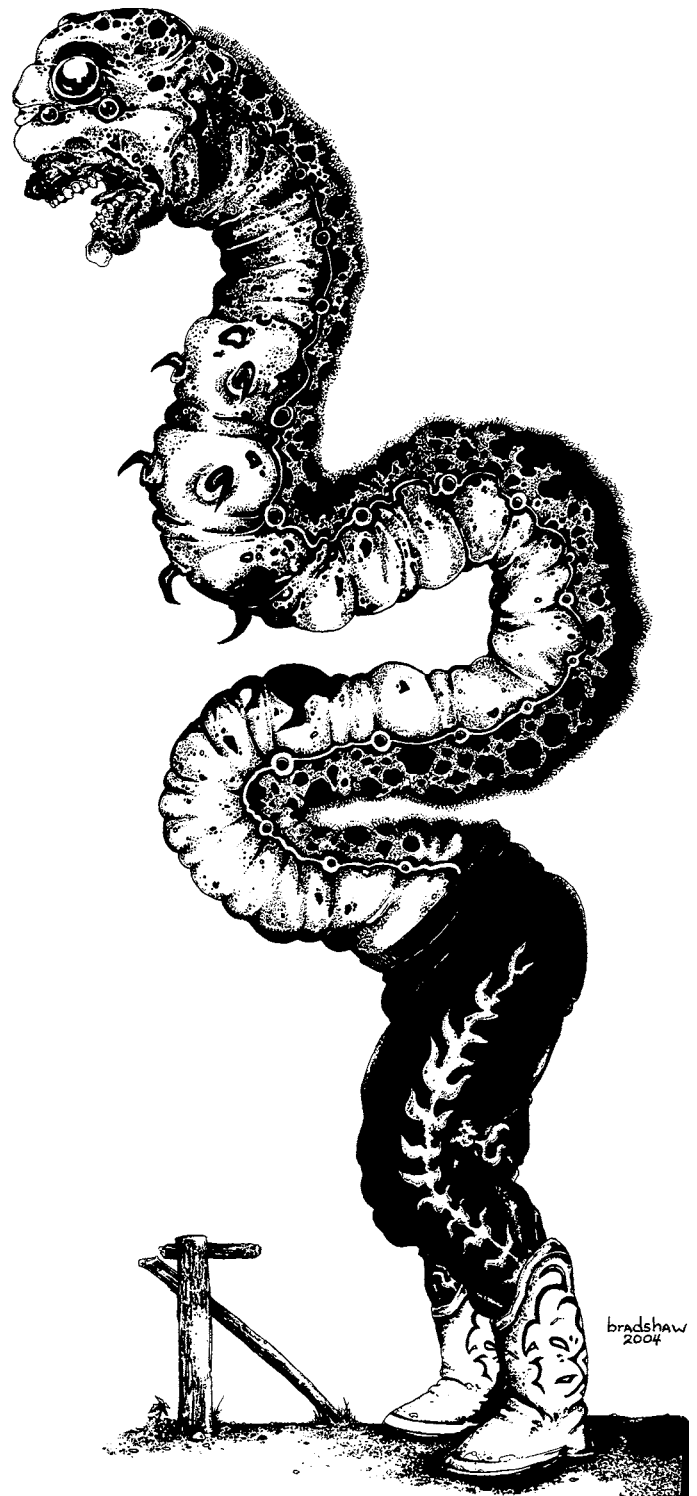
By Kevin Siembieda, inspired by Nick Bradshaw

These bizarre beings may be related to, or come from, the same reality as Head Worms and Worm Wraiths, or perhaps not. Nobody knows. Their only true similarity is their *worm-like* appearance and alien nature.

Caterpillar Things, more commonly known as *Caterpillar Men* or *Caterpillar People*, are often mistaken as one of the mutants of Madhaven, but they have nothing in common with human beings. They are alien predators who *emulate* human characteristics, traits and behavior. Whether they actually wish they were human themselves, or mistakenly believe that by acting human so they can pass as one, is unclear. The fact that they speak in a clear, human voice and mimic human character traits only makes them all the more bizarre and disturbing.

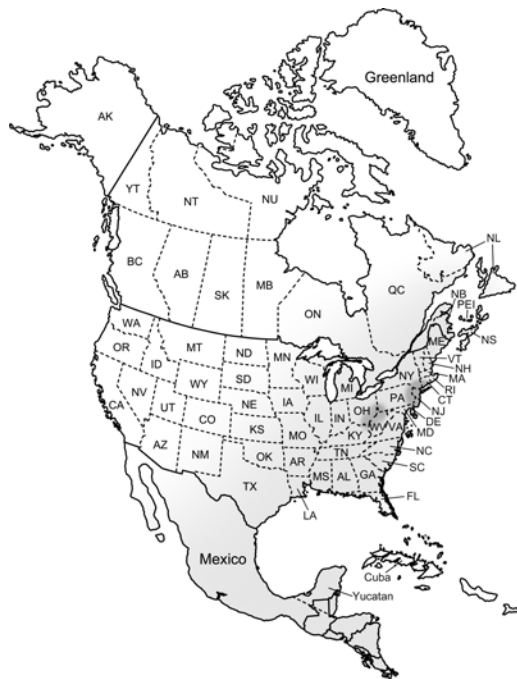
The horrid Things seem to both admire and loathe human beings, the Madhaven Mutants and most D-Bees. On one hand, they try to speak and act like humans, but on the other, they see humanoids only as prey to be tricked, stalked and eaten.

A Caterpillar Man is likely to approach a group of humans or humanoids pretending to be a friendly, kind and harmless creature. They always approach unarmed, alone or in pairs, and often bear the gift of a warning about other dangers, or helpful information or kind or consoling words. The monster speaks in a warm, sincere voice dripping with compassion and empathy, and will offer to help by serving as a native guide, helpful advisor, a kind local inhabitant concerned about the adventurer group's welfare, and sometimes even as the local welcome wagon. All Caterpillar Things are consummate liars who meld truth and facts with lies



and fiction so masterfully, that all but the most suspicious people are likely to be won over by one. Furthermore, despite the creature's size, and strange and rather ugly appearance, they are just giant – albeit intelligent, talking – caterpillars, and who but a little child is afraid of a caterpillar?

This Academy Award winning performance is all a trick. These monsters ultimately see humans as little more than *food*. They use their *concerned act* and *human voice and mimicked character behavior* to get close to their *prey* and strike when least expected. Thus, while the monsters behave as if they are harmless and helpful, all the while they are thinking about how yummy the humans will taste after they kill them. The more helpful and kind the weird thing pretends to be, the more likely it is preparing to pounce and



kill. People fooled by this deception are likely to find themselves attacked in their sleep, stabbed in the back, pushed down a pit or off of a roof, or separated from the rest of their group and led into a trap where other Caterpillar Men wait in ambush. One of the things that make these monsters so horrible is that they are always so polite, sincere and seemingly harmless right until the moment they strike.

Caterpillar Things don't use weapons or magic, and their long bodies are soft and deceptively vulnerable looking. When they attack, they strike with gnashing teeth and six stubby, slashing, clawed feet/arms. The fiends may also use their body as a blunt weapon, thumping their victims from above, hammering them from the top and the sides. A Caterpillar Man may also wrap itself around its victim, but cannot constrict or hold a person tight like a snake. The wrap-around attack is used to get the monster's small, slashing claws and biting maw into close combat. Any opponent who rolls a successful dodge can easily slip from its entangling grasp.

The head of the Caterpillar Thing is a bulbous mass of flesh with two large, silver orbs for eyes and a pair of smaller, silver eyes underneath the large ones. The mouth and tongue look disturbingly human, although out of place on a thing like this.

The body of this hideous, bipedal worm looks very much like that of a gigantic caterpillar, except that it walks upright on a pair of human-like legs, and usually wears pants and boots taken from one of its victims. Short, silky hair covers the monster's back from the base of its skull to its ankles. The wormlike body seems impossibly long, and inevitably kinked, bent and folded to make the monster appear smaller and less threatening than it really is. Stretched out completely straight, this ugly menace is 18 to 22 feet (5.5 to 6.7 m) long, but typically stands bent or contorted to be no taller than 10-13 feet (3 to 4 m). This size and flexibility also means it can bob and weave without moving its feet (automatic dodge ability), as well as lunge forward or to attack from the sides. It can also bend backwards to attack with a reach of 12-18 feet (3.7 to 5.5 m) or to look around or to dodge an attack.

Its skin is green with black, purple, dark blue or dark green spots and patches on the back and a light or pale green or off-white underbelly and face. Six small, hooked claws protrude from the

underbelly of its body close to the head in what might be considered its chest. The skin is soft and cool to the touch, but Caterpillar Men are Mega-Damage creatures.

Caterpillar Thing – Carnivorous Predator

Also Known As: Caterpillar Men, Caterpillar People, Caterpillar Monsters, Demon Caterpillars, and Giant Madhaven Caterpillars.

Alignment: Miscreant (75%) or other evil alignment.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+9 (average human intelligence and animal instinct), M.A. 1D6+12, M.E. 1D6+6, P.S. 1D4+25 (*Robotic P.S.* and inflicts a low range of M.D.C. damage), P.P. 1D6+12, P.E. 1D6+12, P.B. 1D6, Spd 1D6+4 running, or 3-7 mph (5-11 km). No burst of speed and cannot swim.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Eyes, Large (2, one on each side of head) – 1D6+12 each

*Eyes, Small (4, two per each side of head) – 1D6+4 each

*Head – 1D6+30

Legs (2) – 1D6+24 each

*Claw Feet (6, tiny and hard) – 1D6+20 each

Main Body – 1D6+80 (plus an additional 10 M.D.C. per level of experience).

* A single asterisk means a small and/or difficult target to strike and requires a Called Shot to hit. Even then the attacker is -4 to strike.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, Caterpillar Men have a main body of 1D6x10 S.D.C., 1D6x10+20 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 10. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (2D6+16 M.D.C. = 2D6+16 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D.

Horror Factor: 10 (+4 when it shows its true monstrous and carnivorous nature or attacks).

Size: 18-22 feet (5.5 to 6.7 m) long/tall, but typically stands scrunched up at 10-13 feet (3 to 4 m) tall. Can bend at what looks like the waist of a humanoid in a completely horizontal position in any direction without pain or difficulty.

Weight: 600-1,000 pounds (270-450 kg).

Average Life Span: Unknown, at least 80 years, possibly two or three times greater.

A Second-Stage of Life: There also remains the question of whether or not these "caterpillar" creatures make a cocoon at some point and transform into something else. A moth-like creature, perhaps. Moth, because they have short hair covering and running down the entire length of their backs, and the caterpillars of Earth moths are fuzzy. Could this caterpillar/larva-stage of the monster be the beast once known on Earth in urban legends as **the Mothman Monster**? Sightings of one or two giant, dark-furred humanoid creature with giant wings and large, round, glowing red eyes made headlines in West Virginia in 1966 and 1967 and, periodically, thereafter in other parts of the country. If this is the case, it could mean that these creatures have been visiting Earth as solitary hunters or in tiny groups (1D4) for hundreds of years, perhaps thousands of years, prior to the Coming of the Rifts! Many believe the answer is yes, and that the return of magic has brought hundreds of *Caterpillar Men* back to Earth. This would also mean they will, at some point, turn into hundreds of Mothmen, mate and spawn more of their kind and slowly spread across the continent. After all, Mothmen have wings and can fly.

See the Mothman Monster description in the **Rifts® Bestiary Volume Two**.

Average Level of Experience: 1D6+3

P.P.E.: 4D6+8

Disposition: Caterpillar Men use their human voice and facade of innocent friendship as a ploy to lure outsiders into a false sense of security, only to attack, slay and eat them. Despite their name and mimicked human voice and behavior, these creatures are predatory monsters. They cannot read, write or use math, have no use for human technology and never use tools, weapons or devices, nor magic. They function on instinct and hunt humanoid prey.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 80/70%, Escape Artist 65%, Land Navigation 80%, Lore: D-Bees 75% (+10% when it comes to Madhaven Mutants and monsters), Prowl 50%, Tailoring 55% (+10% at night and when flying), and Wilderness Survival 90%.

Natural Abilities: Average human intelligence, but functions on both instinct and limited intellect (i.e., the use of deception, trickery and traps). Although Caterpillar Men prefer to feed on fresh kills, they also feast upon corpses and carrion of both animals and people. Impervious to spoiled meat, foul water and most diseases. Moves by walking upright like a human, although they can also crawl across the ground and up the side of walls and trees like a caterpillar. The tiny, claw-like arms/legs are used primarily for combat and cutting up slain prey. *Bio-Regenerates* lost M.D.C. at a rate of 2D6 per hour and can completely regenerate a lost tongue, teeth, eyes, tiny arm/claw, leg and as much as one-third of its lower body in 1D6 days.

Advanced Sight (special): Nightvision 1,000 feet (305 m), sees the infrared and ultraviolet spectrums of light, sees the invisible, and can see in fog up to 100 feet (30.5 m).

Hibernation & Super-Regeneration (special): When the monster gets below 10 M.D.C. and as low as -30 below zero for its Main Body, the thing is capable of slipping into a death trance and playing dead. As far as sensors and physical examinations are concerned, the Thing is dead. However, this is really a recuperative hibernation. As long as the head is not utterly destroyed (smashed to a pulp, burnt to a cinder or vaporized), the horrid Thing can completely regenerate within 1D4+2 weeks! It may also play dead when prey proves to be too difficult for it to fight and win, and goes into hibernation when food is not available. Hibernation can be used to survive as long as 11 months without food or water. The creature wakes up to hunt for a day or two every month to hunt. If no food or prey can be found, it goes back into hibernation. If no food is found during the full 11 month period, the Caterpillar Thing wakes up with a voracious hunger and bloodlust that makes it little more than a craven beast. That feral murderous mindset lasts until after it has gorged itself. If no food can be found, not even rodents or birds to hunt and eat, it dies of starvation over the next 1D6 weeks.

Language (special): Only speaks American in a soft, clear, soothing voice. The fiend never uses slang, except in a condescending way, and seldom resorts to profanity. Instead, it speaks with an air of culture and refinement like a proper Englishman or intellectual. This means the monster speaks in complete sentences, and uses proper grammar and big words with a certain level of condescension.

However, while a Caterpillar Man only speaks American, it *understands* ALL languages with a 75% proficiency (+1%

per level of experience), because they have a natural aptitude (probably psionic based) for language and can understand any language after hearing it for only 1D4 days.

Soothing Voice (special): The voice of all Caterpillar Men (it's impossible to distinguish male from female) is deep, warm, sincere and entirely human sounding. Somehow, the more the Caterpillar Man speaks, the more comforting and soothing the voice seems to become. This is an innate natural ability that counts as a passive psionic attack that dulls the senses and evokes trust and acceptance of the beast.

Any human, mutant, D-Bee, creature of magic or supernatural being who has spent more than 15 minutes with even one Caterpillar Man suffers the following penalties from dulled senses (no saving throw applies!): -3 on Perception Rolls, -2 on initiative, and -1 to strike, parry, and dodge. Furthermore, the people so affected are likely to quickly accept the monster as a trusted ally. Roll to save vs psionic attack after the initial 15 minutes and once every hour thereafter. A failed roll to save means reasonable (not blind) trust.

Squeeze through Narrow Openings (special): The body of the Caterpillar Thing is so soft and supple that they can squeeze through spaces half their body width. Has the Escape Artist skill at 65%.

Also see *A Second-Stage of Life*, under Life Span, above.

Attacks per Melee: Four to start, +1 at levels 3, 6, 9 and 12.

Mega-Damage: Fights with biting, slashing claws and body slams. Cannot kick because it would lose its balance and fall, and it has no arms to hold or use a weapon or tools.

Bite, Restrained – 5D6 S.D.C.

Bite – 1D4 M.D.

Claw Strike, Restrained 1D4 M.D.

Claw Strike, Full Strength – 2D4 M.D.

Head Butt – 1D4 M.D.

Body Slam – 1D6 M.D.

Power Body Slam – 2D6 M.D., counts as two melee attacks and can be performed from a standing position due to its long, worm-like body. Has a 50% chance of knocking down human-size opponents up to 10 feet (3 m) tall and weighting under 900 pounds (405 kg). Victims of knockdown lose initiative and one melee attack.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 on Perception Rolls, +2 on initiative, +2 to strike, +4 to automatic dodge (the monster still needs to roll to dodge, but the act of dodging does not use up a melee attack or action), +1 to disarm, +3 to roll with impact, +4 save versus Horror Factor, +6 to save versus poison and disease, and is impervious to spoiled/rotting meat or diseased blood. They also seem to be impervious to the psychic imprint of Madhaven, although their fascination with, and imitation of, humans and the ridiculous practice of wearing pants and boots may be a manifestation of insanity brought about by that cursed land.

Vulnerabilities: Its ugly, wormy appearance instantly brands it as a monster and most people do not hesitate to run from it or attack and kill it. Only its human voice and lack of notoriety keeps it from being a feared and loathsome monster known to everyone.

Vulnerable to all M.D. weapons and attacks, cannot swim and is easily drowned, and has no arms to hold or use a weapon. Close combat only.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Considered a Minor Psychic with the following abilities: Empathy (4; but can only sense/read the emotions of others, cannot transmit their own emotions), Mind Block (4), See Aura (6), and Sense Time (2). **I.S.P.:** M.E. attribute number x2, +1D6 I.S.P. per level of experience.

Habitat: Known to exist in large numbers (perhaps as many as a thousand) in *Madhaven*, as well as notable numbers in *Jersey Side* and along the border of *Ohio* and *West Virginia*. However, these abominations may be encountered as a lone individual, pair or small group (1D4+2) anywhere in the USA, Canada, and Mexico, as well as Central and South America. They seem attracted to regions with warm climates which makes you wonder what they are doing in Madhaven and Jersey Side. Caterpillar Things are most active and likely to travel to the Northern portions of the Old American and Canadian Empires during the spring and summer, but seldom seen outdoors during winter months. Nor do they usually make their home in regions where there are cold, snowy winters like the American Midwest and the Northern USA or Canada.

In Madhaven and Jersey Side, the monsters are most likely to be encountered as a lone individual, pair or trio. However, they are scouts or members of a larger group (at least 1D6+1 other Caterpillar Things) who may be lurking nearby. These insectoids rest and sleep at night in caves, basements, old subway tunnels, and other subterranean lairs. They may also gather with other bands of Caterpillar Things (as many as 100) at night, because large numbers mean safety from most enemies. **Note:** Giant Ruin Worms do not eat Caterpillar Things; they taste awful to the worms and most predators.

Enemies: The Caterpillar Man and Head Worms are natural enemies who frequently clash. They also dislike Onion Heads, who are impervious to their vocal influence, and see most other humanoid life forms, including Haven Mutants and people as prey to be hunted and eaten.

Allies: Primarily their own kind. Occasionally, associates with or may serve other evil beings. Associates with people for the sole purpose of stalking them as prey.

Value: Horune Pirates and other Slavers pay 6,000-8,000 credits for a Caterpillar Man, usually selling them as monsters in the gladiatorial arena or as living garbage disposals to dispose of the bodies of those who die on the ship during transit and in the arena. The latter use may appeal to anyone with the need to dispose of any evidence of murder, as Caterpillar Men devour the entire body, bones and all, leaving only a blood stain and pieces of the skull and teeth behind.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 29: Madhaven™**, page 92.



Cerebro-Scramblers

By Charles Walton Jr. and Kevin Siembieda

Cerebro-Scramblers are more commonly known simply as *Scramblers* or *Air Octopus*. Initial reaction upon meeting one for the first time is always unnerving. These floating nightmares are a mass of undulating tentacles. The creature resembles a giant octopus attached to the body of an eel floating or swimming through the air. Their six, long tentacles make them seem more massive than they really are, with most standing a head taller than a human, and females generally being 20% larger than males.

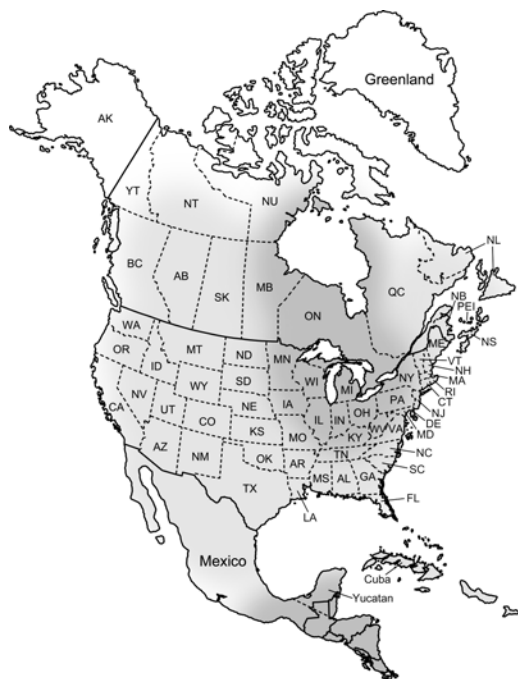
Rather than live in the water, Cerebro-Scramblers float and swim through the air. Their natural state is hovering and floating in mid-air, even when they sleep. Though their eel-like body trunk may touch the ground or move only a few inches to a foot (0.3 m) above the ground, Scramblers can also crawl, using its tentacles to pull itself along or slithering like a snake across the ground. When floating, its body position resembles a cobra or rattlesnake ready to strike. The eel-like body tapers toward the end and has frilled fins that undulate. The motion of the fins and tail/body helps the creature to glide and move through the air with precision, though as a rule, not very quickly.

Though Cerebro-Scramblers are primarily land creatures – or are they “air” creatures? – they are born in water and are natural swimmers that can breathe underwater indefinitely. Presumably, the creature evolved from an alien sea or swamp, before becoming an airborne land animal. They can also climb and travel through trees with startling speed and agility for an animal its size. This includes climbing cables, rope and netting, and scaling the sides of buildings and mountain cliffs using their tentacles, and assisted by their natural ability to hover and psionic Levitation. Many Scramblers make their lairs inside abandoned buildings, under bridges, in the rafters of abandoned buildings, ruins, tunnels and caves, but also in tall trees and cliff-side mountain crevices. These incredibly versatile and adaptive creatures have also been known to live in water-filled sewers, tunnels, ocean cliffs and along the shores of lakes and marshlands.

Scramblers are exceptionally intelligent animals, easily on par with the chimpanzee and dolphin, probably higher. They exhibit fundamental hunting strategy and tactics, are inquisitive and observant, and learn quickly from their experiences. Each group, known as a shoal, has its own distinguished leaders, members and culture. These octopus-like land cephalopods from another world may hunt alone, in pairs or in shoals of 10-40 adult members, plus 2D4 juveniles half the size and power of adults, and 2D6 three year olds the size of a wolf. How one shoal interacts, learns, reacts and hunts may be completely different from another, but each group is well suited and adapted to the surroundings they have adopted as their territory or hunting ground.

They are very cunning hunters and work as a team to overcome large or difficult prey or to vanquish invaders. Cerebro-Scramblers seem to enjoy challenges and like figuring out the weaknesses and traits of newly encountered species. In fact, they seem fascinated by humanoids of all types, but especially humans, Psi-Stalkers, Atlanteans, Lemurians, D’Norr Devilmen, Lyvorrk and the Lynn-Srial, but seem wary and even hostile toward insectoids like the Xiticix as well as monstrous or bestial humanoids including the N’mbyr Gorilla People, Mastadonoids, Septumbran, Simvan, Werebeasts and Dog Boys, among others.





Cerebro-Scramblers often silently observe and tail such people from a safe distance, slipping in closer to steal a few of their possessions for examination and may keep items as little treasures. Such trophies and keepsakes can be almost anything from a computer, radio, E-Clip, weapon or helmet, to a generator, backpack, spare tire, a magic item, an article of clothing or a box or bag containing anything from food or drink to tools and widgets. (“Hey, have you seen my knit cap anywhere?” “Or my canteen?”)

An encounter with one or more Scramblers may also entail touching – a lot of touching. The animal uses its tentacles to touch and examine everything from machines, weapons, and objects to prepared food, pets, livestock, and people; all of which are of interest to this strange and intelligent animal. Scramblers are very tactile oriented, so they touch things with their tentacles like a blind person trying to imagine what a particular person or an object looks like through touch. There is nothing sexual about these tactile encounters. It is all about familiarizing and understanding the interloper(s) and the devices they use. Such encounters are rather like dealing with a child who has no sense of boundaries and who climbs right up into your lap, grabs your nose with one hand and puts his other into your pocket to see what you have. It is also likely that the Scrambler is using its psychic ability of Object Read which also requires touching it.

This attraction to, and affinity with, humans and human-like D-Bees makes the Cerebro-Scrambler easy to domesticate and turn into a friendly and helpful companion or guard animal. Scramblers are quick to defend and protect their human master (truth is they probably consider the human to be “their” companion) and quickly learn to understand basic words and commands on par with a dog or chimpanzee. The endlessly inquisitive Scrambler is particularly attracted to adventurers, scouts and explorers as the creature enjoys travel, exploration and new experiences. It loves to meet new people and animals and see new places, even if the experience is frightening or involves combat.

Though some people have speculated that Cerebro-Scramblers somehow tap into human emotion, perhaps via Empathy or Telepathy, it has never been proven. And those who travel with Scrambler companions insist this is not the case. (Or are they unaware of it?)

Other encounters with the animal can be much less friendly and may feel like the Scramblers are stalking them or harassing them with malicious acts of vandalism. In reality, it’s just one or more of the animals being intrusively curious and accidentally causing damage. This happens when the beast(s) rummages through backpacks, containers and the trunks of vehicles, and (most likely inadvertently) breaking things or scattering them all around after examining them. Such intrusive investigators may also take bites out of food, empty canteens and bottles of liquid, take down tents, take apart simple machines, turn devices on (or off, like a sensor or communications system), start vehicles and heavy machinery, opening or closing doors, containers, cages and gates, perhaps releasing animals or captives because they hate slavery and often free people or animals in captivity, all out of playful curiosity. In most cases, the Scrambler means no harm. It is simply having fun examining or *playing* with all of this interesting “alien” stuff. That said, Cerebro-Scramblers can be intentionally mischievous and deliberately vandalize. Such activity is usually done to thwart and chase away enemies, destructive and frightening creatures (to the Scramblers) or out of spite/revenge for a wrong committed against the shoal or one of its members. Cerebro-Scramblers can hold a grudge and do seek retribution for acts of cruelty, murder or capture and enslavement of their kind, and know when a fellow Scrambler is a willing companion or a prisoner or slave.

Some experiences with Cerebro-Scramblers may simply involve the creatures wanting to play with the people passing through, though sometimes, their play may seem a bit rough, rude and a bit more like harassment, theft or sabotage. A Scrambler may seem to attack (trip, push, slap, etc.) and then run/float away in an attempt to get humanoid to give chase in a *game of tag* or *keep away*. Or it might take something, especially if it seems like something the travelers need or want, and then run and hide with it in a game of *hide and seek*. Likewise, the animal may want to play catch or keep away with a person’s possession, or want to *wrestle* which may seem quite terrifying for people who have no idea what the “monster” wants from them. In many cases, people assume the Scrambler is a monster, not a playful new friend, so they attack the creature and unleash lethal force against it. Which is real shame, because an innocent encounter offers the same fun experience as playing with a dolphin or a bold, friendly monkey. Attack, and what might have been a joyful experience quickly changes into a brutal battle with deadly consequences on both sides. Though Cerebro-Scramblers are generally peace-loving and playful, they are capable of fighting and killing when they feel such extreme action is necessary. That includes protecting themselves and members of their shoal. Fun and games gone terribly wrong.

Sometimes the encounter is violent from beginning to end. Cerebro-Scramblers are territorial predators that may attack or try to chase away those they believe to be competing, humanoid predators or intruders who either startle it or whom the animal believes is a threat to its mate or its young, or its keepsake treasure trove. Cerebro-Scramblers, like Earth cephalopods, like to gather trinkets and place them around their den/lair as trophies and decorations. Trinkets that adventurers might regard as valuable treasure for the taking after they kill the monster. Likewise, hurt a Scrambler or its mate, offspring, or a fellow member of the shoal, and one or several of them will strike back. Depending on the offense, Scramblers can be outright vengeful, tracking down and harassing or killing people who have hurt or wronged it in some manner, even if it takes days or weeks.

Cerebro-Scramblers that are trained to be companions or guard animals behave very much like a well-trained dog or chimpanzee, only smarter. Legendary animal trainer *Cathy Schutt* was one of the first to prove Scramblers understand commands, follow orders well, are cooperative, and exhibit loyalty and affection, right down to nuzzling and holding hands via their tentacles. As a guard animal, the creature is ever vigilant of potential danger, especially from monsters and predators, including the demonic. They also function well as intelligent hunters and retrievers of small to medium animals.

Domesticated Scramblers form an emotional bond with their owner and consider him and his family and friends, or teammates, to be part of *its shoal*. Moreover, the animal has the rare ability to transfer its own I.S.P. into its master and its friends/shoal members – provided they are psychic – to help fuel their psychic abilities. To be domesticated properly, the animal must be trained from a young age as adults refuse to bond with another species.

Problems, however, may arise when such *pets and companions* become bored. And these inquisitive creatures get bored fairly easily. When that happens, the animal is prone to float away and go off to explore or follow a person or animal that it finds interesting. All Cerebro-Scramblers collect trinkets and trophies, and do so by simply taking whatever it is that strikes their fancy. An action most people would consider to be *stealing*. As you can imagine, this can cause a serious problem for their human companion(s), especially since the pet Scrambler probably stows its memorabilia inside its owner's pockets, backpack and luggage, or under the seat of a vehicle. Victims of such theft may not believe a person was not responsible, and even if they do, they may insist the monstrous pet be punished, put on a leash, or put down/killed! Many people are understanding and forgiving in situations like this, especially if the item has little value; others are not.

There is another problem. Cerebro-Scramblers take an automatic dislike toward demons, evil monsters, bestial humanoids, insectoids, Simvan, slavers, bullies and cruel people in general. Worse, the animal has a good memory, holds a grudge and can become quite vengeful against those it dislikes. This usually amounts to painful and embarrassing pranks and practical jokes, like tripping somebody via one of its tentacles or Telekinetic Push, untying shoelaces, tying shoelaces together, and any of the things noted earlier. And not just tripping someone, but causing them to fall into a river or lake, or mud puddle, or to get hit in the face with a pie or to knock over an entire table of food or drinks, break items, and so on. This is likely to be in addition to other forms of harassment against the target of revenge, such as the Scrambler stealing his food and valuables, unlocking doors and cages, turning on recording or broadcasting equipment (again, to cause embarrassment or trouble), and similar. Worse, Scramblers seem to enjoy the trouble they cause such “enemies” and even laugh. When a Scrambler laughs there is a deep, breathy “heh, heh, heh,” sound and its entire body bobs up and down, again, rather like a chimpanzee only with tentacles. Some people have claimed to even see the creature smile.

Scramblers could have gotten their name from a number of traits and characteristics: their ability to swing and scramble through trees and scramble up the sides of buildings, or from their own means of communication between each other which involves squeaks, squeals, chirps, clicks, clucking, and slurping noises that resemble a scrambled communications transmission. However, the beast gets the name because their physical presence scrambles and knocks out communications equipment, cameras, computers,

monitors, sensor systems, and other electronic devices. This happens whenever a Scrambler comes within a 10 foot (3 m) radius of an electronic device. Even shielded and hardened electronics are interfered with (inflicting a -20% penalty on all related skill rolls and reduce bonuses for targeting by half). In addition, it can fire an electromagnetic pulse that temporarily knocks out electronics.

Cerebro-Scrambler – Carnivore Predator

Also Known As: Air Octopus, Squid Monkey, and Clickers.

Alignment: A friendly, mischievous predator generally considered to be Unprincipled or good alignment, harmless to humans unless the animal is threatened or attacked.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+9 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+11, M.A. 1D6+14, P.S. 1D6+19 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+14, P.E. 1D6+14, P.B. 1D6+2 to most humanoids, Spd (special, below).

Floating/Hovering in the Air: Speed is 1D6+9, or 10 mph (16 km). Floating is the animal's natural state, usually only a few inches to a foot above the ground. Can also physically crawl or slither on the ground at the same speed as floating in the air, but also see Speed Burst, Swing through Trees and Swimming. Floating in an upright position is its natural mode of travel, not prone/lengthwise.

Speed Burst Swimming Through the Air: 22 mph (35 km), but can be maintained for only 1D6+6 minutes. Maximum height is 12 feet (3.7 m), but usually closer to the ground and can be as low as 6 inches (15 cm) above the ground, flowing over the contour of the ground and debris.

Swinging through Trees and Swimming in Water: When climbing or swinging through trees like a monkey, or swimming in water, a speed of 18 mph (29 km) can be maintained for up to seven hours before needing to rest for one or two hours, or reduce speed by half. When swinging through trees using its tentacles and psionics for extra oomph and precision guidance, Scramblers can hurl themselves up to 15 feet (4.6 m) high and 40 feet (12.2 m) across; 50% higher or farther when moving at maximum speed. This enables them to swing from tree to tree or from rooftop to rooftop, with relative ease.

Note: Cerebro-Scramblers typically hover only a few inches to a foot (0.3 m) above the ground. Maximum height off the ground while floating or swimming through the air is 12 feet (3.7 m), but only for 2D6 minutes at a time. Using the psychic power of Levitation, a Scrambler can rise much higher, but only straight up and down. Levitation can also be used to break a fall. Maximum depth tolerance underwater is three miles (4.8 km), but feels uncomfortable.

M.D.C. by Location:

Tail – 1D4x10+80

*Tentacles (6) – 1D6+45 each

Main Body/Head – 1D6x10+120

* A single asterisk means a small and/or difficult target to strike and requires a Called Shot to hit. Even then the attacker is -3 to strike.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Cerebro-Scrambler has a main body of 1D6x10+20 S.D.C., 1D6x10+30 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 10. All other locations are S.D.C. at the same number as M.D.C., above, i.e. 4D6+30 M.D.C. = 4D6+30 S.D.C./Hit Points. The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D., so a bite that does 1D6 M.D. on Rifts Earth does 1D6 S.D.C. damage on S.D.C. worlds.

Horror Factor: 10 for an individual, 14 when encountered in numbers larger than four. People tend to be scared because of the animal's appearance, size and ability to hover, but the animal is not usually aggressive toward humans or D-Bees unless threatened or attacked.

Size: 6-7 feet (1.8 to 2.1 m) in height when floating erect, its head bent forward and raised up like a cobra on its tail ready to strike, which is how it stands and floats; 9-11 feet (2.7 to 3.34 m) long from head to tail tip when prone. Each of its six tentacles has a 6-8 foot (1.8 to 2.4 m) reach. **Note:** Females are 20% larger than the males.

Weight: 180-250 pounds (81 to 112.5 kg; females are larger than males). The tentacles and large head/upper body make Scramblers appear larger and heavier than they really are.

Average Life Span: 4D6+40 years on average, but some have lived to twice that age. Scramblers reach physical maturity by age seven, and sexual maturity by ten.

Females lay 1D6x10 eggs, usually deposited in a safe place on the floor of swamps, marshland, ponds, pools of water and shallow lakes or a lazy river, every 5-7 years, and leave. When the young hatch, they are roughly the size of a human's pinky and must fend for themselves; instinct helping them to survive. The young spend most of their first year in their underwater habitat eating smaller fish and bugs. By the end of the second year, they will have grown to the size of a human's forearm, about 10-14 inches (15 to 35.6 cm) long, and begin to spend half of their time, or more, on dry land and in the air, mostly up among the tree branches. They double in size over the next year, and again the next, and the next until they reach their full size.

The first two years are the most dangerous for Cerebro-Scramblers and only 10% survive to become adults. The rest are picked off by frogs, fish, birds and predators during those first 2-3 years. Adult Scramblers begin to let three year olds join their shoals to teach the young how to better use their abilities to hunt and survive.

P.P.E.: 5D6+8

Disposition: Extremely inquisitive and playful. Though attracted to humans and D-Bees, they are wary of people and regard them and most sentient beings as dangerous, destructive and unpredictable. Thus, Cerebro-Scramblers in the wild tend to be elusive and watch people from a distance. Most Scramblers have the gentle, playful personality of Earth dolphins and are even smarter than dolphins, orca, dogs and chimpanzees. They sometimes come to the rescue of other animals and people in need, but prey upon small and medium-size animals, from fish, crustaceans, amphibians and reptiles to birds (large and small), water fowl, rodents, raccoons, possums, ground hogs, and other animals. They like to hunt and love to explore as well as watch people.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Art 50%, Climbing 98%/95%, Escape Artist 65%, Land Navigation 85%, Pick Locks/Open Doors/Containers/Battery Casings/Remove E-Clip 70%, Palming 80%, Prowl 60% (+10% in the air, in trees and underwater), Sing 75% (not that we would recognize it as singing), Swimming 95%, Tailing 80%, and Tracking (animals) 60% (+10% to track humanoids).

Natural Abilities: Supernatural P.S., hovering and floating in air is the creature's natural state, has six arms/tentacles and an eel-like tail, can breathe air and underwater indefinitely, can survive in fresh and salt water but prefers the fresh; climb, swim,

swing from tree branches, possess an array of psionic abilities and Bio-Regenerates 2D6+6 M.D.C. per 12 hours of rest (or much faster via the psionic *Bio-Regeneration* ability) and can regrow a lost eye, tentacle or tail within 1D6+2 days.

Use of Tools, Weapons and Keepsakes (special): In the wild, Cerebro-Scramblers are known to use simple and primitive tools such as sticks, clubs, rocks, a found knife, etc., as well as simple human tools like a hammer, screwdriver, staff, spear, keys, etc., and are able to pick locks and pry open a locked container or door, cut a rope or cable, open doors, flip a switch, press a button, and so on. It can pick up and use a gun or power tool but is -5 to strike using it as a weapon. No bonus to strike or parry with melee weapons, just an unmodified die roll, and such items are only used in an emergency and as available. Scramblers do not carry weapons and tools the way humans carry weapons and gear on belts and in backpacks. Cerebro-Scramblers do not like to use any item in combat more complicated than a rock, club/tree branch, staff/tree branch, spear, knife, axe or sword, and tend to grab a blunt weapon, which is most likely how it would use a rifle, as a blunt weapon. However, they recognize weapons and understand their danger.

The animal also likes to sing, draw with chalk or charcoal, paint, stack rocks, build and weave nests out of sticks and vegetation, and collect trophies. All Scramblers decorate their lair/den/nest with trinkets, trophies and memorabilia, which can be a wide range of items from one or a few crystals (or TW item with a crystal), uniquely shaped or colored stones, pine cones, feathers, and seashells to human items like one or more E-Clips, a gun, knife, Vibro-Blade, hand grenade(!), flashlight, children's toy, TW weapon or device, canteen, pocket mirror, language translator or pocket computer, strips of brightly colored cloth, tin cans, articles of clothing, or pieces of junk, especially if shiny or colorful. Basically whatever strikes its fancy or has some significance to the creature. **Note:** The animal may, over time, tire of a trophy and abandon or discard it. Sometimes it is willing to take something new and shiny in exchange for an old trinket, but it will never let go of a favorite treasured item (for whatever the reason) and may fight to the death to keep it, or grab it and a few other items and run away with them until the intruder/thief leaves.

Electronics Scrambling (special): Close proximity, within a 10 foot (3 m) radius, causes interference with electronic devices, scrambling radios and video transmissions/communications, sensors, computers and other electronic devices. Inflicts a -30% penalty on all skills related to the use of said electronic device, etc., plus response time from the device is slow, taking ten times longer than it should. Also reduce bonuses for targeting by half. Even shielded and hardened electronics inside a robot or vehicle are interfered with, though the penalty is half (15%).

EMP/Electromagnetic Pulse (special): The Scrambler's most powerful defense against technology is an electromagnetic pulse that temporarily knocks out electronic devices. The EMP burst is a deliberate attack, because the Scrambler is smart enough to know it impairs many of the weapons/sensors/devices used by people (and if not the weapon itself, its targeting computer and other electronic elements). They know the EMP is especially useful against people wearing helmets, and body armor and against cyborgs, robots and vehicles. The fact that its electromagnetic pulse seems to affect the machines of the two-legged creatures (i.e., humans and D-Bees) is something all Scramblers have learned. **Penalties:** The electromagnetic

blast temporarily shuts down or completely scrambles radio signals, video feeds and transmissions, electrical feeds, radar, sonar, motion detectors, optic systems, sensor systems, targeting systems, communication systems/radios, cameras, computers, monitors, etc., making them unintelligible. All affected devices temporarily shut down or show static and distortion such as flickering or snow-filled monitors, and long delays in displaying data that is garbled, jumbled and incoherent; communications transmissions and video are undecipherable and computers and sensors shut down and reboot. Range of EMP Blast: 120 feet (36.6 m) as a focused blast in front of the Scrambler (double under water and on ley lines), or a 30 foot (9.1 m) radius generated around the animal. Duration of Scrambled Systems: A short 1D6+2 melee rounds, but that's 45 seconds to 2 minutes too long during combat or a crisis. Counts as Two Melee Attacks for the Animal: Each EMP pulse counts as two melee attacks and cannot be performed more than twice per melee round. Does not have accumulative penalties if fired at the same target several times. Once a device or sensor is knocked out, it's out for the duration.

Note: Underwater, the electromagnetic pulse is used against technology (power armor, submarine sensors, boats, etc.) the same as described above, but is primarily used to hunt. The EMP blast stuns small to medium-size fish and other aquatic prey weighing less than 50 pounds (22.5 kg). Stunned underwater prey are -6 on combat maneuvers (initiative, strike, parry, dodge, etc.) and their number of melee attacks and Spd are reduced by half, making them easier to capture and kill. An EMP blast has the same effect and full penalties on *Burrower Bruins*, who are sensitive to sound and vibration! However, only a -2 penalty to combat bonuses against large aquatic predators like sharks, tuna, dolphins, etc., but sometimes the blast is enough to dissuade casual predators who are not too hungry.

Hover and Swim through the Air (special): Cerebro-Scramblers hover a few inches to a foot (0.3 m) above the ground, but can rise up into the air up to 10 feet (3 m) high and swim through the air in a stretched out, prone position at that height, rather than upright like a coiled snake. See the *Speed Attribute* for complete details about speed floating, swimming through the air, swinging through trees and swimming in water.

Share Psychic Energy/I.S.P. (special): Cerebro-Scramblers are able to lend their own I.S.P. to another, providing a temporary boost of I.S.P. to one or more companions it considers to be its benevolent master/leader, teammate or friend. Since they gather in groups (shoals), Scramblers are social creatures. In times of need, a Cerebro-Scrambler can make a psychic connection with another living being and let that being draw upon its I.S.P. reserve. Up to half of its base I.S.P. can be made available in this fashion. In the wild, I.S.P. is usually shared with a fellow Scrambler in order to heal itself or to escape trouble, but there are tales of compassionate and sympathetic Cerebro-Scramblers that have helped humans and D-Bees in this manner, especially when it comes to saving the life of an innocent child or a good person in trouble.

Domesticated Cerebro-Scramblers do the same for their humanoid master or another well-liked and trusted member of the group which it serves. Those trained at a young age by humanoids to become a pet, companion, guard or hunting animal regard the people it serves and those who may associate with them to be members of its shoal and friends; provided they treat the Scrambler and each other with kindness most of the time.

To share its own I.S.P. with another, the Scrambler must touch the person with one of its tentacles – but only one person at a time can share its I.S.P. **Note:** A Cerebro-Scrambler cannot be forced to share its I.S.P. The animal can become quite stubborn in this regard, refusing to share I.S.P. even under physical or mental torture. Many would rather die than help a cruel or wicked being in any way, and are especially defiant of demons, the Minions of Splugorth, dragons and the supernatural. A Scrambler only shares its I.S.P. with those it likes and with whom it feels a bond of kinship or friendship.

This ability to share I.S.P. makes them a favorite pet/companion among *Wild Psi-Stalkers*, *Mind Melters*, *Psi-Druids*, and to a lesser degree, *Cyber-Knights*, *Psi-Warriors*, *Mystics*, *Bursters* and other psychics. (See **Rifts® World Book 12: Psyscape™** for a number of psionic wielding character classes.)

Scramblers have a strong fear of dragons and are leery even of Dragon Hatchlings as well as reptilian D-Bees, insectoids, and beings with animal features such as Sasquatch, Wendigo, Loup Garou, werebeasts, Dog Boys, Kill Cats, Xitix, and the supernatural in general.

Also see Psionics.

Attacks per Melee: Six for males, seven for females.

Mega-Damage: Fight with bite, tentacles, EMP or psionics.

Bite/Nip, Restrained – 1D6, 2D6 or 3D6 S.D.C.

Bite, Full Strength (a hard beak, concealed): 1D6 M.D.

Tentacle Strike, Restrained – 2D6, 3D6 or 4D6 S.D.C. as it chooses.

Tentacle Strike, Full Strength – 2D6 M.D.

Tail Strike – 2D6+2 M.D.

Also see Psionics.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls (all), +2 to strike, +4 to parry, +3 to dodge (double when swinging from trees and when underwater), +2 to disarm, +4 to entangle, +3 to pull punch, +1 to save vs poison, +1 to save vs mind control, and +3 to save vs possession.

Vulnerabilities: As the saying goes, “Curiosity killed the cat.” The Cerebro-Scrambler’s insatiable curiosity and empathy toward other creatures in distress (unless prey), as well as their affinity toward humans and other humanoids, can often get them into serious trouble. So does their proclivity to steal things they like. In many ways, Cerebro-Scramblers are borderline kleptomaniacs which causes obvious problems.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Considered an animal with Master Psychic abilities. Needs a 10 or better to save vs psionic attack and mind control (see Combat and possible M.E. bonuses). **Base I.S.P.:** 1D6x10+20 for males, 1D6x10+35 for females, and both get an additional 1D6 I.S.P. for every four years of age.

Psychic Abilities: *Bio-Regeneration* (self, 6, restores 1D6 M.D.C. per use), *Death Trance* (1), *Detect Psionics* (6), *Empathy* (4, but can only use Empathy on non-Scramblers by touch or when within 15 feet/4.6 m; Empathy between fellow Scramblers is 100 feet/30.5 m), *Healing Touch* (6, but only works on non-M.D.C. creatures), *Levitation* (varies, can levitate self at a cost of 8 I.S.P.), *Mind Block* (4), *Object Read* (6, but has only the most rudimentary understanding and requires touch), *See Aura* (but must be touching the person/creature), *See the Invisible* (4), *Sense Evil* (2), *Stop Bleeding* (4), *Telekinetic Leap* (8), and *Telekinetic Push* (4).

Habitat: Anywhere across North America, but primarily the forests and waterways of the eastern half of the Old American

and Canadian Empires, especially the Great Lakes region and Hudson Bay. Smaller populations of transient shoals have also been spotted in the forests and jungles of Southern Mexico and Central and South America, as well as Africa. Scramblers favor forests, marshes, wetlands, and swamps in cool to moderate climates.

Enemies: Cerebro-Scramblers fear and hate evil beings, especially demons and other evil supernatural creatures and monsters, but tend to judge most people on a case by case basis. As noted earlier, Scramblers take a quick disliking and distrust of most monsters, insect-based D-Bees and creatures (including Xitixix), dragons, reptilian beings, vampires, demons, Splugorth and their minions, Dark Hounds, Dog Boys, and other bestial D-Bees as well as animal predators. They also dislike slavers, bullies and Mind Bleeders.

Mind Bleeders in Africa (see **Rifts® World Book 4: Africa**) have learned of the creature's ability to provide I.S.P. to its owner, and have contracted with Horune Pirates, slavers and big game hunters to acquire young Scramblers to be domesticated. This has resulted in a bounty placed on them. Ironically, many Mind Bleeders are manipulative and cruel, making the bond necessary between man and beast for sharing I.S.P. unlikely. Sadly, cruel masters will, as a result, eventually kill the animal or release it into the wild.

Allies: Fellow Cerebro-Scramblers, Vagabonds, Wilderness Scouts, Cyber-Knights, Wild Psi-Stalkers, Psi-Druids, Psi-Warriors, Mind Melters, and other psychics, but Scramblers find most humans and D-Bees fascinating and may form a bond with any humanoid regardless of O.C.C. or psychic ability. Shifters, especially those with some psionic abilities, and Mystics may also find the animal desirable. Most Scramblers are attracted to beings of good alignment, and are good themselves. Some Scramblers and even entire shoals will work together to escape or take down sizeable targets or large numbers of enemies, and do not, generally, fight each other.

Value: Domesticated, young Cerebro-Scramblers sell for 4,000-16,000 credits. They can be a loving pet/companion or a loyal hunting or guard animal, but make terrible work animals and cannot be used as a riding animal. They hate the drudgery of routine work, and will starve themselves rather than be held captive. Scramblers love to travel, hunt, explore, and see new things.

The meat of the Cerebro-Scrambler is good (tastes like calamari), so many large predators, pack hunters, and some humanoids, including Simvan and Xitixix, hunt and eat them. Remember, adult Scramblers cannot be domesticated and trained, but they can become temporary friends or allies to characters of good alignment fighting a common enemy.

A potential treasure: The Scrambler's current lair is likely to have one or several items of value to humans, though perhaps not much of value. Probably common items such as 1D4 uncharged E-Clips, perhaps one charged E-Clip, a Vibro-Blade and/or an S.D.C. knife or hatchet, a handgun, one hand grenade or flare, a gem or piece of jewelry worth 2D6x10 credits, a gold or silver nugget or item, a walkie-talkie, a language translator, pocket computer, camera, an empty or filled canteen, a bottle of booze or Psi-Cola, a military ration, a pocket mirror, a colorful cap or piece of clothing, a book, and *maybe* even one TW device or TW weapon or other magic item, or just about anything among its many other useless trophies likes bottle caps, feathers, shiny rocks and pieces of

reflective metal, etc. Game Masters, use your discretion and moderation.

Note: This is a new creature appearing for the very first time. Inspired by the art and writing of Charles "Chuck" Walton Jr.

Chatterlings

By Kevin Siembieda

Chatterlings are sometimes mistaken for a dragon or dinosaur, but they are a strange breed of mystical being visiting from an unknown world. They are long-necked and serpentine, with thick, wrinkled flesh, ribbing along the spine, a long snaking tail and a crown of horns that resemble large thin feathers. The head, however, is more insect than reptilian with large silver, bronze or gold eyes that look like gleaming metal and small horn in the forehead between them. The hind legs are larger than the front ones and their hands are more human-like with thin sensitive fingers. Like dragons, Chatterlings are creatures of magic and seem fascinated by the mystic arts and magic items. However, they are not as powerful as dragons and possess a very limited range of mystic knowledge.

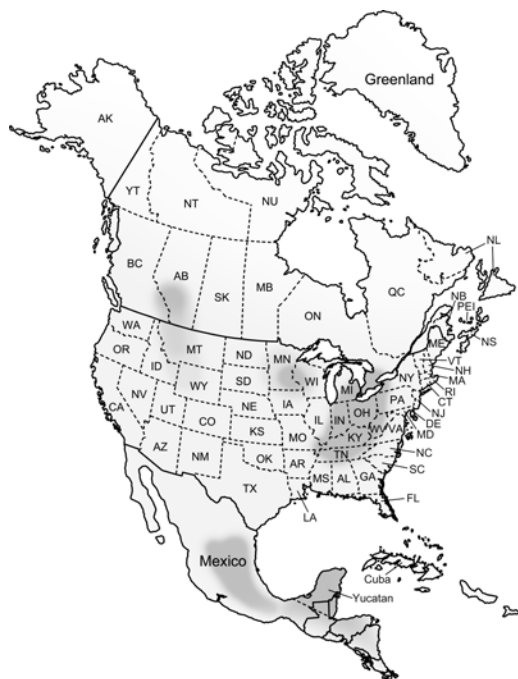
Chatterlings are a rare and mysterious breed of serpent or dinosaur that has appeared, off and on as lone individuals or small groups across Rifts Earth. They are reportedly most plentiful in India and parts of Southeast Asia, but they are also known to visit and take up residence and adventuring throughout North and South America. The beast seems to find places of magic, like the Magic Zone, Lazlo, Tolkeen and others located in the American Midwest, lower Canada and the Yucatan Peninsula, of particular interest. Why, is unknown. The creatures claim to prefer jungle environments, yet they are found in plenty of locations that are not rainforests or always hot. They appear to be completely at home among ordinary people and love civilization where they can engage in politics, crime, and skullduggery.

They were particularly fond of the Kingdom of Tolkeen before its fall and are known to live and work within the Federation of Magic, throughout the Magic Zone, Calgary the Kingdom of Monsters, and some other places of magic. The leaders of Lazlo and New Lazlo neither like nor trust these creatures, have nothing to do with evil Chatterlings and try to keep Anarchist and even those of good alignments at arms length. Though friendly and excellent communicators, Chatterlings are notoriously self-serving and cutthroat – backstabbing associates with a smile and a kind word whenever it serves their purpose.

As their name suggests, the Chatterlings strength is their use of words to trick and manipulate others. It is said that a Chatterling can talk itself out of any situation, even a firing squad. Indeed, they are masters of diplomacy, lies, deception and double-dealing. Thus they love political intrigue and enjoy being the power behind the throne, pulling strings, and establishing secret networks to engage in acts of spying, smuggling, theft, forgery, gambling, extortion and racketeering.

Foolish Tolkeen Shifters thought Chatterlings would make the perfect spies and assassins to use against the Coalition States, but the creatures turned out to be too self-serving and treacherous to be of much use, especially against a technological power that would not welcome such creatures. A few dozen were summoned by Tolkeen Shifters before anyone came to this realization, and they refuse to go home – wherever that might be. A handful worked for Tolkeen successfully, although there is no doubt that they stole





money and magic items for themselves as the Kingdom fell under siege by the CS, and may have other schemes in the works.

Since then, they have scattered. Some going to the Kingdom of Monsters, others to the Federation of Magic, and still others to any number of places. Though often evil and cold-hearted, most Chatterlings will see no value in working with or helping the Minions of Hell conquer the Americas, and ultimately, the world. Thus, some try to stay out of the conflict while the majority are likely to work against the forces of the Minion War. As usual, this will be done mostly from the shadows without putting their own necks at much risk if they can avoid it.

Otherwise, most Chatterlings sell their skills and knowledge to the highest bidder, powerful people and nations, and to the side of a conflict they think will benefit *themselves* the most whether it wins or loses. Or both sides of a conflict if they can manage to play both for their own gain. Chatterlings are known to associate with mercenaries, criminals and the Black Market, as well as slavers, pirates, practitioners of magic of every ilk, the Horune, and the Minions of Splugorth, among others, but not with the Splugorth themselves. They tend to avoid Atlantis, except for the occasional visit – probably in disguise – to the Splynn Dimensional Market. They have a deep disdain for the Splugorth, whom they consider to be brutal transdimensional slavers and scum.

Chatterling, NPC Monster/Alien Creature of Magic

Also Known As: The Little Dragon, Chatterbox and Lizard Thief.

Alignment: Miscreant (55%), Diabolic (10%), Aberrant (10%), Anarchist (20%), and other (5%). Good Chatterlings are uncommon, but not unheard of.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+17, M.E. 1D4+14, M.A. 1D6+19, P.S. 1D4+16 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D4+16, P.E. 1D4+17, P.B. 1D4+8, Spd 1D6+26 running, or 20 mph (32 km). This speed can be maintained for up to one hour. 30 mph (48 km) can be performed in a short burst lasting 1D4 minutes. However, a more sustainable trotting speed of 8 mph (12.8 mph) can be maintained for up to eight hours before needing to rest.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 150

*Arms (2) – 80 each

Hind Legs (2) – 120 each

*Tail (1) – 150

Main Body – 1D4x10+180 plus 30 M.D.C. per level of experience.

* A single asterisk means a small and/or difficult target to strike and requires a Called Shot to hit. Even then the attacker is -4 to strike. Damage regenerates.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Chatterling has a main body of 1D4x10+90 S.D.C., 1D6x10+90 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 12. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (80 M.D.C. = 80 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D.

Horror Factor: 10

Size: 24-30 feet (7.3 to 9.1 m) from nose to tail tip; stand 10-12 feet (3 to 3.7 m) tall when sitting on haunches. The beast is long and narrow, so 4-5 feet (1.2 to 1.5 m) wide at the shoulders.

Weight: 2-5 tons.

Average Life Span: 200-290 years, but some have been reported to be as much as 380 years old. Females lay 1D4 eggs

Level of Experience: 1D6+3 or set by the Game Master for NPCs. If allowed as a player character, start out at level one. Use the Dragon Hatchling experience table.

P.P.E.: 100 +10 per level of experience.

Disposition: Most Chatterlings have a glib, affable and easy way about them. They tend (or pretend) to accept everybody as an equal and a friend to be made, while simultaneously exhibiting a complete disregard for authority, the law, title or power. Quick to bend or ignore the law for their own gain.

Chatterlings love magic items of every kind and appreciate technology, so they may use radios, sensors, recorders, guns and even learn to drive one or more vehicles. Many also enjoy artwork, jewelry, gems, and precious metals, a trait they share with dragons.

Equivalent Skill Abilities/R.C.C. Skills (starting at level one):

Climbing 70%/70% (the prehensile tail helps), Find Contraband 36%, Interrogation 45%, Land Navigation 46%, Law 55% (so it can skirt or manipulate the law), Literacy: Dragonese/Elven 90% and knows one language of choice (+5% per level of experience, but speaks all languages), Mathematics: Basic and Advanced Math 98%, Prowl 65% (does not increase with experience), Radio: Basic 55%, Seduction 35%, Streetwise +40%, and Surveillance Systems 45%.

May also select three skills from each of these categories: Domestic, Espionage, Rogue, Technical, and W.P.

Secondary Skills (Optional): Select four skills from the skill categories listed on page 300 of **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** at level one and two additional skills at levels 3, 6, 10 and 14. No bonuses apply other than a possible I.Q. bonus.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 600 feet (183 m), see the invisible, resistance to fire and cold (half damage, including M.D. cold, magic cold or fire, and plasma energy weapons), impervious to disease, magically understands and speaks all languages 95%, and Bio-Regenerates 1D6 M.D.C. per melee round. Regrows lost limbs (fingers, hands, arms, feet, tail, etc.) in 2D4+10 weeks. **Note:** Chatterlings are not dragons and must *learn* metamorphosis spells in order to change their shape, size and appearance.

Prehensile Tail (special): The tail is articulate enough that it can be used as an extra limb in combat to strike opponents and

can use melee weapons (-5 to strike with guns or weapons that fire any projectile or energy beam), as well as operate simple machines, carry things and help to climb.

Attacks per Melee: Five (includes prehensile tail), +1 attack at levels 3, 6, 10 and 15.

Mega-Damage: Bites, punches and strikes with slashing tail, or by weapon, psionics or magic.

Bite – 1D4 M.D.

Punch, Restrained – 3D6 S.D.C. damage.

Punch, Full Strength – 1D6 M.D.

Power Punch – 2D6 M.D., but it counts as two melee attacks.

Tail Whip – 2D6 M.D.

Also see Magic and Psionics.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, +4 to parry, +2 to dodge, +4 to pull punch, +2 to roll with impact, +2 to save vs magic and poison, +4 to save vs illusions, +1 to save vs psionics and insanity, +4 to save vs Horror Factor.

Magic/Spell Knowledge: As magic wielding con-artists, thieves, smugglers, assassins and “fixers,” the spell magic known to the Chatterling primarily has to do with deception and theft. Spell descriptions not found in the **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** can be found in the **Rifts® Book of Magic** with nearly one thousand additional spells, magicks, magic weapons and more. **P.P.E.:** 100 +10 per level of experience.

Starts with Death Trance (1), Cleanse (6), Cloak of Darkness (6), Fool’s Gold (10), Globe of Daylight (2), Featherlight (10), Levitation (5), Mask of Deceit (15), Multiple Image (7), Mystic Alarm (5), Mystic Fulcrum (5) and Tongues (12).

Additional spells come at one per level of experience starting with level one. Spell selections are made from level 1-5 Wizard Spell Invocations. Select one *Metamorphosis* spell of choice, regardless of level, when the Chatterling reaches experience level 4, 8, 12 and 16.

Psionics: Considered to be a Master Psychic but limited to the following psionic abilities. **I.S.P.:** M.E. 170 +2D6 per level of experience.

Psionic Abilities: Alter Aura (2), Empathy (4), Hypnotic Suggestion (6; Super), Machine Ghost (12), Mask I.S.P. & Psionics (7), Mask P.P.E. (4), Mind Block (4), Object Read (6), Presence Sense (4), Psionic Invisibility (10), Read Dimensional Portal (6), See Aura (6), See the Invisible (4), Sense Dimensional Anomaly (4), Sense Evil (2), Sense Magic (3), Sense Time (2), Speed Reading (2), Telemechanics (10; Super), Telemechanic Mental Operation (12; Super), Telepathy (4), and Total Recall (2). **Note:** Does NOT gain additional psionics as it increases in experience.

Habitat: Claim to prefer jungles but may be encountered in any environment across the USA, Canada, Mexico, Central America, South America and Asia. They enjoy and thrive in cities and seem to genuinely like humans and D-Bees even as they manipulate and take advantage of them.

Enemies: Dislike Naruni, Splugorth and Sunaj. Love to trick, con and steal from dragons. Dragons, in turn, especially adult and ancient ones, do not like Chatterlings because the creatures don’t show them the fear and respect they deserve.

Allies: None per se, they see everyone as a potential friend, ally, business partner or most likely, *a mark*: a sucker/victim waiting to be plucked. The beast genuinely like humans and many D-Bees that share human traits and sensibility.

Only the most evil and cunning Chatterling considers working with the Minions of Hell, but most will not. There is no value or advantage to seeing Rifts Earth – a world seething with magic and opportunity, and which functions as an open gateway to thousands of other worlds – fall under the absolute control of any demonic power.

Value: Underworld figures find Chatterlings make good spies, snitches and lieutenants, provided one doesn’t mind the creature skimming 20-40% off the top. Most Chatterlings prefer to be their own boss.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® Coalition Wars® 6: Final Siege™**, page 73.

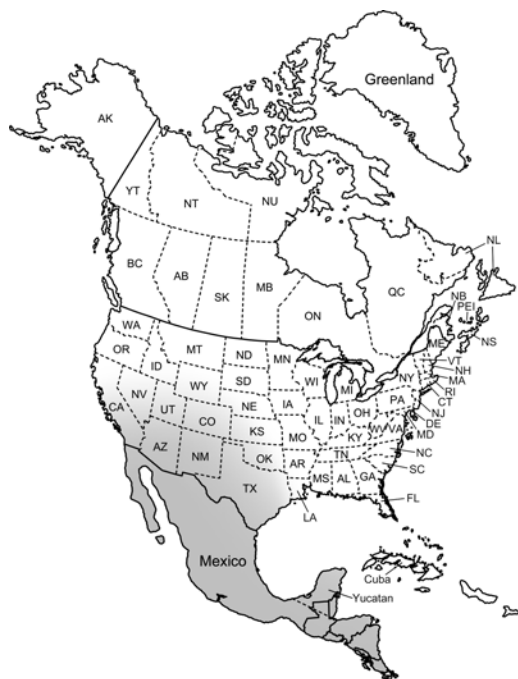


The Chupacabra

By Kevin Siembieda and Matthew Clements

One of the many mysteries of Mexico and Central America is the fabled *Chupacabra*. Spoken of in folklore long before the Coming of the Rifts, early sightings may have been evidence of previous attempts made by Vampire Intelligences to break into our dimension. Since the appearance of the Rifts, however, and especially since the establishment of the Vampire Kingdoms, the Chupacabra is known to be an actual flesh and blood creature, spoken of with fear and a certain bizarre reverence by the mortal inhabitants of Mexico. (In the southwestern USA, the beasts are regarded as dangerous pests to be exterminated or run off.)

Chupacabras are Mega-Damage animals with a hunger for blood. The creature looks like a genetic mistake that merged a dog with a monkey. The head of the Chupacabra resembles that of a ba-



boon or canine, with a long muzzle, small, pointed teeth and a pair of large fangs. The creature has large, blood-red eyes, and pointed dog- or bat-like ears. A crop of shaggy hair on its head and neck runs halfway down its spine like that of an African Lion, except the hair of the mane is much shorter than a lion's, and does not grow under or on the sides of the neck, just on the top of the head and down the back of the neck. The mane extends along the spine and between the shoulder blades. The Chupacabra's skin is a dull green color and scaly like a reptile. A series of short spikes run along the spine, ending just before the rump. The whip-like tail is more like a dog's than a monkey's and it is *not* prehensile. The hands have four fingers and an opposable thumb, but are small, like those of a monkey. The fingertips end in small, sharp, black claws for ripping flesh and climbing.

When there is a need for speed, the monster runs on all fours in a loping motion, but it can also stand, walk and run on its two hind legs at half speed. Chupacabras are good climbers and can leap a good distance and height, which means they can go from the ground to climbing trees or scaling the side of a barn, building or mountain cliff with a quick hop and a jump.

Like vampires, Chupacabras are nocturnal hunters that drink the blood of their prey. However, they are not the undead nor do they possess any of the powers of the vampire. Chupacabras are strange, possibly supernatural animals, and though they are night hunters, they sometimes come out during the day. They can also swim across rivers to get to new territories and are quite comfortable living up in the rafters of a barn or bridge or in trees, caves, ruins or anyplace they can hide. Despite their speed and power, Chupacabras tend to be shy creatures, even when they run in small packs of 2D4+1.

The bloodthirsty predators drink the blood of their animal prey, but they are also P.P.E. vampires, known for preying upon livestock and pets. The Chupacabra kills its prey, drinks in the P.P.E. and then drinks the blood, leaving the carcass behind otherwise intact. Chupacabras are extremely elusive creatures, equipped with natural psychic abilities that enable them to better track animals (and people) and evade pursuers.

Their physiology and breeding habits are mostly unknown, and theories regarding their origin range from them being Wild Vam-

pires that have somehow further devolved, to creatures from some long-forgotten vampire home world or alien dimension. All that is known is that they drink blood and they appear most often in dimensions and on planets that have been colonized by vampires.

Dense rain forests, Aztec and Mayan ruins and rocky deserts are all familiar habitats to the Chupacabra, and they have been reported to exist in the parched deserts and grasslands of the American Southwest and Northern Mexico since before the Great Cataclysm. The animals seem to be most prevalent living near farms and cattle ranches where they can find plentiful prey such as goats, sheep, chickens and other livestock.

Chupacabra shelter in caves and tunnels, in the remains of pre-Rifts sewer systems and in thickets, caves and burrows/dens dug into the earth. Solitary scavengers and hunters that sometimes congregate in small groups, Chupacabras normally stick to their animal diet, but have been known to attack and kill, and sometimes abduct, human children and small D-Bees. The creature may also attack adults who are sick, hurt, especially if bleeding, or trapped/pinned. They are sometimes seen on battlefields when the fighting is over, finishing off the wounded and drinking their P.P.E. and blood. Children abducted by the little monsters are taken back to their dens and kept as playthings for several days. However, if the child or small D-Bee proves to be an annoyance, too much trouble or the creature tires of him, it feeds and drags the body away from its den, dumping it out in the open for scavengers to devour.

Chupacabras are curious about people and may simply follow groups of humanoids or cause mischief because it amuses them. Necromancers and Shifters sometimes use the creatures as pets or Familiars. Among vampires, they may be kept as pets, like trained monkeys or watchdogs.

Chupacabras seem to have an affinity for the undead and obey them much better than any living human or D-Bee owner. Vampires use them not only as pets, but as watchdogs and for herding and corralling human cattle like sheepdogs would, as well as for running down slaves or prisoners trying to make an escape. In the capacity of wrangling humanoids or running down slaves, 2-4 Chupacabras are set upon one or two individuals, leaping on their backs, biting their legs and ankles and tripping them.

The creatures are found in the wild, especially tailing or living among packs of Wild Vampires. However, they are most numerous in the vampire cities where in addition to being vampire pets, wild Chupacabras scurry through the streets and alleys, on the sides of buildings, and along ledges and rooftops like oversized rats. Found in every vampire city (including Ciudad Juarez and El Paso, though in smaller numbers), Chupacabras overrun **Ixzotz**, whose untended ruins and abandoned vampire lairs make perfect dens for the creatures.

Most humans and D-Bees view Chupacabras as pests and vermin, or even as little monsters that spread disease and frighten, chase and kill livestock as well as represent a danger to house pets, children and the elderly. They terrorize human and D-Bee settlements throughout Central America, Mexico and the American Southwest and are the bane of ranchers, cowboys, the Simvan and other herdsmen. As a result, the little monsters are regularly hunted, trapped and exterminated.

Chupacabra, Blood and P.P.E. Predator

Also Known As: Vampire Protectors and Blood Drinkers.

Alignment: Considered Miscreant.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+7 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+6, M.A. 1D6+2, P.S. 1D6+8 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+9, P.E.

1D6+10, P.B. 1D6+1, Spd 1D6+24 running, or 19 mph (30.4 km). It can sustain a trotting speed of 10 mph (16 km) for up to six hours, and can run 30 mph (48 km) in short bursts lasting 3D4 minutes.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Head – 1D6+40

Main Body – 2D6+40

* A single asterisk means a small and/or difficult target to strike and requires a Called Shot to hit. Even then the attacker is -4 to strike.

Note: *On S.D.C. worlds*, Chupacabras have a main body of 2D6+20 S.D.C., 3D6+20 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 10. The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D.

Horror Factor: 10 for one or two Chupacabra, 12 for a group of 2D4+1.

Size: 2-4 feet (0.6 to 1.2 m).

Weight: 40-120 lbs (18 to 54 kg).

Average Life Span: 2D6+6 years in the wild. Some kept as pets by vampires or as Familiars by Shifters have lived to be more than 30 years old.

P.P.E.: 6D6

Disposition: Curious and inquisitive rather like monkeys, but skittish and quick to attack when startled, attacked first or when the beast thinks it has the upper hand. Chupacabras enjoy killing other animals and love the taste of blood. They would attack humans and D-Bees more often if they were not so shy and wary.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 85%, Detect Ambush 55%, Land Navigation 85%, Prowl 55%, Swimming 50%, and Tailoring 75%.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 1,000 feet (305 m). Can leap 12 feet (3.7 m) from a standing position; double with a running start. Chupacabras are P.P.E. vampires, but must kill their victim in order to absorb its potential psychic energy. They require between 10 and 20 P.P.E. per week to survive depending on overall body weight. Also see Psionics.

Attacks per Melee: Three for males. Two for females and young.

Mega-Damage: Fights tooth and claw.

Bite, restrained – 2D6 S.D.C. or 4D6 S.D.C.

Bite, Full Strength – 1D4 M.D.

Bite, Power Bite – 2D4 M.D., but counts as two attacks.

Claw Strike – 1D6 M.D.

Claw Power Strike – 2D6 M.D., but counts as two attacks.

Pounce/Tackle – 2D6 M.D., but only when the Chupacabra has the initiative and use its claws or bite to help inflict damage. The pounce has a 30% chance of knocking a human-size opponent weighing less than 300 pounds (135 kg) down. Victims lose initiative and one melee attack.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 on Perception Rolls, +1 on initiative, +1 to strike and parry and +3 to dodge.

Vulnerabilities: Chupacabras are not true vampires and are *not* harmed by daylight, wooden weapons, water, holy water, garlic or crosses. They are, however, vulnerable to *silver weapons*, which deal Mega-Damage when used against them. So, if a silver-coated dagger normally inflicts 1D6 S.D.C., it does 1D6 M.D. to the Chupacabra. This has led the few scholars who have studied the creatures to conclude that there must be some sort of connection between them and vampires.

Mega-Damage weapons and attacks inflict their normal damage.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Detect Psionics (6), Sense Evil (2), Sense Magic (3), Sense Time (2), and Empathic Transmission (6, but only attack using Confusion and Fear). Considered a Major Psychic. **I.S.P.:** M.E. attribute number x4.

Psionic Sensitivity (special): Chupacabras can Sense Psychic and Magic Energy like Psi-Stalkers: average skill 35% to track a specific psychic “scent,” 75% to sense magic or psionic powers being used in their vicinity. They can also Sense Supernatural Beings with a base skill of 40% (65% to sense vampires and other undead).

Habitat: Shy and reclusive, Chupacabras require a good den or other hiding place to conceal themselves. In the jungle, they inhabit fallen trees, caverns and burrows and relocate their dens frequently, living very much like other animal predators. Closer to ranches or farmland, they tend to create more permanent dens dug with their own claws and range across a familiar home territory looking for prey. In cities and other urban areas they live in sewers, under porches and stairs, under piles of debris, behind dumpsters, in abandoned houses and garages, warehouses and ruins. City Chupacabras prey upon pigeons, rats, cats, stray dogs, children who wander off in dark places, drunks and homeless people. In vampire cities the creature may run wild (same as city above), but many are vampire pets or used to herd human cattle as well as animals. As such, the monsters often sleep in the vampire’s lair or secret hiding place, as well in the rafters of attics and basements, under the bed and in catacombs and ancient ruins.

Chupacabras are found throughout Mexico and the Old American Southwest, as well as in the jungles and ranch country of what was once Guatemala, Honduras, Belize, Costa Rica and the rest of Central America. Within the last ten years they have also been reported around the vampire kingdom of Haktla in Colombia and may be spreading further south.

Enemies: Humans and D-Bees view Chupacabras as vermin and predators. Most people aware of these beasts try to kill them when given the chance. Ranchers and farmers especially loathe the creatures, who pick off strays and valuable cattle, especially young animals.

Allies: Sometimes used as pets or familiars by Shifters and Necromancers. Vampires and other undead keep them as pets and companions, and even train them to perform certain tasks, mostly guard, herding and tracking duties.

Note: Previously appeared in **Rifts® World Book One: Vampire Kingdoms™, Revised**, page 62.



Corrival Battler

By Charles Walton Jr. and Kevin Siembieda

The monstrosity known as the Corrival Battler is a chimera that resembles a half dozen different creatures. At a quick glance, it resembles a dinosaur or maybe a dragon, except its towering 20 foot (6.1 m) body more resembles that of a gorilla. It even walks on its knuckles and runs on all four like a gorilla or chimpanzee, but any resemblance ends there. It's tough armor-plated hide suggests chitin like an insect, except it is bone, and the skin has more of a reptilian look and texture. The tail, in particular, suggests reptile and somewhat resembles that of an alligator or crocodile but is flexible enough to be used as a weapon to swat adversaries. The massive and monstrous head of the Corrival Battler is thick bone and spikes. The long, nose horn and rim of spikes is somewhat reminiscent of a nightmarish rhinoceros or styracosaurus. Thick, heavy spikes also line its arms and run down its spine. The monster's gaping maw is large enough to bite a person in half and the lower jaw has a pair of large, mandible-like appendages that can be used to bite and slice the flesh and sinew of its opponents as well as fingers to help shovel meat into its mouth.

You'll notice the use of the words adversary and opponent rather than prey. Though the Corrival Battler hunts and preys upon other large animals, including predators like the Devilsaurus, Allosaurus, and Tyrannosaurus Rex, it likes to fight. Not to just hunt for food, but to engage others in combat for the sheer challenge and fun of it all. This includes people, cyborgs, power armored troops, giant robots, and combat vehicles to other giant animals and even dragons and monsters like Demon Bear, Demon Beaver, Black Faeries, and so on. It is the monster's desire to challenge and fight others that has earned it its name, the Corrival Battler, and the reputation of being an adversary to anyone who encounters it.

It is no surprise then that the Corrival Battler is another alien beast that has led some to wonder if it may be the product of genetic engineering, designed for the purpose of war or pacifying the population of a planet marked for conquest before full-scale invasion. Such speculation is based, in part, on the beast's phenomenal healing capabilities, heavily armored body resistant to kinetic attacks, and its power to sniff out practitioners of magic, among others. The rest is based on its behavior, such as its high level of aggression, fearlessness of people and their machines, and instinct to target humanoids and intelligent beings as prey and opponents. It is unusual and suspicious that magic users and armored troops seem to be regarded as its primary targets. All unusual for animals, even a large predator.

It could be that this giant alien simply does not recognize people as being at the top of the food chain. Instead it sees itself at the top, and people as rivals and prey. Thus, not only does the Corrival hunt people for food, but it specifically targets them for battle in acts of combat to display its superiority over them. This odd, aggressive behavior is punctuated by the fact that the bigger and more powerful the humanoid, the more likely that person is to be singled out and attacked by the Corrival. This also applies to "armored" foes. The Corrival Battler instinctively recognizes the most powerful member of a group, targeting the biggest, most heavily armored and/or magic wielding prey first. Thus, giant robots, combat vehicles, power armor, cyborgs, large D-Bees and mages are at the top of the monster's list of combatants, along with a wide array of animals.

While this could be the result of deliberate genetic engineering, other scientists and naturalists believe this predator, heavily armored itself, may come from a world where all of its competition and prey is aggressive and armored, so anything that is armored and/or unafraid is seen as a dangerous rival to be beaten into submission. Likewise, some of those creatures may possess innate magical abilities, which would explain why practitioners of magic and magical creatures are also targeted. Some have pointed out that the feelers at the back of its head are reminiscent to the *Burrower Bruin*, another large, armored beast, and that they may both come from the same world. Others refute this notion and the feelers, though similar in appearance, function differently, especially the two that end in fur.

Like most carnivores, even the Corrival Battler kills only when hungry (which is often) and when defending its mate and young. These hunters mostly target large animals and people, but will eat carrion, bones, livestock, processed meats, and some garbage left behind by humanoids. However, the hyper-aggressive brute *loves to fight* and to prove its dominance and superiority over all other animals, people included. People especially.

In battles of superiority, the monster is happy to leave its opponent(s) battered and humbled, lying on the ground or limping away without any doubt of who is the undisputed king of beasts. This could leave a player character beaten and bruised, his body armor ripped apart, weapons chewed to pieces, *but alive*. A Corrival Battler loves to brutally tear apart power armor and body armor with its mandibles, teeth and claws, leaving the person inside exposed and terrified before it walks away in triumph. Against cyborgs and robots, the monster likes to bite and tear off weapons, sensors and limbs, leaving the 'Borg or 'Bot mangled and hobbled. It takes a similar approach against combat vehicles.

When battling a fellow Mega-Damage creature, such as a dinosaur, it is often satisfied when the animal assumes a submissive posture, but only after having mauled and roughed it up. More often than not, the Corrival Battler leaves its opponent lame and scarred with one or more injured limbs, perhaps a dislocated shoulder or hip, and trauma by which to remember this encounter always. The same holds true of battles against practitioners and creatures of magic, though the monster is much more likely to kill and devour them. That said, it may walk away from a magical being that it has rendered unconscious or it believes is dead. Likewise, if the Corrival Battler is taking a beating and suffering heavy damage, it is likely to run off in retreat, heal up and come looking for a rematch in a day or two. A strategic retreat is likely to occur when it has lost 70% or more of its M.D.C. It should be noted that this animal heals impossibly fast and can regrow lost limbs in a matter of days.

Whatever its reason for targeting sorcerers and creatures of magic, it is smart enough to prowl ley lines in search of them. The animal can also sniff out such beings when they are within 2,500 feet (762 m), as well as follow their trail after an encounter. Not surprising then, that Corrival Battlers find their way up from Mexico and the American Southwest into the Magic Zone and as far north as Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan and southern Canada, but only during the hottest summer months of July and August. The animal hates the cold, so it always heads back south by early September, unless it is unseasonably hot.

The Corrival Battler's behavior of challenging other larger, dangerous animals and heavily armed and armored people, but leaving them alive, has led some – like Northern Gun Head of R&D, **Federico Franceschi**, who encountered and battled the creature in an *EX-11 Okemos prototype*, during a field test in Wis-

consin one hot summer – to speculate that Corival Battlers may feed, at least in part, upon the fear and adrenaline of their victims. Or perhaps, it enjoys the euphoria generated by a chemical cocktail that surges within the animal's own body when locked in combat. Like a drug addict, the monster may enjoy "the buzz" or "high" it gets from such confrontations, so it engages in combat against whatever antagonist becomes available. In Federico's case, he had the displeasure of watching the Corival Battler tear up his Okemos, before abandoning him in mid-fight (much to his relief) to engage a larger NG 'Bot, and then attack three power armor defenders, one after another. At the point that it became clear that the Corival was winning the battle against them all, it decided they had had enough, and the beast trotted back into the woods from whence it came. During the pitched battle, Federico couldn't help but notice the monster seemed to be enjoying itself. Roaring and chest thumping in triumph with each crippling contest with a foe. If the battle had gone to the death, Federico would like to think their Northern Gun designs would have won the day, but he can't be certain of it. And this very real battle sent him back to the drawing board. What he does know is that the monster seemed content to have won the conflict by knocking down, ripping up, and crippling their machines without actually having killed anyone, thank goodness. It is also possible that the beast is simply that aggressive and territorial, and that once it felt it had imposed its dominance over the mechanized intruders, and *showed them who's the boss*, it cheerfully left them to gather up the pieces of their torn up machines and go home.

Coming across the scattered remains of power armor or a vehicle that has been torn to pieces and/or is covered in deep claw and bite marks, is a sure indicator that a Corival Battler has been in the area. If the adventurers can determine if the carnage is recent, it should tip them off to the peril they may soon face themselves. They may want to make a wide detour to avoid an encounter of their own with this brutal fighting machine. Of course, the abandoned corpse of a vehicle may be too alluring to pass up without looking for any valuables left inside, or taking whatever can be salvaged from the vehicle or robot, and resold or put to good use by them. Lingering to conduct such a search or salvage operation, however, could be a tragic mistake.

A successful fight with a Corival Battler is any confrontation where the combatants are able to walk away with their lives. However, it is likely to leave them battered and their power armors and vehicles damaged and in need of repair. Some damage is too severe for a field repair even by an experienced Operator, and may require the adventurers to leave the vehicle behind and walk the rest of the way until they can find someone willing and able to come and tow it back to a repair facility. Or the encounter may leave the cyborg, power armor, or vehicle functioning but hobbled or without some of its weapons and sensor systems, or its speed reduced by 1D6x10%. Game Masters, use your discretion, but be reasonable and fair.

The experience of dealing with damaged and impaired vehicles or armor, and being vulnerable while trekking through hostile territory, can be just as frightening as the battle itself. This is especially true when the G.M. describes the disturbing amount of creaking, rattling or odd engine noises, and the amount of oil or fuel (and/or blood) leaking from the damaged cyborg, power armor, robot or vehicle. Along the way, weapons and other systems may break down and fail, one after another, an artificial limb may go numb, and speed may be reduced even more. All of this may affect the morale and psychological state of the entire party. And things only

get worse as night falls or the sounds of combat or monsters (the Corival Battler returning?) are heard in the distance.

Corival Battler – Predatory Carnivore

Also Known As: The Challenger, Deadly Rival and just Battler.

Alignment: Anarchist, though most people who have to face one consider the warring beast to be Miscreant or Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+7 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+11, M.A. 1D6, P.S. 1D6+29 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+16, P.E. 1D6+14 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6+2, Spd 1D6+26, or 20 mph (32 km) running on two legs, 40 mph (64 km) running on all fours in a loping manner. Both speeds can be maintained for two hours before the monster needs to rest; twice as long at half the speed. A maximum speed of *60 mph (96 km)* can be achieved in short bursts lasting 1D4+1 minutes. Babies run at one third these speeds, juveniles at half. **Note:** Due to their weight and bulk, Corivals cannot stop on a dime nor make sharp turns. When running at speeds greater than 20 mph (32 km), the animal is likely to run past more agile prey that *can* make a quick stop or a sharp turn, and have to come to a skidding stop and turn around to pursue, which uses up two melee attacks/actions.

M.D.C. by Location of the Armored Body:

Tail – 1D6x10+100

Large Front Legs/Arms (2) – 1D4x10+140 each

Large Rear Legs (2) – 1D6x10+180 each

*Eyes (4, small) – 12 each

*Feelers (2, back of head) – 25 each

*Feelers (2, snout) – 30 each

*Mandibles (4, head) – 70 each

*Horn, large (one, nose) – 200

Armor-Plated Head – 2D6x10+400 (530 on average)

Main Body – 1D4x100+350 (650 M.D.C. on average for an adult; 330 for juveniles, 160 M.D.C. for babies under seven months old).

Vulnerable underbelly is 1D6x10+240 M.D.C., but almost impossible to access unless the creature rears up, arms outspread, is knocked on its side or back, or an attacker manages to get under it. All are difficult tasks because even when the Battler attacks standing on its two hind legs, it does so with its heavily armored head and arms hung low to protect its underside and uses goring attacks with its horn to gut its opponents, head butts and body blocks to knock down prey, and slashing claws and biting maw to kill. Moreover, the large thick spines on its back, automatically cause the beast to roll on its side and quickly clamor to its feet.

* The eyes are comparatively tiny targets and difficult to strike, so an attacker must make a *Called Shot* and even then is -5 to strike. Targeting other small targets is done at a penalty of -4.

Reducing the M.D.C. of one leg to zero reduces speed by 30%, two legs by 60%, three by 90%. Lost limbs regenerate.

Note: *On S.D.C. worlds*, the Corival Battler has 1D4x100+60 S.D.C., 2D6x10+300 Hit Points, and a Natural A.R. of 17. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (50 M.D.C. = 50 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D. +12 to damage.

Horror Factor: 8 for a baby the size of a coyote to that of a bear. 12 for a juvenile the size of a rhinoceros or Silonar. H.F. 14

when facing a full-grown adult. H.F. 16 when facing a mated pair and their brood.

Size: 18-22 feet (5.5 to 6.7 m) tall when standing erect on two legs, half that height when running on all fours like a quadruped. 6-7 feet (1.8 to 2.1 m) wide at the shoulders and the tail is 7-9 feet (2.1 to 2.7 m) long. The Corrival Battler usually stands and walks on two legs when it wants to be imposing and tall, and when fighting other tall adversaries such as giant robots, dinosaurs, Aegis Buffalo, etc.

Weight: 6-12 tons.

Average Life Span: 2D6+12 years. Corrivall Battlers are solitary hunters and their aggressive nature means many do not live past the age of 16. The only time they are encountered in a group is during mating season in December and January, when males and females pair off and stay together until 1D6 babies are born five months later. The male stays with his brood for 1D4 months to guard and protect his offspring before leaving the mother and young to fend for themselves. The female leaves her young after one year, but by then the young are the size of a rhinoceros. Corrivall Battlers reach full size and maturity at five years of age. Young/juveniles possess half the M.D.C., attacks and bonuses as the adult.

P.P.E.: 3D6

Disposition: Hyper-aggressive especially toward other large predators, giant robots, large vehicles, and humans and D-Bees in general. Fiercely competitive and territorial, it is quick to challenge any predators or people that catch its eye. Somehow the Corrivall Battler sees humans and D-Bees, as well as dragons and other intelligent beings, as rivals and competitors to be challenged, fought, and chased away if not slain. The beast targets the largest or most threatening opponent in a group, first. Then it moves on to the others only after defeating the first, or when another challenger is more aggressive toward it and captures the monster's attention by attacking or challenging it. Though the Corrivall Battler generally attacks one opponent at a time, it is happy to fight groups of pack animals such as humans. Most smaller predators, like Raptors and Burrower Bruins, fear Battlers to such a degree that they are hesitant to attack the monster even when it is injured and weak.

The hulking monstrosity is surprisingly gentle and patient with its mate and babies, though males leave the brood after the young reach one year old and may regard other Corrivall Battlers, even its own offspring, as rivals to be fought in the future.

Males and females claim a territory of about 30 square miles (77.6 sq. km), but that territory is frequently changing as these nomadic hunters follow their prey, going to where the food is.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 70%/60%, Detect Ambush 60%, Land Navigation 85%, Tailing 70% (-15% to tail a specific animal/target in dense woods or on crowded streets), Tracking 60% by sight (people and animals; +25% to hunt mages and magic creatures), but is -20% to track a specific target(s) in dense woods, crowded city streets, heavy rain, snow, fog or at night. Also see *Track, Smell or Sense Mages and Magic*, below. Dislikes subterranean tunnels and confined spaces. It also dislikes water, freezing temperatures, snow, and ice, and tries to avoid them.

Natural Abilities: Two pairs of eyes on each side of the head provide sharp, clear *daytime vision* and alertness to movement; can see a human or a steer up to one mile (1.6 km) away, but has poor nightvision and cannot see well in the dark (60 feet/18.3 m and even then cannot make out details); but has feelers and other

excellent other senses to help it hunt. Track by scent alone 60% (+20% to follow blood). Supernatural Strength and Endurance, incredible agility and speed for a creature its size, and can leap 12 feet (3.7 m) high and 30 feet (9.1 m) across. Corrivall Battlers can also survive drops from heights as great as 300 feet (91.4 m) and land on their feet or on top of a vehicle, robot or prey. A drop from twice that height inflicts a mere 1D6x10 M.D. to the animal and stuns it for one melee round (15 seconds).

Impervious to radiation and normal heat and fire, resistant to poison (does half damage and penalties last only 20% their usual duration), can hold its breath for 1D4x10+30 minutes enabling it to survive in a vacuum for at least a short time, and Bio-Regenerates from damage at a rate of 2D6 M.D.C. per hour. That's 48-288 M.D.C. per 24 hours! Double when curled up on a ley line! The Corrivall Battler regenerates lost digits, teeth and feelers within 1D4 days, an entire arm, leg, or tail within 2D6 days, eyes or horn in 2D6+4 days; half that time when healing on a ley line the whole time. This enables the monster to take a serious beating before retreating, and then go heal and return to fight anew. The monster just keeps coming back, stalking, harassing and mauling its chosen targets. Corrivalls like to regenerate on a Ley Line by curling up into a tight ball hidden under or behind a boulder, debris, a cluster of trees or tall vegetation.

Ballistic, Segmented Armor (special): Its tough, M.D.C. hide of armored plates is resistant to kinetic energy attacks. Punches, kicks, bullets, rail gun rounds, missiles and other explosives inflict *half damage!* Moreover, the animal barely feels any pain from attacks against its thick armored skin until its main body M.D.C. is reduced below 100.

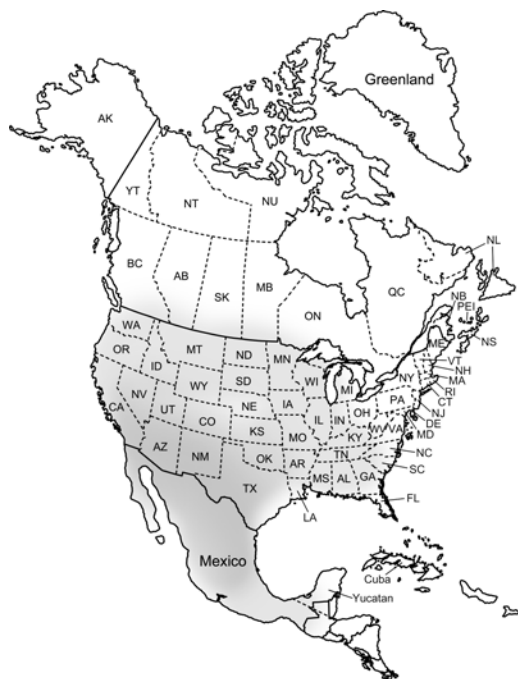
Extreme Heat Resistance (special): Impervious to normal heat and fire, and able to handle high temperatures; comfortable in temperatures as high as 200 Fahrenheit (93 Celsius). M.D. fire, napalm, plasma weapons, and magical fire inflict only 20% of their normal damage!

See Vulnerabilities for fighting the Corrivall in cool temperatures.

Feelers (special): The feelers help the monster to navigate in the dark and in close quarters, but more importantly, measure air temperature and warns the monster of drastic changes in air temperature and the approach of winter and winter storms as far off as 36 hours away. They also feel vibrations in the ground about on par with humans. Penalties for darkness and being blinded are only -4 to all combat maneuvers (strike, parry, dodge, etc.)

Mandibles (special): The four mandibles are able to deliver a powerful bite that can cut through, or peel away, thick armor and metal plating. They are also used to tear off limbs and mechanical appendages, slice and pull away armor and cut through bone and M.D.C. materials, as well as carry prey or large hunks of meat or a large animal's leg, etc., or to drag an entire carcass.

Prehensile Feet (special): Like everything else about the massive Corrivall Battler, it has large, prehensile feet. Each foot has three long, thick, prehensile toes that can bend like the fingers of a hand to form a tight grip. Plus four stubby toes on the sides of the heel of the foot that add to its gripping power. When all seven claws are sunk deep into the hide of giant prey or the armor of robots and vehicles, it is difficult to shake the monster loose. These dexterous feet also enable the creature to climb poles and massive trees, scale towers and girders, climb cables that are strong enough to support its weight, as well as scale



the sides of buildings and steep mountain inclines. All with the agility of a giant monkey, at a maximum climbing speed of 10 mph (16 km).

The clawed feet are also used to hold prey down on the ground or inside the palm of the hand-like foot. The Corvial Battler is large enough that the monster can use its feet like a second pair of hands to grab and hold onto one human-sized opponent while fighting others. A human-sized victim held in the powerful grasp of the prehensile foot is likely to be unable to fight back – 60% chance of both of his arms being pinned – but takes no damage. A combined Supernatural P.S. of 35 or greater is required to pry the toes/foot open enough for its victim to escape or to be pulled from its clutches.

The Corvial can walk and run on its balled foot containing a prisoner, but reduce speed by 30%; reduce by 60% if each foot clutches prey.

In the alternative, each clawed foot is able to hold prey down under its foot, firmly pinned and unable to get away. This attack does no damage but the victim is held down in a prone position, probably face down in the dirt, unable to move or engage in physical combat for as long as the foot is holding him down.

Of course, the clawed feet are also used to slash and claw at adversaries as well as to rip apart armor and tear apart opponents.

Track, Smell or Sense Magic and Mages (special): The Corvial Battler seems to possess the ability to sniff out or sense creatures of magic such as mages, dragons and other creatures of magic, as well as magic automatons, Rune Weapons and Techno-Wizard devices whenever they are within 2,500 feet (762 m), as well as follow their trail after an encounter (85%) like a bloodhound. Can smell and find a single ley line within three miles (4.8 km), and a ley line network of two or more interconnecting lines within 10 miles (1.6 km). Ley lines are considered hunting grounds for creatures of magic, which seem to be regarded as natural enemies and adversaries. Where the Battler may leave other opponents beaten but alive, it almost always kills and devours prey that possesses magic/high levels of P.P.E.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Mega-Damage: It fights by every means at its disposal, from bites and claw strikes, to goring with its rhino-like horn (ideal for ripping up giant robots and large vehicles), head butts, and ramming attacks.

Feeler Strike, Full Strength – 4D6 S.D.C.

Tail Swat – 3D6 M.D.

Bite with Teeth, Restrained – 1D6x10 S.D.C.

Bite with Teeth, Full Strength – 4D6 M.D.

Bite with 2 Mandibles – 4D6 M.D.

Bite with 4 Mandibles – 1D4x10+4 M.D., counts as one attack.

Claw Strike, Arms, Restrained – 2D6 M.D.

Claw Strike, Arms, Full Strength – 5D6 M.D.

Claw Power Strike, Arms – 1D6x10 M.D., but counts as two attacks.

Feet Claw Strike, Restrained – 3D6 M.D.

Feet Claw Strike, Full Strength – 6D6 M.D.; cannot perform a power punch with claw strikes using the back legs.

Kicks – Are not possible.

Punch (a blunt attack) – 4D6 M.D.

Power Punch (a blunt attack) – 1D4x10 M.D., but counts as two attacks.

Head Butt “Bump” (a blunt attack) – 1D6 M.D.

Head Butt, Full Strength (a blunt attack) – 4D6 M.D.

Horn Attack, Restrained – 2D6 M.D.

Horn Attack, Full Strength – 5D6 M.D.

Horn Goring Attack – 1D4x10+10 M.D., intended to do grievous damage to its opponent, such as gutting or crippling him. Counts as two attacks.

Running Horn Ram (special) – 1D6x10+10 M.D., but counts as three attacks and has a 90% likelihood of knocking down any animal as large as itself or smaller. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and two melee attacks. Such a blow should also give the attacker or intruder serious second thoughts about continuing its attack. Smaller animals and humanoids are likely to be knocked off their feet and sent flying several yards/meters (1D6x10 feet/3-18.3 m) and lose initiative and two melee attacks.

Stomp and Grab (special) – No damage, but the victim is grabbed by the hand-like foot and held in its clutches. 60% chance of both arms being pinned as the monster holds or carries and runs with its victim in its grasp. Otherwise, one arm is automatically pinned but the other is free. The monster cannot crush/squeeze hard enough to inflict damage, but the victim is held tight. Requires a combined Supernatural P.S. of 35 or greater to break free of this hold. Effective only against opponents 9 feet (2.7 m) tall and smaller.

Stomp and Hold (special) – 75% chance the victim of this attack is knocked down and pinned by the foot, and pressed against the ground or up against a tree, boulder, wall, vehicle, etc., unable to move his arms and legs for as long as the beast stands in place. Only psionic and magic attacks are possible. No damage, but 50% chance the victim dropped his weapon when knocked to the ground by the stomping foot. 50% chance of being held down, face-first in the dirt. Requires a Combined Supernatural P.S. of 60 or greater to break free of this hold. Effective only against opponents 9 feet (2.7 m) tall and smaller.

Stomp to Inflict Damage (special) – 3D6+2 M.D. and an 80% likelihood of being knocked down. Victims of knockdown via a quick foot stomp lose initiative and one melee attack; 50%

chance his weapon was dropped when stomped. Like a Punch, this is a quick stomping action, before the monster moves on or attacks another person. Each stomping action counts as one melee attack. Effective only against opponents 9 feet (2.7 m) tall and smaller.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 on Perception Rolls to recognizing mages and creatures of magic, potential prey, and threats, +3 on initiative, +3 to strike, +2 to parry and disarm, +1 to dodge, +3 to pull punch, +1 to save vs magic, +3 to save vs mind control, resistant to heat and fire, and +5 to save vs Horror Factor.

Also see Natural Abilities.

Vulnerabilities: Poor nightvision, 60 feet (18.3 m), and even then cannot make out details. A daytime predator. Has a hard time stopping and making sharp turns.

Dislikes underground caves and tunnels, as well as confining spaces such as the ruins of pre-Rifts building, narrow ravines, the inside of a large cargo vehicle and similar. There is only a 30% chance the Corrival Battler is willing to pursue an adversary into a dark cave or building even if the opening and space inside is fairly large. If the monster cannot see the sky or an easy exit, it is not likely to enter. This is another example of its battle savvy, because the Corrival realizes it is at a disadvantage in dark, confined spaces where it cannot see clearly, cannot maneuver well and may be subject to ambush and traps.

Hates and fears water because it cannot swim. Easily drowned in water deeper than 14 feet (4.3 m) or in a strong current. The animal will not enter water it believes to be deeper than 10 feet (3 m). Instead it paces along the shore, bellowing its frustration at opponents who may have escaped into water.

Easily distracted by another challenger. The Corrival Battler is easily lured away from its current opponent or victim by another creature or person that attacks or engages it in challenging behavior, such as calling it out, making noise and taking threatening action against it. Just standing still and defiant, *seemingly unafraid*, infuriates and draws the monster to that person or animal, as will firing a weapon at it. In fact, the Corrival is more likely to attack someone who doesn't seem to be afraid than people running away screaming.

Cold-based M.D. weapons and magical cold and ice attacks inflict 50% greater damage. Likewise, Corrival Battlers dislike extreme cold and arctic conditions, and do not do well in cold environments. In temperatures below 45 degrees Fahrenheit (7.2 Celsius), it is -1 one melee attack, -2 to all combat maneuvers (Initiative, strike, parry, dodge, etc.), and reduce speed by 30%; double the penalties when temperatures fall below zero Fahrenheit (-17.7 Celsius). The monster can handle desert environments where temperatures are sweltering during the day and cold at night, and it can even survive snow and winter temperatures for 1D4+1 weeks, but any longer than that, the beast weakens and freezes to death. If you have to hunt a Corrival in the desert or plains, you want to do so at night.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Hot, dry climates including the deserts and plains of the Old American and Mexican Empires, particularly Utah, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Northern Mexico. Ventures further north and east only in the summer. Though good climbers, the animal is seldom found in the higher, colder mountain elevations, preferring mountain lowlands. In Arizona and Utah, Corrival Battlers may stalk prey

from bluffs, buttes and canyon walls, dropping upon unsuspecting prey from great heights.

Enemies. Creatures of magic, including practitioners of magic and their automatons and devices appear to be natural enemies of the Corrival Battler, and instinctively hunted and destroyed.

Large predators, dinosaurs, Rhino-Buffalo, people, and most intelligent beings, including Shemarrians, Xitixix, giants, the Minions of Splugorth, and any creature it sees as a rival or challenger are enemies. For some reason, humanoids are regarded as rivals and adversaries to be singled out by the monster. This is especially true of bigger, bulkier armor-clad people such as cyborgs, power armor, and pilots of giant robots and large vehicles. Corrival Battlers also exhibit a disdain toward Brodkil and other giants, demonic and supernatural beings, and Dragon Hatchlings, viewing them all as viable threats, opponents and prey. Corrival Battlers are smart enough to know they cannot win a battle against a healthy, adult dragon or deity, and avoids them. However, they may take delight in attacking and trying to slay a severely wounded dragon, Demon Lord or Godling.

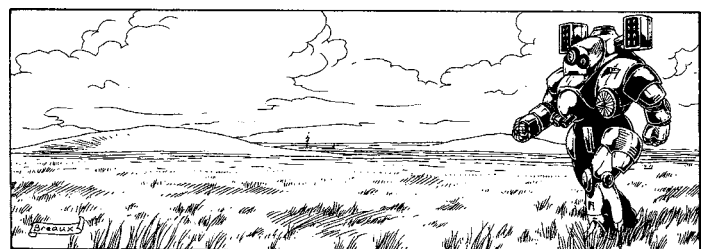
Note: Corrival Battlers can NOT be controlled by Shifters, Psi-Druids, or Wild Psi-Stalkers, but they seem to have a healthy respect for *Simvan*, *Cerebro-Scramblers*, *Death Springer* and *their zombies*, *Devil Unicorns*, *Dream Butchers*, *Field Reapers*, *Oborus-Slitherers*, *giant worms*, and *Fury Beetles*, and do not attack them unless provoked. Wicked creatures, including some of those named above, may trick and manipulate humans and D-Bees into conflicts with the beast as an act of revenge or for the sheer enjoyment of watching the spectacle.

Allies: Mainly their own kind, but even among their own, one male may take exception to another aggressive male and engage it in battle. Such contests are not usually to the death, with the winner satisfied that its opponent surrenders and limps away with its tail between its legs. However, sometimes an adult male kills juvenile males to whom it takes a disliking or sees as a potential rival, but the adult is probably just as satisfied with running the young off.

Only Simvan are known to be able to somewhat control and ride juvenile Corrival Battlers under the age of four, but never adults.

Value: Little. As a monster for combat in a gladiatorial arena the beast can fetch 1D6x1,000 credits. The animal's tough meat is edible though not very tasty and has no market value. Its rhino-like central horn however, is said to be a component used in the creation of certain healing potions and can fetch 1D6x1,000 credits for the whole horn. The animal's armored hide deteriorates rapidly and has an odd, putrid smell as it decays. The teeth may be used to make knives, picks, tomahawks, war clubs and farm tools as well as used in headdresses and jewelry. Each tooth is worth 1D6 credits; it has 38 teeth.

Note: This is a new creature appearing for the very first time. Inspired by the art and concepts of Charles "Chuck" Walton Jr.





Covenant Falcon

By Kevin Siembieda,
inspired by an idea from Carmen Bellaire

The Covenant Falcon, also known as the *Demon Slaying Falcon*, is an otherworldly, parasitic creature that resembles an Earth bird of prey. Its most unique attribute is the ability to create a symbiotic bond between itself and humans or D-Bees. This bond provides the animal with a constant food source (i.e. the person to whom it is linked), but in exchange, the human host/partner gets a loyal companion, combat bonuses and the power to see through the animal's eyes, among other things. Nobody understands why it likes to bond to humans and to a lesser degree, D-Bees, especially human-like D-Bees, but there is some force that seems to attract the avian creatures to them. Moreover, it is not fooled by shape-shifters and can tell if the person is truly mortal or something else in human guise.

This bird of prey is roughly the size and shape of an Earth Falcon, but has feathered, bat-like wings, and is a Mega-Damage creature capable of fighting and killing S.D.C. and light M.D.C. creatures. One glance up close tells you this is not a bird from Earth, but from a distance it is easy to mistake it with an ordinary falcon or hawk.

This alien bird enjoys the taste and euphoric sensation it experiences from feeding on the blood and emotions of its handler, and bonds with its *humanoid food source* in an agreeable way. While this may sound disturbing, it is actually a fairly positive symbiotic relationship between the Covenant Falcon and its humanoid host. For one, the Covenant Falcon behaves more like a loyal dog than a

bird, and shows affection and protects its humanoid "partner" (and food source).

If there is a downside to this symbiotic relationship, it is that the bird and the human or D-Bee to whom it bonds, become inseparable. For the humanoid, the bird-like creature is thought of and treated more like a human partner and friend than a pet or an attack animal. Both become emotionally bound to each other and will give their own life to protect the other. For the humanoid that means talking to it like another person and thinking of it almost as an extension of himself.

The Covenant Falcon shares a similar connection and sense of unity and synchronicity with its humanoid partner, but in reality that person is its host upon which it regularly feeds. The host/partner is rarely aware that he is his bird friend's *daily meal* because there is nothing painful about the process and the union is *mutually beneficial* – but it is still a parasitic and symbiotic relationship. After one month of the initial bonding between the two, its humanoid "partner" becomes the creature's *primary food source*, eliminating the need for it to hunt other prey, except when it so desires, is commanded to do so, or is necessary. If the humanoid host is killed, the Covenant Falcon suffers serious damage (loses half its M.D.C.) and begins to waste away. It must find a new humanoid host/partner within 14 days or it dies from starvation and loneliness.

Covenant Falcons feed upon P.P.E., emotions, and the blood of the person to whom it is bound. The first two forms of feeding can be performed even when the bird's partner is clad in body armor, power armor or is a partial cyborg. The last condition requires a bit of effort and a willingness to do so.

P.P.E. Nourishment: The Covenant Falcon consumes a total of 4-6 P.P.E. per 24 hours, usually one or two P.P.E. points every

four hours and usually AFTER the P.P.E. it has eaten earlier has already, naturally recovered. This is done simply by resting on the person and showing affection. Since most people are not aware of their P.P.E. nor draw upon it, it is of little consequence to them. Moreover, the bird rarely bonds with mages and never to creatures of magic, so there is no conflict.

Emotions: It is unclear how the emotional connection to a human or D-Bee nourishes and pleases the creature, but it does. Some scholars and scientists believe the Covenant Falcon uses the emotions more like a drug to experience a range of stimulation, highs and lows, and actually becomes addicted to its host human. It feeds upon the emotions by being linked to its host.

Blood: This is the least pleasant part of the symbiotic relationship, but it too is fairly painless. Whenever its humanoid host/partner is cut and bleeds the bird will want to drink some fresh blood. Just a little, and requires only four ounces (118 milliliters) a week. Of course, it is happy to consume more blood as often as it is offered or made available to it, but four ounces (118 milliliters) a week meets the minimum nutritional requirement. This can be done very cleanly and humanely by having the blood drawn with a syringe and put in a bowl or bottle. In fact, many mercs and adventurers with a Covenant Falcon draw enough to feed it for a few weeks. The trick is keeping the blood fresh while in the field.

Other Food/Prey: If Psi-Stalkers were a bird, they would be a Covenant Falcon. Like Psi-Stalkers, the bird of prey likes to feed upon the P.P.E. of evil supernatural beings and wicked creatures of magic, and in much the same fashion. For this reason, it stays near its host/partner whenever he and his teammates battle such monsters so that it may gorge itself upon the doubled P.P.E. released at the moment of death. By just being within a 20 foot (6.1 m) radius of the kill, the animal can capture 2D4x10% of the escaping P.P.E. and that keeps it satisfied for a week or two. The Falcon gets all the P.P.E. if the bird is the one who delivers the killing blow itself! It is also likely to drink some of the monster's blood and eat some of its flesh if there is any available.

The powerful link between the Covenant Falcon and its One:

Two Who Are One – Empathic Connection: As all of this suggests, only the Covenant Falcon's *humanoid partner* enjoys the array of special insight and abilities provided by this unique bond. In a way, the two do become one. Each sensing the other's emotions, particularly strong emotions like fear, anxiety, hate, anger, despair, hunger, and love. All functioning as signals that their partner might be in trouble and in need of the other's help or companionship, or that all is fine and good.

This empathic connection enables each to try to comfort, assure or cheer up the other. This is done via touch, chirps, body language and nuzzling by the bird. Petting and soft words or singing by the humanoid. Covenant Falcons love listening to singing and music, bobbing their heads and sometimes even dancing along, as best it can, to the music.

These two best friends and companions always know how the other is feeling: Hungry, thirsty, cold, hot, sad, happy, angry, relaxed, scared or worried, and so on. This makes each member of this symbiotic relationship keenly aware of, and responsive to, the other's needs, fears, and comfort level. And each will try to help alleviate things like being hungry or thirsty, hot or cold, sad or worried. Hot emotions like fear, anger, and sudden spikes in adrenaline alert each to potential danger or impending violence,

and provide a bonus to react. Bonuses are listed, below. Also see Combat Bonuses, listed separately.

Skill Bonuses to the Humanoid Partner: This symbiotic union adds a +5% bonus to the following skills if its humanoid partner has any of them: +5 to Animal Husbandry, Detect Ambush, Horsemanship (any), Identify Plants & Fruits, Sing, Tailing, Track & Trap Animals, and Tracking (people), and +10% to Land Navigation and Wilderness Survival.

Sensory Link – Shared Vision: The humanoid partner linked to a Covenant Falcon must stop and focus for one full melee round (15 seconds) to establish a sensory link. Once the link is established, the human partner sees, hears and experiences the Covenant Falcon's senses (mainly sight and sound) from its perspective – seeing through the other's eyes and hearing through the other's ears. Which is often a bird's eye view from the Falcon.

This is always a two-way connection, and when sensory linked – which is usually most of the time – such a link enables the Covenant Falcon to hear and understand any words its human partner might vocally voice/speak out loud, which means he can give it directions, commands, cues and warnings from a distance. No limit as long as man and fowl are in the same dimension.

For humanoids, the sensory link is ideal for aerial reconnaissance, scouting ahead and spying. It can be maintained while the animal is flying, gliding or perched someplace inconspicuous. Sensory links are also initiated to “check in” on each other to make sure their partner is okay and does not need assistance or protection.

The link can be maintained while the humanoid is walking, sitting, resting, driving or performing very simple tasks like sweeping the floor. However, he is distracted, rather like trying to do one thing while watching and listening to someone else's conversation.

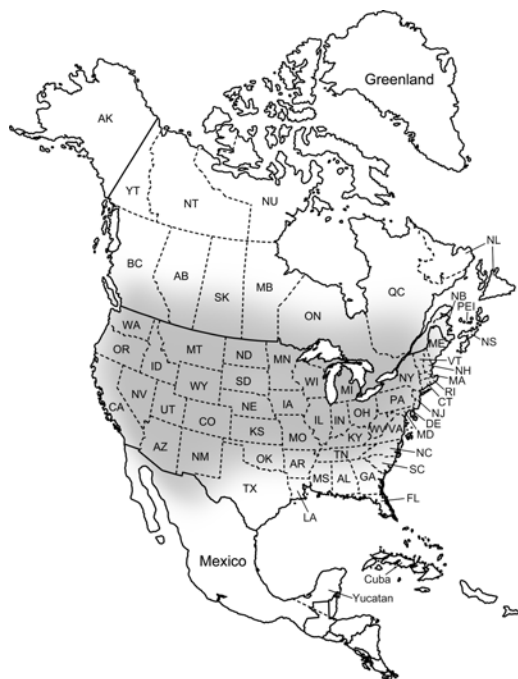
Penalties from the Sensory/Seeing/Listening Link for Humanoids: The human partner is -3 on Perception Rolls when it comes to what's happening around him, -2 on initiative, -1 on all combat rolls, -20% on skill performance that requires focus, concentration and dexterity, and it takes twice as long to perform the skill, all for the duration of the link. **Note:** The link can be broken with but a thought at any time. If it was broken to engage in combat or to focus attention on something threatening or dangerous, or fun and enjoyable, the animal partner knows it, and vice versa. The partner will respond accordingly to the situation and come quick if there is trouble.

Penalties From the Seeing/Listening Link for the Bird: The penalties for the Covenant Falcon while it is seeing and hearing what its human host is experiencing are less severe. -1 on Perception Rolls, -1 on initiative, -1 to strike, parry, dodge and other combat bonus and flying speed is reduced by -10% while simultaneously seeing through its humanoid's eyes for the duration of the link. It can break the link whenever it desires.

The Covenant Falcon can do the same and see and hear whatever its humanoid partner is experiencing. As an animal, this is mainly to keep tabs on its friend/companion and food source. If it suspects danger or trouble, the animal rushes back to protect its partner as necessary.

Note: Man and avian each knows when the other is watching and listening in this fashion, but don't mind. This connection cannot be blocked, not even via Mind Block, because *the two are one*.

This means each knows when the other is ill, tired, injured and roughly how badly, and when the other fears death, is physically near death, or has died, whether the sensory link is in force or not.



Fusion of Life: In life and death situations, one can fuse his or its own life energy into the other in an attempt to save the other. Of course, additional medical attention is likely to be needed to fully recover and heal, but this can be an important starting point to keep man or beast alive! All that is necessary is a moment's focus and desire to heal the other by touch or close proximity (20 feet/6.1 m).

One of the Covenant Falcon's M.D.C. points from its Main Body provides 20 S.D.C. or 10 Hit Points to its human partner. (One M.D.C. if that partner is a Mega-Damage D-Bee.)

20 S.D.C. or 10 Hit Points from the humanoid to the bird provides the Covenant Falcon with ONE M.D.C. point. Obviously, this exchange is potentially more lethal to the human than to the Covenant Falcon as the M.D.C. cost is minimal to help heal a human, but high for a human to heal his Falcon Friend.

If the animal or person is already in a coma, this fusion of life energy works to jumpstart the heart/body and provides a +40% bonus to save vs coma and death as well as the infusion of the Hit Points or S.D.C. or M.D.C. described above.

Bonuses from the Union: The Person: +1 on all Perception Rolls in regard to recognizing signs of danger, animal and demonic predators, and impending attack from wild and domesticated animals, predatory monsters and supernatural evil. +1 to dodge, +1 to save vs the Horror Factor of animals and monsters, and the person develops perfect, sharp vision. If his eyesight was less than perfect (nearsighted, farsighted, etc.) prior to the union, it becomes perfect within 48 hour of linking with a Covenant Falcon friend.

The humanoid's connection to the bird makes him aware of the meaning of the sounds it makes and recognizes the Covenant Falcon's battle cry and other sounds it makes when it is happy, sad, angry, scared, concerned, agitated, etc. (clucks, chirps, whistles, shrieks, etc.). The person also becomes more aware, appreciative and considerate of nature and animals in general.

The connection to the Covenant Falcon and sharing its senses and emotions turns many partners/hosts (75%) into speed-freaks who enjoy fast vehicles and flying by any means. And any fear of heights is eliminated and he is impervious to any phobia about heights or speed while connected to the Covenant Falcon. This might compel the character to want to ride in, or drive, fast vehicles like hovercycles, rocket bikes and jet packs.

The human partner also knows when this strange bird of prey senses supernatural evil and knows if the evil is a big, medium or small threat. Such moments are a good time to see through its eyes to get an idea of what monsters or demons it may be seeing or about to attack.

Bonuses from the Bonding for the Falcon: +1D6 to its P.P.E. base, +3D6+16 years added to its lifespan, and the link provides it a much larger understanding of spoken human language (as per its humanoid host/partner). The animal is able to understand words and their meaning at twice the level and range of dogs or horses.

The bird also becomes very comfortable and remains calm and at ease around large groups of people and technology. It is unafraid in urban environments or being taken indoors where it probably rides on its human partner's shoulder or backpack, or flies ahead a short way before finding a perch or rejoining its humanoid partner. This includes being in crowded, noisy cities like the Chi-Town 'Burbs, MercTown and Northern Gun, as well as being inside buildings, hallways, small rooms, elevators, tunnels and riding inside vehicles.

Bonding Conditions & Restrictions: It is the Covenant Falcon who chooses the human or D-Bee to bond with. A person can offer himself but the bird makes the final decision. Good aligned practitioners of magic and Psi-Druids may try to select this animal to be a familiar without actually using the Familiar Link spell. However, this creature tends not to bond with practitioners of magic and Master Psychics, with the exception of Psi-Stalkers (fellow demon hunters).

If one bonds with a mage, the Covenant Falcon is likely to accept a mage who has an additional *Familiar Animal* but is not completely satisfied as long as the other animal is part of the team. In such an instance, the Covenant Falcon is likely to leave the mage at some point, in favor of a new partner willing to devote himself to it exclusively. **Note:** The bird does not have a problem sharing its human host/partner with a spouse, children, family or friends, just other animals.

In most cases, once the *two become one*, the bond is permanent for life, lasting until one or the other dies. However, there are instances in which the animal may choose to sever the link and leave that particular host, usually for a more emotionally and alignment compatible partner. Anarchist alignments are acceptable even if the bird is itself good. This may occur when the Covenant Falcon has no other available option, or the two share the *same* Anarchist alignment (a compatible match), or that despite the selfish alignment, the good Covenant Falcon finds something about the person that it likes or finds interesting and positive.

If the Anarchist "partner" becomes too chaotic or his selfishness hurts others on a regular basis, the Covenant Falcon may choose to abandon him in favor of someone with a closer alignment and temperament. **Note:** When the Covenant Falcon breaks the symbiotic connection (or when it dies), the connection to it and any special abilities and bonuses are immediately severed and gone.

It never bonds with evil or cruel beings, nor beings that enslave and abuse animals. Thus, they dislike *Simvan*, *Horune Pirates*, *Minions of Splugorth*, *evil Shifters*, *Witches*, and other cruel or evil beings. They seem to favor *Psi-Stalkers*, *Cyber-Knights*, *Lynn-Srial*, *Native Americans*, *humans* and *D-Bees* of good alignments.

For reasons unknown, Covenant Falcons generally avoid bonding with Dog Boys and other *animal-like mutants* and *D-Bees*. Perhaps they are seen as too animal-like or too unfamiliar and alien. The bird is incompatible and unable to bond with creatures of magic and supernatural beings and never tries.

Why bond with humanoids at all? A great question to which there is no answer. Some Rogue Scientists and Scholars have speculated that these alien birds of prey must have been partially domesticated and trained to suit the needs of the, presumably, human-like beings from whatever world or dimension they originate. A relationship, like our own domesticated dogs, that may have existed for thousands or tens of thousands of years. As a consequence, the birds are instinctually imprinted to seek and establish a symbiotic bond with intelligent humanoids of recognizable shape and size, and compatible alignments.

That makes sense, but if so, it makes one wonder if the human-like aliens were once Rifted to Earth. And if so, what happened to them? Perhaps they perished during the Two-Hundred Year Dark Age. If they were demon hunters, they could have been targeted and wiped out during one of the Demon Plagues.

Covenant Falcon – Carnivore and P.P.E. Vampire

Also Known As: Demon Slaying Falcon, Bonding Falcon and Falcon Friend.

Alignment: Unusual. Most of these predators are Principled (15%), Scrupulous (45%), Unprincipled (15%) and Anarchist (15%) and partner with humanoids of compatible alignment.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+9 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 2D6+10, M.A. 2D6+12, P.S. 1D6+13 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+14, P.E. 1D6+15 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6+16, Spd 1D4+1, or 2 mph (3.2 km) on the ground.

Flying speed is 62 mph (99 km) maximum, and can be maintained for up to four hours. A more casual flying speed of 25-30 mph (40-48 km) can be maintained for as long as 12 hours. A dive reaches a speed of 200 mph (320 km) but counts as three melee attacks (see Mega-Damage). Maximum altitude is three miles (4.8 km) or roughly 16,000 feet (4,877 m).

M.D.C. by Location:

*Wings (2) – 1D6+26 each

Main Body – 1D6+50

* A single asterisk means a small and/or difficult target to strike and requires a Called Shot to hit. Even then the attacker is -5 to strike. Reducing the M.D.C. of one wing to zero makes flight impossible until the bird can heal, which takes 2D6+6 days. Lost limbs do not regenerate.

Note: On S.D.C. worlds, the Covenant Falcon has a main body of 1D6+12 S.D.C., 1D6+18 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 10; wings have 25 S.D.C. each. The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D., so its bite that does 1D6 M.D. on Rifts Earth does 1D6 S.D.C. on S.D.C. worlds.

Horror Factor: None unless under attack by it, then H.F. is 10.

Size: 17-22 inches (43-56 cm) tall and has a wingspan of 3-3.6 feet (0.9 to 1 m).

Weight: 3-4 pounds (1.35 to 1.8 kg).

Average Life Span: 2D6+40 years.

P.P.E.: 6D6

Disposition: Friendly, inquisitive, bold, brave and confident. It finds humans and similar humanoids to be fascinating and desirable in a symbiotic relationship. Dislikes, and is hostile toward, cruel and wicked predatory monsters and supernatural evil, and is happy to help humans fight and destroy them. Aggressively protective of its human host/partner. Will starve themselves in captivity and try to escape or kill their captor, if evil or Anarchist, at every opportunity.

Prior to bonding with a human or D-Bee in a symbiotic relationship that sustains the bird and helps the human, Covenant Falcons prey upon small animals like birds and rodents, feeding upon their flesh, blood and their doubled P.P.E. at the moment of death. They also hunt and kill small, evil creatures and evil supernatural beings like Black Faeries, Headworms, Witchlings, and even lesser demons like Imps, Gremlins, Bonelings, and similar – making them part bird of prey and part Psi-Stalker.

Note: This animal cannot be “tamed” without it developing a bond between it and a humanoid partner. It is highly resistant to the influence of the Simvan, Psi-Stalkers and Psi-Druids unless the bird wants to bond with one of them. That said, the animal is attracted to Psi-Stalkers and seems to like Psi-Druids.

The bird can be forced to become a familiar via the *Familiar Link spell*. When this happens the mage gets double the Hit Point bonus and the Blood Falcon gets one additional M.D.C. point. HOWEVER, in this case, the mage has all the bonuses and abilities of the *Familiar spell* NOT those from *bonding* as described above. The two are not one. Moreover, the Falcon will struggle to break the unwanted magic of the Familiar Link EVERY SINGLE DAY (+1 to save). When it does save vs magic (needs a 15 or higher), the bird flies away and never agrees to bond with anyone it was magically forced to serve regardless of alignment or good intentions. If the animal is slain while a Familiar, the mage to which it is linked takes double the usual damage from the severed link.

Similarly, a Covenant Falcon can be summoned and controlled by *Shifters*, but are +2 to save when summoned AND can try to save vs magic/Shifter control/dominance over it once ever 24 hours. +2 to save; +4 to save if the Shifter is a creature of magic or a supernatural being!

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 60%/50%, Land Navigation 95% (-20% at night), Tailing 75% (-10% to tail animals in dense woods and a person/people on crowded streets and in massive groups and at night; +10% to tail them on the open plains and empty streets), Tracking 70% by sight, includes tracking people and animals, but -10% to track in dense woods, crowded city streets, and in heavy rain, snow, fog or at night.

Natural Abilities: Flight can ride wind currents indefinitely and fly for 16 hours before needing to stop and rest. Extremely sharp hawk-like vision that enables the bird to see a rabbit up to two miles (3.2 km) away, excellent other senses, Supernatural Strength and Endurance, and incredible agility and speed. Prefers to be a daytime hunter, but can function at night, able to see about 600 feet (183 m), farther if seeing through the eyes of its human partner using technologically enhanced vision (night optics, binoculars, gun scope, etc.). Recovers from damage at a rate of 1D6 M.D.C. per 24 hours or 2D6 M.D.C. per every 12 hours on a ley line.

Bonuses vs Supernatural Evil/Demons (special): +1 on Perception Rolls regarding anything to do with supernatural evil, +4 M.D. per attack against supernatural evil, +1 additional melee attack when fighting supernatural evil, and +1 to strike, +1 to save vs Horror Factor, and +2 to save vs possession and mind control, but only from the supernatural.

None of these bonuses are applicable when fighting evil creatures of magic or ordinary people or animals, only against supernatural evil.

Sense Evil Creatures of Magic, 65% (special): The Covenant Falcon is sensitive to the distinctive psychic aura and scent of *wicked creatures of magic* such as Black Faeries,

Black-Winged Monster Men, evil Faerie Folk, Witchlings, the Loup ger Lou, Werebeasts, Windigo, Worm Wraiths, evil dragons, and similar, up to 600 feet (183 m) away at 65%, but not applicable to the mortal Minions of Splugorth, Black Priests, Witches, Necromancers, or evil practitioners of magic.

Sense Supernatural Evil, 75% (special): The Covenant Falcon is sensitive to the very distinctive psychic aura and scent of supernatural evil such as entities, demigods, Godlings, vampires, undead, Thornhead Demon, Brodkil and other subdemons, demonic host races, and the demonic of all kind, as well as hellspawned monsters like demon worms, demonic War Steeds, and Netherbeast, up to 1,000 feet (305 m) away at 75% (+10% to sense Great Demons, Demon Lords, evil deities, and Alien Intelligences. -20% to sense supernatural beings of good alignment).

Track Supernatural Evil by Scent/Sense Alone, 45% (special): The Covenant Falcon can sometimes track the aura and scent of evil supernatural beings as well as evil creatures of magic within its sensing range at 45% (+10% to sense and locate Greater Demons, deities and Alien Intelligences). **Note:** +10% to Track and Tail skills whenever the Covenant Falcon has visual contact with the monstrous target from the start. Its psychic sensitivity helping to keep the bird on track to hunt or follow the creature(s). May lose track or sight of a specific demon if the target joins with a large group, pack or army of similar creatures (66% chance).

Also see Psionics and the abilities and bonuses from bonding with a human or D-Bee.

Attacks per Melee: Four. Five when fighting supernatural evil, see *Bonuses vs the Supernatural (special)*, above.

Mega-Damage: Attacks with razor sharp beak and talons, usually making swooping and diving attacks.

Bite – 1D6 M.D.

Claw Strike – 1D6+3 M.D.

Swooping/Diving Claw Strike or Bite – 2D6+2 M.D., but counts as two attacks.

Power Dive (special) – 5D6+4 M.D., but it must be the *first attack of the melee round* and uses ALL melee attacks/actions other than the ability to fly away at half its usual speed at the end of its Power Dive attack. Speed remains half for the next melee round (15 seconds), but it has all of its melee attacks for that melee. Diving attacks take a lot of energy and cannot be repeated more than every third melee round.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses and those for fighting the demonic): Alert and +1 on all Perception Rolls in general, +1 on initiative, +3 to strike, no parry, +4 to automatic dodge (the act of dodging does not use up a melee attack), +3 to pull punch/strike, Critical Strike on a roll of a Natural 19-20 (double damage), +2 to roll with impact/fall, +4 to save vs poison and disease, +2 to save vs Horror Factor. Needs a 12 or higher to save vs psionic attacks.

Vulnerabilities: Cannot swim. It may become overconfident and take dangerous risks, especially to protect its host/partner, seasonal mate or young (one month during the spring). Most Covenant Falcons will fight to the death to protect the human with whom it has bonded.

Magic: None.

Psionics (limited): Abilities are limited to the following: *Bio-Regeneration (Self, 6 I.S.P. and restores 1D6)*, *Empathy (4; receiver only, not transmission)*, *Sense Evil (2)*, *Sense Magic (3)*,

Sense Time (2), and *Sixth Sense (2)*. **Base I.S.P.:** M.E. attribute number x2.

Covenant Falcons are considered Major Psychics with special psionic sensitivity as described above. This means they roll a 12 or higher to save vs psionic attack. **I.S.P. Recovery:** Two I.S.P. per hour of activity or 6 per hour of play, rest or sleep.

Habitat: Temperate forests, plains, and mountains of America, Canada and Mexico, from coast to coast, but can survive in most environments and climates other than arctic cold.

Enemies: Blood Hawks and other predators that feed on birds as well as humanoids, but supernatural evil and wicked creatures of magic are regarded as natural enemies.

Dislikes Simvan, Horune Pirates, Minions of Splugorth, slavers, evil Shifters, Witches, and other cruel or evil mortals and monsters such as the Darkhound, Devil Unicorn, Dragon-Ape, Shadeling, Soul Snake, evil dragons, and many others.

It is interesting to note that the Covenant Falcon adds the enemies of its humanoid partner to its list of enemies. Likewise, the human or D-Bee connected to the bird develops a deeper disdain for creatures the Covenant Falcon considers dangerous or enemies.

Allies: Other Covenant Falcons, humans and D-Bees of good to Anarchist alignment. Favor humans, Psi-Stalkers, Cyber-Knights, Lynn-Srial, Native Americans, True Atlanteans, Lemurians and people who do NOT wield magic or great amounts of psionics; see Bonding Requirements, above, for details.

Value: None per se. Covenant Falcons that are tethered or caged die in captivity unless they can find a humanoid with which to bond and become a valued partner.

Note: Covenant Falcons who do not bond to a humanoid, do exist. Their behavior is feral. Such lone wolves avoid human interaction and function like Wild Psi-Stalkers, feeding upon the blood and P.P.E. of wild animals, lesser demonic beings and minor creatures of magic they kill as prey.

Note: This is a new creature appearing for the very first time. Inspired by an idea from Carmen Bellaire and the art and ideas of Charles “Chuck” Walton Jr.

Craaphery Demon Snake

By Kevin Siembieda

The Craaphery (pronounced cray fur-ree) is a wicked predator from an alien world that has given people along the Gulf of Mexico, the coast and swamps of Florida, and up and down the Mississippi River, reason to be afraid. The monster tends to avoid small, shallow rivers, but can be found in the Mississippi River and many of its larger tributaries, as well as the Colorado River. They are also known to inhabit the Caribbean Sea, the Demon Sea (Bermuda Triangle), waters around Atlantis, and throughout the southern Atlantic Ocean as far as the West Indies. Some say the creature finds its way to Earth from the *Bermuda Triangle*, better known on Rifts Earth as the Demon Sea.

The monster is as dangerous and vile as it appears to be, and preys upon humanoids, dolphins, whales, Sail Rays and other mammals and large animals. They are only a notch or two less intelligent than dolphins and Sail Rays, but are more aggressive and savage than a tiger shark. Worse, they have a mean streak a mile long, kill for pleasure and enjoy stalking, chasing and toying with their prey. Craaphery Demon Snakes are aptly named, because they are fiends that like to terrorize their prey and engage in

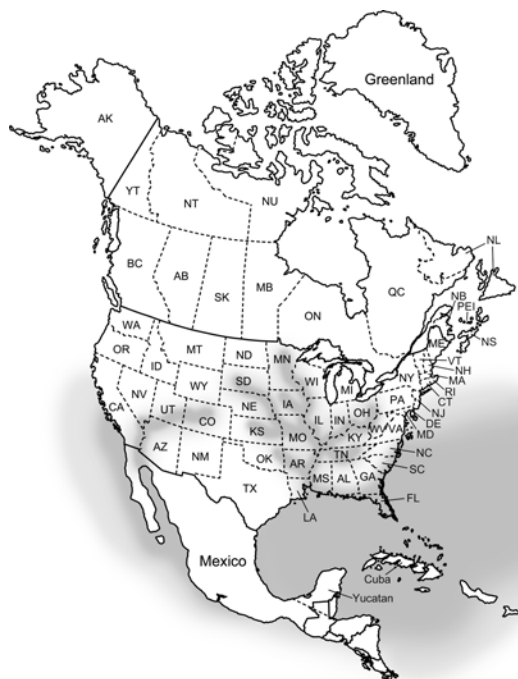
cat and mouse games, particularly when targeting humans and D-Bees. Though mortal, Lemurians consider the creatures to be more demonic than animal, and one of the most dangerous creatures of the ocean.

The Craaphery Demon Snake sometimes serves powerful aquatic monsters including *Splugorth Slavers*, *Metzila* (another Minion of Splugorth), *Lorica Wraiths*, *Storm Rider Ley Line Beasts*, and the *Lord of the Deep*, as well as the occasional *Demon Lord*, *Naut'Yll*, and powerful mages, especially evil Shifters and Sea Witches. Surprisingly, *Horune Pirates* who barter with, and work for, the Splugorth have no affinity with Craaphery and hate the monster because they are sometimes victimized by the beast.

Though not originally common as far north as Minnesota, Shifters at the Kingdom of Tolkeen summoned a few thousand Craa-

phery to supplement Tolkeen's naval forces in their war against the Coalition Army. These beasts were either controlled by allied Simvan or by a Techno-Wizard vehicle-like attachment that made the Craaphery Demon Snake a living weapon. The Demon Snakes would not hesitate killing their Tolkeen controllers if they could, but the animals always make the best out of captivity and enjoy masters who let them hunt and kill with few restrictions as the Tolkeenites did. In the case of Tolkeen, the Demon Snakes' primary targets were Coalition soldiers, marines and other designated humanoids such as Dog Boys and Psi-Stalkers in the CS Army. Thousands of CS troops along the Mississippi and waters around Tolkeen fell victim to the Craaphery Demon Snake. In fact, the Craaphery deployed in the Coalition-Tolkeen War killed and devoured so many Coalition soldiers, that they developed a fond-





ness for human flesh and have continued to hunt anyone wearing the familiar *CS Dead Boy* armor, all styles, Dog Boys included, as favored prey. Unfortunately, the Demon Snakes' taste for human flesh has turned them into man-eaters, making all humans and human-looking D-Bees a prime target. However, any humanoids and large animals (cattle, horses, deer, etc.) are fair game for these monsters of the deep.

At first glance, the Craaphery looks like a hideous, giant eel, then observers usually notice that what should be the eel's body trailing off from behind the head is actually four long, ribbon-like tentacles! When swimming, the tentacles function like an eel's tail, so mistaking it for a giant eel is an understandable mistake. This gives the Craaphery Demon Snake excellent speed and versatility in combat, enabling it to ram boats and prey with its head, bite like a shark or grab and entangle or strike with its four tentacles. The tentacles also enable it to climb up onto the deck of ships where it can pick off sailors by either entangling and eating them right there, on deck, or by pulling them into the water to drown them and eat them at its leisure or just for fun.

Wicked and cruel, the Demon Snake is smart enough to understand human fears and fragility, so the monster likes to capsize or cripple boats and small ships, and then engage in a campaign of terror, picking off the crew and passengers a few at a time. Sometimes for weeks. The creature loves to harass and attack people lost at sea, trapped on a raft or a ship that is adrift. The monster's cat and mouse games means it may grab, submerge, and threaten or chase people in the water only to seemingly let them go, and repeat, or engage in other "games" of torment. At least until it becomes bored of such games or gets hungry.

The monster itself can live in water as little as 40 feet (12.2 m) deep and can swim at full speed in water as shallow as five feet (1.5 m). Able to breathe air for short periods – two hours or less (longer if necessary but it becomes dehydrated and weak) – the Craaphery Demon Snake is able climb aboard ships and give pursuit to prey in marshlands and on dry land, attacking people traveling, camping or living near a large body of water. They can also climb trees that can support their weight or up the framework of bridges and towers, large vehicles and robots, buildings and other structures to get at, or wait for, prey, as well as to escape from larger preda-

tors and those who might be hunting them. Thankfully, Craaphery seldom stay on land for more than an hour and tend to hunt as lone individuals, pairs and small schools of 1D4+2. However, schools of as many as 12 Demon Snakes have been reported in the wild, and there can be many more if they are under the control of riders, mages or a more powerful, evil being. During the Tolkeen-Coalition War, Coalition forces along the Mississippi and Gulf Coast regularly faced onslaughts from dozens to hundreds of the monsters depending on the person(s) directing the siege or the purpose of the attack. The rest of the time, 1-6 would be lurking and waiting to attack one or a few soldiers whenever the opportunity presented itself. They also picked off Coalition troops at night from ships and on dry land. It is little wonder that the Coalition Navy could get no traction and was stymied time and again along the Mississippi and other waterways during the Siege on Tolkeen.

Craaphery Demon Snake – Carnivorous Aquatic Predator

Also Known As: The River Monster and Octopus Eel. Sometimes mistaken for the much less dangerous *Cerebro-Scrambler* by those not familiar with either animal. The two look very different, but both resemble cephalopod-like creatures and possess tentacles.

Alignment: Considered Miscreant or Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+4 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D4+6, M.A. 1D6+4, P.S. 2D4+24 (Supernatural), P.P. 2D4+12, P.E. 1D4+20, P.B. 1D4, Spd in water 2D4+75, or 55 mph (88 km or 47 knots). This top speed can be maintained for two hours straight before needing to rest. A speed of 30 mph (48 km 26 knots) can be maintained for up to 12 hours, but a casual speed is 4-8 mph (6.4 to 13 km). Maximum depth tolerance is five miles (8 km).

12 mph (19 km) on dry land, using its tentacles to slithering like a snake. This speed can be maintained for five hours before need to rest. Six mph (9.6 km) using the tentacles to crawl or to climb through trees or rocky/mountainous terrain, and when scaling scaffolding, bridges, or the sides of buildings.

M.D.C. by Location:

- *Large Black Eyes (2) – 30 each
- Tentacles (4; large) – 125 each
- Head (large and bony) – 1D6x10+60
- **Main Body – 1D6x10+70

* Items marked with an asterisk are difficult to strike, so the attacker must make a Called Shot and even then is -4 to strike.

** Depleting the M.D.C. of the main body to zero or below kills the animal. Destroying a tentacle reduces the monster's number of melee attacks by one and reduces its Spd by 10%. Destroying the head kills the creature, but its body continues to thrash about, striking out blindly with its tentacles for 2D6 melee rounds (four attacks per melee).

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Craaphery has a main body of 1D6x10+60 S.D.C., 1D6x10+50 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 14 for the body and tentacles, A.R. 16 for the head. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (125 M.D.C. = 125 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D. (i.e. 2D6 M.D. = 2D6 S.D.C.).

Horror Factor: 13

Size: 20-34 feet (6.1 to 10.4 m).

Weight: 400-800 pounds (180 to 360 kg).

Life Span: 160 years. The fertile female lay 1D6x10 eggs in an egg case anchored to the sea or lake floor. The female stands guard until the young hatch three months later. The six inch (15 cm) long young instinctively school around her for protection, but most will perish before they reach one year old, by which time they are five feet (1.5 m) in size. Young stay with their mother and siblings until they reach age four and 20 feet (6.1 m) in length. At this point, the juvenile animals leave their mother but usually stay together in a small family schools (3D6+2 survivors), pairs or threesomes. Juveniles grow one foot a year, reaching full size and maturity by age 12. Young adult animals that may still be in a school go off as lone individuals, pairs, or threesomes.

P.P.E.: 1D4+20

Disposition: Wicked and cruel, these vile creatures love to play with, torture, and torment their victims before killing them slowly. Whenever possible, Craaphery like to inflict as much pain and suffering as they can. They are extremely treacherous, and even so-called trained or domesticated Craaphery will turn on their riders or master when the opportunity presents itself. They are most obedient and loyal to cruel and wicked masters that rule over them with an iron fist.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 80%/80%, Fishing 95% (catches them with its tentacles or mouth), Land Navigation 70% (+20% underwater), Prowl 55% (+10% underwater), Tailoring 55% (+20% underwater), Track by sight 55% (+20% underwater), and Wilderness Survival 80% (+18% underwater).

Those trained by humanoids can learn to understand (not speak) 1D4+2 different languages (usually American, Spanish and one other) at 60% proficiency (+30% to understand Dolphin and other aquatic languages). **Note:** Its own natural language is similar to Earth whales and dolphins (which it understands at 90% proficiency), and it speaks to other members of its species using growls, grunts, moans, clicks and whistles. It can roar when its head is above water.

Natural Abilities: Swim, breathe underwater and breathe in the air. It is able to operate on dry land for 72 minutes at a time before beginning to dehydrate and weaken (reduce Spd and all attributes by 10% for every additional 30 minutes out of water). However, those hunting along shore or accompanying a ship can go in and out of the water as often as it wants. A quick dip in the water for a 1D4 minutes after 15 minutes on dry land/deck, enabling it to function on dry land indefinitely. Can live in salt or fresh water but prefers salt water. Track by smell 75% (+15% to follow blood scent underwater), impervious to cold, and Bio-Regenerates 2D6 M.D.C. every hour. It is able to completely regrow damaged or lost tentacles within 2D4 weeks, an eye in 3D4 weeks.

Superior Vision (special): Good day vision on par with humans. Nightvision 1,200 feet (366 m), can see in total darkness and in murky water as well as see infrared and ultraviolet spectrums of light, see the invisible, and has filtering transparent eyelids that slide into place to filter out glare like polarized sunglasses. This second, transparent eyelid can also be used to shield it from particles in the water or air (has 10 M.D.C.).

Attacks per Melee: Eight.

Mega-Damage: Fights with tentacles.

Tentacle Strike, Restrained – 5D6 S.D.C.

Tentacle Strike, Full Strength – 2D6 M.D.

Tentacle Strike, Power Punch – 4D6 M.D., but counts as two attacks.

Bite – 4D6 M.D.

Head Butt, Restrained – 5D6 S.D.C.

Head Butt, Full Strength – 1D6 M.D.

Body Slam or Ram – 3D6 M.D.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +4 on initiative, +5 to strike, +4 to parry, +3 to dodge, +4 to pull punch, +2 to roll with impact, +1 to save vs magic, +6 to save vs poison, +1 to save vs psionic attack, and +5 to save vs Horror Factor.

Vulnerabilities: Fire, plasma and heat attacks inflict double damage, and the animal can only survive out of the water for a few hours before dehydrating, weakening and dying.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Considered a Minor Psychic creature. Deaden Senses (5), Death Trance (1), Resist Fatigue (4), Empathy (4), Presence Sense (4), and Mind Block (4). **I.S.P.:** M.E. attribute number x3.

Habitat: The warm southern seas of the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean, West Indies, Coast of Dinosaur Swamp/Florida, the Demon Sea/Bermuda Triangle, the waters around Atlantis, and on occasion, the coast of northern Africa and the Mediterranean Sea. May travel up the Mississippi River and into its tributaries and deep lakes during summer and early autumn months. It should be noted that the Great Lakes get too cold for Craaphery. The only reason they are found as far north as the ruins of Tolkeen and along the Mississippi and Colorado River tributaries is that the monsters can swim back down to warmer waters in the south and into the Gulf of Mexico during the cold winter months.

Enemies: Few. Lemurians, Horune Pirates, Captain Nemo and the New Navy, and Coalition military chase them off or kill them on sight. Larger, more powerful predators may also hunt this animal for food.

Thanks to their use by Tolkeen during the Coalition's siege on the kingdom, thousands of Craaphery have become man-eaters, learning to prefer the taste of humans, especially CS Dead Boys, Dog Boys, Psi-Stalkers and human-looking D-Bees above all other prey. This preference is being taught to the monsters' offspring, making the creature a growing threat to humanity. Such Demon Snakes recognize CS and Techno-Wizard water vessels, submersibles, armor, and identifying markings, making Coalition troops, humans and such vessels and vehicles prime targets.

Allies: None per se, other than its own kind. Hunts alone, in mated pairs, family schools or small groups of 1D6+1 animals. Young Craaphery can be partially domesticated if captured at a young age (under two years old), but is always quick to fight, hunt and kill. Its handler/owner will need regular displays of force to keep the sea monster in line, obedient and submissive. A domesticated Craaphery functions best as a hunting animal that is allowed to hunt and kill on a regular basis.

As noted, the animal may willingly serve, or grudgingly accept being forced to serve, more powerful evil beings. This includes *Splugorth Slavers*, *Metzla*, *Lorica Wraith*, *Storm Riders*, *the Lord of the Deep*, *Demon Lords*, and sometimes, *Naut'Yll*, *powerful practitioners of magic* and *Witches*. For example, during the Tolkeen-Coalition War, defending Tolkeenites used magic and Simvan to force summoned and captured Craaphery to fight against the CS Army. **Note:** See **Rifts® World Book 7: Rifts® Underseas** for some of the evil beings listed above, **Rifts® Atlantis** for Splugorth and their minions, and the **Coalition Wars® series**, Books 1-6, for information about the Siege on Tolkeen.

Value: No real market for these wild animals, though the Horune Pirates and the Splugorth's Metztlā are said to consider them good to eat. A domesticate animal can command 200-1,200 credits in some markets, usually to evildoers.

The forces at Tolkeen used them as semi-domesticated attack animals augmented and control by TW devices. Though it can be partially domesticated, the animal's violent and vicious nature means only evil and ruthless beings have any desire to domesticate the creature and use it as an aquatic attack animal or watchdog. See Allies, above. That means pirates and some aquatic people may try to tame and command such animals with varying results. One thing is for sure, make certain it is well fed or you may be its next meal.

Note: The Craaphery originally appeared in **Rifts® Coalition Wars® 6: Final Siege™**, page 78.



TW Craaphery Control Vehicle

Though Tolkeen has fallen, there are still Techno-Wizards who know how to make the TW control mechanism that turns the Craaphery into a unique, living underwater vehicle. Of course, making such a large TW machine is expensive and time consuming, but there are those who can still make them, as well as hundreds of them at the bottom of the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico.

The TW vehicle portion of the contraption attaches to the top of the Craaphery in order to control and “drive” the creature. A system of gears and pulleys is used to steer the beast in a similar way that a bit and bridle steer a horse.

Fairly smart creatures, the Craaphery learn the signals quickly, within 7-10 days. Those animals trained by a Simvan or a psychic with an affinity for animals learn how to respond in only a day or two. Stubborn monsters learn that the forward part of the vehicle that covers its head delivers a painful electrical shock to procure its cooperation and good behavior.

Aggressive predators, their masters earn their participation by allowing the sea monsters to feast upon their enemies without restraint, often letting the Craaphery stalk and play with its victims. Although the creatures would cheerfully devour those who control them, since they cannot, they have fun killing whenever the opportunity presents itself.

The following are the basic stats and weapons for the Craaphery Control and Driver Vehicle.

Blue Laser: Mounted on the right side of the vessel is a blue laser that inflicts 5D6 M.D. and has a range of 2,000 feet (610 m). Payload is effectively unlimited.

Mini-Torpedo Launchers: Concealed on each side of the vessel is a mini-torpedo launch tube. **Range:** One mile (1.6 km). **Damage:** 6D6 M.D. **Payload:** Four total, two in each tube.

Electro-Lance: The long spear or lance-like rod that extends from the monster's headpiece can be charged with electricity and inflict 3D6 M.D. by touch or fire a short-range bolt that does 1D6 M.D. up to 60 feet (18.3 m) away.

Vehicle Stats: The driving vehicle can move on its own without the Craaphery, so if the beast is slain, the vessel can unhook itself and return to base or keep fighting under its own power. Speed is a modest 25 mph (40 km or 21.7 knots), has a maximum depth tolerance of 4,000 feet (1,219 m), full environmental and life support systems, basic vehicular sensors and communications, and can seat the pilot and two others comfortably.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® Coalition Wars® 6: Final Siege™**, page 79.

Dark Behemoth

By Kevin Siembieda

The Dark Behemoth vaguely resembles a giant, hulking bulldog with two pushed in faces. The massive animal is the size of a small tank or truck, and though it is not clearly depicted in the illustration, the creature has two heads. Both are mashed close together and mounted into the same short, thick neck. Though the beast has six tiny eyes, three per face, and two mouths filled with teeth, both faces/heads point slightly away from each other. This means there is a blind spot directly in front of the Dark Behemoth, and any prey that stands completely still at just the right spot within six feet (1.8 m) of it, cannot be seen, until either the prey or the hulking beast moves.

There are no discernable noses or ears, both are small slits covered by flaps of skin that open and close as necessary. On each side of the face are seven, 12-15 foot (3.7 to 4.6 m) long, thin tentacles used to snatch up and carry hunks of meat and body parts from slain prey bitten off by the mouths. In combat, the tentacles may be used to fight by snaring and entangling one or more legs of the intended prey to trip and knock it down, or entangle an arm or appendage to hold on and keep it from running away. Additionally, the tentacles may be used to jerk prey to keep it off balance or to pull ensnared prey to one of the Dark Behemoth's snapping mouths. Of course, tentacles may also be used to completely entangle and hold on to captured prey and to drag the carcass of dead or dying prey to its lair or other safe place before it is devoured. The tentacle are especially handy in rearing young, enabling the parent Dark Behemoth to literally keep its pups on a tentacle leash tethered to mom or dad, carry and drag its pups around, block the entrance to a hole or crack in a wall beckoning a pup to come and explore, snare and hold one to several playful pups trying to run off, or to separate them when their roughhousing gets carried away. A tentacle may pluck a pup off the ground and put it someplace safe like a sturdy tree branch, cliff or boulder, when danger appears, and so on. And considering a Dark Behemoth can bear 2D4 pups as often as every two years, 14 tentacles are very useful.

Despite its huge size and ferocious nature when fighting, the hulking beast tends to be lazy. Hunting only when it is hungry or has pups to feed, and fighting when it feels threatened or challenged. When on the prowl, the Dark Behemoth likes to ambush its prey and often toys with its victim, like a cat with a mouse, before devouring it.

Like the *Burrower Bruin*, a rival burrowing predator, the Dark Behemoth is a digger that creates burrows underground where the creature sleeps, rests and rears its young. Lairs where the young are born are usually twice as deep as a typical everyday burrow used as a place to sleep and rest. An ordinary burrow is fairly shallow and may essentially create a temporary hill where, 4-6 feet under the dirt lies a Dark Behemoth. The animal seems to prefer to establish its burrow in hilly regions and locations where there is ground cover such as light forests, scrub, city ruins, boulders, fallen trees, and debris fields.

When prey – almost anything – passes by the opening of its burrow, the Dark Behemoth lunges out to snare the unlucky victim with 1D6 of its face tentacles or powerful jaws. If potential prey is fast enough or lucky enough to escape the tentacles, or is out of reach, the beast comes charging out like a slobbering freight train, tentacles flailing and mouths snapping. When in pursuit of fast prey like deer, caribou, buffalo or fleeing cattle, the face tentacles are used to trip and topple prey. A tactic that works extremely well, making the Dark Behemoth a very successful hunter, succeeding in half of its attempts. If there is more than one potential target, the

monster tries to kill or seriously injure the closest, before attacking another. If it is not very hungry, or the other prey animals, which includes people, are too fast for it or put up too much of a struggle, the monster grabs its injured or dying first victim with 1-6 tentacles and drags it back inside the burrow where it finishes the kill and feeds. Eating flesh and bone, the monster leaves behind only bone fragments and pieces of skull in its waste outside the burrow. If an opponent proves to be too powerful and tenacious for the monster to overcome, the Dark Behemoth stops its attack and lumbers away. If it is pursued or injured itself, the Behemoth retreats back into its lair, collapsing the entrance to prevent vengeful prey, like humans and D-Bees, from following and continuing to fight; popping out hours or a few days later, depending on the extent of its injuries or the degree of its hunger.

Unfortunately for people, Dark Behemoths have learned the average human and D-Bee is easy and delicious prey. As a result, the animal is known to establish its lair near the outskirts of places inhabited by humanoids. From there it can make raids on farms, ranches, cattle ranges, villages, towns and even cities, stalking people, pets, cattle, horses, sheep, pigs and other livestock, easily





leaping over or smashing through fences and corrals, and kicking in barn doors. Travelers sleeping under the stars also need to be wary, as they make easy and alluring prey.

In the wild, Dark Behemoths stalk coyotes and wolves, deer and caribou, wild horses and buffalo as well as much larger and dangerous prey including *dinosaurs*, *Rhino-Buffero*, *Fury Beetles* and young or injured *Aegis Buffero*. Not the brightest of predators, one or more Dark Behemoths may also attack cyborgs, power armor, giant robots and vehicles before realizing they are inedible and/or too dangerous, and give up their attack and go away.

Dark Behemoths use the element of surprise whenever they can, and bring down their prey with brute strength and savagery. They use their tentacles to trip and hobble prey while biting at them with one and then the other tooth-lined mouth. These dull-witted, pug-faced beasts tend to be lone hunters and seldom use any finesse or tactics other than laying in ambush to attack. Sometimes a group of individual Dark Behemoths and/or one or more *family clans* may work together, like wolves, to bring down large, powerful prey. A family clan is an adult male, female and 2D4 young that are half the adults' size.

Lazy hunters, Dark Behemoths sleep half the day away, sunning themselves for hours at a time. This, and the fact that two cows or 4-6 humanoids can feed one for a week, suggests the massive beasts may have a very low metabolism. Dark Behemoths can go without eating for up to a month, but after such a long sedentary period, they gorge themselves when they finally go hunting, eating as many as 12 cows or three dozen people! An entire village or mercenary company can be wiped out by four or five ravenous Dark Behemoths on a feeding frenzy.

It is fortunate then that the Dark Behemoth is a rather calm, sedentary and solitary hunter seldom found in groups larger than a mated pair except when encountered with young. Dark Behemoths mate in the winter and give birth to 2D4 pups toward the end of spring. The young leave their mother one year after birth, and reach full maturity at the unbelievable pace of 18 months. It is the short period when the young are with their mother, and possibly both parents, that they live and hunt together.

During the first ten months, the family group may be joined by the male who spawned the young. Males linger in the area to

protect their temporary mate and offspring, and sometimes join the female to hunt for food. The young, eager to learn to hunt, frequently join their parents on a hunt and try to help to bring down large prey as young as six months old. The young are half the size of their parents, but eat two to three times as much. Between 13 and 18 months of age, the young Dark Behemoths undergo a rapid growing spurt to reach full size and physical maturity. This is the Dark Behemoth at its most dangerous and reckless. The aggressive and ravenous young continue to develop for an additional six months after, during which time they eat double the amount they were consuming the previous months; six times more than what a typical adult eats.

Though the juveniles will have separated from their mother 12 months after their birth, brothers and sisters may also continue to hunt as a pack or separate and hunt in pairs or trios until two years old. At two, they all separate and go off on their own. A few may linger within 1D4x100 miles (160 to 640 km) of where they were born, but the rest may travel thousands of miles until they find a hunting territory that suits them. **Note:** The male that sired the young leaves the family clan nine or ten months after they are born. Mother stays with them for 12 months before leaving the still, comparatively small and vulnerable young to fend for themselves. Dark Behemoths do not mate for life.

In the New West and southwestern Canada, individual Dark Behemoths may randomly join forces to bring down one *Aegis Buffero*, and because the *Aegis* is so huge, Behemoths are willing to share the kill with their brethren, and sometimes other animal predators. Dark Behemoths are not very territorial and most are willing to tolerate fellow Dark Behemoths and other predators, large and small, without conflict. Even the Devil Unicorn, T-Rex, Alien Rex, and Allosaurus may share a hunting range with the Dark Behemoth, though they may try to steal each other's kill, or feed on the remains the other has left behind. This means several lone, adult Dark Behemoths and large predators may stakeout the same hunting ground or follow the same herd of *Aegis Buffero*, *Duckbilled Honkers*, *Mammoth Brontodon*, *Rhino-Buffero*, *dinosaurs* and other large herd animals, especially when the prey is plentiful. Never bothering or challenging one another until mating season, and even then, battles to win mating rights with a female are seldom to the death. Once they mate, the male and female stay together for a time, separating 9-10 months after the pups are born.

There are three predators the Dark Behemoth will not tolerate, *Burrower Bruins*, *Grigleapers* and *Raptor dinosaurs*. All three of these pack predators often trail Dark Behemoths, just as hyenas trail African Lions, to steal the Behemoth's kill or to eat whatever they leave behind. Moreover, these bold pack hunters are not afraid to challenge and attack, as a group, to kill and eat a lone Dark Behemoth, and target the young, injured and old Behemoths. *Burrower Bruins* and *Raptor dinosaurs* regard Dark Behemoths as rival predators to be eliminated, where *Grigleapers* simply see them as another large prey animal to feed their pack. An injured Dark Behemoth as well as the half-sized and half as powerful young Behemoths are always considered potential prey. The smaller, faster *Burrower Bruins* are so bold as to attack a lone Dark Behemoth or its young inside their own underground lair! Striking while the giant sleeps or rests inside, or is away hunting, leaving its young behind in the burrow. *Bruins* and *Raptors* like to attack as a group, taking turns to chase and attack to wear down their giant adversary, before moving in en masse for the kill.

Dark Behemoths make their lairs underground to hide and protect themselves from such predators as well as from humans

and D-Bees. However, as superior burrowers and tunnelers, there is no protection from a pack of *Burrower Bruins*, which are capable of forcing a Dark Behemoth from its burrow or ambushing it from within. Again, young Behemoths or a severely injured adult Behemoth are favored targets, as is stealing the carcass of prey taken inside the monster's lair. A pack of Burrower Bruins always have a decent chance of taking down even a healthy, individual Dark Behemoth when they really want to. Lucky for the Dark Behemoth, Bruins shy away from such brutal battles that are likely to result in death and injury to several members of their pack. Thus if the hulking hound-like animal puts up too much of a fight, they abandon it in favor of hunting smaller, more manageable prey. A pack of Burrower Bruins may also take over lairs abandoned by a Dark Behemoth, using the large, short burrow as a main chamber and adding a network of smaller, longer tunnels to it. Perhaps for that reason, Dark Behemoths usually fill in their burrows when they no longer need them and move to a new hunting ground.

Unlike the Burrower Bruin which constructs long and intricate tunnel networks, the Dark Behemoth digs rather short burrows that serve mainly as a safe place to sleep and rest. A typical lair is shaped rather like an upside down comma, with a short tunnel that turns left into a bit larger, round sleeping chamber. Such burrows are large only because the creature itself is so big.

Like most predators, a Dark Behemoth ignores even easy prey when it has had its fill. Of course, invading the underground lair of a Dark Behemoth is another story, though most Behemoths are satisfied with showing intruders who is boss and running them off, the hated Burrower Bruins and Raptors being the exception. The two-headed beast is likely to pursue and cheerfully kill and devour every last one of them, if it can, dragging the additional carcasses back to its burrow to eat at its leisure. As one might expect, a Dark Behemoth cornered inside its own lair is extremely aggressive, and will fight to the death.

Dark Behemoth – Predatory Carnivore

Also Known As: The Demon Hound, Giant Hound, and Tank Dog.

Alignment: Considered to be a Diabolic animal predator.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+2 (low animal intelligence, relies on instinct), M.E. 2D6+4, M.A. 1D6, *P.S. 3D6+30 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+12, P.E. 2D6+16 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6, Spd running 1D6+58, or 43 mph (69 km) running for up to two hours! 60 mph (96 km) for brief spurts of two minutes as often as every 15 minutes. 10-20 mph (19.2 to 32 km) trotting for up to eight hours straight. 3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km) walking. 8 mph (12.9 km) tunneling.

P.S. Tentacle Note: Each tentacle has a P.S. of 17 (Supernatural) and is used more to trip, entangle, and incapacitate prey, or to carry and drag, rather than to attack/strike prey and opponents outright.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Eyes (6) – 15 each

Legs (4) – 1D6x10+100 each

*Face Tentacles (14; seven per side of the face) – 30 each

**Head (2) – 280 each

***Main Body – 1D4x100+320

* Items marked with a single asterisk are difficult to strike, so the attacker must make a "Called Shot" and even then is -4 to strike.

** Destroying one head eliminates one mouth, its seven tentacles, and one set of three eyes, blinding the Dark Behemoth on that side of its body. Reduce combat bonuses by half! The two heads share one brain that is actually located at the back where the two skulls seem to be joined to the neck. A head cannot grow back. Destroying both heads kills the Behemoth.

*** Depleting the M.D.C. of the main body to zero or below kills the animal.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the beast has a main body of 3D6x10+160 S.D.C., 2D6x10+220 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 14 for the body and tentacles, A.R. 15 for each head. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (1D6x10+100 M.D.C. = 1D6x10+100 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D. (i.e. 2D6 M.D. = 2D6 S.D.C.).

Horror Factor: 15

Size: 12-15 feet (3.7 to 4.6 m) tall, and 25-30 feet (7.6 to 9.1 m) long; young are half this size. Females are 20% smaller.

Weight: 2-6 tons.

Average Life Span: 180-200 years.

P.P.E.: 2D6x10

Disposition: A simpleminded predator that relies on instinct and response to hunger and basic needs. Lazy even when hungry, this predator prefers to do as little work as possible and is always on the hunt for easy prey that either is a quick kill or cannot fight back, like herd animals and unarmored people. It only fights hard when hungry, protecting its young or as long as it thinks it has the upper hand, and when cornered. Whenever it is necessary to retreat from a fight, the Dark Behemoth runs or tunnels away. After all, easier prey is bound to happen along sometime and most predators will not dig through yards/meters of dirt to try to get to it.

When not hungry and on the hunt, this hulking monstrosity is laid-back, calm and ignores most smaller life forms unless they are *Grigleapers*, *Raptors*, *Burrower Bruins* or *humans clad in Coalition armor*. All Dark Behemoths have learned to fear and hate these iconic creatures and attack them on sight when there are only a few, and hide or flee when there are more than they can handle (10 or more).

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 60%/10%, Camouflage (self, 58% using leaves and/or debris or hiding among foliage, +30% when covering itself with dirt, sand, mud or gravel, or is mostly buried underground with only the top of its head and back above ground but covered in loose soil or leaves), Dowsing 90% (surface and underground sources of water), Land Navigation 90%, Prowl 40% (+10% underground in caves, tunnels, burrow), Swimming 50% and Tailing 85% (usually following large prey or a herd from a distance).

Natural Abilities: It possesses a decent sense of smell, but Dark Behemoths are visual hunters and do not rely upon scent as much as most predators; 57% to track by smell alone (+20% to track a blood scents), Nightvision 300 feet (91.4 m), exceptional hearing, sensitive to seismic vibrations (can sense location of surface movement from underground up to one mile/1.6 km away; 62%), heals at an exceptional rate (3D6 M.D. per hour) and regenerates lost tentacles within 48 hours. It can leap 20 feet (6.1 m) high and 40 feet (12.2 m) lengthwise, tunneling/create a burrow 80%, and has a slow metabolism despite its huge size, so does not need to consume as much as one would expect.

Attacks per Melee: Five. Special Sneak Attack: If the Behemoth is able to attack from an ambush position (i.e. camouflaged, from the mouth of a burrow or hiding place, or a successful Prowl), it is allowed to make one bite attack against a single target *before* combat begins. The victim is caught flat-footed, and cannot defend in any way! Only Sixth Sense or something like the Juicer's Super-Reflexes can help avoid this.

Mega-Damage: The Dark Behemoth is extremely strong, with incredibly powerful jaws and legs. The monster usually attacks with its bite, and uses the legs for tunneling. However, it can strike with the front and rear legs. **Note:** Half damage for young, round up.

Punch/Claw Strike – 5D6 M.D.

Power Claw Strike – 2D4x10 M.D. but counts as 2 attacks.

Mule Kick – 7D6 M.D., but only to targets behind it.

Bite – 1D4x10+10 M.D.

Death Bite (special): When the Dark Behemoth is about to die, it channels the last of its strength into a powerful bite, then locks its jaws. The bite inflicts 2D4x10+20 M.D., and a combined Robot Strength of 60 or Supernatural Strength of 40 or greater is required to pry the jaws of the dead animal loose. Until then, or until the head is destroyed, the victim is held tight and trapped.

Face Tentacles (special): Seven 12-15 foot (3.7 to 4.6 m) long tentacles are located on the side of each head. They are used to ensnare prey and pull them toward one of the mouths – two different prey can be pulled to both mouths or each can take turns biting. Tentacles are used to great effect to trip, entangle, and incapacitate prey. It is difficult to stand and fight or run away when one or more of your legs are snared or tangled by 1D6 tentacles, or you keep getting tripped or pulled at by tentacles. They can also be used to carry and drag a carcass, and pieces of prey bitten or gnawed off the victim's body, as well as the handling of young.

Each set of tentacles has two non-damaging, tangling, snaring, or tripping attacks of their own, but can only be used in that fashion, not to inflict damage; +4 to entangle/ensnare, trip or disarm. Once a victim is entangled or snared he is held until he can break free (needs the combined equivalent Supernatural P.S. of 18 or a Robot P.S. of 30) or cut free by inflicting 30 M.D.C. to each tentacle he is held by. Once snared/entangled, victims can be pulled and dragged by the animal, or pulled toward one of the biting maws of the two heads!

When a tentacle is used as a whip attack that hits rather than grabs and holds (only one tentacle at a time), it counts as one of the creature's five melee attacks and damage is only 3D6 S.D.C. (restrained strike) or 1D6 M.D. (full strength).

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +5 on initiative, +4 to strike, +2 to save vs poison and magic, +2 to roll with impact or fall, and +6 to save vs Horror Factor, but in many cases it is too stupid to be afraid.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: The animal can be found anywhere in North America, but is primarily found in southwestern Canada, the New West, the Pecos Empire and Northern Mexico.

Once plentiful in the American Midwest, Dark Behemoths have been systematically hunted down and destroyed by the Coalition Army as well as others who fear them. Still they can be found scattered throughout North America, though comparatively uncommon.

Enemies: Burrower Bruins, Grigleapers, Raptors, other large predators and humanoids. As noted, a hungry Dark Behemoth will consider attacking anything that moves, including vehicles, robots, and power armor. Numerous Coalition patrols and adventurers tell stories of having been ambushed by these brutes, only to have the startled monstrosity realize, after it has attacked, that the "thing" it has engaged is either inedible or more than it can chew.

Like the *Spiny Ravager*, the Coalition Army have targeted the *Dark Behemoth* for extermination, and have cleared out ranges in the Midwest and around Chi-Town, Iron Heart, Free Quebec, and other CS population areas. On the other hand, Psi-Stalkers and Simvan Monster Riders sometimes use Dark Behemoths as guard and attack animals as well as war mounts. However, though gigantic, scary looking and powerful, the creature is too laid back and lazy to make an ideal riding animal and is not an alert or effective guard or attack animal, sleeping soundly for many hours at a time and ignoring intruders when the animal is not hungry or attacked first.

Allies: None per se, other than members of its own species.

Value: None. Its meat is barely edible, chewy and not flavorful; the tentacles are like chewing on rope. Can NOT be domesticated and even Simvan and Psi-Stalkers have trouble controlling and motivating them.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 12: Psy-cape™**, page 92.

Darkhound

By Peter Murphy & Kevin Siembieda

To this day, rumors circulating throughout the Magic Zone have it that the savage Darkhound is really a monstrous mutation of a Dog Boy. As the story goes, Lord Alistair Dunscon allowed one (or more) of his supernatural "associates" to experiment on captured Dog Boys rather than destroy them. Immobilized by magic, the hapless canines spent weeks being experimented upon with transformative magic. Many perished after agonizing torment, but those who survived are said to have been warped by the magic and turned into a mockery of their former selves. The idea was to turn the Coalition's own Dog Boys against them. A legion of monsters to hunt their maker.

The magical forces mutated the Dog Boys' body and mind, transforming them into a Mega-Damage canine monster of considerable power. A creature called the Darkhound. Sadly, the magical transformation had reduced the poor things' intelligence, turning them into savage, primordial hunters. Creatures that, though transformed by magic, are able to breed and bear young.

Lord Dunscon, of course, denies these rumors and claims to have no personal knowledge of these creatures. One might believe him if not for the smirk or frown that accompanies such denials.

The Darkhounds do bear a fleeting resemblance to the Coalition's Psi-Hounds, more commonly known as Dog Boys. They are vaguely humanoid, have articulated hands and can stand and walk on two legs. However, they usually stand in a crouched position and run on all fours. Darkhounds are far larger than the average Dog Boy, many reaching eight or nine feet (2.4 to 2.7 m) in height. Their arms are long, gorilla-like, thickly muscled, and end in large, clawed hands. Most have dark, reddish brown or a sooty grey fur and a thick, wild mane of black hair on their head, down their neck and shoulders, rather like that of an African lion. Darkhounds tend



be muscular but lean and mangy, always looking half starved and usually slaving. Their eyes glow a fierce red during combat and otherwise have a half-crazed look in them.

If they were once Dog Boys, the Darkhounds retain only a rudimentary intelligence, being overwhelmed by an instinctive need to hunt and kill monsters, supernatural evil and wicked mages and creatures of magic. They are Mega-Damage creatures now, so they can be a formidable opponent for most demons and monsters, and may run in packs, and attack in numbers, like wolves, or gather in small groups to take on a more powerful foe then go off on their own. Darkhounds are extremely savage hunters who prey on monstrous humanoids, evil supernatural beings, evil practitioners of magic, members of the True Federation of Magic, and to a lesser extent, psychics, mainly Psi-Stalkers. As predators, such beings are considered prey, so the canines devour at least some portion of those they kill.

There are a number of disturbing aspects about Darkhounds that seem to give the rumors that they were once Dog Boys some credence.

1. Darkhounds possess the Psi-Hound's psionic and tracking abilities, in addition to resistance to magic and the psychic abilities common to Dog Boys, as well as some Dog Boys don't.

2. Darkhounds only began to appear in the last decade or two, and some years after Alistair Dunscon's rise in power and the unification of his True Federation of Magic. Moreover, their appearance coincides with increased subversive activity by the True Federation.

3. Darkhounds *never* attack Dog Boys unless they are attacked first, but have been known to attack other intelligent canines, werewolves and mutant animals. Likewise, they seldom bother human Coalition Troops. In fact, there are many reports of Darkhounds following CS wilderness squads and platoons, sometimes rooting through their trash or supplies for food, but rarely attacking a single soldier. Just the opposite, there are numerous accounts (and probably many more unreported) of one or more Darkhounds leaping out of the shadows to rescue or join CS troops in battles *against supernatural horrors and evil mages belonging to Lord Dunscon's True Federation of Magic*. One notorious incident reports how a large pack of two dozen Darkhounds saved a CS company from a deadly ambush by members of the Federation of Magic. The soldiers were caught off guard and outnumbered three to one when the Darkhound pack attacked, slaughtering the mages first, before turning on other Federation combatants. Their intervention and the panic that ensued, enabled CS forces to rally and win the day. The report goes on to say that the pack shadowed the company for another two days until they had left the Magic Zone. Many of those soldiers said they did not fear the creatures, but rather felt safer, as if the wild canines were guarding their perimeter from subsequent retaliation by the Federation. Once considered a strange, isolated incident, the number of similar events recorded by the CS as well as by mercenaries and adventurers who oppose the evil Federation, has become commonplace. Human and D-Bee civilians have also reported Darkhounds coming to the defense of human children, babies and pregnant females against monsters, demons, Simvan, and evil sorcerers and psychics.

Note: Officially, Darkhounds are on the Coalition States' list of dangerous monsters to be exterminated on sight, however, unofficially most CS troops, as in 90%, take no action against the animal and consider being tailed by a Darkhound or a pack of them as a sign of good luck. If the Darkhounds are magically transmuted Dog Boys intended to become monsters to prey upon on their Co-

alition brethren, Alistair Dunscon and his agents made a terrible mistake, for Darkhounds hunt the sorcerers, monsters and supernatural allies of the Federation, not the CS.

4. Approximately 50% of all Darkhounds fashion partial body armor out of scrap armor they find. Partial armor, again, reminiscent of the armor worn by Dog Boys. And the armor most preferred is salvaged Coalition armor! **Note:** Typical Darkhound armor has 1D4x10+15 M.D.C.

5. Darkhounds fight with tooth and claw, but also use Vibro-Blades and magic blade weapons, the types of weapons favored by Dog Boys.

6. Most of the Darkhounds' enemies are the same as the Dog Boys: Practitioners of magic, monsters, and the supernatural.

All of the above may be pure coincidence, but 65% of CS soldiers assigned to wilderness duty, especially in the Magic Zone, and 89% of all Psi-Hounds, even Kill Hounds, believe the monstrous Darkhounds are ... were ... Dog Boys and remain loyal to the CS and their duty.

Secrets of the Darkhound

The first Darkhounds did, indeed, each begin life as one of the Coalition States' famous *Dog Boys*. Genetically engineered, humanoid canines created at the Lone Star Complex and trained to be loyalty to their CS masters, and safeguard innocent people from magic and the supernatural.

The twisted magic used by Lord Dunscon and his henchmen tortured and transformed hundreds of captured Dog Boys into the first legion of Darkhounds. However, they underestimated the canines' loyal and instinct to protect humans. His demented plan to turn the Coalition's loyal Dog Boys against their CS masters, has backfired. What he created was a new monster that hunts evil Federation mages and their supernatural minions and monstrous allies. In fact, the magical transformation has only strengthened the Darkhound's deep-rooted sense of purpose and instinct to protect people from the likes of the Federation. Moreover, the emotions of the experience from that terrible and traumatic event seem to have infused ALL Darkhounds, including their offspring, with a racial memory and instinctive hatred of not just evil supernatural beings and mages in general, but for members of the True Federation of Magic and Lord Dunscon, himself, specifically! All are regarded as dangerous monsters to be hunted and destroyed whenever possible. Federation practitioners of magic being Enemy Number One.

Darkhounds consider evil supernatural beings and anyone who practices dark magic such as Witchery, Necromancy, Soulmanancy and similar dark arts, as their *natural enemies* and hunt them for destruction. This includes beings like the Splugorth Conservators, Splugorth Bio-Wizards and Slavers as well as the undead, demons, evil creatures of magic, and similar, including *Lord Dunscon*. Driven by instinct, the Darkhounds do not know why they hate and feel the need to destroy such creatures, they just accept it and respond accordingly.

Darkhounds are stealthy and clever hunters that use basic strategies and tactics, and fight as a team when gathered into a pack or join a group of adventurers or mercs. They are smart enough not to throw their lives away in futile combat against a magical or supernatural opponent they cannot possibly defeat, and know that sometimes you must retreat to fight another day. Like most predators, Darkhounds stalk their prey, waiting for an opening to strike when the prey least expects it, and ideally when prey is disoriented, weak and vulnerable. The only exception is when innocent humanoids

are in immediate danger, and when Lord Dunscon is encountered. Under these circumstances, the Darkhound is likely to throw caution to the wind and attack, fighting long enough for the innocent to escape, and in the case of Lord Dunscon, may fight to the death in an attempt to slay him.

Darkhounds are becoming infamous throughout the Magic Zone, and as their numbers increase, throughout neighboring CS held territories, particularly the State of Arkansas/El Dorado, where they are regarded as wild beasts who hunt monsters and protect humans, D-Bees and Coalition soldiers. That's right, Darkhounds feel an instinctive connection to Coalition soldiers and Dog Boys of every type. As a result, they are quick to come to their aid and join them in fights against monsters, mages and supernatural evil; battling alongside CS soldiers before running back into the wilderness and vanishing in the shadows. CS troops who notice a pack of Darkhounds following them from a distance, or watching over them at night, consider it a sign of good fortune. Darkhounds have also been known to howl and bark to alert Coalition soldiers and travelers to nearby or approaching danger, as well as lead children and people lost in the wild to safety or at least to a location where they can find water or rescue. They have also been known to stand guard and bring slain animals for people to eat, and sometimes even protect them from non-magical threats.

Darkhound as NPC Pet/Companion or Optional Player Character

The Darkhound is a very special case. It is neither a D-Bee or a true Dog Boy. Nor is it a completely wild animal. The magic that transformed the Dog Boys into Darkhounds has made them more animal than human, but they still share an affinity toward humans and feel compelled to watch over them. They are less intelligent and more animalistic, driven by instinct to hunt and kill monsters, mages and supernatural evil. Speech is replaced by grunts, growls, barking and howling, but they still understand human language on par with a trained dog, perhaps better. Though smarter than an ordinary dog, and an instinctive demon hunter and monster slayer, Darkhounds only have a rudimentary understanding of technology and weapons, and cannot operate machinery, drive a vehicle or use guns. Nor can they be taught how to use them. However, as noted earlier, some wear piecemeal body armor and may wield a Vibro-Blade or other bladed weapon, including captured TW blades, Rune Weapons and other enchanted blade weapons. However, the first inclination of most is to fight tooth and claw.

If the G.M. allows it, a Darkhound NPC pet or companion should function very much like a very smart guard, attack or hunting dog that can follow more complex commands than an ordinary dog, and seems to understand basic strategies and tactics. Like any dog, he responds to acts of kindness, enjoys treats and compliments, and likes being petted on the head and neck and behind the ears. Most Darkhounds can be incredibly loyal and fierce fighters willing to sacrifice their own life to protect a liked and respected member of their human pack. Always being alert and ready for danger makes Darkhounds more skittish and jumpy than domesticated dogs. The wild animal part of them makes them long for adventure and hunting in the wilderness, and they dislike civilization and city environments with a passion.

If forced to stay in a civilized area for more than a couple of days, the Darkhound begins to run off on his own to patrol the outskirts of town, or to sniff out monsters and mages in alleys and

dark corners of the city. Or the animal may begin to make hunting trips into the nearby wilderness. Any of it can lead to serious trouble if a citizen or visitor is an evil mage or evil supernatural being.

If unable to hunt in or around an urban community, and forced to stay in town for more than a few weeks, the animal will soon leave his humanoid pack and return to a feral life in the wild. There he resumes hunting evil mages, monsters and the supernatural on his own. A Darkhound is the ideal companion for groups of adventurers, mercenaries, demon hunters, heroes or bandits who never stay in town for very long and are always on the move and fighting monsters, sorcerers and bad guys.

Darkhounds, like wolves, are predators who hunt and eat meat to survive. When there are no monsters or evil mages to hunt, they hunt and eat all sorts of animals to survive in the wild. This can range from rats and pigeons in urban environments to squirrels, rabbits, game birds, deer, buffalo and other animals. Ultimately, they live to hunt evil and protect the innocent, and they feast on the prey they kill, including human mages.

Darkhounds are wary and distrusting of ALL mages, creatures of magic (e.g. dragon hatchlings), and supernatural beings even if they are members of the adventuring group, and certainly of strangers. The animal watches them closely and may growl and come between them and a mortal teammate, woman or child, as a precaution and a warning to such individuals. This can cause concern and dismay for some NPCs (Non-Player Characters) who may find the behavior of the player group's "dog" inappropriate or insulting. Which, of course, might lead to an unwanted altercation.

Darkhounds, like any well trained canine, can be taught to be loyal, obedient and to follow orders, *but only to a point*. Instinct, danger, fear and the Darkhound/Dog Boy's compulsion to protect innocent people, humans in particular, but also D-Bees and any innocent, may override a command to stand down and "stay" or "sit," while a cruel or wicked NPC threatens, harasses or hurts what the Darkhound considers an innocent. This is very true if that innocent is a baby, child or woman, a pregnant woman, an elderly person, teammate, or another Darkhound.

The Darkhound's love and respect for Coalition soldiers and Dog Boys may also lead to trouble for a player group, especially if they consider the CS to be an enemy and a target. The animal welcomes CS troops, trusts them and treats them with open friendship and kindness. Moreover, the Darkhound is likely to come to the aid of CS forces in trouble, regard them as friends and allies, and is not willing to fight them unless they threaten him or a member of his pack (i.e. the player group) that the animal likes. (**Note:** He may not like or completely trust a mage, dragon hatchling or monstrous D-Bee in the group for a very, very long time, if ever.) In a fight with CS forces, the Darkhound is unlikely to kill a Coalition soldier or Dog Boy, only defeat, capture, corner or chase him off. Killing a member of the Coalition Army is a last resort for a Darkhound and usually done to protect an innocent or teammate, or if the CS character is clearly wicked, cruel and uncompromising.

All of the above also applies to Darkhounds who might be allowed by a Game Master as a *player character*. We do not encourage allowing a Darkhound as a player character because it can be quite challenging. Basically, the gamer must play a smart dog that can only communicate as a dog would, via grunts, growls, barking, howling, scratching, body language and the animal's actions.

It can be a lot of fun for some players, but it can be difficult to *play in character* even for the best players. It requires immersion

into an unconventional character and staying there. To think and behave like a dog. It can be difficult to remember the Darkhound character probably does not understand entire conversations, is likely to get bored when not exploring, hunting or fighting, and may do things that are inappropriate, like chase or eat the mayor's cat, bring a dead animal into a tavern or boarding house to share with its teammates/humanoid pack, or to eat later, or pee in the corner. Nor does the animal understand politics or diplomacy, and he is not likely to understand technology or the danger a particular weapon, vehicle, robot, etc., may represent. The player of such a unique character must ignore the inclination to be disruptive and cannot really make suggestions or join in conversations.

Though more animal than man, the Darkhound character is very much a team player and will not deliberately cause trouble for his humanoid pack. The character is also a stealthy, cunning, and smart hunter, so he will not just attack someone on sight because they are evil or inhuman. The Darkhound watches and waits for a cue from the pack leader to attack. If that does not come, the creature will wait for the right moment to attack, picking off the enemy/prey, one by one, over time and when they are away from their own pack/allies/henchmen.

Ultimately, this character is always on the lookout to hunt and kill supernatural evil, monsters, wicked mages and evildoers, or protect the innocent. That's the Darkhounds' purpose in life. Friendship, love and camaraderie are welcomed but come second. And always remember, the character is more *animal* than human.

The Darkhound character, even if well behaved and obedient, should take an instant and lasting dislike toward all magic characters and creatures of magic. Even those of good alignment and who are always kind to him are regarded with a concerned and wary eye. It takes a long time, if ever, for the animal to trust any mage, creature of magic or supernatural being. The Darkhound will growl at them and may avoid their company. If the Darkhound thinks they (or others like them) are about to attack him or a friend, the animal is likely to respond with immediate and deadly force. Likewise, when a Darkhound attacks one of his natural enemies or any threat to it, an ally, teammate or innocent, he does so without hesitation or mercy.

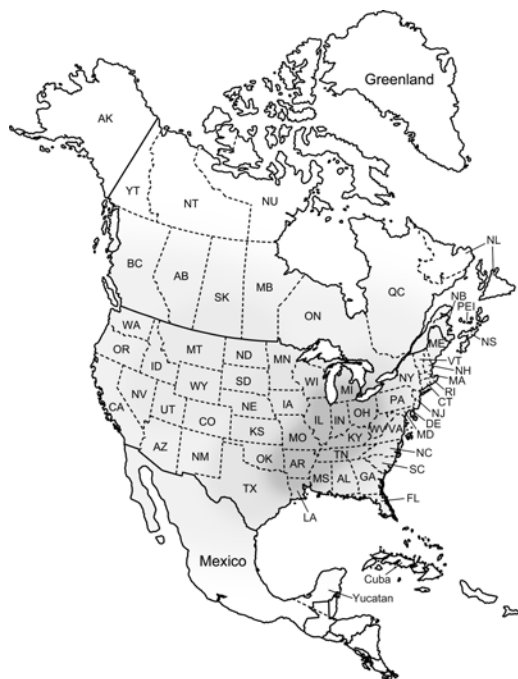
A Darkhound can exhibit stealth and restraint, as well as some degree of patience, but they tend to be very direct in everything they do and seldom bluff. The creature can use simple weapons and tools, with swords and Vibro-Blades being favored, but cannot pilot a vehicle, operate a radio or computer, nor understand the written word. He has enough problems with the human language.

Darkhound – Predatory Carnivore

Also Known As: Demon-Hunter Hound, Strange Hound, Super-Dog Boy, and Monster Dog Boy.

Alignment: Generally considered to be Anarchist or good alignment by most people, including soldiers of the Coalition Army, but seen as deadly hunter-killers by evil mages and members of the Federation of Magic, evildoers and especially evil supernatural beings and evil creatures of magic. **Note:** Typically Darkhound alignments are Scrupulous (20%), Unprincipled (23%), Anarchist (33%), and Aberrant evil (20%).

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+6, M.E. 1D6+12, M.A. 1D4+6, P.S. 1D6+21 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+18, P.E. 1D6+15 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D4+3, Spd 1D6+40 running, or 30 mph (48 km) for up to two hours. 40 mph (64 km) in short bursts lasting 1D4+4 minutes. A trotting speed of 8-15 (12.9 to 24 km) can be maintained for up to 10 hours.



Maximum swimming speed is 8 mph (12.9 km) and can be maintained for up to two hours before needing to tread water or find a place to rest.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Head – 100

Main Body – 1D6x10+144

* A single asterisk is a small or difficult target to hit, requiring an attacker to make a Called Shot with a penalty of -3 to strike.

Note: *On S.D.C. worlds*, the Darkhound has a main body of 1D6x10+60 S.D.C., 1D6x10+60 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 14.

Horror Factor: 11 to ordinary people. H.F. of 14 to evil supernatural beings, wicked creatures of magic to Witches and other evil practitioners of magic, especially members of the True Federation of Magic.

Size: 8-9 feet (2.4 to 2.7 m) tall, but usually stands in a crouched position as if ready to pounce or run, and runs on all fours.

Weight: 400-500 pounds (180 to 225 kg).

Average Life Span: 5D6+30 years, but usually die in combat at an earlier age. Adult Darkhounds can mate and bear 1D4 offspring as often as once every twelve months. Pups grow to full size within three years, but do not achieve full, physical and sexual maturity till they are four and a half years old. Males may mate with several females, but only if the female allows it, and females may do so with more than one male. Only 10% mate for life.

While a male Darkhound does not know if the pups are his, all males defend pups, young and females whenever they see them in trouble. Otherwise, it is the female who raises and tends to the pups, with an occasional male fighting off danger or bringing food to the young. Adult males spend most of their time hunting and ridding the world of magical and supernatural evil. At 24 months, one or more adult males may take young Darkhounds under their wing or into their pack to teach them group hunting and fighting tactics, the use of a blade, and how to cobble together simple, partial body armor.

See Allies, below, for information about Darkhound Packs.

Average Level of Experience (NPC): Not really necessary or appropriate for an animal. *If* the Game Master allows a Darkhound as an NPC or a player character and wants him or her to gain experience, use the Juicer experience table. With each new level of experience the character gains an additional 1D6 M.D.C. to the Main Body and 1D6 I.S.P. Only Equivalent Skill Abilities gain experience at 5% per level. Experience level should start at level one as he begins life anew when transformed into a Darkhound and all memories of having been a Dog Boy are erased. NPCs may be considered 1D4 level or as desired by the G.M., or used simply as presented here without any additional consideration.

P.P.E.: 2D6

Disposition: In a way, Darkhounds are natural born heroes. Driven by instinct to hunt and destroy evil creatures of magic, including mages and supernatural evil. Ever alert for danger and always ready to hunt and fight or protect the innocent. Wary of strangers, dislikes and distrusts all practitioners and creatures of magic (Faeries, dragons, etc.), hunts cruel and evil ones. Can become a loyal and trustworthy friend and companion.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climb 85%/70%; Darkhounds are excellent climbers and prowlers, and like to leap on their opponents and attempt to overwhelm them with the sheer ferocity of their attacks. Detect Ambush 75%, Escape Artist 50%, Land Navigation 95%, Language: understands American at 75% (cannot speak words), Prowl 65% (+10% at night and in forest environments), Swim 80%, Tailing 95%, Tracking 85% (animals and people; +10% to track supernatural monsters and blood scent), and Wilderness Survival 98%.

Natural Abilities: Perfect 20/20 color vision with a field of vision that is 270 degrees (compared to the human's 100 degrees, nightvision is the same as a human's, fair sense of taste, good speed running, can leap 8 feet (2.4 m) high and 16 feet (4.9 m) across, increase by 50% with a running start (12 or 24 feet/3.7 or 7.3 m respectively), and heals at a rate of 1D6 M.D.C. per 12 hours of rest, double on a ley line.

Impervious to the Animal Affinity and Control Powers of Simvan, Psi-Stalkers, and Psi-Druids (special): Also impervious to similar psionic and magic powers including Repel Animal, Summon Animals, etc.

Magic Resistance (special): Darkhounds are surrounded by an invisible field of energy that dulls the effects of magic when it is cast upon them. Even when the creature fails to make a successful saving throw, the effects of the magic are reduced by *half* (damage, duration, penalties, etc., all reduced by half).

Keen Sense of Hearing (special): Darkhounds have exceptional hearing and can hear into a higher range of sound and can register sounds of 35,000 vibrations per second compared to 20,000 in humans and 25,000 in cats. Additionally, their large ears work like external sound receivers that can prick and swivel to focus in on the sound (thanks to 17 ear muscles). They can also shut off their inner ear to filter the general din of noise to zero in on the sound they want to concentrate on.

Superior Sense of Smell (special): Recognize and accurately identify general/common/known smells: Includes gases, food, animals, and the path used by a group of humans, mutant animals, D-Bees or monsters, or other strong and/or distinctive odors, 80% (+15% to recognize supernatural monsters, creatures of magic, Dog Boys and Coalition soldiers).

Track by Smell Alone (special): This means the mutant canine relies entirely on his sense of smell even if blind. Can sniff

his way through total darkness if there is a scent that can be followed, and suffers only *half* the normal penalties to strike, parry, and dodge when blinded or in total darkness, or when fighting an invisible opponent. 65% (+20% to track a blood scent and the supernatural).

In most cases, the Darkhound's player should roll once for every 1,000 feet (305 m) to see if the animal stays on the trail; half that distance if the scent is unusually light or if the trail is covered in light rain or snow. A failed roll means the trail has been temporarily lost. Two successful rolls, out of three tries, means the trail has been rediscovered. Two failures means the trail is lost.

Darkhounds can smell a scent that is as much as four days old (96 hours) as long as the trail has not been washed away. Can NOT track through water, nor smell Astral Beings, Ghosts or energy beings, although the canine can probably sense their presence and general locale if nearby. Also, despite what many people may think, a dog can *NOT* see any better in the dark than humans. However, their exceptional sense of smell and keen hearing help compensate for their lack of sight.

Also see Psionics and Special Psychic Abilities.

Attacks per Melee: Six.

Mega-Damage: Fights primarily with tooth and claw, but may also use Vibro-Blades and other bladed weapons, not guns.

Claw Strike, Restrained: 6D6 S.D.C. or 1D4 M.D.

Claw Strike, Full Strength: 3D6 M.D.

Punch, Restrained: 4D6 S.D.C.

Punch, Full Strength: 2D6 M.D.

Power Punch: 4D6 M.D.

Bite: 4D6 M.D.

Or by weapon.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls involving the supernatural, magic and danger, +3 on initiative, +2 to strike, parry and dodge, +1 to disarm, +3 to pull punch, +2 to roll with impact, +3 to save vs disease and poison, +2 to save vs possession, and +4 to save vs Horror Factor. Physical Endurance is Supernatural so the creature can run or fight for hours before succumbing to fatigue.

Vulnerabilities: Their instincts compel Darkhounds to hunt practitioners of magic, especially evil ones above all others, with evil supernatural beings a close second, monsters third and creatures of magic fourth. This hatred is almost obsessive and can get the animal into deadly combat.

Sensitivity to Ley Line Energy (special): Ley lines and nexus points obliterate the Darkhound's psychic and supernatural sensing abilities. This means the creature cannot use these abilities to locate magic or supernatural prey nor to sense their presence when they or the Darkhound are on a ley line or at a nexus point. However, the Darkhound's normal physical senses, especially smell, help to compensate for this temporary loss. Still, the Darkhound is leery and uneasy around places of magic and exhibits uncharacteristic signs of being nervous and afraid.

Darkhounds are terrified of *Ley Line Storms*, which cause physical discomfort to them – headaches, crackling sounds in the ears, and annoying static electrical shocks, plus they are twice as likely to be struck by ley line energy and lightning than even practitioners of magic. If allowed to do so, Darkhounds flee when a Ley Line Storm is coming and know when it will strike 20 minutes before the storm hits a particular location, unless the storm appears out of nowhere, which happens. The

Darkhound will also know when a Ley Line Storm has passed or vanished.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Deaden Senses (4), Empathy (4), Nightvision (4), Resist Thirst (6), Sense Evil (2), Sense Magic (3), plus one Psychic Sensitive power of choice. Darkhounds are considered to be Master Psionics who possess special psionic sensitivity as described below.

I.S.P.: 2D6x10 plus the animal's M.E. attribute number. I.S.P. is regained at the rate of 2 points per hour of activity, 4 points per hour of rest and relaxation, or 12 I.S.P. per hour of sleep. As a Master Psychic, the Darkhound needs a 10 or higher to save vs psionic attacks.

Special Psychic Abilities of the Darkhound:

1. Recognize Psychic Scent 65% (+20% if well known to the Darkhound; special): Once a Darkhound has had a personal, up close encounter with a specific species, type of monster, or individual, he can recognize their *psychic scent* in the future. Range is limited to 120 feet (36.6 m), double for known supernatural beings.

Only 50% (+15% if well known to the Darkhound) to track or pinpoint in a crowd.

A *psychic scent* is the particular signature that emanates from all living beings, mortal, magical or supernatural, every time they use their psionic powers or cast magic. The emanation from each individual is unique and distinct, like a psychic or mystic fingerprint that the Darkhound is able to recognize. Thus, he will recognize another Baal-Rog demon when he senses one, as well as the psychic sent of a hated enemy or prey that got away. The ability is constant and automatic, just like the ability to see and smell.

Note: As always, if the Darkhound is on a ley line this ability is completely negated. Likewise, the animal cannot sense or track a psychic scent as long as the target is located on a ley line.

2. Sense and Track Psychic and Magic Energy 65% (+20% when used by a supernatural being): Similar to the Dog Boy ability, only keener. Like a bloodhound smelling a familiar scent, the Darkhound can detect the presence of psychic energy, specifically fellow psychics (I.S.P.) and magic energy (P.P.E. used as a spell, in magic devices and large amounts in people; 80 or more points). The ability is constant and automatic, just like the ability to see and smell.

Range: The Darkhound can sense whenever a psionic ability or magic spell is used within 1,200 feet (366 m); double when the psi-abilities or magic are being used by a supernatural being such as a Greater Demon, Splugorth, deity, etc. Cannot sense any of this when on a ley line. **Note:** Sensing range is only 120 feet (36.6 m) when a mortal psychic or practitioner of magic is NOT using his/its abilities.

If the psychic or magic energy is being continually expended, like a series of magic or psionic attacks, or is of a duration effect that lasts longer than one melee round (15 seconds), or is being unleashed by a powerful being, the Darkhound can trace it with relative ease to the source/spell caster (+10%). Several psychics or spell casters using their powers in the same area may attract more than one Darkhound to the same location, but the animals are not able to recognize or track any one specific *psychic scent* when there are multiple magic users, psychics or supernatural beings at the same location. The Darkhound is typically drawn to the most powerful of the mages or psychics,

i.e. the most dangerous. Once on site, he can make a visual determination as to which of the multiple prey/targets to attack.

3. Sense and Track Supernatural Beings 70% (+20% if well known to the Darkhound): Like the Dog Boys, the Darkhound is very sensitive to the distinct psychic scent of *the supernatural*. This ability enables the canine to sense when such beings are in the area and track down their general location. As the hound gets closer, other senses may enable him to more accurately identify the supernatural being, but initially, he simply knows one or several are present and a rough idea of where. (They're all inside a particular building, all around the perimeter of the town square, in the valley, and so on.)

Range is limited to 600 feet (183 m) when the supernatural being is keeping a low profile and not using any of its psionic abilities or magic. That increases to 1,200 feet (366 m) when those psi-abilities or magic are being performed by a lesser supernatural creature, and 2,400 feet (732 m) when being cast by a powerful supernatural being such as a Greater Demon, Splugorth, deity, Demon Lord, etc. **Note:** As always, if the Darkhound is on a ley line this ability is completely negated. Likewise, the animal cannot sense or track the use of psionics or magic as long as the supernatural being is located on a ley line.

Habitat: Darkhounds are capable of surviving almost anywhere. However, they originate from the wilds of the Magic Zone where they are most numerous, and are also found in CS Arkansas/El Dorado, the Midwestern USA, and lower Great Lakes regions. They often travel and hunt at night, and are social animals who gather in small packs of 4D4 Darkhounds and occasionally in small diverse groups of mixed races (Dog Boys, humans and animal-like D-Bees are most likely).

Enemies: Lord Dunscon, mages and members of the True Federation of Magic, evil practitioners of magic, evil creatures of magic, demons and other evil supernatural beings are all *natural enemies* of the Darkhound and their primary prey. No real enemies as such, outside of them and creatures like werebeasts, the Demon Bear and other demonic monsters.

When hungry, the predator will hunt and eat almost anything that moves — rodents, birds, cats, dogs, deer, elk, moose, buffalo, cattle, livestock, small to medium-sized dinosaurs, wicked and cruel people, etc. Dislike Simvan, Psi-Stalkers, psychics and felines.

Allies: Mainly their own kind, but also attracted to humans and human-like D-Bees, heroes and warriors — be they a lone individual, pair or small group — and may join them to battle evil or fight a common enemy, or to protect the innocent. Darkhounds are most welcoming and accepting of Dog Boys and other canine people as well as Coalition soldiers, Cyber-Knights, Native Americans, Wilderness Scouts and men-at-arms of good alignment, but also children, women, and people who are kind, compassionate and of good alignment.

Adventurers, warriors and heroes battling one of the Darkhound's natural enemies or protecting the innocent may find a lone Darkhound or a pack joining the battle for no other reason but to destroy that common enemy. When the fighting is done, the Darkhound(s) may linger or leave as unexpectedly as they appeared.

Darkhound Packs: Most packs form out of convenience or necessity and are temporary alliances that last only hours, days or a few weeks. This occurs when a number of individuals work together to take down large, dangerous prey, or to battle a group of evil creatures, witches or mages, or to help wor-

thy warriors (in the animal's eyes) like Coalition soldiers, Dog Boys and heroes, or to protect the innocent, and similar situations where working together is advantageous. Otherwise, most Darkhounds are lone hunters or travel in pairs (hunting buddies, not sexual pairs), and sometimes small family clans. A typical small pack has 1D4+4 members, a medium pack 3D4+4 members and large pack 2D6+16, seldom more.

Packs of convenience disband back into lone individuals, pairs and small groups after the reason for gathering into a pack is over. The same occurs when one or more Darkhounds join forces with humans or D-Bees, their alliance of convenience ending as soon as it is no longer necessary. However, sometimes a Darkhound stays with a group of humanoids, just as there are some permanent packs that stay together for generations.

Equipment Note: Darkhounds generally don't have much for possessions except, perhaps, the ragged remains of clothing (if any), a belt and possibly some homemade, piecemeal body armor. They do not use guns of any kind but may have one Vibro-Blade (1D4 or 1D6 M.D.) and an S.D.C. knife (1D6 damage) to start. May also use blunt weapons (clubs, etc.), staves, and magic blade or blunt weapons. As an animal predator the creature has no comprehension of, or use for, money; lives off the land.

Value: Only as a friend and companion. The Splugorth are known to pay as much as 15,000 credits for Darkhounds as combatants in their gladiatorial arenas, but other than that none. Darkhounds can become friendly companions if the animal choose to do so, but they cannot be truly tamed or domesticated. When enslaved, the beast constantly tries to escape, free the other slaves and kill the enslavers and cruel taskmasters.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 12: Psyscape™**, page 94.

Death Springer

By Charles Walton Jr. and Kevin Siembieda

Death Springers are an otherworldly abomination that is thankfully, uncommon. First reported by *James P. Walker* of Lazlo after an expedition into the **Dark Woods** of Alabama and Tennessee. The Death Springer is a gruesome creature that is much more dangerous than it appears, and it looks as menacing as a demon. At first blush, the horror seems like a nightmare amalgam of lion, insect, and shark. It is a fast, stealthy predator that likes to stalk and observe its quarry before springing out of its hiding place in the tall grass or forest shadows to attack. Patient and cunning, the monster often lays in ambush until the right opportunity or the right prey show itself. The attack is always swift and often unexpected. With one powerful leap the heavily armored monstrosity can cover up to 70 feet (21.3 m) to land directly in front, or on top, of their intended target. Large black talons, yellow teeth and slicing mandibles tearing at the startled prey pinned under the beast. Animal or human victims that are pinned better pray that a pack member or teammate is able to come to his defense before the monster finishes its kill — usually targeting the throat or head of its victims.

Highly aggressive and unafraid of people, Death Springers are known to leap out from cover to grab and pull down humans flying by on wing boards, jet packs or power armor in mid-air! Remember, these monsters, even young, can leap 30 feet (9.1 m) straight up from a standing or prone position to snatch flying prey out of the sky, be it a bird or human. Likewise, the creature is known to

tackle hovercycle pilots, knocking them off their cycle while traveling at speeds that you would think would make such an attack impossible. But not for the Death Springer. That's how precise the predator is when it leaps or unleashes a pouncing attack. Likewise, it is difficult to maintain control of a moving hovercycle when a 500 pound (225 kg) armored monstrosity pounces on top of it, digs its rear and middle claws into the vehicle and attacks with its slashing front claws, tail and biting maw and mandibles. If your exterior gunner or a passenger riding on the outside of a tank or giant robot goes missing, odds are he was snatched by a Death Springer and pulled away so fast the rest of the crew didn't even notice.

Once a Death Springer makes a kill, it drinks in the sudden burst of P.P.E. energy released at the moment of death, storing it, as it tears into the flesh, feasting upon the softest and meatiest portions of the kill; typically the stomach, intestines, and organs. The creature only consumes a proportion of each victim. Eating no more than one third, before carrying off the corpse with most of its sinew intact. This is where a new nightmare horror begins.

The Death Springer takes the remains of the carcass to its lair or other dark corner of the woods or inside a cave, ruin, or the gutted remains of a large vehicle, but any dark, secluded place will do. The Death Springer balls the carcass up into a fetal position and exudes an ectoplasm-like secretion from the end of its spiked tail; the ectoplasm coating the entire corpse. A moment later, the egg and the corpse inside is imbued with the P.P.E. captured at the victim's moment of death, starting a strange metamorphosis. The ectoplasm hardens to forms an icky, slime-covered egg. Each egg varies in size depending on the shape and size of the carcass contained inside the ichor. These "eggs" are usually left in a cluster at the same location but can be picked up and carried by the Death Springer to be placed at a better hidden location or a wide range of hiding places such as inside a dying tree or under a fallen tree, inside a hole or crevice, or cave, etc.

Inside the egg something inexplicable and horrible occurs. The carcass is infused with dark energy, gestates and comes to new life – or "unlife." After 1D4 days, the egg hatches. Unleashing a ghoulish undead thing dripping with foul smelling, sickly green ooze. These reanimated dead – or *zombies*, if you will – awaken ravenous and seek out the closest living prey to devour. The size of the living prey doesn't matter, a beetle, a large grasshopper, butterfly, toad, squirrel, fox, wolf, deer, human or D-Bee will all do for these mindless eating machines.

The more living beings slain by **Death Springer Ghouls** (zombies), the longer they are kept from deteriorating and remain active. It is the P.P.E. consumed from their victims that keeps the Ghouls going. As long as the Ghouls are able to consume 30 P.P.E. every day, the oozing zombies continue to hunt and feed upon the living. Going without sufficient P.P.E. for more than 3-4 days, causes whatever life or magic force that drives the Death Springer Ghouls, to leave their slimy carcasses, rendering the zombies truly lifeless and dead. There is no coming back from death a second time. As a result, these abominations hunt and kill around the clock in a relentless campaign to cling to their cursed pseudo-life. To stop means true death. **Note:** Remember, at the moment of death P.P.E. is momentarily doubled, and it is the doubled P.P.E. amount that is consumed by a Death Springer Ghoul.

After creating and hiding the eggs, the Death Springer's work is done. The monster does not command or control its Ghouls in any way, and has nothing to do with them after they reanimate, hatch and wander away in search of the living. The Death Springer knows the Ghouls are not alive and have no val-

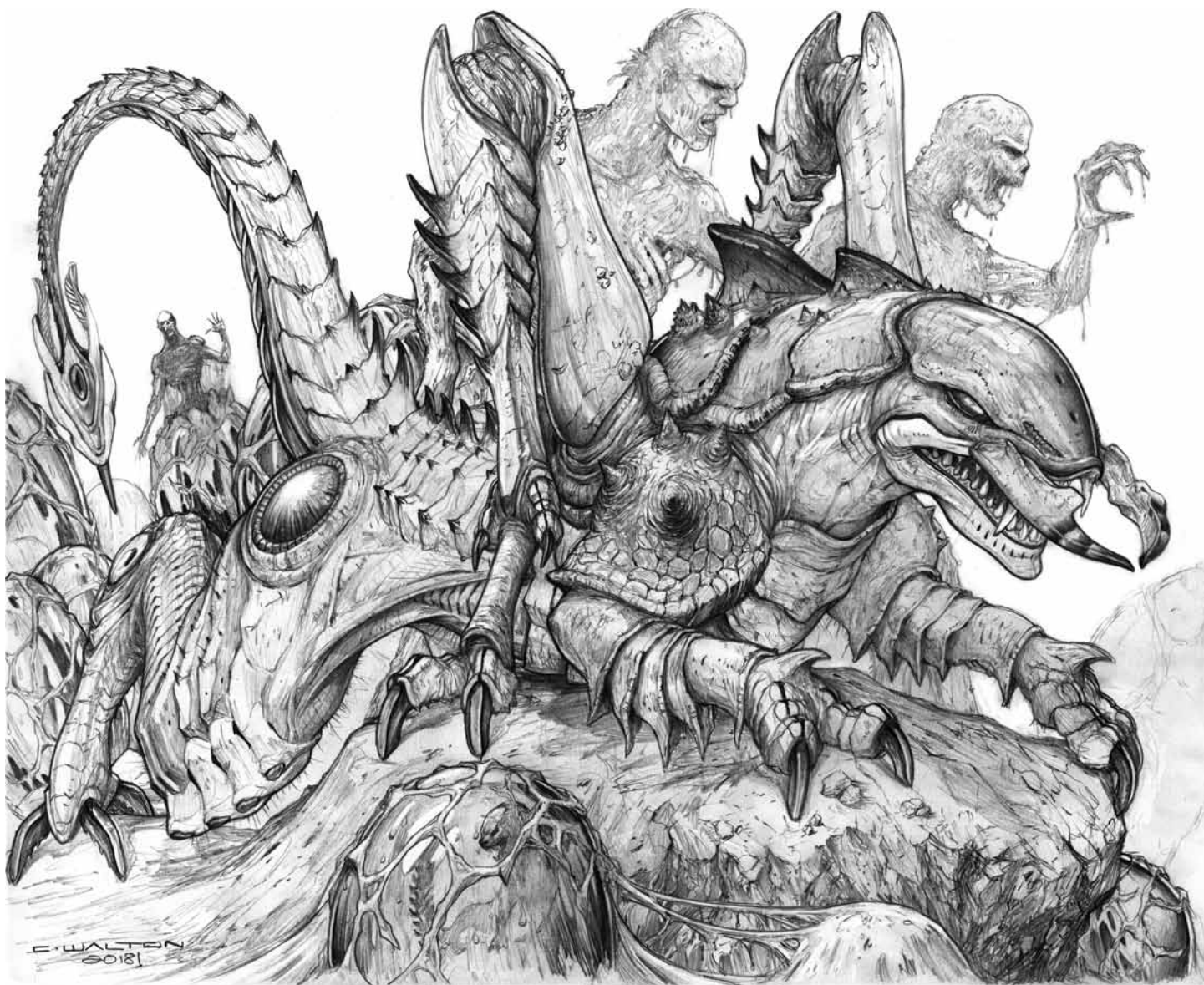
ue to it, so it does not see them as prey. Likewise, the zombie-like Ghouls do not consider any Death Springer or zombies to be prey, and leave such creatures alone. All other living animals are viable targets.

While a Death Springer may follow or observe one or more of its zombie creations to let it flush out larger prey for it to attack and consume, the reanimated dead just wander off to hunt without a plan. Whatever it encounters along its travels is a potential victim. Over time, and with sufficient food, an area of forest may become populated by hungry humanoid and animal Death Springer Ghouls, as well as additional Death Springers as they breed and spread out. Sometimes an entire village or town may be wiped out by a single, relentless Death Springer or a group of its reanimated and ravenous zombies. All these reanimated dead do is hunt, kill and devour the living. **Note:** People and animals slain by the Ghouls or "zombies" do NOT turn into zombies themselves. Only a Death Springer can create a zombie from its victims. Those slain by a Ghoul/zombie is simply dead. Whatever remains are left behind by the Ghouls is carrion for other beasts.

Lacking intelligence, Death Springer Ghouls do not prowl or use even simple combat tactics. They simply lunge out of the shadows and attack regardless of whether their target is more powerful or there are too many for it. However, they seldom attack people larger than a Brodkiil or animals larger than a buffalo or moose.

Since the Death Springer is a large predator, itself, the animals it slays and turns into zombies also tend to be large: Coyotes, wolves, medium to large dogs, wild boar, puma, cougars, deer, goats, cattle, bears, man-sized dinosaurs like Raptors, and so on. They also prey upon humans, D-Bees, and human-sized creatures, including Brodkiil and Xiticix. *People* are a favorite target because they are slow and easy to kill compared to most animals. (Well, most of the time.) Whatever large animal or humanoid the beast kills, cocoons and hatches from one of its is Death Eggs, enters the world as some sort of short-lived, ravenous, reanimated zombie that hunts the living, even if it was not a predator in life. **Note:** Only people and large animals are reanimated. A hungry Death Springer may hunt and eat any animal, large or small, but small animals like squirrels, rabbits, raccoons, cats, small dogs, snakes, lizards, amphibians, fish, and birds of any size, are completely devoured in a few bites, leaving no body to reanimate. Small animals and birds are never turned into zombies.

Some scientists and military tacticians have wondered if the Death Springer might not have been bio-engineered by an alien race as a biological (and magic?) weapon of war. A creature designed to soften up the enemy population in advance of all-out invasion. This theory was first raised by a team of Coalition scientists headed by *John Dorch*. The report speculated that if released in large numbers, Death Springers could create an army of zombies out of indigenous life forms to pacify an unsuspecting population. An army of undead killing machines created from the dead of the enemy without cost or resources. An army that is easily eliminated by their masters when they are no longer needed, by simply corralling them and preventing the zombies from eating live prey. In a matter of a few days, the animated hunter-killers would all become inert/dead. The Death Springers that created them gathered up and redeployed (or exterminated if necessary). The indigenous population decimated and pacified, if not completely wiped out. Leaving the land, buildings, vehicles, and machines, mostly untouched by the ravages of conventional



warfare. All left standing and waiting to be re-occupied by the invasion force.

With the above in mind, some within the paranoid Coalition Army have wondered if Rifts Earth or North America might be such a target for alien invasion? Unlikely, since Death Springers are exceedingly rare and found in small numbers scattered across the country. Most believe the monsters that exist on Earth came through the Devil's Gate in St. Louis at an earlier stage in CS history, with enough slipping through the Coalition States' security net to enable the creature to breed and slowly increase in number and spread across the continent; mostly in grasslands and forested regions. Others have pointed to the Splugorth as unleashing the beasts on American soil, but that too is unlikely as the Minions of Splugorth are targeted by Death Springers and their Ghouls along with everyone else. While it does sound like something the Splugorth might do, they are just as mystified by Death Springers and their zombie Ghouls as anyone else.

Death Springers and the Death Springer Ghouls are on the **Coalition's Extermination List**, creatures designated as a Class One Threat to human life to be hunted down and exterminated whenever they are reported within CS occupied territories.

Death Springer – Alien Predator

Also Known As: Dark Hopper, Death Maker and Death Bringer.

Alignment: Like any animal predator, the Death Springer should probably be categorized as Anarchist. However, due to its monstrous appearance and the fact that it creates the zombie-like Death Springer Ghouls, most people regard the creature to be Diabolic evil.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+6 (average to high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+9, M.A. 1D4, P.S. 1D6+19 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+18, P.E. 1D6+20, P.B. 1D4, Spd 1D6+33 in a loping run, or 26 mph (41.6 km), but can travel hopping like a giant grasshopper, able to leap over and over again as soon as it lands, at a staggering speed of 90 mph (144 km). Rumor has it that Northern Gun power armor with jump-jets like the *Aurora Blazer* and *Lynx*, enabling them to leap and engage in Power Jumping Travel, were inspired by the Death Springer. That speed of 90 mph (144 km) can be maintained for up to four hours.

A more comfortable leaping speed of 35 mph (56 mph) can be maintained for up to eight hours before needing to stop and rest.

Walking/crawling speed is 4-5 mph (6.4 to 8 km).

Death Springers hate water. They even dislike being in the rain, but in an emergency can swim as a speed of 5 mph (8 km).

*See full details about running, leaping, etc., under **Natural Abilities**, below.*

M.D.C. by Location (Exoskeleton):

*Head – 1D6x10+120

*Legs, Hind (2, large) – 1D6x10+100 each

*Legs, Center (2, large) – 1D6x10+60 each

*Legs, Front (2, armored) – 1D6x10+80 each

*Tail – 1D6x10+60

Main Body – 1D6x10+240

* In this case, the animal's body is so low profile, hugging the ground, and hops and moves so fast, and leaps such great distance, it is difficult to target unless it is standing still feeding on its latest victim, at rest, or facing you ready to pounce! A single asterisk means a difficult target to strike and requires a Called Shot to hit. Even then the attacker is -4 to strike.

Reducing the M.D.C. of one leg to zero reduces speed by 10%. Destroying two legs reduces speed by 30%, three by 40%, four by 60%. Lost limbs regenerate.

Note: *On S.D.C. worlds*, the Death Springer has a main body of 1D6x10+100 S.D.C., 1D6x10+130 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 17. All other locations are S.D.C. at the same number as M.D.C., above, i.e. 1D6x10+90 M.D.C. = 1D6x10+90 S.D.C./Hit Points. The damage inflicted by the creature's attack does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D., so a bite that does 2D6 M.D. on Rifts Earth does 2D6 S.D.C. damage on S.D.C. worlds.

Horror Factor: 15

Size: Adults are roughly the size of a tiger. Death Springers stand 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m) tall, and the animal is usually in a crouched, ready to leap, or a crawling, ready to pounce position, low to the ground. This makes them a low profile target and hard to see in tall grass and weeds. 8-12 feet (2.4 to 3.7 m) long from the tip of the mandibles to the rump. The tail is another 4-5 feet (1.2 to 1.5 m).

Note: Young are half to one third smaller than adults and have half the M.D.C. and do half the damage from their attacks.

Weight: Death Springer females are 30% larger than males and weigh 500-650 pounds (225 to 292.5 kg). Males 380-500 pounds (171 to 225 kg).

Average Life Span: 2D6+10 years. Death Springers reproduce once every two years. They come into heat at the beginning of summer. Females typically give birth to one, sometime two (33% chance), young. Both parents take part in the rearing of the young until the pup(s) reaches adolescence at 18 months. Then the mother drives off the male or he will be killed and devoured by the family. Young reach physical and sexual maturity at four years of age, and usually leave their mother six months earlier. They are solitary animals that do not gather into packs or groups. When encountered as a group (2-4 animals), it will be a female and her young from one or two birth cycles or an adult male, female and one or two young.

P.P.E.: 2D4x10

Disposition: An aggressive predator unafraid of man. A cold and calculating hunter, the animal stalks and observes its prey, sizing it up before attacking. It is smart enough to recognize heavily armored humanoids (heavy power armor, cyborgs, obvious robots) are not edible nor easy prey to kill and avoids them. But it can tell when armor is light, or patchwork, S.D.C. or partial, and that the wearer is a viable target. That said, Death String-

ers are murderous beasts that are easily provoked to kill when disturbed, startled, attacked, cornered, or protecting young. Females are especially aggressive and murderous. Humans and D-Bees are desirable prey because they are large and, generally, easy to kill.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 85%/40%, Detect Ambush 45%, Detect Concealment 30%, Land Navigation 70% (+25% to find its lair, young, and zombie eggs), Prowl 60%, Swimming 40% (dislikes water), Tailing 80%, and Tracking 70% (+15% to track humanoids).

Natural Abilities: Supernatural P.S. and P.E., Nightvision 2,000 feet (610 m), can see the invisible, fair sense of smell, 50% to track by scent alone (+15% to follow blood scent), keen sense of hearing and able to hear into the ultrasonic range (penalties for blindness are only -5), able to leap great heights and distance, Bio-Regenerates at a rate of 5D6 M.D.C. per 12 hours, double on a ley line, and can completely regenerate a lost tail, foot or leg in 2D6+4 days, a lost tooth, mandible, toe/claw, or fin in 1D4 days.

Cat-Like Landings from Great Heights (special): Death Springers can leap down or fall from considerable heights, up to 200 feet (61 m), and turn to land on its feet like a cat without injury.

Drops from heights greater than 200 feet up to 500 feet (61 to 152 m) are potentially survivable, but the impact is likely to inflict damage. **Roll 1D20** to determine the success of the landing. **On a roll of 1-10** the beast hits the ground hard and takes 1D6x10 M.D. and is momentarily stunned; loses 1D4 melee actions/attacks before it is able to get back up on its feet. **On a roll of 11-20** the creature sticks the landing, and can continue to move/jump/run without damage or delay.

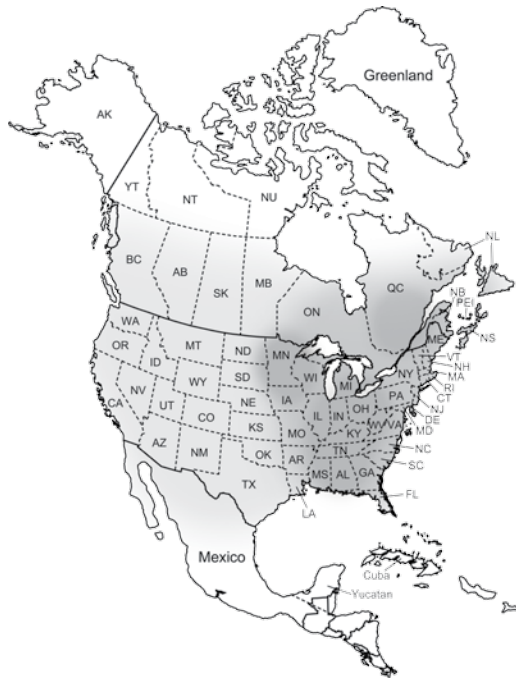
Drops from greater heights are not possible without potentially life-threatening damage: 5D6x10 M.D. and the beast is stunned for 1D6+4 melee rounds (cannot leap or run, can barely stand, reduce number of attacks and combat bonuses by half; round down, until it recovers from the fall and is able to take action again).

Climb Ceilings and Walls (special): Its toes and claws are such that the beast can climb the sides of buildings and cliff walls, leap from the ground to cling to the side of a building or the underside of a bridge, cave or tunnel, and walk across ceilings. However, crawling speed is only 5 mph (8 km).

Leap Great Heights and Distances (special): The Death Springer can leap an astonishing 30 feet (9.1 m) high and 70 feet (21.3 m) across from a standing position – 40 feet (12.2 m) high and 100 feet (30.5 m) across with a running start or after several successive leaps.

Running Speed (special): An awkward loping run with the middle legs suspended above the ground and not part of the running motion is 26 mph (41.3 mph). That speed can be maintained for up to 30 minutes. 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km) at a trotting speed for up to three hours. However, its natural and preferred mode of transformation is power jumping, below. When the Death Springer wants to move fast, it engages in Power Jumping Travel.

Power Jumping Travel (special): 90 mph (144 km), leaping 70 feet (21.4 m) and launching into a new 70 foot leap a split second after landing. This type of travel and speed can be maintained for up to four hours, but is usually used to elude attacker and dangerous animals, or to chase down fast moving prey (and people in vehicles). While Power Jumping, the Death Springer



can make sharp turns and change direction, turning left or right in a heartbeat, making it **+4 to automatic dodge while Power Jumping**.

A more comfortable jumping speed of 35 mph (56 mph) can be maintained for up to eight hour before needing to stop and rest.

The height of the leaps are controlled by the beast and can be low to the ground, making it difficult to see in tall grass and underbrush or rocketing between trees (an attacker can't get a clear shot at the beast), or it can leap 10-40 feet (3 to 12.2 m) high, and bound over debris that would prove to be an obstacle for troops on the ground and even for cyborgs, power armor, and ground vehicles. The Death Springer may also leap up on top of boulders and debris to launch itself even higher.

As an aggressive and clever predator, the creature has been known to suddenly reverse direction and spring back right at its pursuer in a single bound. This tactic often catching the pursuer entirely off guard and leaving him victim to slashing claws, a whipping tail or a deadly leaping pounce. The beast is so skilled and controlled that it can leaping through comparatively small openings at high speed, such as a crevice in the side of a mountain, a small cave or tunnel opening, between a tree, under a vehicle or fallen tree and out the other side, through a debris field, into an open door, etc. It can also switch from Power Jumping to running or crawling and back to Power Jumping as necessary, and can stop on a dime. **Note:** Its wild and unpredictable movement and spiked endoskeleton makes it unsuitable as a riding animal and it cannot be domesticated or controlled even by Simvan.

The Death Springer can maintain a ground speed of 90 mph (144 km) when Power Jumping, even through light forest and across uneven ground and up the incline of a mountain, though not steep cliffs. This speed can be easily maintained for one hour. Three hours at 50 mph (80 km) when it paces itself by switching from Power jumping to running or crawling and back to Power Jumping at reasonable intervals, before needing to stop and rest for 20 minutes. Reduce speed by 40% when traveling through dense vegetation, deep mud, snow, water or steep elevations. Reduce climbing speed up vertical walls like the side of a building and sheer cliffs by 90%.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Mega-Damage: Fights tooth and claw, and with whipping tail, body blocks and pounce attacks.

Bite, Restrained – 4D6 S.D.C.

Bite, Full Strength – 2D6 M.D.

Pincer/Mandible Bite, Full Strength – 3D6 M.D.

Claw Strike, Restrained – 1D4 M.D.

Claw Strike, Full Strength – 3D6 M.D.

Head Butt (blunt attack) – 2D4 M.D.

Tail Strike, Blunt – 2D6 M.D.

Tail Strike, Stab or Slash – 3D6 M.D.

Running Body Block/Ram – 2D6 M.D.; blunt damage as the creature runs or leaps in such a way as to sideswipe one targeted individual with its shoulder, body or tail. 01-40% chance of knocking humanoid prey up to 10 feet (3 m) tall and weighing up to half a ton (1,000 pounds/450 kg) down. The victim of this knockdown loses initiative and one melee attack.

Leaping Body Block/Ram – 3D6 M.D.; counts as one melee attack and intended only to inflict ramming damage and knockdown before the beast leaps to attack another target. 01-60% chance of knocking humanoid prey up to 10 feet (3 m) tall and weighing up to half a ton (1,000 pounds/450 kg) down. The victim of this knockdown attack loses initiative and two melee attacks.

Leaping Pounce Attack (special): 3D6 M.D.; counts as one melee attack and is intended to knock its prey down and underneath the Death Springer where it continues to fight with bites from its maw mandibles and attacks from its front claws. When out to kill, this is the predator's first attack and it usually comes without warning. In addition to damage, the victim of the leaping pounce loses initiative and two melee attacks. Thankfully, the monster seldom tries to pin its opponents, but lashes right into them to make the kill.

The high-powered pouncing leap has a 01-80% likelihood of knocking humanoid prey up to 10 feet (3 m) tall and weighing up to half a ton (1,000 pounds/450 kg) down, and is vulnerable to subsequent biting and claw attacks! Even cyborgs take damage from a pounce attack and characters inside body armor or power armor suffer 2D4 S.D.C./Hit Point damage from the jolting impact, fall and weight on top of them.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 on Perception Rolls involving prey and predators, +2 on initiative (and automatically has initiative the first melee of a surprise attack), +3 to strike, +2 to parry, +2 to dodge, +4 to Automatic Dodge when running and leaping (the act of dodging does not use up a melee attack), Critical Strike (double damage) on a Natural 18, 19 or 20, and +3 to save vs Horror Factor.

Vulnerabilities: Deep water because the monster is a poor swimmer. A nocturnal hunter, it has poor daylight vision (500 feet/152 m) and bright lights and sunlight hurts its eyes. Vulnerable to extreme cold weather and temperatures – reduce speed, leaping height and distance and combat bonuses by half (round up) in temperatures below zero Fahrenheit (-17.7 Celsius). It hibernates during the coldest parts of the winter until day time temperatures regularly reach freezing or above. Cold attacks do 20% more damage. Its reputation precedes it and most people, including Psi-Stalkers and Simvan, destroy the monster and its Ghouls wherever one is encountered.

Magic: None, other than the bizarre instinct and ability to create zombies.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Can be found anywhere in North America, but seems particularly fond of the temperate Eastern forests of the old Canadian and American Empires, particularly around Free Quebec, the fallen Kingdom of Tolkeen in Minnesota, the forests of the Magic Zone and the Dark Woods of Alabama and Tennessee.

Though mostly found in forested areas, it is just as at home in tall grass and fields of weeds and flowers, as well as prowling among ruins and debris fields – anyplace where there is plenty of cover to hide among and prey to hunt. Dislikes wide open spaces like deserts and short grass where there is no place to hide.

Enemies: Large, aggressive predators, humans, and D-Bees. It sees animals up to twice its size as prey. Even most other predators regard the Death Springer as dangerous and hard to kill. Even its underbelly is armor plated. Its spiked legs and barbed body inflicting 2D6 M.D. to any large predator that tries to bite the Death Springer, including the Allosaurus and T-Rex. Apply damage to every bite attack leveled at it. Even Shifters and Necromancers cannot control the animal or its zombies/ghouls, and fear it.

Allies: None. A solitary hunter, sometimes encountered as a mated pair or a female with her 1D4 young from two birth cycles.

Value: None whatsoever. Its meat is putrid, its armor becomes brittle after it dies. Only its stinger can be used as a pick or spike. The beast cannot be domesticated nor used as a trained War Steed or work animal, not even by Psi-Stalkers, Simvan, Necromancers and Shifters.

Note: This is a new creature appearing for the very first time. Inspired by the art and ideas of Charles “Chuck” Walton Jr.

Death Springer Ghouls

The creation of zombies is the real reason this beast is called the **Death Springer**, for wherever the monster treads, “death springs” forth in the form of the undead who stalk the living. These dead may range from coyotes, wolves, deer and larger animals to humanoids as large as, and including, Brodkil. Animals that were harmless herbivores rise as killing machines that hunt and feed upon the living.

Also Known As: Zombies, Death Spawn and The Hungry Ones.

Alignment: Mindless, ravenous evil.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+1 (mindless predators always in search of prey), M.E. Not Applicable, M.A. N/A, P.S. 1D4+16 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+11, P.E. 1D6+8 (Supernatural), P.B. One (green slime covered, rotting corpses!), Spd 1D4+7, or 5 mph (8 km). It is capable of 10 mph (16 km) in a short burst lasting one melee round (15 seconds) when initially lunging or charging at prey. Cannot leap or swim.

M.D.C. of the Zombie’s Main Body depending on its size:

Large Dog/Coyote/Wolf-Size Zombies – 2D6+6

Deer or Wild Boar-Size Zombies – 3D6+12

Human-Sized Zombies – 3D6+14

Bear-Sized Zombies – 4D6+24

Note: If it was a Mega-Damage creature before the transformation into a zombie, add 2D6+20 M.D.C. to the Main Body, listed above. Specific limbs/body locations have one-third the M.D.C. they had in life. Only large animals and humanoids can be turned into one of these zombies. The Death Springer Ghoul dies when its M.D.C. is reduced to below zero or when it runs out of P.P.E. Once it is dead, again, it cannot be regenerated. See *Life and Undeath* under *Natural Abilities* for complete details.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Main Body M.D.C. listed above is S.D.C. +6 points, no Hit Points (they aren’t alive), and a Natural A.R. of 9, but ordinary weapons do only half damage, while magic weapons and fire do full damage. The Mega-Damage inflicted by the zombies does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D., so a bite that does 1D6 M.D. on Rifts Earth does 1D6 S.D.C. damage on S.D.C. worlds.

Horror Factor: 13

Size: Same as in life.

Weight: Half as in life.

Average Life Span: 3D4 days; longer only if the zombie can kill enough prey. Needs 24 P.P.E. per day to stay undead and active (burns up one P.P.E. per hour). When below 24 the zombie goes on a feeding frenzy, killing everything it can and gorging itself until back up to at least 28 P.P.E. It can store up to 60 P.P.E. When P.P.E. runs out (or M.D.C. is reduced to zero), the thing dies again, becoming a lifeless corpse that cannot be restored to unlife.

P.P.E.: Varies.

Disposition: A relentless hunter-killer, eating machine, Death Springer Ghouls have no other goals, desire or emotions. Driven to feed or die.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 70/40% (usually in pursuit of prey), Prowl 20%, Swimming 20% (dislikes water and a poor swimmer), and Tailing 40%.

Natural Abilities: The reborn zombie becomes a slime covered M.D.C. monster with Supernatural P.S. that inflicts M.D., never sleeps, never tires, and is constantly in search of prey. Nightvision 2,000 feet (610 m), track by scent alone 30% (+20% to follow blood scent), good sense of hearing the same as it had in life. Winged zombie-like reanimated Death Springer Ghouls cannot fly.

Allure of Death (special): The reanimated corpses smells of death and decay the same as rotting meat, which attracts insects and scavenging animals to come feed upon their rotting remains. Which can lure potential prey into their clutches.

Appearance of Death (special): The Death Springer Ghoul has no signs of life, does not radiate heat, has no flowing blood, though it is always covered in slime, and does not register on heat sensors or life detection devices. Where the oozing slime comes from is anyone’s guess, and provides people tracking them a +10% bonus to do so by follow a trail of green slime.

Life and Undeath – Regeneration by Feeding Upon the Living (special): The Death Springer Ghoul dies when its M.D.C. is reduced to below zero or when it runs out of P.P.E. (zero P.P.E.). However, it always collapses and pretends to be dead whenever its M.D.C. falls below five points. There it waits until an animal or person comes within its reach and it can attack the living.

The Death Springer Ghoul is able to consume and hold inside its body as much as 60 P.P.E., but burns one P.P.E. point per hour, which is why the horrid creature never sleeps and is constantly hunting, killing and eating around the clock. The P.P.E. of bugs, snails, frogs, toads, snakes, rodents, etc., provide life giving P.P.E., even if it is a half of one point to 1D4 P.P.E. at a time. It all adds up.

Regeneration by Consuming Life Energy (P.P.E.) is all that keeps the zombie functioning. Even with only one M.D.C. point or one P.P.E. point remaining, it can recover by killing the living and feasting upon their P.P.E. When M.D.C. is very low, less than 5 points, the zombie is likely to collapse onto the

ground or against a wall or tree. There it pretends to be lifeless and waits until a scavenger comes to feed upon its rotting remains. Even small animals like a rat, or crow have at least 1D4 P.P.E., and that doubles at the time of death. Energy absorbed at the moment of death by the undead abomination restores and fuels the zombie.

After the zombie has absorbed at least 28 P.P.E. points, it can choose to redirect additional P.P.E. to recover lost M.D.C. This happens automatically when it consumes more than 60 P.P.E. within a 24 hour period. Every two P.P.E. points applied to M.D.C. restores one M.D.C. and gives the thing strength. When all M.D.C. is restored, broken bones are mended and severed limbs are regrown.

When on a ley line, a Death Springer Ghoul can absorb just one point of ambient P.P.E. every day, but as long as it remains on the ley line, that one point keeps it alive, um, animated, without fear of dying from complete starvation. Leave the ley line and the zombie will perish in 20 minutes unless it can feed before that time elapses.

Recognize P.P.E. in Prey (special): They don't sense it or see it until they encounter prey or a group of people/animals, but somehow these zombies can tell which of the living has the highest amount of P.P.E. and go after them! This makes practitioners of magic prime targets. Of course, the monsters attack whoever is closest, first, and may also target easiest prey such as a baby, children, tethered animals, and so on, before they go after the prey that has the most P.P.E. to feast upon.

Also see Bonuses, below, and the *P.P.E. Reference Guide for Animals* on page 17 earlier in this book.

Attacks per Melee: Half of what the creature had in life; three by default.

Mega-Damage: As per Supernatural P.S., fights with tooth and claw, and always goes for the kill, striking at full strength. The damage listed is what it inflicts as a Death Springer Ghoul regardless of what P.S. and abilities it might have had in life.

Bite – 1D6 M.D.

Punch, Full Strength – 2D4 M.D.

Fangs add +3 M.D. to bite attacks.

Talons/Claws or Stinger adds +6 M.D. to punch attacks.

That's it! The zombies never uses weapons, tools, armor or devices and has no memories, no learned skills or emotions. It fights to kill, but stumbles off or pretends to be dead when down to 6 or less M.D.C. It may fight to the death when cornered, trapped or desperate for food/P.P.E.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 on Perception Rolls to find and recognize food (humanoids, especially children, are a favorite prey because they have a good to large amount of P.P.E. and are generally easy to kill), +3 to strike, +1 to parry, cannot dodge or pull punch, nor roll with impact, impervious to mind control, possession and Horror Factor, and can NOT be controlled or commanded by Psi-Druids, Psi-Stalkers, Simvan, Shifters, Necromancers, demons or death deities! Death Springer Ghouls regard all mages, including Necromancers, as juicy, P.P.E. rich prey!

Vulnerabilities: A slow moving killing machine, Death Bringer Ghouls are devoid of reason and don't use strategies or tactics, though they may try to use stealth (see Prowl skill). This makes them straightforward combatants, vulnerable to smarter opponents. However, they are relentless and without compassion or mercy. Very poor swimmers that can be swept away by strong tides and waves, or sink.

Magic: None, other than their cursed existence.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Wherever a Death Springer is found there will be its undead spawn. The more abundant the prey, the greater the number of zombies, especially if there are no heroes or huntsmen able to track and destroy the zombies. That said, once they are "born" the zombies wander off in search of prey without any allegiance to their maker.

Enemies: Death Springer Ghouls are attracted to groups of animals, humans and D-Bees as prey to hunt, as well as places of magic and ley lines. They seem to instinctively sense or know when an opponent such as demons and other supernatural beings, as well as dinosaurs and large M.D.C. creatures, are beyond their capability.

Allies: None, not even the Death Bringer that created it. They seem to instinctively gather into small, loose-knit groups of 2D6+2, but fight as individuals and never use group tactics. They are just a wandering pack hunting for prey. For reasons that are unclear, these zombies do not seem to travel more than 1D4x100 miles (160 to 640 km) from where they were spawned unless carried off by flood waters or people. As noted previously, Death Springer Ghouls cannot be controlled by Psi-Druids, Psi-Stalkers, Simvan, Shifters, Necromancers, demons or death deities!

Value: Absolutely none.

IMPORTANT NOTE: People killed by these zombies do NOT turn into zombies themselves. The slime the zombies exude is rather thin, gross and tastes awful if it gets in the mouth. The ooze burns like soapy water if it gets in the eyes, but does no permanent damage. It will burn and cause temporary blindness (-10 to combat maneuvers) for 2D6 minutes or until flushed with water (counts as two melee actions).

Note: This is a strange new zombie, appearing for the very first time. Inspired by the art and ideas of Charles "Chuck" Walton Jr.

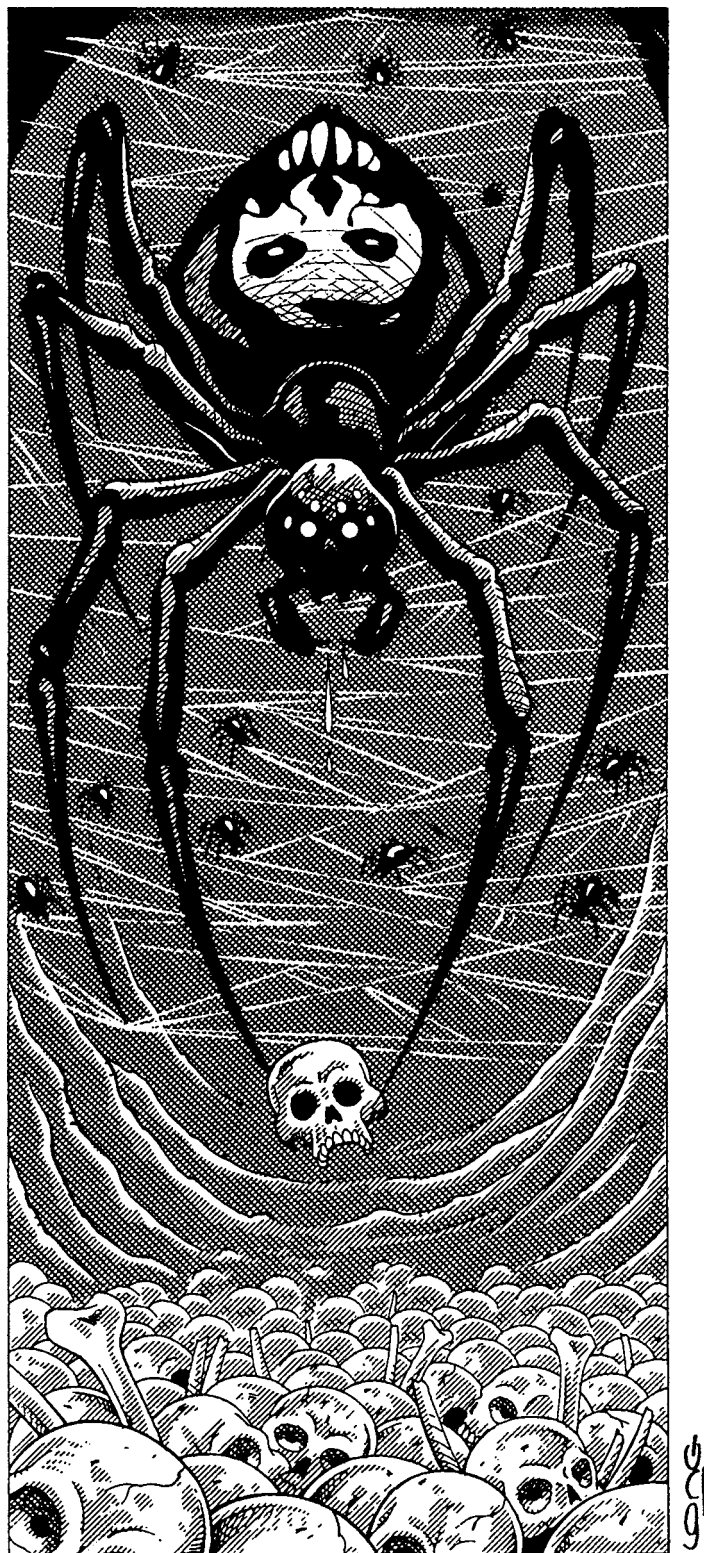
Death Weaver Spider

By Kevin Siembieda

Long before the Coming of the Rifts, the Cunto Indians of South America knew of the **Death Weaver Spider Demon**. A vile supernatural being that appears as a giant black spider with a hideous, half human head and the markings of *death's skull* emblazoned on its hindquarters. The Indian legend says that the Death Weavers were overlooked by the gods, who mistook them to be lowly predators of vermin. The Spider Demons were, however, much more intelligent than anyone suspected, and stole the gods' secrets of magic, throwing them to the wind, and scattering magic across the world where mortal man could learn it. For eons ever after, the Spider Demons are said to have searched the globe, retrieving the magic and mastering its secrets so they might become gods some day themselves. Or so the legends say.

With the Coming of the Rifts, Death Weaver Spiders have returned to Rifts Earth more powerful than ever, and anxious to learn more secrets of magic. Including the acquisition of magic artifacts both great and small.

Death Weavers prefer hot, steamy jungles over cooler climes, but travel north during summer months and hot spells, and if necessary, can survive, uncomfortably, in winter and the cold. Their preference for warm to hot environments means they are primarily



found in places like the Yucatan, South America, Africa, India, Asia, Malaysia, and parts of China. The incredible amount of ley line energy of the Yucatan, India and China makes such places all the more appealing. That said, Death Weavers may be encountered across North America, attracted to places of magic and ley lines such as Wyoming, the ruins of Tolkeen in Minnesota where they search for magic items and dark secrets, Lazlo, the Federation of Magic, and warm climates like Dinosaur Swamp, the American South and Southwest and throughout Mexico.

As the legends suggest, Death Weaver Spiders are masters of magic and hoard magic knowledge, magic books and artifacts,

magic weapons, and mystical paraphernalia. And the Spiders stop at nothing to obtain new magic items and forbidden knowledge and will go wherever is necessary for as long as necessary to get what they seek. Many Death Weavers use the Yucatan and locations in Mexico as a base of operations for all their efforts in the Americas. They like it there because of the many ley lines and the fact that the Yucatan Peninsula itself straddles more than a few different dimensions and serves as the monsters' gateway to Rifts Earth. There are many places to hide in the jungles of the Yucatan, southern Mexico, and South America as well as ancient ruins of stone pyramids to use for traveling across the planet and in the weaving of magic. For them, the Yucatan feels like a safe haven and a central location for their activities in both North and South America. From here the wicked Spiders can keep an eye on developments in Biomancy in South America and among the Lemurians who oppose vampires in Mexico, as well as quietly observe, and perhaps help, humanity in its struggle against the Vampire Kingdoms. They are also fascinated by the burgeoning nations of North America and see much opportunity there. When you can ride the ley lines and use them and stone pyramids to Rift anywhere in the blink of an eye, the ruins of Tolkeen, the Federation of Magic, Atlantis and much more distant locations are just seconds away.

A number of Death Weavers have been reported among the ruins of Tolkeen and Freehold City of Dragons. Presumably they are on a quest to recover many of the legendary magic artifacts and TW creations held by the kingdom before its fall to the Coalition States. Indeed, the magic artifacts collected by the Tolkeenites are greatly desired by the Death Weavers and countless others. With Tolkeen gone and so many outside forces making a grab for the mystic relics, the CS among them, Death Weavers feel a sense of urgency. However, while they too scour the ruins, they realize the artifacts are most attainable when in transit and exchanging hands. Each time a magic item changes hands, it is vulnerable to capture by a Death Weaver Spider or one of its henchmen lurking in the shadows. Best of all, few so-called heroes care what a Death Weaver may do to Coalition troops to get the magic, so the monsters are able to have their way with the CS troops and work their dark magic with little worry of repercussions from said heroes. As for the Coalition States, they are no match for the cunning and magic of Death Weaver Spiders. Besides, the wicked creatures enjoy tricking and manipulating one enemy against another while they pursue their own agenda, and Coalition forces make wonderful unwitting pawns in such schemes. Not just CS troops, but all mortals are so fun to use and manipulate.

Another rumor claims a Death Weaver Spider has managed to live in the steamy bowels of the *Fortress City of Chi-Town* for at least 30 years now. If the rumor is true, what it may want in the greatest city of the Coalition States is a mystery, though it seems safe to assume it seeks to locate the Coalition's fabled *Black Vault*, where the CS is said to lock away powerful magic items so they cannot be used against humanity. The Black Vault is an urban legend and nobody knows whether it really exists or not. (It does. See **Rifts® Adventure Sourcebook: The Black Vault**, for more details.)

Death Weaver Spiders are cunning, ruthless, and many seem to be more than a little insane. They are so selfish, greedy, and obsessed with the acquisition of magic that they see each other as rivals and refuse to work with other Demon Spiders no matter how great the reward may be. Thus, one never encounters more than one Death Weaver at a time and the creatures never share their secrets or knowledge with anyone, though they may dangle the promise

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Death Weaver has 1D6x10+60 Hit Points, 1D4x10+60 S.D.C., double on ley lines, nexus points, and similar places of power, and has a Natural A.R. of 10. Uses magic for additional protection, defense, deception and attack.

Horror Factor: 16

Size: Stand 6-8 feet tall (1.8 to 2.4 m) and equally long.

Weight: 600 to 1,000 pounds (270 to 450 kg).

Average Life Span: Immortal. Mating habits unknown.

P.P.E.: 1D4x100+100 on Rifts Earth; they love it here. (1D4x10+10 in S.D.C. settings where magic energy is minimal, such as 21st Century Earth; double the amount in the Palladium World.)

Disposition: Death Weaver Spiders are instinctively secretive, devious and cunning. Brilliant schemers with many concurrent agendas, they seem to instinctively understand the dark emotions and passions of mortals and how to manipulate them to do their dirty work. It is said that Death Weaver Spiders love no one other than themselves, magic and knowledge, and will ultimately betray everyone they associate with, including members of their own species.

Cold and calculating in their schemes, Death Weavers are able to compartmentalize and multi-task, which is why they always seem to be working on a half dozen different schemes at the same time or have several different agendas. One agenda is always the acquisition of magic items. Another is learning new mystic knowledge. Another is learning secrets and using them to manipulate mortals for fun or personal gain, or to create death and suffering for their own amusement. Death Weavers love all types of secrets. They see them as a powerful weapon and use knowledge to control and hurt others. The creature also enjoys encouraging mortals to inflict suffering and murder, even genocide, against their fellow mortals. As a result, Death Weavers often inspire death cultists, terrorists, tyrants and conquerors to engage in unspeakable act of murder and cruelty.

Insanities: In addition to being narcissists and sadistic, Death Weavers are quite obsessed with the acquisition of magic items, magic knowledge and secrets. Speaking of secrets, though they pretend otherwise, Death Weavers are secretly envious of humans, which is why they so much enjoy using them, tormenting them, and devouring them.

Level of Experience: As NPC monsters and villains, most Death Weavers are the equivalent to a 6th level Ley Line Walker or Shifter, or other magic O.C.C. or as desired by the G.M., or they can be played exactly as presented here without consideration or concern for level. They are NOT to be used as a player character.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Acrobatics 95%, Astronomy 88%, Barter 95%, Climbing 98%/98% and includes rappelling, Computer Operation 50%, Holistic Medicine 50%, Identify Plants & Fruits 60%, Land Navigation 95%, Languages and Literacy 90% (see *Natural Abilities*, below), Lore: All 90%, Mathematics: Advanced and Basic 98%, Prowl 80% (+10% in darkness, in trees, caves and elevator shafts, or coming down a web-line), Radio: Basic 90%, Seduction 80%, Tailing 90%, and Tracking (humanoids) 50%.

Natural Abilities: Intelligent, cunning and wicked, has keen hawk-like daylight vision, Nightvision 200 feet (61 m), see the invisible, see in the infrared and ultraviolet spectrums of light, magically understands and speaks all languages 90%, literacy 90% (can read all but the most alien and bizarre written lan-

guages), impervious to disease, poisons and drugs, Bio-Regeneration 1D4 M.D.C. every hour, double at a ley line, and is able to regrow lost eyes, mandibles and limbs within 36 hours.

Wall Crawling (special): Can walk, run, and climb on most surfaces with amazing speed (15-20 mph/24 to 32 km), as well as walk upside down on ceilings and straight up the side of walls just like a real spider. Only smooth, slick, glassy surfaces impede its movement, reduce speed by half.

Webbing (special): The creature can spin a web for climbing and ensnaring at a rate of 200 feet (61 m) per melee round (15 seconds). The web is tough, like light M.D.C. rope, but deteriorates quickly within 4 minutes (16 melee rounds) unless a bonding resin is secreted from the Spider Demon's mouth over the web. Death Weavers can also use the web as a rope to entangle and tie up/cocoon captives. Each thick, rope-like strand has 1D4 M.D.C.

Attacks per Melee: Five physical or via magic or psionics.

Mega-Damage: Fights using bites, webbing, and magic. The hideous spider likes to capture and entangle victims with its webs. It also uses henchmen to do its bidding and fight its fights.

Bite – 3D6 M.D.

Punch/Leg Strike (blunt) – 1D6 M.D.

Power Punch (blunt) – 2D6 M.D.

Web Entanglement (special): This entanglement attack does no damage, but has a 69% chance of incapacitating its target. The victim is pinned, cannot move or attack, until the character can untangle himself (takes 30 seconds/2 melee rounds) or until the webbing dissolves (takes 1D4 minutes). Entangled victims are vulnerable to cocooning and other attacks while incapacitated. When the Demon Spider uses this attack, roll first to strike an opponent with the web, then roll percentile dice to see if he is entangled. 01-69% means yes. An entanglement attack can be attempted only once per melee round and counts as one of the demon's attacks.

Web Cocoon (special): No damage, but completely encases the victim in a web cocoon straightjacket. The trapped individual is completely immobilized, unable to perform any physical actions. The only way to get free is to be cut or torn out by a comrade or wait until the webbing dissolves (1D4+4 minutes for all the M.D.C. layers to vanish). Cutting a victim loose can be dangerous and time consuming. The average cocoon has 2D4x10 M.D.C. While an untreated cocoon (no resin) will deteriorate within 1D4+4 minutes, a cocoon treated with the spider's *bonding resin* does not deteriorate and the resin adds an extra 10 M.D.C. to the silky encasement. The cocoon is porous and allows air to pass through its walls, so even a person encased from head to toe can still breathe. The Spider Demon can secrete a different resin that causes any cocoon, even one made permanent, to dissolve in 30 seconds. Unfortunately, it usually only uses this chemical to get to the victim inside for interrogation, torture or to devour.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls, +1 on initiative, +2 to strike, +4 to parry, +4 to automatic dodge (the act of dodging does not use up a melee attack), +4 to save vs magic, +3 to save vs psionic attacks, +5 to save vs possession, and +10 to save vs Horror Factor.

Vulnerabilities: Death Weavers are cunning and methodical schemers who, like a chess master, pride themselves on being able to see the big picture and always be five moves ahead of their opponents. While this is often the case, the creatures' hubris causes them to underestimate mortals on a regular basis,

always assuming they can outsmart people at every turn. This can get the Death Weaver into serious trouble.

Death Weaver Spiders love to feast on the blood and flesh of mortals, and they keep their skulls as souvenirs to line the floors and walls of their lairs. This is as much an obsession as is their lust for magic and secrets, and the skulls often give away their lair and that the creature is operating in the area.

They are also fascinated by the undead, but don't know exactly what to really think about them or how to use them.

Magic (typical knowledge): A Death Weaver Spider may practice any type of magic, from spell casting to Shifting or Temporal Magic, or know a handful of spells from several categories of magic. Death Weavers prefer to use magic and magic items rather than technological devices or modern weapons, but have a fair understanding of technology and can use it when necessary. As a rule, the monster lets its henchmen deal with technological matters and use whatever tech weapons, armor, vehicles and gear they might desire. **Note:** Most Death Weavers are the equivalent of a 6th level mage. Those more ancient and knowledgeable may be 8th, 10th or 13th level spell casters. **P.P.E.:** 1D4x100+100.

Magic Common to Most Death Weaver Spider Demons: All Protection Circles and Protection Magic (like Sanctum), Summoning Magic (rituals), and the following spell invocations: Armor of Ithan (10), Breathe Without Air (5), Close Rift (200+), Dimensional Portal (1,000), Escape (8), Float in Air (6), Invisibility: Simple (20), Invisibility: Superior (60), Invulnerability (25), Manipulate Objects (2+), Mystic Portal (25), and See the Invisible (4).

In addition, it will know four invocations of choice selected from each level 1-8 (32 spells total), and one spell each selected from levels 9-15 (7 additional).

Older, more experienced Death Weavers may know more spells from other areas of magic: *Bone Magic*, *Fire Magic*, *Ley Line Magic*, *Nature Magic*, *Necromancy*, and/or *Temporal Magic* being among their favorite areas of magic (G.M. discretion).

Spider Demons are fascinated by Biomancy, Bio-Wizardry, Soul Crafting/Dark Weapons, Soulmancy, and Techno-Wizardry, and love to possess items created by such magicks, HOWEVER they lack the mental discipline to study and master any of them. They would rather manipulate or extort the services from those who can work such magic and can make such magic items.

Psionics: Limited to Ectoplasm (6 or 12), Hypnotic Suggestion (6), Presence Sense (4), Sense Dimensional Anomaly (4), Sense Time (2), and Total Recall (2), and is considered a Minor Psychic. **I.S.P.:** 2D4x10 + M.E. attribute number.

Habitat: Anywhere, but prefers jungles and tropical forests, and make their lairs in dark places. On Rifts Earth, Death Weavers are known to exist in Mexico, the Yucatan, Central America, South America, Atlantis, England, Africa, India, Malaysia, Japan, and parts of China. The Yucatan is a favorite place and there are more Death Weavers (an estimated 19-24 of them) operating from there than anywhere else in the world.

In North America proper, there are rumors of one or more Death Weaver Spiders operating in the Magic Zone, Federation of Magic, Pecos Empire, Arizona, Ciudad Juarez, El Paso, and other locations in the New West and Mexico, as well as the Chi-Town 'Burbs, Chi-Town itself, the Iron Heart 'Burbs, Calgary City of Monsters (though not a part of that society nor an ally

of demons), Dinosaur Swamp, and elsewhere. If reports can be believed, there could be as many as a dozen operating in and around the ruins of Tolkeen, the abandoned City of Dragons: Freehold, and other satellite communities that were once part of the Kingdom of Tolkeen. None are known to exist at Lazlo, but that seems unlikely as the Death Weavers are attracted to power and magic, and Lazlo and New Lazlo represent both.

Enemies: Humans are among the most hated and exploited by Death Weavers, who feed on them as prey. The Splugorth and their minions are next in line, followed by hated demonic rivals. The Splugorth because the Death Weavers are jealous of their vast mystic knowledge, humans because such puny and worthless beings are not worthy of possessing so many different types of magic, this even though some legends suggest the Spiders taught humans at least some types of magic (Shamantic magic perhaps).

With the Minion War spilling onto Rifts Earth, Death Weavers are almost certain to be targeted by demonic being on both sides of the conflict. Both sides in the war are looking for magic items to destroy the other with. Since Death Weavers collect magic items and know the latest rumors of where magic items are hidden, the warring factions may try to steal the Spiders' magic artifacts and press them for the location of others. Another reason for the Death Weavers to hate these two demon factions and to help humanity from the shadows to defeat them.

Allies: Most mortals are seen as pawns or food, but the monsters respect power and may ally themselves with (or more likely try to manipulate) powerful mortal mages. Death Weaver Spider Demons like to operate as lone individuals, never associate with their own kind, but may have mortal or supernatural underlings and minions, sometimes getting entire populations to worship them as gods. They will sometimes join forces with powerful practitioners of magic, evil creatures of magic or evil supernatural beings. Death Weavers prefer to be the leader or top dog in any so-called alliance or partnership, and will betray their "partner" when doing so is of benefit to them. They find the vampires' bid to control Mexico and Central America interesting and a bit troubling, but of little importance at this time.

Value: None.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 1: Vampire Kingdoms™, 1st Edition**, page 173, and the **Revised Edition**, page 202.

Demon Bear

By Kevin Siembieda

Though the Rifts® Bestiary's focus is mortal beasts, not demons and spirits, we have made a few exceptions when it is unclear if the creature is a demon or if the supernatural monster is more animal than human-like. The Demon Bear, Death Weaver Spider, Wishpoosh and a few others are such creatures.

The Demon Bear is an evil, Murderous Animal Possessing Entity that links itself to our realm of existence by possessing an ordinary bear, and only large bears (never a black bear, panda, etc.). For whatever reason, this supernatural force can only possess bears. This phenomenon is believed to occur in Siberia, Greenland, Alaska, and the Canadian Northwest Territories, but the Demon Bear may travel much further south and into the northern United States during winters that suffer arctic blasts and extremely cold temperatures of zero Fahrenheit (-18 Celsius) and below.



The type of bear is almost always the Polar Bear, Grizzly or Brown Bear (known by the Inuit people as the *Lord of the Forest*). The Demon Bear is easy to identify by the blood soaked fur on its claws, around its muzzle, and around the neck and chest. The possessed animal becomes a supernatural, Mega-Damage monster that is 20-40% larger than an ordinary bear of that species, has Supernatural P.S. and P.E., does not fatigue, and inflicts Mega-Damage with its attacks.

The only way to be rid of a Demon Bear is to kill the abomination or to subdue it and perform an exorcism, either of which sends this particular Possessing Entity back to whatever dimension from which it originates and returns the bear to its normal size and S.D.C. capabilities.

A Demon Bear is a wanton murderer and destroyer that kills for pleasure. Its favorite prey is humans, followed by D-Bees and large animals such as seals, caribou, deer, moose, horses, cattle and livestock. The monster is so malicious that they are known to drive wildlife from the region. This is accomplished by the Demon Bear going on killing sprees and attacking *every living thing* it encounters until they move to another, safer, location. Demon Bears are well known to break into pens, corrals and barns to butcher livestock, as well as attack and slaughter sled dogs and house pets. They may also steal vital supplies and gear from houses, vehicles and people they attack and either tear them apart or put them at a desolate and difficult location for people to retrieve them. This is one of the Demon Bear's sick games, just as the beast sometimes steals a woman or child, dragging them into the wilderness, leaving a clear trail that dares loved ones, warriors and heroes to come and try to rescue them. The monster wants rescuers and heroes to chase it, and lies in wait for them so it can either pick them off one or two at a time along the way, or engage the group in an epic battle, killing as many as it can. Sometimes this ploy is more sinister, drawing the best warriors and defenders away from a community while the Demon Bear circles around to attack the village or town or traveling caravan while its defenders are away. When the rescuers return with the missing woman or child, they find the bloody carnage back home. And probably with the Demon Bear still lurking nearby, ready to kill more. But sometimes the evil Entity would rather let the returning rescuers live so they may suffer the loss of their loved ones' slaughter while they were on their rescue mission. Such is the cruelty of the thing possessing the bear.

When a community of people is discovered by a Demon Bear, it usually takes its time picking off villagers one or two at a time every couple of days. It may leave the mauled bodies lying in the snow half eaten, or drag them into the woods never to be seen again. This may be repeated for days or weeks until the Demon Bear has lost interest in this game or when almost the entire village is wiped out. The beast likes to let one or a few people live so they can tell others about the horror that took place. Demon Bears enjoy creating an atmosphere of terror.

Driven to hunt and kill, when no humanoid prey is available to torment and feed upon, Demon Bears stalk animals. Just as they enjoy killing people just for the sake of killing, the Demon Bear is likely to go on frequent killing sprees, slaughtering dozens, sometimes entire herds of caribou, deer, seals, or livestock, leaving the corpses and a trail of blood and gore in its wake. The monster also challenges and dares other bears, wolf packs, bull walruses, and even lone Rhino-Buffalo to do battle with it. The smart or lucky animals don't take the bait and flee. Those who choose to fight the Demon Bear almost always perish, or limp away defeated, battered



and near death. This monster knows no fear and loves to fight, often to the death.

It is easy to tell when a Demon Bear is on the loose by the size of its footprints and the bloody trail it leaves wherever it goes. Most are solitary hunters, but sometimes join forces with 1-3 other Demon Bears or a Windigo, Sedna, or a Lesser or Greater Demon; and sometimes an evil Shifter, Witch or Necromancer, though the latter are quite uncommon. Thankfully, Demon Bears are relatively few in number. According to Inuit Shamans, they seldom see signs of more than 1-6 in any given season. Demon Bears only appear in the winter months, vanishing (hibernating perhaps?) during the spring and summer.

Demon Bear – Predatory Carnivore

Species Note: An ordinary, large bear that is possessed and physically transformed by some sort of evil, supernatural Entity.

Also Known As: The Blood Bear and Winter Death.

Alignment: Diabolic! Diabolic! Diabolic!

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+6 (medium animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+6, M.A. 1D6, P.S. 1D6+40 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+14, P.E. 1D6+14 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6+6, Spd 1D6+54 running, or 40 mph (64 km). The Demon Bear can maintain that speed indefinitely as the supernatural terror never tires. However, it would need a reason to run for a long period of time, such as pursuing an enemy or target of revenge.

Swimming speed is 12 mph (19.2 km or 17 knots) and can be maintained indefinitely. However, the creature never deliberately swims south into warmer waters. Can dive underwater up to 500 feet (152 m). Maximum depth tolerance is 1,000 feet (305 m), but greater depth does not kill the creature, only sends it into a state of suspended animation as it slowly floats to the surface. When the unconscious or drowned monster is pulled onto dry land, an ice floe or a water vessel, it returns to life after 48 hours!

M.D.C. by Location:

*Head – 100

*Legs (4) – 80 each

Main Body – 140, +70 M.D.C. more on a ley line. The Demon Bear also possesses incredible powers of regeneration, completely regenerating even when slain, unless special measures are taken. See Natural Abilities, below.

* A single asterisk is a small or difficult target to hit, requiring an attacker to make a Called Shot with a penalty of -3 to strike.

Note: On S.D.C. worlds, the Demon Bear has 1D6x10+60 S.D.C., 1D6x10+80 Hit Points, 50% more on ley lines and similar places of power, and has a Natural A.R. of 12. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (80 M.D.C. = 80 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D. (i.e. 2D6 M.D. = 2D6 S.D.C.) plus P.S. damage bonus of +25).

Horror Factor: 14; radiates power and evil.

Size: 12-15 feet (3.7 to 4.6 m) tall standing erect, 4 feet (1.2 m) at the shoulders.

Weight: 1D4x1,000 pounds (450 to 1,800 kg).

Average Life Span: The entity is immortal and elusive, immediately disappearing the instant the possessed animal is permanently slain, its head removed and either burned or thrown into the sea. If the Demon Bear is captured, an exorcism can be attempted on the bear to remove the murderous Entity from it, and sending the Entity back to whatever hellish dimension it comes from.

Once possessed, a Demon Bear can live for decades and decades, surviving impossibly long until destroyed. However, because they are such terrible creatures, Demon Bears are hunted down and destroyed within a few months or a few years of making its destructive appearance. Shamans in particular, are quick to identify and help warriors hunt down and destroy these malevolent Possessing Entities.

Demon Bears hibernate during the warm months of spring, summer and autumn, coming out to hunt only in the winter.

P.P.E.: 1D6x10+40

Disposition: Demon Bears are vengeful, malicious, murderous, living machines of destruction that enjoy hunting and killing. Even when stalking a specific individual, the horrid creature happily slaughters anyone who gets in its way or just happens to be present. The equivalent of a mad dog that retains its cunning and is deliberately cruel and vicious, the Demon Bear might kill a father and mother but leave the children to suffer, or vice versa.

Demon Bears kill for pleasure, like to target warriors and heroes, torment and slaughter the innocent and all living beings, and terrorize an entire region. When the victim of an embarrassing defeat or its host body is (seemingly) slain, the fiend regenerates after 48 hours, and the vengeful beast will seek revenge upon the person or people responsible. If they cannot be found other people or animals will pay the price or the angry monster may go on a killing spree slaughtering everyone it encounters.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Camouflage 65% (+10% when buried in the snow), Climbing 60%/40%, Detect Ambush 70%, Detect Concealment 40% (+20% if there is a blood scent), Land Navigation 95%, Prowl 50% (+10% on the tundra and in snow), Swimming 80%, Tailing 65%, and Track Animals and People 80% (+10% to follow a blood scent).

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 1,000 feet (305 m), keen eyesight, hearing and heightened sense of smell (track by smell alone

65% and recognize a specific scent 50%), can hold breath underwater or completely buried under snow for 18 minutes, can survive depths underwater up to 1,000 feet (305 m), impervious to poison, disease, and normal, non-magical cold no matter the depth of the temperature, but magic cold and ice attacks as well as M.D. cold inflict half damage, and impervious to possession and mind control by others. All attributes are Supernatural and the beast never tires. It searches for victims day and night. However, the monster often stakes out a potential target during the day and comes back at night to kill, especially if it is facing heroes or a group of people.

Magically Understands All Tribal Languages 85% (special): The Demon Bear understands all Native American tongues and other tribal languages of aboriginal, tribal people, worldwide, including werebeasts, but the monster cannot speak any language itself.

Superior Bio-Regeneration (special): This murderous beast regenerates 4D6 M.D.C. per melee round and regenerates a lost eye or destroyed limb in 24 hours! Moreover, the entire body automatically regenerates within 48 hours unless the head is removed from the body and the head or the body – not both (the other should be left to rot) – is burned or thrown into *the sea*. Not a lake or river, the sea. Most people don't know this and find themselves hunted by the Demon Bear they thought they had slain only a few days earlier.

When slain and the head removed, the Entity inside the host body falls into a stasis sleep. If the head is laid on top of the beast, placed inside its paws or next to the body within one foot (0.3 m), the monster returns to life in 48 hours to kill again. It doesn't matter if the body and decapitated head have been apart for as long as 10 years, reuniting them restores it. This is why the head or body (pick one), but not both, must be separated and burned, or thrown into the sea. When that happens the remaining body part deteriorates and turns to dry bones and skin within 1D6 minutes. Otherwise the separated head and body decays very slowly, as if it were frozen, and can be reunited to come back to life up to 10 years later! After 10 years, the Entity awakens and either searches for a new bear host or returns to its native dimension; 50/50 chance of either. Other animals instinctively knows the meat of a Demon Bear is putrid and is never eaten.

The remains of a slain and decapitated Demon Bear can also receive an Exorcism with a +20% bonus to succeed.

Attacks per Melee: Five physical attacks per melee round or two by spell magic (very limited).

Mega-Damage: Fights tooth and claw, or with magic, never uses a weapon.

Swat, Restrained (blunt, no claws): 6D6 S.D.C. or 1D4 M.D.; usually when it is toying with prey.

Swat, Full Strength (blunt, no claws): 5D6 M.D.; usually when it is toying with prey.

Claw Strike, Restrained: 1D6x10 S.D.C. or 1D6 M.D.; a restrained attack occurs when the monsters is toying with its prey.

Claw Strike, Full Strength: 1D4x10+4 M.D.

Claw Strike Power Punch: 2D4x10+8 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks.

Bite: 4D6 M.D.

Bear Hug: 2D6 M.D. per crushing action.

Body Block/Ram: 5D6 M.D. and has an 80% likelihood of knocking down opponents as tall as 20 feet (6.1 m) and weigh-

ing as much as three tons. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and one melee attack.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 on initiative, +4 to strike, +1 to parry and dodge (+2 to dodge underwater), +2 to roll with impact, +2 to pull punch, and +10 to save vs Horror Factor.

Vulnerabilities: Magic! Demon Bears are -4 to save vs magic of all kinds. Magic weapons inflict full damage (including magical cold-based weapons). Rune Weapons and weapons made from the Millennium Tree do double damage. The Psi-Sword and most types of psionics also do normal damage.

Most conventional Mega-Damage weapons, including explosives, particle beams and other energy weapons do only *half damage!*

However, S.D.C. weapons made from stone of any type inflict the equivalent in M.D.; i.e. a spearhead or dagger made from stone that normally does 1D6 S.D.C. will inflict 1D6 M.D. to the Demon Bear, as will a sling stone or a thrown rock at least the size of a baseball.

Killing the Demon Bear by only reducing its M.D.C. to zero or less is an illusion, because the horror will completely regenerate like a vampire and seek revenge for having been temporarily killed. Only when the Demon Bear's head is separated from its body and the head or body is either burned or thrown into the sea (not a lake) is the creature destroyed, and its Killer-Possessing Animal Entity sent back to its own alien dimension. There it takes hundreds of years for it to find its way back to Rifts Earth.

Magic: Chameleon (6), Fear (5), Fingers of the Wind (5), Repel Animals (6), See the Invisible (4), Sense Magic (4), and Invisibility: Simple (self; 6). All spells are the equivalent of second level. **P.P.E.:** 1D6x10+40.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: The tundra, including Alaska, the Yukon, Northwest Territory, Nunavut, Siberia, Greenland, the Arctic Circle, but in the winter months a Demon Bear may travel farther south, especially into the northern portions of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The monster loves the frozen north and stays there most of the time.

It is said that no Demon Bear has ever been reported east of Hudson Bay and never any farther south than the northern tip of Manitoba, but that is not true. When major winter snowstorms hit and the arctic winds drop temperatures to below zero Fahrenheit (-18 Celsius), a bloodthirsty or adventurous Demon Bear may venture into lower Canada and into the Northern United States. However, the beast only comes south with the arctic winds and leaves with them to go back north, so it seldom lingers in these parts of the country for more than a few days or a week or two. Still, a Demon Bear can kill plenty in that short time.

Occasionally like every decade or two, one will follow the Rockies down into Washington, Idaho, or Montana, but usually stays in the mountains.

Enemies: Hates, hunts and slaughters all mortal beings from humans to animals, but considers Practitioners of Magic to be their natural enemies. Humans and D-Bees are its preferred prey, then large animals and all other life forms, great and small.

Allies: Sometimes other Demon Bears and, on occasion, Windigo, Sedna the Sea Hag, a Lesser or Greater Demon, and once in a great while, an evil Shifter, Witch or Necromancer. However, Demon Bears are almost always lone hunters and prefer it that way.

Value: None, whatsoever. Impossible to tame or control. The meat is putrid and inedible even after a successful Exorcism or burning of the head or body. For this reason, many shamans choose to burn and be rid of the creature's entire body.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 20: Rifts® Canada™**, page 170.

Demon Beaver, Wishpoosh

By Kevin Siembieda

Though the **Rifts® Bestiary's** focus is mortal beasts, not demons and spirits, we have made a few exceptions when it is either unclear the creature is a demon/supernatural or if the monster is driven by instinct and more animal than human. This is one such creature.

As their name suggests, Demon Beavers are giant rodents, 15 feet (4.6 m) long from snout to rump, or tall when sitting upright on their haunches, plus another 8 feet (2.4 m) for their large, flat beaver tail. The paws on their front legs look more like clawed hands with an opposable thumb, and their eyes twinkle with intelligence and wicked intentions.

A giant, Demon Beaver may sound silly, but it is no laughing matter. Face to face, the beast can kill a person as easily as a Demon Bear, and they are a terror to sailors and fishermen on the rivers and lakes of Canada and the Northern United States.

A Wishpoosh is considered to be a demon or evil spirit that takes the form of a wicked beast that resembles a giant, monstrous beaver. Legends of the Nez Perce of the Northern Plains warn of a Demon Beaver. One story speaks of a time in which the wicked Wishpoosh was preventing the Nez Perce from fishing. Fearing they would starve, the people managed to convince Coyote (the Trickster) to help them. Coyote attacked Wishpoosh by leaping on his back and stabbing him with a huge spear, but the monster still lived and swam away with Coyote still on his back. Ever the cunning Trickster, Coyote transformed himself into a fir branch, which Wishpoosh swallowed. Inside his enemy's belly, Coyote changed into human form and gutted the beast from the inside, killing it. This tale suggests that there might only have been one Wishpoosh, for the Demon Beaver is not mentioned again. However, this is not the case. Since the Coming of the Rifts, the Wishpoosh or Demon Beaver has returned. Their numbers are very small and they typically are lone bringers of trouble and sorrow, but the beast creates serious, life threatening problems wherever one appears.

The wicked beast is something of a mischievous, evil trickster that enjoys causing trouble and grief for humans and D-Bees. Nowhere near as imaginative or cunning as the legendary *Coyote*, Demon Beavers use cruel tricks, intimidation tactics, surprise attacks and the same stunts repeatedly to hurt mortals.

A Demon Beaver likes to cause trouble by chasing away fish, capsizing boats, poking or biting a hole in a canoe or small boat to watch it slowly sink and enjoy the spectacle of the people inside panicking and rushing to shore or drowning, pulling swimmers underwater to drown, creating weak spots and holes in the ice of frozen lakes, as well as biting fishing lines, hooking sunken logs or debris to fishing lines, snapping/gnawing through anchor chains to set water vessels loose from their moorings, rocking and shaking large vessels, knocking on the hull to awaken or frighten the crew, and, if the vessel is small enough (weighing less than 8 tons), grab-

bing the anchor and pulling the boat in a zigzag pattern all over the river or lake before finally letting it loose or trying to tip it over. The Demon Beaver also likes to create traps involving felling trees on land and along waterways as well as blocking waterways with logs and debris, channeling water to flood a road, trail or crops, and so on. **Note:** A Wishpoosh can topple a full-sized tree by gnawing through it in 1D4 minutes and tear saplings and young trees out by the roots.

The Demon Beaver's favorite two tricks are causing floods and changing the direction/shape of waterways. This is done by creating dams, or sabotaging man-made ones, to redirect the water. Masterful damn builders themselves, Demon Beavers can also summon, control and direct ordinary beavers to do their bidding. By redirecting the flow of water, the monster can flood roads and crops, washout bridges, flood towns, or cut off the flow of water to dry up a river, pond, fishing hole, small lake, marsh, etc., as well as reduce the water level to cause large or deep vessels to go aground. They think all of this is an absolute hoot, and of course, do not care about who they may hurt or kill in the process. In fact, it wouldn't be much fun if somebody didn't get hurt. The long term result of drying up part of a river or lake can be starvation of those living around it, forcing people from their homes, and changing the very land (forests or fields growing in dried up lakebeds, rivers or lakes appearing where there was none before, etc.), and then, one day after people adapt and resettle, the monster changes it all back or makes it different.

Demon Beaver, Murderous Monster

Also Known As: Wishpoosh and Giant Beaver Monster.

Alignment: Miscreant through and through.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+6 (low to average human intelligence), M.E. 1D6+2, M.A. 1D4, P.S. 1D6+30 (Supernatural; double when in water!), P.P. 1D6+10 (double in water!), P.E. 1D6+20 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6+2, Spd 1D6+28 running, or 20 mph (32 km). 8 mph (12.8 km) at a trot for as long as five hours. The Demon Beaver can maintain either speed indefinitely as the supernatural terror never tires. However, it would need a reason to run or swim for a long period of time, such as pursuing an enemy or running for a body of water where it can escape and is more powerful.

Swimming speed is 60 mph (96 km or 52 knots) and can be maintained indefinitely! Can dive underwater up to 500 feet (152 m). Maximum depth tolerance is two miles (3.2 km), but only inhabits fresh water, never seas or oceans.

M.D.C. by Location: It can be killed by reducing the Main Body M.D.C. to below zero. When that happens, the creature's body disintegrates, transforming into thousands of bubbles before fading away as if it never existed at all.

*Head – 100

*Tail – 90

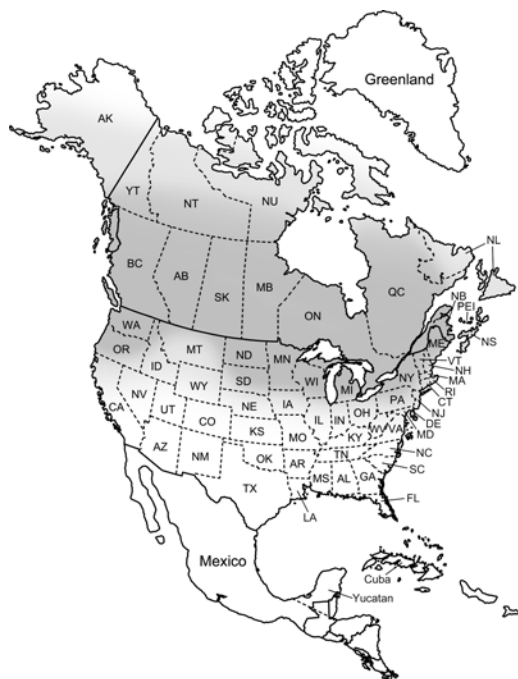
*Legs (4) – 70 each

Main Body – 1D6x10+120

* A single asterisk is a small or difficult target to hit, requiring an attacker to make a Called Shot with a penalty of -3 to strike.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Demon Beaver has 1D6x10+40 S.D.C., 1D4x10+100 Hit Points, and a Natural A.R. of 10. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (100 M.D.C. = 100 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points





rather than M.D. (i.e. 4D6 M.D. = 4D6 S.D.C. plus P.S. damage bonus of +15).

Horror Factor: 10

Size: 15 feet (4.6 m) from snout to rump, plus another eight feet (2.4 m) for its tail.

Weight: 1-3 tons.

Average Life Span: Uncertain, 1,000+ years and possibly immortal.

Species Note: Believed to be a Lesser Demon or evil woodland spirit.

P.P.E.: 2D6x10+22

Disposition: Wishpoosh are cocky, arrogant and overconfident beasts that think of themselves as bold and much more cunning than they really are. They often underestimate humans and other life forms and the Demon Beavers are easily bluffed, tricked, and cheated. However, if the monster discovers it has been fooled by a lesser being, its vengeance will be terrible, and if the person(s) responsible cannot be found, its rage is taken out on whoever it encounters.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Boat Building 80%, Carpentry 80%, Fishing 95%, Land Navigation 95%, Prowl 40% (+20% when in water), Swimming 95% and Wilderness Survival 98%.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 2,000 feet (610 m), can see clearly underwater even in dark, murky or muddy waters, but has poor day vision (300 feet/91.4 m) in bright light, which is why it prefers dense, shadowy forests and comes out on overcast days, evening and nighttime. Can hold its breath underwater for up to 12 hours and often hides and even sleeps underwater when necessary. The beast can survive depth up to two miles (3.2 km) deep but only inhabits fresh water. It never tires, magically understands and speaks all languages 90%, but cannot read, and Bio-Regenerates 1D6 M.D.C. per melee round. Destroyed limbs, tail included, teeth or eyes regrows within 1D4+1 days.

Bite through Trees (special): Wishpoosh can topple a large, full-sized tree by gnawing through it in 1D4 minutes, bites through a young tree in 1D4 melee rounds, and a saplings in one melee action. It can also uproot saplings and young trees using its Supernatural P.S. and weight; counts as one melee attack/

action. The creature sometimes uses a small tree as a club or javelin. A tree strike does 5D6 M.D. and one that is thrown like a javelin does 6D6 M.D. (includes P.S. and all considerations).

Build Dam 98% (special): A Wishpoosh can build a 20 square foot (1.9 sq. m) section of dam per hour, and, are expert engineers when it comes to building and taking down dams, and knowing how the dam will affect or redirect a body of water.

Invulnerability (special): The Demon Beaver is impervious to disease and drowning, resistant to normal cold, possession and magic. Most magic weapons and spells inflict full damage, however cold- and water-based magic does only half damage.

Most conventional Mega-Damage weapons, including particle beams, other energy weapons, Vibro-Blades and explosives, do half damage, and *explosives underwater* do no damage.

The Psi-Sword and most types of psionics all have full effect and do their normal amount of damage.

The Wishpoosh is impervious to normal S.D.C. weapons, unless the S.D.C. weapon is made from the wood of a *maple tree*. Weapons made from maple inflict Mega-Damage (M.D.) to Demon Beavers; see *Vulnerabilities*, below, for details.

Make Waves (special): A magic attack that must be the first attack for that melee round and uses up all melee actions for the round. The wave is created by the beast slapping its tail in the water. The magic doubles the size of existing waves, which can be especially dangerous during rough weather and storms, or, if the waters are calm, creates waves up to six feet (1.8 m) tall, which is big for most lakes and rivers. These sudden waves or enlarged monster waves are used to startle and scare boaters, create confusion, capsize small vessels, wash swimmers away and pound the shore. The waves last for as long as the Demon Beaver slaps its tail. No other attacks are possible, not even magic, when this magical tail slapping is being performed. The waves continue for only one minute (4 melee rounds) after the monster stops making waves. This ability can be performed without drawing on its own P.P.E. reserve once every 24 hours, otherwise it costs 50 P.P.E. to Make Waves. But as noted, the waves continue for as long as the monster continues to slap its tail on the surface of the water, and since it doesn't tire, that can be as much as 1D4 hours before the Demon Beaver accomplishes its goal or gets bored and stops.

Ride the Waves (special): The Demon Beaver can ride the waves of a river, lake, sea or ocean, including tidal waves, without injury. This power also gives them the ability to walk and run across the surface of water at their normal speed!

Attacks per Melee: Four physical attacks per melee round.

Mega-Damage: Fights tooth and claw, or with magic. Never uses a weapon unless it is an uprooted sapling, young tree, or a handy log within reach. **Damage Note:** When the Demon Beaver is underwater or in water that is halfway up its body, the monsters' Supernatural P.S. increases! The damage inflicted when in water is indicated in the parenthesis, below. Water is the creature's element so it gives it additional power. Not applicable in the rain or snow, only in water that covers half its body or more.

Punch or Tail Strike, Restrained (blunt, no claws): 5D6 S.D.C.

Punch or Tail Strike, Full Strength (blunt, no claws): 4D6 M.D. *(1D4x10+4 M.D. in water).

Claw Strike, Restrained: 1D4x10 S.D.C. or 1D4 M.D.

Claw Strike, Full Strength: 5D6+2 M.D. *(1D6x10+2 M.D. in water)

Tree Strike Blunt Weapon (includes P.S. consideration): 5D6+3 M.D.

Bite: 6D6 M.D. *(1D6x10+8 M.D. in water)

Tail Slap: 4D6 M.D. (unchanged in water)

Underwater Body Block/Ram: 5D6 M.D. and has a 70% likelihood of capsizing any boat under 16 feet (4.9 m) long. Anyone standing on the boat is knocked down and there is 50% chance they fall in the water. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and one melee attack.

Cannot perform a power punch.

Tree Thrown like a Javelin – 6D6 M.D. with a maximum range of 700 feet (210 m). Tree must be at least 20 feet (6.1 m) tall; cannot be a sapling. Picking up and throwing an available log or fallen tree counts as one melee action. If no logs are available it must gnaw one or a few down to use as weapons.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls when underwater only, +1 on initiative (+3 underwater), +2 to strike (+4 underwater), +1 to parry and dodge (+3 underwater), and +6 to save vs Horror Factor.

Vulnerabilities: Normal S.D.C. Weapons (arrows, javelin, spear, club, staves, etc.) made from the wood of any maple tree inflicts the equivalent Mega-Damage when used against a Demon Beaver. Thus, a maple wood arrow or staff that normally inflicts 2D6 S.D.C. does 2D6 M.D. to the Demon Beaver. **Note:** *Milennium Tree Weapons* do double damage!

A wide variety of maple trees are common throughout the old Canadian and American Empires, especially Eastern and Southern Canada, and the Eastern, Northern and the Midwest of the United States. Maples are also found throughout Europe, Asia and northern Africa. In North America, they include the Acer, Boxelder, Black Maple, Big Leaf Maple, Field Maple, Manitoba Maple, Mountain Maple, Oregon Maple, Sycamore, Vine Maple, Red Maple, Silver Maple, and Sugar Maple, and others; there are 150 species of maple trees worldwide.

Also, the Demon Beaver can NOT eat the seeds from a maple (kids often call them twirly-birds, helicopters or propellers because of their shape) nor swallow acorns, it chokes on both, and causes it to lose 1D4 melee attacks while choking and coughing the seeds out of its throat. If it should manage to swallow even one or two, they give the demon an upset stomach and the following combat penalties: -1 melee attack and -2 on all combat maneuvers (strike, parry, etc.).

Limited sight (300 feet/91.4 m) in daylight or when exposed to any type of bright light. However, though the creature prefers murky or polluted waters, overcast skies, dim light and darkness, a Demon Beaver is not negatively affected by the light of day other than squinting and being unable to see beyond 300 feet (91 m).

Magic: Spells are equal to a 5th level mage. Summon & Control Animals (62; half the usual P.P.E., but limited to beavers and frogs only), Repel Animals (7), Seal (7), Sense Magic (4), Mystic Fulcrum (5), Mend the Broken (10+), and Create Water (15); the latter two spells are described in the **Rifts® Book of Magic and Federation of Magic**. P.P.E.: 2D6x10+22.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Wishpoosh are thankfully scarce, evil, woodland beings sometimes encountered in Canada and the northern United States. They seem to be especially fond of New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, the Dakotas, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York, Vermont, and Maine, all of which are cool

regions with many waterways and lush forests, but from time to time, are encountered anywhere in the old Canadian and American Empires. Seldom ever found in Mexico or hot climates.

Enemies: Hates all mortal beings, especially Native Americans, who have fought and opposed these monsters throughout the ages. Humans and all mortals are regarded as playthings to torment and kill.

Allies: None per se. Demon Beavers tend to operate alone, but sometimes join forces with another Wishpoosh or demon or evil spirit. However, such alliances never last long.

Value: None. When slain, the Wishpoosh's body discorporates, transforming into thousands of bubbles that either float up into the air and vanish or cover the surface of water, like foam, and float away or fade away.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 20: Rifts® Canada™**, page 178.

Desert Sleeper Dinosaur

By Kevin Siembieda

The Desert Sleeper gets its name from the fact that they bury themselves under the sand or loose earth at night and when hiding from predators. This is a two-legged, warm-blooded, theropod dinosaur about twice the size of a human, with powerful ostrich-like legs for running and leaping. Its two small arms and two-fingered claws are for picking up and carrying eggs and scraps of meat. The clawed arms also help to dig in the sand and dirt, but the hind legs do most of the digging. The top of the Sleeper's head is armor plated, almost as if the beast was wearing a helmet. Other plates extend down its spine and tail. This plating offers additional protection while it sleeps and from predators the animal cannot outrun. When sleeping, the Desert Sleeper curls up in a ball, like an armadillo. It also curls into a ball when cornered or trapped by a predator it cannot escape. By curling into an armored ball, the Desert Sleeper hopes its attacker will grow frustrated and leave when it cannot penetrate its tough armored hide. This defense tactic is effective against many animal predators, but makes it easy for humanoids to hunt, capture and kill the animal. Most people find the meat of Desert Sleepers to be quite good tasting and others use the animal's natural armor plating to make non-environmental body armor, so they hunt the peculiar dinosaur.

The animal's skin color varies, ranging from a sand color to a dusty brownish gray, depending on its environment (most deserts in North America are parched, stony deserts like those of the American Southwest, not sand). The top body plates are a dark shade of brown or a reddish-gray brown.

Desert Sleepers prey on carrion and small animals, including rabbits, groundhogs, mice, rats and other rodents, snakes, lizards, birds, and insects, as well as reptile and bird eggs, and carrion. Though the Desert Sleeper may eat the carcass of a dead humanoid, they *never* attack people even when they are attacked by them first. The animal simply tries to run away and fights using its clawed hands and feet, but only long enough to make good an escape or to convince its attacker to back off. However, while they may not attack people, the animals may follow merchant caravans, traveling shows, mercenary companies and even small bands of adventurers to eat whatever scraps and garbage they leave behind. The dinosaurs may also attack and eat people's livestock, such as chickens, ducks and geese to sheep, goats and piglets, as well as small dogs, house cats, and other small animals and pets.



In a pinch, Desert Sleepers will eat any kind of meat and most processed foods such as lunch meat, jerked meat, bread, sandwiches, cereal, cookies, cakes, pie, pastries, and processed food, in addition to nuts, vegetables and fruit, but these last three are a last resort. The animal does not eat raw grain like wheat, rice and barley, but might consider corn and beans. In fact, traveling shows and merchant caravans must be on constant alert for one or more thieving Desert Sleepers that might sneak into camp to steal food and eat pets, show animals and livestock. A group of the dinosaurs might also attack calves, ponies and foals. Likewise, hunters must be watchful or they could have their kill stolen right out from under them by a pack of Desert Sleepers.

Desert Sleeper

– Dinosaur-like Omnivore, Hunter & Scavenger

Also Known As: Armored Runners and Ball Dinosaurs.

Alignment: Considered Anarchist and mostly harmless to humans.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+3 (low animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6, M.A. 2D6, P.S. 1D6+20 (Augmented P.S.), P.P. 1D6+15, P.E. 1D6+18, P.B. 2D6+3, Spd 1D6+53 running, or 40 mph (64 km) running for as long as one hour. Reduce by 30% on sand dunes, but no speed penalties for running on gravel or rocky deserts like those found in the American Southwest. It is able to run at 20 mph (32 km) without exhaustion for up to 12 hours. Walking speed is 4-7 mph (6.4 or 11.2 km).

M.D.C. by Location:

- *Plated Head – 100
- *Small Arms (2) – 15 each
- *Hind Legs (2) – 50 each
- *Underbelly – 80

Main Body – 2D6x10+100 for adult animals. Juvenile animals ages 1-6 years old are half the size and half the M.D.C. Babies have 1D4x10 M.D.C. and half the attacks, bonuses, speed and skill abilities. When curled into a tight ball, no other body parts are visible and when buried in the dirt or sand, travelers may mistake the creature in this sleeping and defensive position as a boulder of some kind. The armor is hard and cool to the touch.

* A single asterisk means a small and/or difficult target to strike and requires a Called Shot to hit. Even then the attacker is -3 to strike. Destroying one leg reduces speed by 50% and requires the animal to plod along using its one leg and two arms. Destroying two legs reduces speed to zero. Lost limbs do not regenerate.

Note: On S.D.C. worlds, the beast has a Main Body of 1D6x10+40 S.D.C., 1D6x10+60 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 16. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (15 M.D.C. = 15 S.D.C., and so on). The damage inflicted by the creature does S.D.C. damage as indicated below, while a Rear Leg Kick does 5D6 S.D.C. and a Power Ram does 1D6x10+40 S.D.C. damage!

Horror Factor: 6

Size: 10-11 feet (3 to 3.4 m) from head to tail, about 6 feet (1.8 m) at the shoulders.

Weight: 600-800 pounds (270 to 360 kg).

Average Life Span: 2D6+40 years. Desert Sleepers mate in the late winter and lay 2D6+2 eggs at the onset of spring. Eggs are buried in the dirt or sand and hatch five months later. Babies are the size of a squirrel and the young must fend for themselves. They grow quickly and are half their full size within

1D6+12 months. Reach physical maturity within five years and sexual maturity in seven. The animals do not mate for life, but do gather in packs.

P.P.E.: 2D6

Disposition: Frisky, playful and curious, but wary of humanoids. They always seem to be running about chasing bugs, birds or reptiles or playing. They can also be seen laying stretched out on the sand or the dirt and rock of the desert basking in the sun. They love the sun and enjoy hot temperatures that most other animals would find distressing.

Desert Sleepers are also pesky thieves. If travelers are not careful, a hungry or curious Desert Sleeper will sneak into camp, riffle through a saddlebag or backpack, suitcase or satchel, tossing things on the ground until it finds something to play with or eat. The animal is likely to open containers and dig through belongings looking for food, and may run off with a box of cookies, a sandwich or other food, or dash off with the entire backpack to rummage through elsewhere.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 40%/10%, Dowsing 85%, Land Navigation 70% (+20% in desert environments), Prowl 25%, Tailing 45%, and Wilderness Survival 85% (+10% in deserts), Tracking 55% (+20% when hunting for birds, eggs, reptiles, bugs and carrion; it eats carrion so it can track the scent of decay and rotting meat).

Natural Abilities: Excellent speed, can stop on a dime and make sharp turns and leap while running; can leap up to 12 feet (3.7 m) high and 20 feet (6.1 m) across. Desert Sleepers elude predators and humans by leaping out of the way or leaping over them, and have keen senses of hearing and sight. The beast can go without food or water for as long as eight weeks without ill effect (lives off the fat and water stored in its tail), and Bio-Regenerates 3D6 M.D.C. per 24 hours.

Dig and Curl into a Ball (special): Desert Sleepers dig a hole in the ground, curl up into a ball and sleep during cool or cold desert nights. The animal can survive cold temperatures but does not like it, and hates snow and ice (reduce speed by 30%). They prefer temperatures from 75-150 degrees Fahrenheit (24 to 66 Celsius). Sleepers bury themselves in sand and dirt or loose gravel, but they are not burrowers, they simply dig a hole, often with 20% of their curled body protruding from it, to sleep, hide and protect themselves.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

S.D.C. and Mega-Damage: The Desert Sleeper does not have Supernatural P.S., but Augmented P.S., so most of its attacks inflict S.D.C./Hit Point damage. The hind legs and clawed feet are strong enough, however, to deliver a Mega-Damage kick, does a running power ram, see below. *An asterisk indicates a Mega-Damage attack.* The animal's skull and hard, plated head armor is used to butt and knock predators down and chase them away. When the animal goes low and runs like a living battering ram, it is time to dodge and back away.

Bite – 2D6 S.D.C.

Tail Slash – 4D6 S.D.C.

Claw Strike (small foreclaws) – 2D6 S.D.C.

*Rear Leg Kick – 2D4 M.D.

Head Butt, Restrained – 2D6 S.D.C.

Head Butt, Full Strength – 4D6 S.D.C.

Running Head Butt – 1D6x10 S.D.C. and has a 70% chance of knocking down human-sized opponents up to 10 feet (3 m) tall. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and one melee attack. Counts as two melee attacks.

* Running Power Head Butt/Ram Attack – 1D6+4 M.D. and has an 80% chance of knocking human-sized opponents up to 15 feet (4.6 m) tall, off their feet and flying back 4D6 feet (1.2 to 7.3 meet) and down on their back or face. Victims of a power knockdown lose initiative and two melee attacks. Counts as three of the creature's melee attacks.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on initiative, +1 to strike, +2 to dodge, +4 leaping automatic dodge in which the act of dodging does not use up a melee attack, +3 to roll with impact, +6 to save vs disease and poison, and +2 to save vs Horror Factor.

Vulnerabilities: All M.D. weapons inflict damage. Cannot swim and will drown within 1D4 minutes. Dislikes cold. M.D. cold attacks do an additional 30% damage. Fire scares it (Horror Factor 13), even S.D.C. fire. Its curiosity can also get the animal into serious trouble.

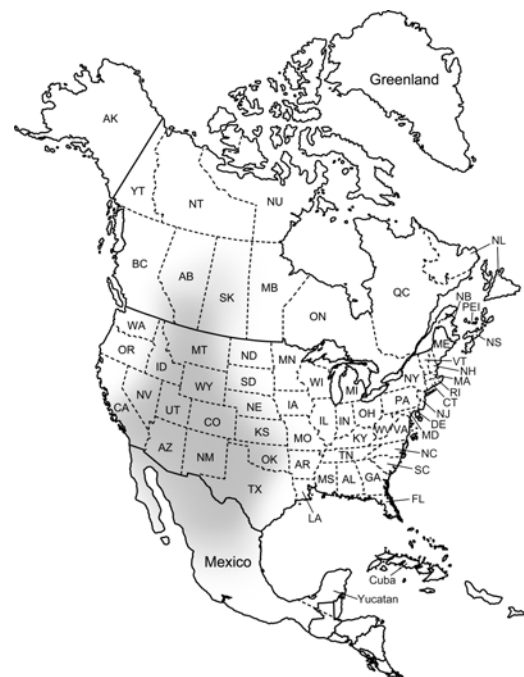
Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Deserts and grasslands of all kinds, but love deserts most of all. Primarily found in parts of the Rocky and Sierra Madre Mountains, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas/Pecos Empire, California and Mexico in the winter months, but may expand into the New West as far north as Wyoming, Montana, the Dakotas, and lower Alberta and Saskatchewan in the summertime. The dinosaur-like creature can handle cold, overnight desert temperatures, but cannot survive long, cold winters or climates that have more than a week or two of cold temperatures that do not rise above freezing. They protect themselves from cold, desert nights by digging a hole or burying themselves under the sand and curling into a ball. But more than 14 days of *constant* freezing temperatures is likely to kill the beast or force it to find a warmer place to live.

Enemies: Large predators and pack hunters, including Burrower Bruins, Dark Behemoths, Eeracrech, Field Reapers, Grigleapers, Gwylack, Panthera-Tereon, Silonar, Raptors, T-Rex, Leatherwing and other predators, as well as humans and D-Bees.

Allies: None, except their own kind. A Desert Sleeper may travel, hunt and scavenge for food by itself or as a pair or trio, especially when young or juvenile, but adults often gather into hunt-



ing and scavenging packs. When food is plentiful, those packs can group into larger herds.

Small Pack: 1D6+5 Desert Sleepers.

Medium Pack: 3D6+12 animals.

Large Pack: 1D4x10+16 animals.

Small Herd: 1D6x10+40 animals.

Medium Herd: 2D4x10+90 animals.

Large Herd: 4D6x10+200 Desert Sleepers.

Thankfully, this animal is not, generally, dangerous to people.

Value: 300-600 credits per animal. The meat of Desert Sleepers is good to eat which means they are regularly hunted by Simvan, Psi-Stalkers, Native Americans, and other humans and D-Bees. Their natural armor plating can also be used to make non-environmental body armor. (Half suit has 40 M.D.C. and A.R. 13. A full suit of plate armor has 90 M.D.C. and usually has a technologically produced helmet with 50 M.D.C. and basic features like air filter, light adjusting visor, etc.). Many Mexicans, Native Americans, Cyber-Knights, Pecos Bandits, Vampire Hunters, Psi-Stalkers, Simvan, and tribal people use the Desert Sleeper's head plate as a shield (6D6+16 M.D.C.) as well as a sled/toboggan, platform with rope or rawhide straps that can be pulled behind a traveler walking across the ground or behind a riding animal, as well as carrying tray, large serving platter, large shovel and plow blade. The animal cannot be domesticated and only Simvan, Psi-Stalkers, and Psi-Druids can ride them without penalty.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 14: New West™**, page 138, and inspired by the artwork of Ramon K. Perez.

Devil Eel

By Todd Yoho and Kevin Siembieda

The Devil Eel, sometimes called the Centipede Eel, is a hideous predator that hunts on land, marshes and in the water. It prefers wetlands, swamps, bogs and murky waters and are they seldom found in sparkling clear streams, rivers or lakes. Devil Eels are most common in Dinosaur Swamp and other swamps and marshlands of the Gulf Coast and southeastern United States. It is a gruesome sight to behold. A twisted amalgam of animals – the head of a monstrous fish, the body of a snake, spindly legs like those of a crab or spider, only they are not legs, arms that end in wicked hooked claws, and a tail that is split in two. This twisted appearance has compelled some people to wonder if the monster might not be a mutated Earth eel, snake or fish, but the Devil Eel is none of these animals. It is undoubtedly a monstrosity from an alien world beyond the Rifts. The fact that the Devil Eel shares some striking similarities with the Devilsaurus – namely the tri-fingered tongue and hooked claws – suggests they may both originate from the same alien planet or dimension.

The Devil Eel is a versatile and ruthless predator. It has gills and can live underwater for an indefinite amount of time, but it also has lungs and can live on dry land with little or no water for as long as nine weeks before starting to weaken (reduce speed, the number of attacks and bonuses by half). Even in a weakened state, the hardy Devil Eel can last another eight weeks without water before finally dying of dehydration. The monster's serpentine body is covered in large, shingle-like fish scales and has a set of six, crab-like legs. A combination that enables the beast to swim, crawl

and climb with frightening agility. The six legs are not especially good for walking, but excellent for climbing up half-submerged logs and tangles of weeds, scurrying up trees, and latching onto larger prey with its terrible, hooked claws. The same claws are used to rip its prey and enemies to pieces. Its large maw is filled with hooked teeth also designed to hold onto prey and rip out large hunks of flesh. The ability of the Devil Eel to travel and hunt in so many diverse environments – underwater, in shallow marshes, on dry land and up in trees, where it can stalk arboreal animals, birds and insects or drop down upon passing land animals – makes it a terrifying and deadly apex predator, the likes of which are seldom seen. Cunning and insidious, the monster takes advantage of each and every environment it finds itself in.

When on the attack on the ground or in shallow water, the Devil Eel rises up like a cobra, its six arms/legs spread out wide as if opening for a hug. When an enemy gets within striking range, the creature either lunges forward and bites or, more likely, slashes or impales prey with the wicked, curved hooks on each of its six arms/legs. A fusillade of rapid-fire slashes in a matter of seconds can cripple and kill prey, or send would-be predators, including people, backing off quickly and running for the hills.

Impaling and clamping onto large prey such as bears and dinosaurs can be just as deadly for the Devil Eel's victims, and a safe method of attack for the wickedly cruel and patient monster. All it has to do is stab and hold onto prey while the creature bleeds out. Each of its six long, hooked claws digging deep, like six daggers, while it holds tight, until blood loss weakens the large animal or continuing biting attacks and blood loss bring the prey down. The horrible creature seems expert at hooking itself to locations on the body, like the back, neck and haunches, where its victim cannot reach it to bite or pull the serpent off. Thrashing and rolling by the prey to free itself from the Devil Eel's death grip is likely to be futile, inflicts more damage and hastens blood loss.

Small to medium-sized animals such as lizards, snakes, fish, rabbits, birds (from sparrows to ducks, geese and pelicans), dogs, cats, monkeys, sheep, goats, and similar, to alligators and small to medium-sized dinosaurs, are its primary prey. However, Devil Eels, especially large ones, are quick to attack large animals such as wild boar, cattle, horses and even animals as large as a Duckbilled Honker and other large dinosaurs and animals. When successfully attached to a very large animal like a Canadian Honker or T-Rex, the fiendish Devil Eel crawls up to find a position where the dinosaur cannot reach it, and like a devouring parasite, feed upon it for days, even weeks until the animal is finally able to knock it off its back or keels over dead. When the Devil Eel is done feasting upon its kill, it slithers off. But not too far. This beast is wickedly methodical and cunning, so it always leaves enough of its victim behind as a lure to attract new carrion-eaters or predators for it to feed upon, and waits. The Devil Eel lurks in the nearby shadows or submerged in the marsh, or waits perched, unnoticed, up in a tree or a tangle of vines. When a new predator or carrion-feeder arrives to pick at the remains of the monster's kill, the Devil Eel pounces. Small and medium-sized prey (wolves, vultures, etc.) are slain and usually eaten the spot. Large prey are attacked and slain as described above, with the Devil Eel dropping down onto its victim from above or climbing up onto the back of a large animal to repeat its slow kill. Such gruesome tactics are what has earned the monster the name *Devil Eel*. That and the fact that it often attacks people.

A cunning predator and opportunist, the bold Devil Eel is known to invade campsites to steal food (usually only meat) or to attack and drag away animal companions, pets, livestock or an

unsuspecting person. While the man-sized Devil Eel is not afraid to attack a healthy human or D-Bee, it is more likely to target someone who is injured (the smell of blood attracts them), sick, sleeping or alone. And such attacks usually come from behind or above. Ever the efficient hunter-killer, in and around marshlands and other bodies of water, the horrid creature knows it can drown people and land animals by pulling them into the water.

Fortunately, Devil Eels fear fire and keep a distance of 10-15 feet (3 to 4.6 m) from a handheld torch or lantern, and 30-50 feet (9.1 to 15.2 m) from a large campfire or bonfire. Devil Eels may hunt during the day or night, but are mainly nocturnal hunters. They are gluttons that gorge themselves on a kill and then laze around for 1D4+2 days before getting hungry enough to go hunting again.

Devil Eel – Carnivorous Reptile Predator

Also Known As: Centipede Eel and Crawling Devil Snake.

Alignment: Considered Miscreant or Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+3 (medium animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+4, M.A. 1D6+2, P.S. 1D6+16 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+16, P.E. 1D6+18 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6, Spd 1D6+14, or 12 mph (19.2 km) on dry land slithering like a snake for up to one hour, but up to four hours at half that speed. 6 mph (9.6 km) using its legs to crawl on the ground or in trees. No burst speed.

The Devil Eel is able to swim in water as shallow as four inches (10 cm) or as deep as several hundred yards/meters at 30 mph (48 km or 26 knots) for up to three hours before needing to slow down to rest. Swimming at 15 mph (24 km or 13 knots) or slower, can be maintained indefinitely. Maximum depth is 1,000 feet (305 m). This is a water creature with air breathing and land capabilities.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Clawed Legs (6) – 12 each

*Divided Tail – 35

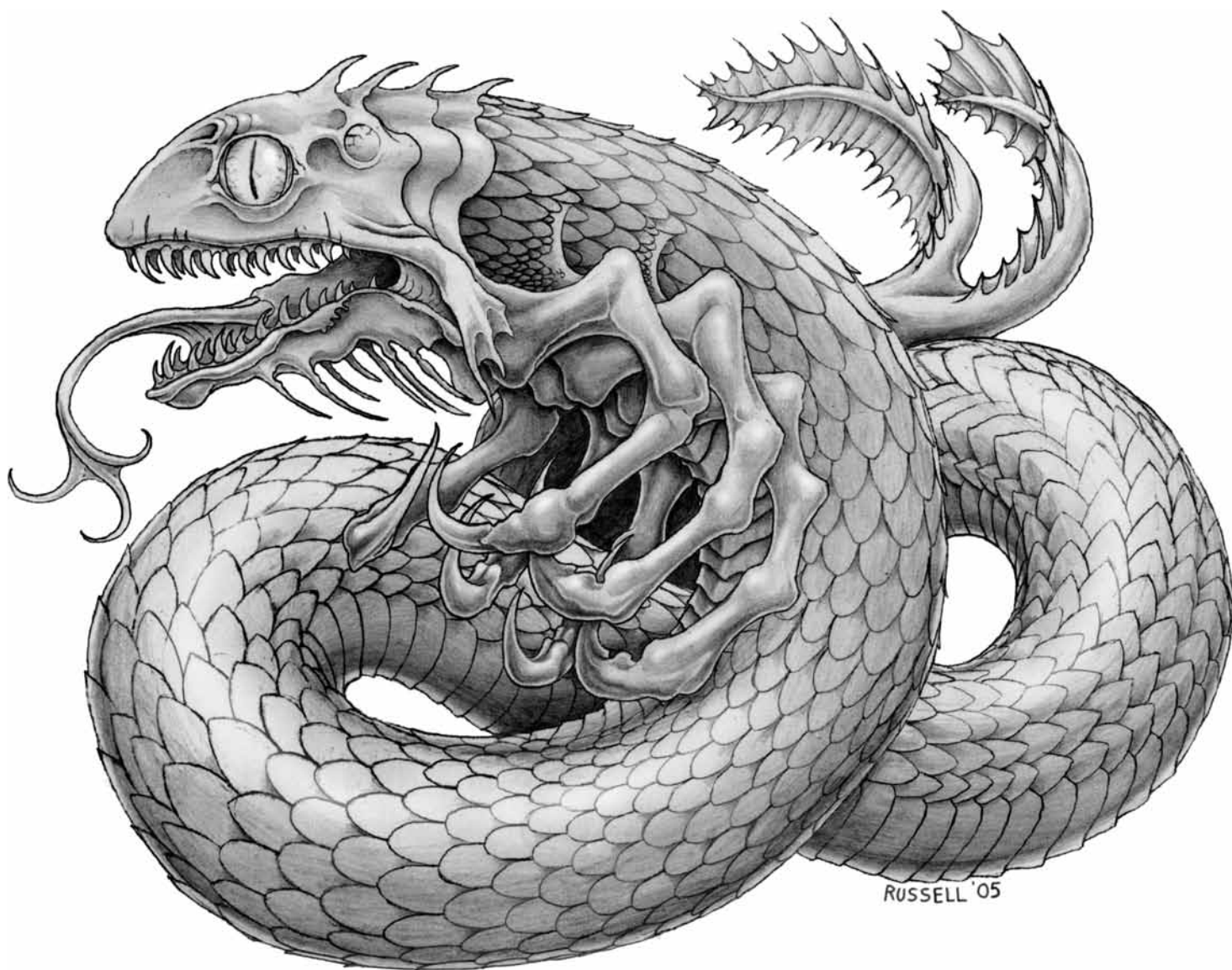
Main Body – 1D6x10+90

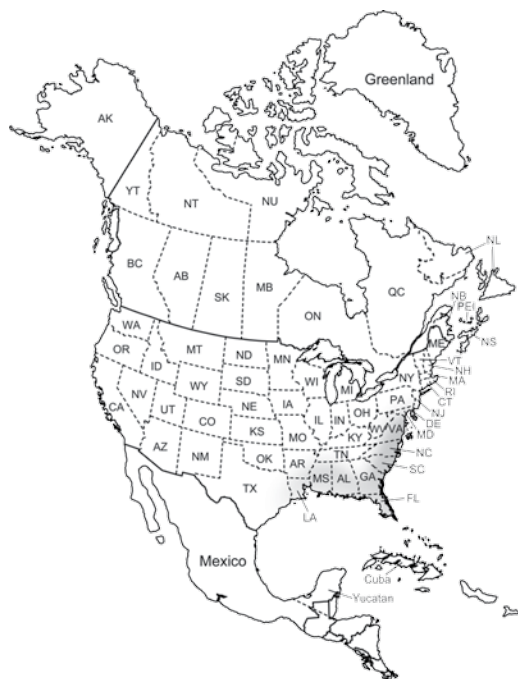
* The legs and tail are small, moving targets that are difficult to strike. The attacker must make a Called Shot to hit, and even then does so at a penalty of -5 to strike.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Devil Eel has 1D6x10+20 S.D.C., 1D6x10+20 Hit Points, and a Natural A.R. of 14. The damage inflicted by the creature's bite and other attacks does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D.

Horror Factor: 13 for one or two, 15 for three or more.

Size: 7-10 feet (2.1 to 3 m) long, but in Florida, Devil Eels as large as 16 feet (4.9 m) long have been captured, and claims of larger have been reported.





Weight: 300-600 pounds (135 to 270 kg) for the average Devil Eel, up to 1,500 pounds (675 kg) for the largest.

Average Life Span: 4D6+35 years, with the oldest and most clever living to 1D6x10+100 years. Devil Eels mate in the early spring and give birth to 1D6x10 live young four months later. The female stays with the young only for the first week of their lives. It takes two years for the young to reach sexual maturity and their adult size of 7-10 feet (2.1 to 3 m) long. Upon reaching adult size, the serpent continues to grow an inch or two every year, which is why the oldest are so long.

P.P.E.: 2D6

Disposition: A cold-blooded, hunter-killer that lives to hunt and eat. It has no evil intentions, it is just a vicious predator that preys on animals and people. Under ideal conditions, the Devil Eel eats 200-300 pounds (90-135 kg) of meat a week, whether that's multiple small kills or one or two kills of a large animal once a week.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 95%/85%, Prowl 40% (+20% in water even if it is shallow), Swimming 98%, Tracking 50% (animals and people; +20% to follow blood scent up to one mile/1.6 km away on dry land, 2 miles/3.2 km and with an additional +10% underwater).

Natural Abilities: Good hearing, sees the infrared spectrum of light so everything is in hues of purple and blues for the Devil Eel, a second eyelid slides down to function as a polarized filter to reduce glare on and in water, and sees well even in dim light or in the murkiest of water. Fair speed on dry land, excellent speed and maneuverability in and under water. A natural swimmer and can breathe underwater indefinitely. The Devil Eel is common to fresh water, but can also survive in salt water and depths of up to 1,000 feet (305 m) when it must. The monster burrows into mud to cool off, sleep and to conserve moisture in dry seasons, and is able to dig 10 feet (3 m) per melee round; half that distance in two melee actions in soft dirt. Bio-Regenerates 1D6 M.D.C. per hour and regenerates a lost leg or tongue in seven days, and an eye or tail section in 14 days.

Hibernation (Special): Under severe conditions (hot spells, no prey, too cold, etc.), the Devil Eel buries itself and goes

into hibernation for 1D4+2 weeks. During hibernation the creature's metabolism slows to a crawl, it loses only 5% of its body weight and energy reserve, and awakes at full strength ready to hunt. If uncovered while hibernating, the monster appears to be dead; it certainly feels cold to the touch. Moreover, the cunning predator will *pretend* to be dead, not moving a muscle until whatever has dug it up puts it down and turns away. Depending on the situation, the Devil Eel may keep playing dead, quietly slither away, or attack from behind. Of course, whenever the monster is attacked, it strikes back with the ferocity of a tornado.

Attacks per Melee: Six when biting only, eight when using claws or claws and biting attacks.

S.D.C. and Mega-Damage: Fights with tooth and claw. An asterisk indicates a Mega-Damage attack.

Head Butt – 3D6 S.D.C. damage.

Tongue Whip Strike – 2D6 S.D.C.

Nipping S.D.C. Bite – 2D6 S.D.C., and may be used in conjunction with its poisonous bite, below.

*Full-Strength Bite – 1D6 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks, and may be used in conjunction with its poisonous bite, below.

*Claw Slash – 1D6+1 M.D. per each sickle-claw strike.

Tail Slap, Restrained – 6D6+6 S.D.C.

*Tail Strike, Full Strength – 1D6 M.D. and has a 25% chance of knocking human-sized targets off their feet. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and one melee attack.

Simultaneous Six Claw Strike (special): The monster can strike with all six hooked claws at once, each digging deep into the body (or armor) of its opponent or prey. This attack offers an additional +1 to strike, inflicts 6D6+6 M.D., and if the Devil Eel wants to hold on, it can do so. **HOWEVER** it uses up *six* *melee attacks!*

To remove the monster when attached to an opponent with its six claws stabbed into its victim, the Devil Eel must be slain, paralyzed or rendered unconscious (magical sleep?), in which case it falls off. Removing it by force inflicts 6D6+12 M.D. to its victims. Waving fire in its face has a 50% chance of causing it to let go, but may also hurt and/or frighten the prey to which it is attached.

While clinging to an impaled victim, the Devil Eel only has TWO attacks per round, and can only attack with bites and tail whipping attacks. However, the animal or person it is attached to, impaled by the hooked claws, automatically takes an additional 2D6 M.D. every melee round (15 seconds) for as long as this horror is attached.

If the victim is a cyborg, robot or clad in M.D.C. body armor or power armor, the initial and subsequent damage is inflicted to the armor. When the armor's M.D.C. is reduced to zero, starting the next melee round, pieces of the armor fall away and the claws sink in and inflict 6D6+6 S.D.C. damage into the body under the armor. Cyborgs and robots that see their Main Body M.D.C. reduced to zero suffer a system shutdown, freeze and collapse, but remain "alive" and restorable with proper repairs. It takes a long while for this to happen as the Devil Eel must first reduce the M.D.C. of any exterior armor to zero, and then the main body of the cyborg itself.

Note: The Devil Eel's number of attacks per melee are reduced to two per melee round while it clings to a specific opponent or prey, and is likely to only be able to bite or tail whip its victim and those who come within range to engage

it in melee combat. Of course, the creature can let go and drop off (counts as one melee attack/action) to slither away or to attack others. Though an animal, it is smart enough to know when an opponent or prey is no longer a threat because it has been sufficiently weakened or incapacitated, and can be released so it can fight other threats. Likewise, it knows when the battle is too costly and let's go to flee and fight another day. A Devil Eel fights only to get food and protect itself. If outnumbered or facing a foe that is too powerful, the monster abandons combat and tries to flee. Slithering off to hide in the shadows, under a log or up in a tree, or ideally, into a body of water where it can swim away or vanish from sight. A Devil Eel only fights to the death when cornered or protecting newborns.

Poison Bite (special): Once per melee round, the Devil Eel can secrete a poison that paralyzes prey. This is usually reserved for large prey and prey with a lot of fight in them.

The neural toxin doesn't begin to take effect for 1D4 melee rounds, but when it does, first the victim's extremities begin to feel numb and movement becomes slow (reduce Spd, attacks per melee and combat bonuses by half). This sluggishness from the poison continues for 1D4+1 melee rounds before things get worse.

After this point, the poison takes full effect: reduce Spd by 90%, attacks per melee drop down to only two, all combat bonuses are lost, and the victim loses the use of one arm. These penalties last for 1D4+1 melee rounds, after which the victim had better have killed the monster or gotten away, because in another four melee rounds (one minute), the poisoned victim collapses, unable to lift a finger for the next 3D4+4 melee rounds (2-4 minutes). If there is no one to protect the poisoned victim(s), the vile Devil Eel moves in to begin *eating its victim alive!* Each bite to eat tears out a chunk of muscle and flesh that inflicts 1D6x10 S.D.C. against S.D.C. beings or 1D6 M.D. against Mega-Damage prey. **Save vs Non-Lethal Poison:** 16 or higher. A successful save means the victim feels a tingling sensation and suffers a penalty of -1 to all combat bonuses for one melee round, but is otherwise fine. Better than fine in a way, because the individual is +3 to save against subsequent Devil Eel poisonous bites for the next hour.

Prehensile Tongue (Special): The prehensile tongue can be used to grab and hold. It is reserved for snaring small prey such as insects, frogs, toads, turtles, fish, lizards, mice, rats, ducks, other small to medium-size birds, rabbits and squirrels, and pull them into the creature's mouth. To resist, the victim must have a P.S. of 16 or greater, so most animals ensnared are dead meat. Devoured in one or a few bites. Oddly, the tongue is never used to grab the arm or leg of larger prey.

In the alternative, the tongue may be used as a snapping whip (2D6 S.D.C. damage). Again, used against small prey with only a few Hit Points and S.D.C. or to chase away an annoying bug or animal.

Constriction Attack (Special): The Devil Eel may use its long, serpentine body to encircle an opponent like a boa constrictor. However, this attack is usually reserved for other large serpents, alligators, dolphins and similar aquatic adversaries, not land mammals or humanoids.

A successful *entangle* occurs when the monster is deliberately trying to entangle and its strike roll is higher than the victim's roll to parry or dodge. An entangled humanoid

(rare) or sentient being remains able to fight back with his free arms, or via weapons, magic and psionics, but the Devil Eel always goes to entangle the legs first, to prevent prey from fleeing. To maintain the entanglement, the Devil Eel must roll higher than the victim's attempt to escape twice every melee round for the first four rounds (one minute). Victims roll to parry. A successful parry means the victim has managed to slip or worm his way free. If the character has the *Escape Artist skill* he or she is +2 to escape from a Constriction Attack, but only during the first 4 melee rounds (one minute) of the attack. After the first melee round, the entangled victim suffers a penalty of -3 to parry or dodge any attacks leveled at him by the Devil Eel while he is entangled and off balance.

When three-quarters or more of the victim's body is covered and trapped in the coils of the Devil Eel, the monster is able to constrict by tightening its body muscles. Constriction does not crush the prey but rather makes breathing difficult, pushing the air out of the lungs and eventually, even collapsing the lungs, causing the victim to die from asphyxiation within 1D6+10 minutes for human-sized prey. No other attacks are possible while engaged in constriction.

The Devil Eel can inflict crushing damage – 1D6 M.D. per each constriction – but each constriction counts as one melee attack and it is easier to simply asphyxiate prey.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on initiative (double when the attack comes from an overhead tree branch or in murky water), +3 to strike with bite attacks, +2 to strike with claws, tongue or tail, +2 to dodge (+4 underwater), +2 to roll with impact (+4 underwater), +2 to save vs poison and +5 to save vs Horror Factor.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Favors warm, steamy swamps and shallow murky waters, but can be found in the marshlands, lakes, slow moving rivers, and in forests and trees, throughout Dinosaur Swamp and the Gulf States. Most numerous and likely to be encountered in Florida and the wetlands of Georgia, South Carolina, and Louisiana. Less common but also present in swampy areas of Alabama and Mississippi.

Enemies: The Razorback Rhinoceros, Raptors and other Mega-Damage predators, as well as people. Most people rightly fear and attack to kill this horrid creature. Devil Eels attack and eat almost any living creature including small to large dinosaurs and people.

Allies: None, other than a mate and other members of its own species. Devil Eels sometimes travel and hunt in small groups of 1D4+1 mated pairs (4-10 animals) in a loose-knit pack.

Value: None. In an emergency, the meat of the Devil Eel is edible, but greasy and foul tasting. Its poison has no medicinal use and perishes quickly, becoming inert within 1D4 minutes after the creature slain or the poison extracted.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 27: Adventures in Dinosaur Swamp™**, page 29, inspired by the art of Jeffrey Russell.



Devil Kraken

By Kevin Siembieda

The Devil Kraken is the largest, and by far most dangerous and malicious sea monster along the Atlantic Coast of the Old Canadian and American Empires. This aquatic behemoth happily capsizes and sinks ships so it can gobble up crew members swept into the water and is said to even feed upon the Splugorth's Metzila. A highly intelligent predator, it exhibits a malevolence and wickedness that seems more demonic than animal. This is exhibited by the fact that Devil Kraken are known to chase and harass ships and capsize vessels for the sheer enjoyment of watching the sailors scream, panic and drown. The Devil Kraken makes no distinction between the vessels of men and those piloted by otherworldly creatures like the Splugorth, and may attack any boat or ship for no reason at all. Likewise, the monster is known to play cat and mouse games, toying with the captains of ships, chasing vessels and creating as much fear and apprehension as it can conjure. Sometimes when it tires of such games, the Devil Kraken simply swims away much to the surprise and relief of the ship's crew. However, more often than not, the creature ends the game by sinking or capsizing

the vessel and devouring all hands. Only *Horune vessels*, with their superior firepower and magical construction, are left alone by the Devil Kraken. However, Horune in smaller vessels or who fall overboard are fair game, and one or more Devil Kraken can often be seen swimming alongside a Horune ship in hope of such an occurrence.

When a Devil Kraken attacks, the assault is so powerful and destructive that few ships can survive its onslaught. The crew's only chance is to outrun the monster (not likely), hold it at bay with magic (a possibility), or destroy it (also not likely). Devil Kraken do not like magic, and because they are the king of the sea, they have become lazy and do not usually press an attack on a vessel that requires too much work and energy. Not when there is easier prey to be had.

Though named the Devil Kraken, this beast is not the tentacled behemoth that many people envision when they hear the name "Kraken." This monster is a massive, armored fish larger than the Blue Whale. As if it is a leviathan from prehistoric times, the Devil Kraken is covered in thick, spiked, armored plates running along the top of its body. The underside is plated too, but these plates are thinner and more vulnerable to attack. The mouth of the massive creature is full of razor sharp teeth, each as long as a man or larger,

the longest teeth recorded measuring 8 feet (2.4 m) in length. Its armored plates are black or brown in color, giving it the ability to hide in the muddy and murky waters of the Long Island Sound and Hudson Bay. Its head is tipped with two small horns on either side of a very long, thick spike extending from the center of its head plate, and which is used to ram ships, and gore large sea creatures such as **Horned Whales**, which they despise.

The Devil Kraken is known to grow to be twice the size as the **Horned Demon Fish**, another resident creature of the Long Island Sound, and the northeastern coast of the Old American and Canadian Empires in the Atlantic ocean. Some researchers wonder if the Devil Kraken is a natural predator from the same world as the Horned Whales, as both share the trait of horns and armored hides, as well as a deep-seated hatred for one another. All three – the Horned Demon Fish, Devil Kraken and Horned Whale – are known to attack and feed upon each other, especially upon juveniles yet to reach full maturity.

It is important to note that the Devil Kraken is a predator driven by animal instinct and dark emotions, but also possesses near human intelligence. The Horune and others insist Devil Krakens are much more intelligent than whales and dolphins, that they set underwater traps (i.e. use treasure or a ship or submersible in distress to lure more victims to it), set ambushes, lay in wait, can learn and understand a number of human languages, and have the ability to cast spell magic. Devil Kraken are also known to sometimes agree to serve wicked practitioners of magic and powerful evil beings, including the *Naut'Yll* and the *Lord of the Deep*. A fact that can be confirmed by some Ocean Wizards, Lemurians and members of Captain Nemo-2's New Navy. Oddly enough, Devil Kraken never willingly serve the Splugorth or their minions, and are known to attack the Metztlá. More often than not, these cruel monsters of the deep seem to exist only to gorge themselves, cause pain for others and bring suffering into the world.

The Devil Kraken is something of a contradiction in that it is smart enough to understand human emotions and desires as well as possessing the ability to cast magic and use simple strategies and tactics and wage war against surface dwellers. Yet they seem to have no aspirations or culture, or technology, which is why some believe they may actually be some sort of demon or sub-demon. Some legends suggest Devil Kraken arrived during one of the Demon Plagues that brought Archaic Demons during the Great Cataclysm. Lemurians and True Atlanteans can confirm the creature did not exist on ancient Earth, more evidence that it is an alien from the Rifts.

Devil Kraken – Aquatic Carnivore

Also Known As: The Demon of the Sound and Sea Spear.

Alignment: Diabolic. These creatures live only to inflict pain and feed upon other creatures, targeting the innocent and good whenever possible.

Attributes: I.Q. 2D6+10 (high animal or near human intelligence), M.E. 1D6+16, M.A. 1D6+10, P.S. 2D4+50 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+10, P.E. 1D6+20 (Supernatural), P.B. 2D6, Spd 1D6+72 swimming or 52 mph (83 km or 46 knots). It can maintain maximum speed for eight hours before needing to reduce speed. Can swim indefinitely at 25 mph (40 km), can dive 1,000 feet (305 m) and survive depths of six miles (9.6 km) and greater.

M.D.C. by Location: Reduce M.D.C. by half when the monster is a juvenile not yet fully mature.

Large Horn (1, head) – 1,000

Small Horns (2, head) – 400 each

*Eyes (2) – 60 each

*Teeth (over 100) – 100 each

Fins (4) – 500 each

Tail Fin – 1050

**Plated Dorsal Fin – 1,000

**Dorsal Armor Plates (9) – 1,200 each

**Belly Armor Plates (9) – 450 each

Main Body – 4,300 on average (P.E. attribute number x 200)!

* Items marked with an asterisk are difficult to hit so the attacker must make a Called Shot, and even then is -4 to strike.

** One of the Dorsal Armor Plates or one of the Belly Armor Plates must first be destroyed before damage may be assigned to the Main Body. If only one of the plates is destroyed, the attacker must make a Called Shot at -8 to strike. If 2-4 Dorsal Armor Plates are destroyed then the attacker is only -2 to strike. If more are destroyed, then there is no need for a Called Shot and no penalties are assigned.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the beast has a main body of 4D6x100 S.D.C., 3D6x100+400 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 17. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (400 M.D.C. = 400 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D. (i.e. 2D6 M.D. = 2D6 S.D.C.).

Horror Factor: 17 for adults, 14 for juveniles that are half the size.

Size: On average 200 feet (61 m) long, but the largest one known to live in the Long Island Sound, an ancient male, is 400 feet (122 m) long and has a Main Body M.D.C. of 5,800.

Weight: 60-110 tons!

Average Life Span: Unknown. Believed to live 200-400 years. It takes 3D6+20 years for a Devil Kraken to reach full, physical maturity. No one knows its mating habits, but it is believed that a female gives birth to one or two live young as often as every 20 years. Young are half the size of a mature adult and stay with their mother for the first 12 years of their life.

P.P.E.: 2D6x100; on average 700 P.P.E.

Disposition: Aggressive and cruel, these wicked creatures thrive on carnage and death, but are also lazy and gluttonous. Devil Kraken prefer to expend energy only when it can get them an easy meal or terrorize sentient beings, preferably both at the same time, or when angered and looking to exact bloody revenge. They willfully inflict suffering upon seafarers and people living along the coast through acts of aggression, and unleash magically induced storms and other acts of evil for the pure devilish joy of seeing other beings suffer.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Language: Demongogian at 90%, Language: Other at 60% (can learn as many as six additional languages), Land Navigation 90% but as it applies to underwater and coastal landmarks, as well as following the electromagnetic highways underwater the same as whales and dolphins; Prowl 60% (underwater), Swimming 98%, and Tailing (ships and large animals) 85%.

Natural Abilities: Swim, Nightvision 2,000 feet (610 m), see the invisible, see in murky water, Bio-Regenerates at 6D6 M.D.C. per hour, armor plates and horns Bio-Regenerate at 1D4x10 M.D.C. per day and a lost eye in 5D6 days.

Chemoreceptor (Special): Enables the Devil Kraken to locate prey and detect minute changes in the chemical composition of the water. Identify chemicals by taste 60%, track by taste 50% (+20% to track blood). Range: One mile (16 km).



Depth Tolerance (Special): Five miles (8 km).

Sense Magnetic North (Special): Like dolphins and whales, unless injured or sick, the Devil Kraken can always tell where magnetic north is precisely located. This is an immense help in navigating the oceans. A powerful blow to the head may temporarily (3D6 minutes) knock out this ability.

Electromagnetic Sensitivity: The ability to sense the electromagnetic activity in the brain and neural circuitry in the bodies of living beings, including dolphins, whales, humans and most D-Bees. Like a living E.E.G. and E.K.G. machine, the creature can detect signals from the brain, recognize deficiencies and aberrations and pinpoint the cause, such as blood clots, tumors, brain or spinal damage, heart problems, paralysis, physical and internal injury, fatigue, and pain. They can also detect brain implants, the presence of psionic abilities and whether the creature is a Minor, Major or Master Psychic, and use this ability to locate and select the most vulnerable *prey* as their primary target!

This ability also helps the Devil Kraken to sense and actually see electromagnetic energy that is invisible and often undetectable by humans and D-Bees. They see, feel, recognize and can follow energy trails in the earth like highways or roads with identifying markers to better navigate the oceans and seas even in complete darkness. It also enables the creature to follow electromagnetic trails left by ships and submarines (trail disappears after 20 minutes and cannot be followed after that time) and to recognize the “signature” of specific types of marine vessels by their E.M. signature alone. **Range:** 30 feet (9 m) when scanning people, 3,000 feet (914 m) when scanning or trailing E.M. signatures of vessels, and 3 miles (4.8 km) when reading the E.M. lines in the earth.

Sonic Echolocation: By bouncing sounds (clicks, whistles, etc.) off an area and interpreting the bounced back signal, the Devil Kraken can see by creating sound images. The echolocation sound system enables the monster to accurately see and understand its environment better than vision alone, and it can “see” in total darkness, identify and locate objects, fish, humans and other creatures even in mixed groups, identify power armor, ships, submarines, and other sea vessels, obstacles and land formations (underwater mountains, ravines, trenches, shipwrecks,

seaweed, underwater city, etc.), determine the speed a vessel or animal is traveling, dodge attackers, navigate, measure depth, determine the speed and direction of the ocean current, and make precision maneuvers.

This ability is so sensitive and precise that it can identify and locate each and every species of fish (animal or humanoid) in the area being probed, determine the approximate number of fish in the school, their relative size and speed, and the direction of travel. To belabor the point, a Devil Kraken can pinpoint the location of a 5 mm copper wire on the ocean floor. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience. **Range:** 1,000 feet (305 m) for maximum accuracy. Up to 2,000 feet (610 m) but at a skill penalty of -20%.

Attacks per Melee: Seven.

Mega-Damage:

Fin Strike – 1D4x10+12 M.D.

Restrained Head Butt or Tail Strike – 5D6 or 1D4x10 M.D.

Full Strength Head Butt/Horn Attack – 1D6x10+20 M.D.

Power Head Butt – 3D6x10 M.D., but counts as two attacks.

Charging Ram – 4D6x10 M.D., but counts three attacks.

Full Speed Ram (special): 1D6x100 M.D., plus there is a 90% chance that the Devil Kraken capsizes any ship smaller than 100 feet (30.5 m), a 01-60% chance it capsizes a ship up to 600 feet (183 m) in length, and a 30% chance to capsize a ship up to 1,000 feet (305 m) in length. Only capital ships and carriers cannot be capsized by this attack. **Note:** The Full Speed Ram counts as all 7 of its attacks for one full melee round.

One favorite tactic is to engage in a Full Speed Ram while using the spell *Air Swim* to strike the deck and hit levels of a vessel above the waterline. The Devil Kraken finds that the sight of it swimming through the air, charging a ship is a terrifying image for humans and D-Bees, more so than a water attack.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 to Perception Rolls, +3 on initiative, +5 to strike, +2 to parry and dodge, +3 to roll with impact, +4 to save versus psionics and mind control, +4 to save versus magic, and +4 to save vs Horror Factor. **Note:** These bonuses only apply while in water. Reduce by half when in the air or forced onto dry land; round down.

Vulnerabilities: All Mega-Damage weapons inflict their usual damage, and electric-based attacks inflict 50% greater damage.

Magic: The Devil Kraken knows the following **Ocean Magic** spells (see **Rifts® Underseas** or **Rifts® Book of Magic**).

P.P.E.: 2D6x100, on average, 700 P.P.E. is typical.

Air Swim (15), *Breathe Air* (5), *Water Spout* (12), *Flying Fish* (8; only on itself, which is a truly terrifying sight to behold), *Impervious to Cold* (10), *Water Wall* (10 or 25), *Impervious to Electricity* (20), *Whirlpool* (50), *Communicate with Sea Creature* (10), and *Change Current* (15). Also knows the *Water Elemental spells* of *Command Fish* (10), *Hail* (20), *Shards of Ice* (15), *Wall of Ice* (20), *Hurricane* (50), and *Summon Storm* (100), all used to create mayhem, suffering and loss of life. Spells are cast as an 8th level spell caster; 4th for juveniles.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Theoretically, the Devil Kraken can survive almost anywhere there is deep water since they can exist in both salt and fresh water. Thankfully, their numbers are believed to be comparatively small, perhaps less than a hundred. A dozen are known to exist in the waters around Madhaven (the island of Manhattan, New York), and others are found in the Long Island Sound and throughout the northern Atlantic, particularly along the East Coast of Canada from Newfoundland to North

Carolina, and the Demon Sea (Bermuda Triangle). However, the creature can be found anywhere in the Atlantic Ocean, and from time to time, has been reported along the coastal waters of Dinosaur Swamp, the Gulf of Mexico, the Carribean Islands, Atlantis, Greenland, and Iceland. Unknown to people in North America, the monsters also exist in the Arctic Ocean, particularly around England, Scandinavia and the coast of northern Russia.

Enemies: Splugorth and their minions, humans, Atlanteans, Lemurians, dragons, and all intelligent creatures of a good or giving nature. They also attack anyone who is invading their domain or dares to challenge them in combat. The monsters' list of enemies changes as quickly as they change their minds, and the list always keeps growing. The Lord of the Deep and its minions are regarded as a dangerous rival, but sometime young or rogue Devil Kraken serve as one of its minions.

Allies: None per se. Loners, most Devil Kraken don't even like to associate with their own kind except to mate or to gang up on a common enemy like the Lemurians, the large submersibles of the New Navy, and Minions of Splugorth including Metztla. Devil Kraken rarely school together, but Devil Kraken have been known to lead small groups (2D4) of lesser sea monsters such as young Devil Kraken, Horned Demon Fish, Dragonfish, Aqua Hydras, and Water Serpents.

Value: None, even their meat tastes rancid and foul and their armor weighs tons and becomes brittle and useless when the monster dies.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 29: Madhaven™**, page 94.

Devilsaurus Dinosaur

By Todd Yoho and Kevin Siembieda

A frightful monstrosity that could very much be the answer to the question, "What do you get when you cross a demon with an Allosaurus?" The answer, a *Devilsaurus*. A predatory dinosaur that could have been spawned from the deepest pits of Hell.

There can be little doubt this creature is not of Earthly origin. Yet some people have speculated the Devilsaurus may be an Earth dinosaur, such as an Allosaurus, that has been mutated by magic or strange dimensional energy. They support their theory by pointing out its many unusual and monstrous features, such as multiple eyes, weird feet and tongue, and its ability to speak. However, such oddities could be just as true of a monster from an alien world come to Earth via the Rifts.

Others have pointed a suspicious finger the Splugorth. Wondering if the Devilsaurus might be the creation of a twisted Bio-Wizard experiment. This theory has gained some traction since people have reported seeing the dinosaurs in *The Preserve* on Atlantis and at sea swimming around its shores. The Devilsaurus has also been reported in the *Sargasso Sea* and in ocean waters around *Dinosaur Swamp*. An animal that is at home both on land and sea is one more weird aspect to this wicked monster. That said, its primary habitat and hunting grounds appears to be the forests and marshlands of Dinosaur Swamp and the Gulf Coast States.

Local people in Dinosaur Swamp claim this vicious predator is smarter than an Alien Rex, as deadly as an Allosaurus and scarier than a Tyrannosaurus Rex. It is a hairless, warm-blooded animal, with greenish-grey colored skin, pale red or tan underbelly, yellow eyes, and egg-shell colored horns, spines and claws. At the end

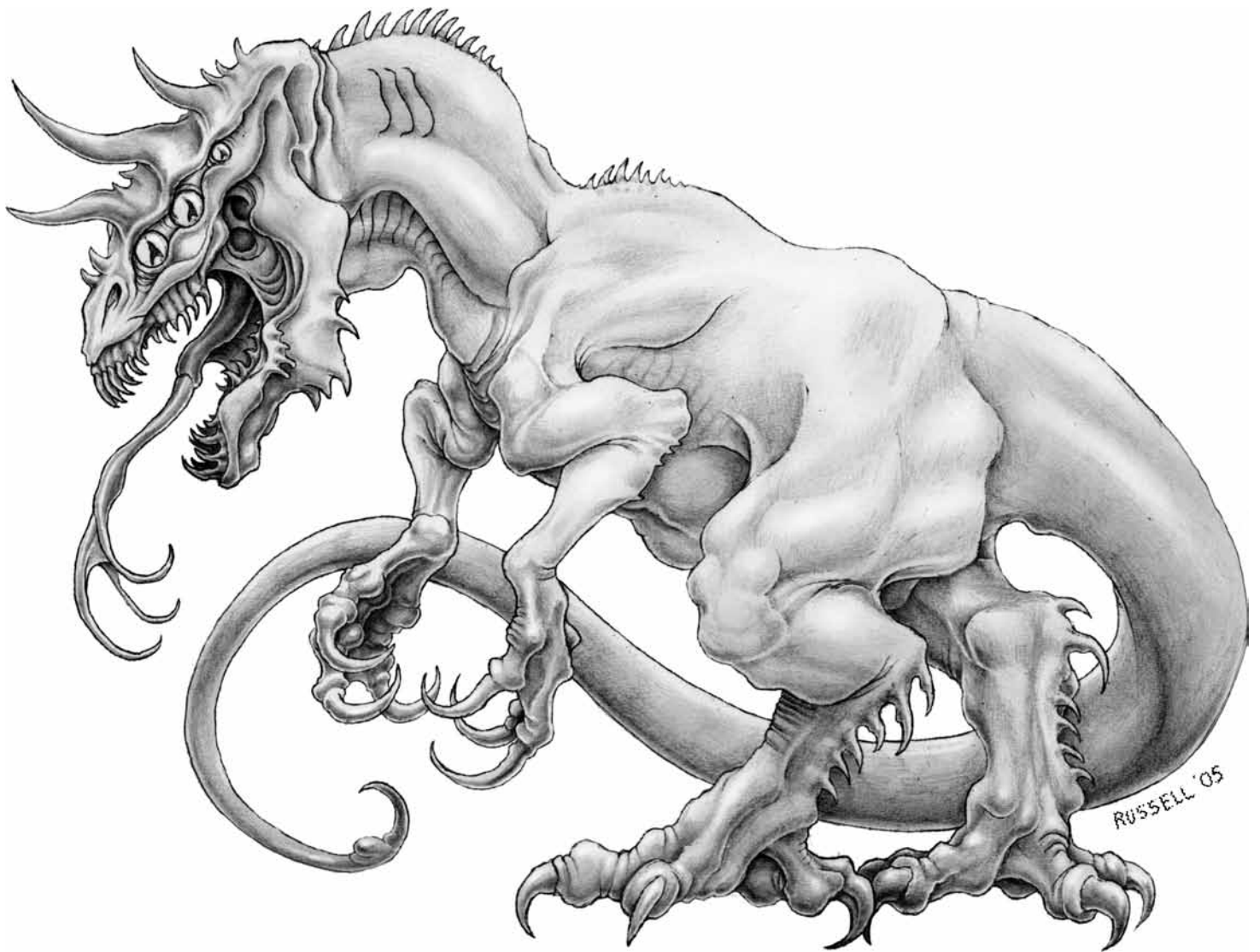
of its forearms are large scythe-like claws for slashing and disemboweling prey, and its prehensile tail ends in a similar hooked blade that functions as a slashing sickle.

The beast's six, yellow eyes, four large, two small, gives it excellent vision and the ability to see the invisible. Three curved horns protrude from the center of the head. Each measure 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m) and used to help parry incoming attacks from other giant predators like the Tyrannosaurus Rex, or used to stab and gore such mighty opponents. Boney ridges encircle and protect the eyes and the skull is thick and hard. The jaw is heavily muscled to bite through the toughest hide, and it can unhinge, like a boa constrictor, to swallow large hunks of meat and prey whole. Long, curved, dagger-like teeth fill the Devilsaurus' mouth, and a three-pronged prehensile tongue functions as an extra appendage with which to ensnare prey and pull them into the monster's slobbering maw. Many say the monster's tooth-filled maw is like the Gates of Hell bringing pain and death to all who enter.

The claws are as long as short swords and curved like scythes. Each hand has three, clawed fingers, but no thumb, so the Devilsaurus cannot grasp or hold objects. Instead, the claws are used entirely as weapons that slash, slice, gut, and skin prey. Its tail is completely prehensile and serves many purposes. As a weapon, it can strike like a whip or use the sickle-like hook at the end of the tail to rip opponents apart and eviscerate prey. The Devilsaurus has such control over its tail that the hook is used to torture and skin prey alive. The tail is also used to anchor the great beast by wrapping around trees or boulders, as well as provide additional balance, strike at more than one adversary or prey, and function as a rudder and means of propulsion when the creature is in the water.

Double-jointed limbs enable the Devilsaurus to twist and turn at impossible angles while running and attacking, as well as when laying completely flat on the ground or in the water where it swims like a snake; the tail doing most of the work. Although the Devilsaurus would appear to be a land creature, it has gills on the sides of its neck, and can swim through water like a serpent, its arms and legs tucked to its side as its long tail provides locomotion through the water. This enables the monster to prowl and hunt in forests, swamps, lakes, and at sea with equal efficiency. Some believe the monster originates from the **Demon Sea** (Bermuda Triangle) and found its way to Dinosaur Swamp and the shores of Atlantis. Horune Pirates insist the creature mates and spawns in the Demon Sea and Sargasso Sea, before returning to the Preserve on Atlantis or mainland Florida. As a result, this versatile predator can be encountered at sea and on land along Dinosaur Swamp and coastal area in the Gulf of Mexico. Indeed, many a sailor can attest to seeing one or more Devilsaurus swimming across the surface or just below the waves in all these waters.

Perhaps the most frightening thing about the Devilsaurus is its almost human level intelligence. This becomes evident during combat. The creature is seldom reckless nor rushes into battle. Rather, it watches and observes before it strikes. Taking note of possible traps and ambush points and sizing up its opposition. When it is ready, the monster lays in ambush and uses the element of surprise. The Devilsaurus likes to watch its intended prey from a distance and waits for an opportune moment to strike. The monster enjoys toying with its victims and may kill on a whim, for pleasure, or out of revenge. The monster often captures prey, keeping it alive for hours, even days, while it inflicts crippling wounds and engages in acts of torture such as flaying of the skin, severing tendons, removing an eye, and other acts of cruelty. There is no *fun* in killing right away, unless it is hungry. That's the thing, the Dev-



ilsaurus likes to stalk and kill for pleasure. And like serial killers who keep a trophy of their victims, the Devilsaurus likes to keep a collection of skulls, bones, armor, and weapons as souvenirs of its triumphs over humanoids, one of its favorite prey animals.

The monster's intelligence and understanding of humans and D-Bees gives the animal a distinct advantage over them. Most people assume animals are dumb compared to themselves, so whenever the Devilsaurus realizes its human or D-Bee targets are not familiar with it, the monster uses that lack of knowledge against them and to its advantage. For example, the Devilsaurus is likely to pretend to be a *dumb animal*, like an ordinary dinosaur, and may *pretend* to be injured, confused or fearful to trick people into underestimating it and lure them closer to it, and their doom. This understanding of people includes a rudimentary comprehension of their machines and an ability to recognize the importance that a particular machine or device may have for that person(s). A Devilsaurus cannot use modern weapons and devices, nor pilot vehicles, but it understands the danger they represent or the value/importance they hold. As a result, the beast may try to circumvent a combat vehicle or remove it from an opponent's arsenal before an all-out attack. Barbarians and adventurers in Dinosaur Swamp have reported the Devilsaurus stealing, damaging and destroying weapons, armor and vehicles in deliberate and calculated acts of sabotage before it returns to attack and slaughter an entire party. The Devilsaurus is known to knock out a generator at night, cast-

ing its intended victims into darkness to create fear and to hamper their ability to see and fight. It is also known to target bridges, tear down camouflage and hunter blinds, eliminate communications and sensor systems, destroy a tire or tread to cripple a vehicle, and take out a weapon turret or gun arm, to completely destroying a vehicle and chasing down the people later. Depending on the people it has targeted and their possession and tech level, the beast may slaughter or chase away riding animals, target leaders and weak points in the defenses, even kidnap people's loved ones, and similar tactics.

Many a Devilsaurus has used captured technology, magic items, and other objects it recognizes as having value to people, as bait to lure people into its clutches. Likewise, the horrid beast may take people and hold them captive, including women and children, as bait to draw people out of hiding and force rescuers and heroes to come to it to rescue them. Coming to a Devilsaurus is always a dangerous proposition, because it will be ready and waiting. Moreover, the wicked and cunning monster is almost certain to have 1D4 other Devilsaurus hiding and waiting at ambush locations. Not only that, but the monsters will have an exit strategy. If the ambush and subsequent battle does not go their way, the monsters will have more than one escape route planned. A lone monster, pair or a family pack (two adults and some juveniles or babies) may also use one or more natural traps waiting for the would-be rescuers. This includes things like quicksand,

a bog, loose earth that is likely to cause a landslide the moment a person or a heavy power armor sets foot on it, and other dangerous terrain to keep people off balance. Other times the trap may be the presence of a dangerous animal(s) or other hostile force that rescuers must face first, before they have to face the Devilsaurus. The creatures may also have a *mate* and/or *juvenile offspring*, or a monstrous ally like a Devil Unicorn, waiting to join the battle when people arrive.

The above demonstrates the Devilsaurus grasps the concepts of ownership, the value of objects and property, family ties, love, hate, revenge, fear, and human limitations. The monster is itself driven by such emotions and uses its awareness of them to harass, hurt and kill people.

Since humans and D-Bees are such challenging and fun prey, over time, many Devilsaurus develop a preference for them. Though the creature seems to ignore Shemarrians, they regularly stalk most other people, and often target an entire adventurer group, platoon, tribe or village for consumption. Their other favorite prey is *Duckbilled Honkers* and the Honker's larger cousin, the *Canadian Duckbill*. Hunting the latter seems to have become some sort of personal challenge or vendetta for the Devilsaurus, and slaying one or two has become a right of passage for young entering the adult stage of their life.

A terror at sea, the Devilsaurus likes to board ships and boats to gobble up any live catch in the hold and/or then devour crew members on deck before jumping ship and swimming away. One of its favorite ploys is to follow a whaling or sea serpent hunting ship, wait for the crew to kill the whale or sea serpent, and then steal it from them. Another favorite tactic is to climb on deck to bat sailors and fishermen overboard into the sea with its tail, kicks and head butts, then dive into the water after them. The malicious and wicked monster also enjoys slicing up sails, knocking down masts, cutting nets and damaging rudders just to cause strife for the pitiful humans or D-Bees.

In the water, the Devilsaurus is king, and here it may play with its prey, pulling sailors under the water, letting them go to grab a few gulps of air before it pulls them back under, and repeat. Other times it vanishes under the waves only to reappear moments later with a terrifying roar just to watch the people in the water scream and scatter. It may then pick them off one by one, overturn and destroy lifeboats and rafts, and slice people with its tail or claws to watch as sharks and other predators make a meal of them. Other times Devilsaurus uses the people in the water as bait to attract sharks and other large aquatic predators, so it can feed on the animals that come to eat the people. When it's done, the beast swims away, leaving the people in the water to whatever fate may befall them.

There is little wonder why this creature is called the *Devilsaurus*. Or why people living in Dinosaur Swamp believe the beast to be an actual, archaic demon rather than just an intelligent predatory animal from another world.

Devilsaurus – Dinosaur-like Carnivore Predator

Also Known As: Devil Dinosaur, Sea Dinosaur, and the Wicked Dinosaur.

Alignment: Diabolic, always.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+9 (high animal, low human-like intelligence), M.E. 1D6+11, M.A. 1D6+5, P.S. 1D4+31 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+15, P.E. 1D6+17 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6, Spd 1D6+29 running, or 23 mph (37 km). This speed can be maintained for 30 minutes before the dinosaur needs to slow down

to a more sustainable rate of travel. 10-15 mph (16 to 24 km) at a steady trot for 10 hours before needing to rest.

It can achieve 30 mph (48 km), but only in a short burst lasting 1D6 minutes. It cannot leap.

A Devilsaurus can swim and survive underwater indefinitely. A fast, constant swimming speed is 12 mph (19.2 km/10 knots) which can be maintained for up to 12 hours before needing to slow down. A casual swimming speed up to 6 mph (9.6 km or 5.3 knots) can be maintained for 48 hours. It rests by floating in the water or on top of debris floating on the surface when it wants to sun itself or watch for ships. 20 mph (32 km/17 knots) in a burst of speed for up to one hour. Maximum depth tolerance is one mile (1.6 km), but the animal usually swims near the surface where it preys upon sea mammals, fish and ocean vessels.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 130

Horns (3 or 4) – 35 each

*Neck – 100

*Eyes, Large (4, side) – 20 each

*Eyes, Small (2, side) – 8 each

*Tongue – 40

Forearms (2) – 75 each

*Clawed Hands (2) – 30 each

Legs (2) – 140 each

Clawed Feet (2) – 80 each

Tail – 150

Main Body – 1D6x10+400

* A single asterisk indicates a small and/or difficult target to strike. It may be protected by armor plating, boney ridges, or just located in a place that is hard to target. The shooter or attacker must make a Called Shot to hit at a penalty of -4 to strike.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Devilsaurus has 2D6x10+125 S.D.C., 2D6x10+100 Hit Points, and a Natural A.R. of 13. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (140 M.D.C. = 140 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D. (i.e. 2D6 M.D. = 2D6 S.D.C.).

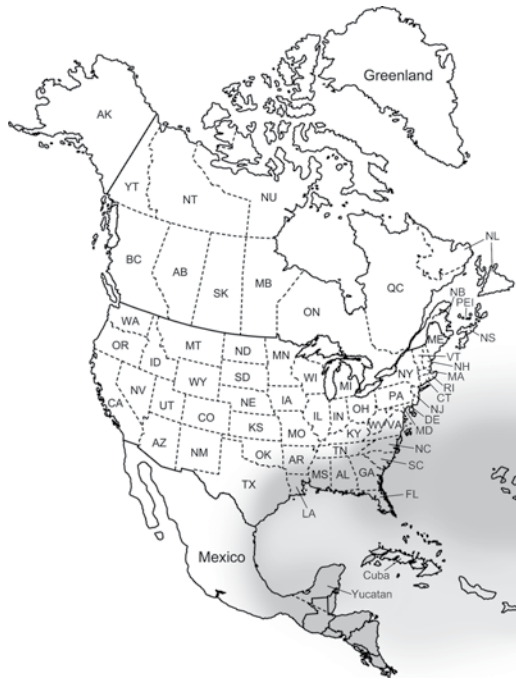
Horror Factor: 16

Size: 13-16 feet (3.9 to 4.9 m) tall, plus the prehensile tail adds 14-20 feet (4.3 to 6.1 m) to its length. The reach of its forearms is 6 feet (1.8 m), and the reach of the prehensile tongue is 6-9 feet (1.8 to 2.7 m).

Weight: 2-6 tons.

Average Life Span: Unknown. At least 40 years. Perhaps double or triple that, as some locals swear the same Devilsaurus has plagued them or a particular region for generations.

A mature female Devilsaurus gives birth to 1D6 live young once every six years. The male stays with its mate and young for three years before leaving the family to fend for itself. The female stays with the young for five years. After which she leaves them to survive on their own. Juveniles from the same family remain together as a group of siblings until they reach full physical and sexual maturity at age eight. Likewise, it is juveniles that may form a small pack consisting entirely of fellow juvenile animals. Sometime 2, 3 or 4 adults, almost always males, form a pack. Such a pack may also allow one or two juveniles to join the group. Such rare bachelor packs are extremely aggressive and vicious.



Note: Young/babies have only one third the M.D.C., three attacks per melee round, and half the speed, skills and bonuses of an adult. Juveniles have two-thirds the M.D.C., 5 attacks per melee, half the bonuses and full speed of an adult.

P.P.E.: 5D6+15 for its P.P.E. base. +10 P.P.E. at 10, 20, 40, 60 and 100 years of age.

Disposition: Cunning and clever, the brutal and murderous Devilsaurus loves nothing better than to inflict slow, painful death upon other creatures, especially humanoids and other intelligent beings. The monster is merciless in combat and enjoys the hunt almost as much as the kill.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Land Navigation 95%, Prowl 73%, Skin Animal Hides (and Humanoids) 87%, Swim 98%, Tailing 90%, Track by scent 55% (+20% to follow blood scent, +40% in water), Tailing 60%, and Track by sight 80% (+10% to track giant prey).

Natural Abilities: A cunning and stealthy hunter, and a nimble and swift runner for its size, but the Devilsaurus cannot leap or kick. It has keen day vision, Nightvision 200 feet (61 m), a good sense of hearing, and Bio-Regeneration at a rate of 1D6 M.D.C. per melee round. The monster completely regenerates a lost tongue, claw/hand, finger or toe within 48 hours, a foot, arm, horn, portion of tail or an eye in 72 hours, and its entire tail or leg in 14 days.

Ability to Speak (special): The Devilsaurus can learn to imitate human laughter and speak simple words and phrases much like a parrot, but with a rudimentary understanding of what it is saying. The voice sounds like a growl and word combinations are short. "Stop." "I kill you." "Give me Alex." "Pretty woman." "Surrender." "Give up." "You cannot run." "I find you." "Come out, come out." "Call friends now." "This will hurt." And similar. The creature's general comprehension and understanding of words is equal to that of a four year old child, but it cannot learn to spell or read or do math, although it may come to recognize certain symbols like a stop sign, a particular flag or insignia, or a symbol for danger, the CS Death's Head motif, etc.

Amphibious (special): This dinosaur is equally at home in the water where it swims like a snake or eel, up to a depth of one

mile (1.6 km), and thrives equally well in fresh or salt water. It can breathe air and has gills to breathe underwater indefinitely. However, it seems to favor spending most (60-70%) of its time on dry land or hunting in marshlands rather than in deep water. Perhaps because of the diversity of prey and the availability of people to stalk.

Prehensile Tail (special): The Devilsaurus has incredible control over its prehensile tail. A tail that ends in a wicked, sickle blade claw that the dinosaur uses like a knife to threaten and torture captives, and cut off thin slices of skin and meat from its prey. The tail is also used as a barbed whip as well as for blunt tail strikes. See Mega-Damage for using the tail (and tongue) in combat.

Prehensile Tongue (special): The tongue is unnaturally long, able to extend 6-9 feet (1.8 to 2.7 m) from the mouth, and ends with three finger-like appendages at the tip. These finger-like appendages at the end of the tongue are able to grab and hold prey, and pull its hapless victims into the toothy maw like a fish on a line. The tongue is often used to snare small prey like frogs, snakes, lizards, birds, rabbits, raccoons, and similar animals, but it is large enough and strong enough to grab a person's arm or an animal's leg. The prehensile tongue and tail contribute to the monster's prolific number of attacks.

Also see magic abilities.

Attacks per Melee: Seven, including prehensile tongue and tail, or the casting of magic spells, but each casting of a spell counts as two melee attacks.

Mega-Damage: The Devilsaurus has an arsenal of weapons with which to fight and kill prey, including its bite, claws, horns, prehensile tongue and tail. Or it can cast as many as two magic spells per melee round, but each spell casting uses up two melee attacks.

Bite, Restrained Nip – 1D6 M.D.

Bite, Full Strength – 4D6 M.D.

Claw Strike, Restrained – 4D6 S.D.C., 6D6 S.D.C. or 1D6 M.D., as it desires.

Claw Strike, Full Strength – 5D6 M.D.; cannot perform a power punch strike.

Claw Strike with Hind Leg – 6D6 M.D.

Head Butt, Restrained – 1D6 M.D.

Head Butt, Full Strength – 2D6 M.D.

Horn Strike – 5D6 M.D.

Kick – not possible.

Ram with Body (blunt) – 4D6 M.D. and counts as one melee attack. It has a 45% chance of knocking down human-sized targets up to 10 feet (3 m) tall. Victims of this blunt knockdown lose initiative and one melee attack.

Ram with Horns (head strike) – 6D6+6 M.D. but counts as two melee attacks and has a 65% chance of knocking down human-sized targets up to 10 feet (3 m) tall. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and two melee attacks.

Tail Slash, Restrained – any amount of S.D.C. or M.D. up to 1D6 M.D., as it desires in increments of 1D6.

Tail Slash, Full Strength – 3D6 M.D.

Tail Strike, Blunt and Full Strength – 4D6 M.D. with a 60% chance of knocking down human-sized targets, 40% to knock down targets up to 10 feet (3 m) tall. Victim of knockdown loses initiative and one melee attack.

Tail: Entanglement and Pin an Opponent (special) – A successful *entanglement* occurs when the monster is trying to entangle and the roll to strike is higher than the victim's roll to

parry or dodge. An entangled victim may still be able to attack with his arms and hands or via a weapon, magic or psionics, but his legs are ensnared for at least one melee round, preventing him from fleeing. To maintain the entanglement the Devilsaurus must roll higher than the victim's attempt to escape (roll to *parry*) at the beginning of the next melee round. Meanwhile, the entangled victim suffers a penalty of -4 to parry or dodge any attacks leveled at him while he is entangled and off balance. In order to maintain entanglement, the Devilsaurus must sacrifice one melee attack.

Pin and Entangle with Tail. The Devilsaurus must roll an 18 or higher (with entanglement bonus only) to try to *pin* its victim – the tail coiling around the victim like a boa constrictor and holding the arms and legs tight. However, the character under attack gets to roll a parry or dodge, and if his roll is equal or better, the character evades being entwined by the tail. **Note:** It costs the monster three melee attacks per round to keep a victim entangled and *pinned*.

A victim entangled *and pinned* by the tail cannot move or physically attack, but can still cast magic and use psionics. To forcibly escape, the victim must have a Supernatural P.S. of 40 or higher to pull himself free, or several other people with a Combined P.S. greater than a Supernatural P.S. of 40 can pull him loose. In the alternative, the tail can be targeted for attack by comrades and when it has sustained M.D.C. damage equal to half the tail's M.D.C., the monster is likely to release its captive. It must release a pinned victim to use the tail to attack other adversaries. It cannot hold prey and still fight with its tail. It must elect to either hold onto incapacitated prey at a cost of 3 melee attacks per round or let it go to strike at others. Likewise, if the Devilsaurus is rendered unconscious, put to sleep or slain, the tail muscles relax and the captive can squeeze out of the entanglement.

Crushing tail attack. Any victim entangled or pinned by the tail may also be crushed by the Devilsaurus constricting (tightening) the tail muscles. Each crushing constriction does 2D6 M.D. and counts as one melee attack.

Note that the Devilsaurus has such great control over the muscles in its tail that the thing can perform precision cutting, skinning, torture and attacks with the bladed tail tip.

Tongue Strike, not grab (special) – 6D6 S.D.C. or 1D6 M.D. in blunt damage.

Tongue Grab (special) – The prehensile tongue can be used to grab and hold, or grab and pull victims into the dinosaur's mouth. A victim must have a P.S. equal to or greater than a Supernatural P.S. of 21 to resist being pulled in or to pull free of the tongue's grasp. Or the tongue can strike opponents and prey like a whip (6D6 S.D.C. or 1D6 M.D.). **Note:** To hold the jaws open, a character must have a Supernatural P.S. of 30 or higher!

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 to Perception Rolls regarding hunting and prey, +2 on initiative, +2 to strike and parry, +3 to dodge and may do so by diving into water, +4 to entangle, +2 to disarm, +4 to roll with impact, +2 to save vs poison, possession and mind control, and +8 vs Horror Factor. There's not a lot that truly scares this aggressive beast.

Vulnerabilities: All Mega-Damage weapons and attacks inflict their normal damage.

Overconfidence and bloodlust are the Devilsaurus' two greatest weaknesses. The animal believes itself to be superior to its prey in cunning and raw strength. Which is why it likes to play with its food and use lures to draw more rescuers and

heroes to it. Though it always tries to stack the odds in its favor and uses hit and run tactics and traps, the Devilsaurus loves the challenge of combat, especially with people. More often than not, the monster is defeated and slain, in part, because it didn't know when to cut bait and give up the fight.

Magic: A Devilsaurus can perform any of the following, at will, without expending its own P.P.E. *once per day* (without limit when within a ley line triangle like the Demon Sea or on a ley line). To cast that spell again within the same 24 hour period, only then must the creature draw upon its own P.P.E. reserve (but cannot use more than half its P.P.E. base), or draw upon the ambient energy of a ley line. It can also draw enough energy to cast spells when within the Demon Sea (Bermuda Triangle). **P.P.E.:** 5D6+15 for its P.P.E. base. +10 P.P.E. at 10, 20, 40, 60 and 100 years of age.

All spells are equal to a first level practitioner of magic. Cleanse (6), Heavy Breathing (5), Lantern Light (1; sometimes used to see, other times to lure prey), See Aura (6), See the Invisible (4), Sense Magic (4), and Thunder Clap (4).

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Forests, lakes, swamps and marshlands throughout Dinosaur Swamp, the Gulf Coast (including eastern Texas) and into Southern Mexico, and the Yucatan and Central America, as well as on Atlantis and sometimes the Caribbean islands. Most numerous and aggressive in Dinosaur Swamp/Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and Louisiana. Sometimes travel farther west and north, often along a waterway during warm weather, but heads back at the first hint of autumn.

At sea, the monster is encountered in and around the Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean Sea, Sargasso Sea, Demon Sea, the waters around Florida/Dinosaur Swamp and sometimes around the Yucatan and Central America. Rarely travels into any portion of South America or Africa.

Enemies: Devil Kraken, Horned Demon-Fish, Giant Squid, and sometimes Metztla prey on them in the ocean. Likewise, other ocean predators like the Lorica Wraith, a school of Dragonfish, sharks, and other aquatic predators will attack an injured Devilsaurus at sea. Dolphin, orca, and other cetaceans fight Devilsaurus only when attacked first and to defend their mate or young.

On dry land, Splugorth Slavers, Shemarrians, and big game hunters as well as the Alien Rex, Allosaurus, T-Rex, Giant Horror Turtle, Razorbacked Rhinoceros, Rhino-Buffer, Devil Eels, Raptors, and other pack predators all of which instinctively regard the Devilsaurus as a natural enemy, and fight it whenever one is encountered. The fight lasts until the monster is driven away, killed (and eaten), or they are themselves slain or run off. Since adults are so dangerous, juvenile and young Devilsaurus under 2 years old, are a more likely target. Young/babies have only one third the M.D.C., attacks per melee round, skills and bonuses as an adult. Juveniles have two-thirds the M.D.C., 5 attacks per melee, and half the bonuses.

Humans, D-Bees, Duckbilled Honkers, and Canadian Duckbills are among the monster's most favorite prey, but the monster happily feeds upon almost any living creature that is edible. People are among the most fun to stalk, torment and toy with.

Allies: Few, other than a mate and its young. A Devilsaurus tolerates the presence of other members of its own race, but despite their intelligence, they seldom work together except as a family group (a mated male and female, 1D4+1 juveniles, 1D6 babies). So it is surprising then that the monster is known to associate with *Witchlings*, *Black Faeries*, and *Devil Unicorns*, and some-

times, wicked supernatural beings and powerful, evil mages. For some reason, the Devilsaurus likes and is willing to trust these like-minded, evil creatures to work together to capture prey, hunt and terrorize people, as well as help each other escape from captivity.

On occasion, Devilsaurus form a pack. In most cases that's 1D6+3 juveniles, seldom adults. When there is a pack of adults, there are seldom more than six and two of them are usually juveniles age 6-8 years old.

Value: None. The meat of the Devilsaurus is putrid tasting and rots within 36 hours even if prepared or refrigerated. Not even Simvan and Psi-Stalkers try to tame this beast, though the Splugorth capture them for battles in the gladiatorial arena. The dinosaur's hooked claws and teeth are sometimes used by Native Americans and inhabitants of Dinosaur Swamp to make weapons, tools and jewelry, but they are not willing to pay or trade much to get them. They would much rather trade Devilsaurus teeth and claws to outsiders for superior tools, equipment and food, but again, nobody is willing to pay more than 1D6 credits for such items. With one exception, some Necromancers are willing to pay 1D4x1,000 for claws, and 1D6x1,000 for the head.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 27: Adventures in Dinosaur Swamp™**, page 32.

Devil Serpent Tongue

By Kevin Siembieda. Inspired by the art of Nick Bradshaw.

The Devil Serpent Tongue is a bizarre creature from another world. As big and bulky as a bear, you would think it would be easy to track and hunt down, but nothing could be further from the truth.

Its appearance and behavior is a series of contradictions, almost as if it were cobbled together by a madman. Its rock hard head is massive. Easily six times larger than a human's. Its neck is half as thick as its hulking body, and the mouth is made up of three, scissor-like mandibles used to cut out chunks of meat from its prey. A pair of green, pincer-like appendages can be used to bite, but are mainly for pushing food into its maw.

The Devil Serpent Tongue usually walks on its hind legs, like a man, but may also walk on its knuckles, like a gorilla, and runs in a slow, loping manner on all fours. But it is also a superior climber that can lurk along the ceiling or a cave wall and pounce from above. The arms are disproportionately long with forearms nearly equal in length to half its height (5-6 feet/1.5 to 1.8 m), and provides the monstrosity a long reach. The tentacles that gives the creature its name, extend from its mouth, and provides an even longer and deadlier reach.

Powerful suction cup fingers are able to climb up stone and wet, hard surfaces and to cling to rock and ceilings from high places. While the suction cup fingers and hairless, green skin lead some people to mistake the Devil Serpent Tongue as some type of monstrous amphibian, the mandibles suggest to others that it is some sort of insect, but the creature is neither. At least not like any amphibian or insect we know on Earth.

Its strangest feature is the one that gives the monstrosity its name – its four mouth tentacles. Each curled up and compressed inside that tree trunk of a neck, until they are needed to attack. Then they uncurl and shoot out of the maw like angry serpents, working in concert to overcome a single prey or striking out at 2-4 opponents as if they had a mind of their own. Though the mouth

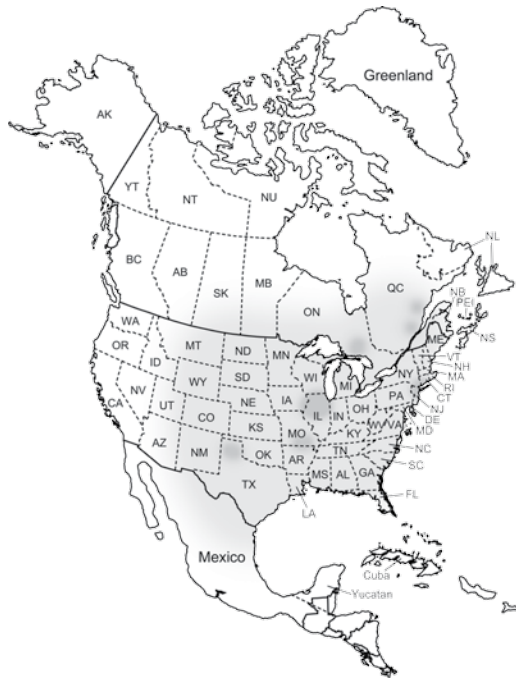
tentacles can entangle and drag prey to the monster, they are more often used to strike and stab. The tips of the mouth tentacles are able to adjust their shape from a bulbous bludgeon to a stabbing spike. Both of which are used to slay prey from a distance. Often without the Devil Serpent Tongue from having to leave the shadows.

Most people will tell you the Devil Serpent Tongue is a cave dweller, but that's not entirely true either. The Serpent Tongue likes to inhabit caves, ruins, tunnels and other dark, damp environments where its climbing capabilities and long reaching mouth tentacles give the hulking beast a distinct advantage. However, it is just as likely to make its nest or lair up in the rafters or girders of a building or the support beams of a bridge or the underbelly of a concrete overpass. Moreover, while the Devil Serpent Tongue is happy to feed on any prey that might come within striking range of its nest/lair, it does most of its hunting on the surface, outdoors or on city streets. Yes, you heard that correctly. Though you would might not want to believe it, Devil Serpent Tongues love to inhabit and hunt in bustling cities. The bigger and older the city, the better. Most of the Chi-Town 'Burbs, Old Bones, Free Quebec, Kingsdale, Whykin and other communities have a serious problem with this monster. Serious because in addition to feasting on rodents, it also feeds upon house pets and people. And people in the city, especially children, the elderly, street people and the intoxicated, are easy, large, delicious prey. They are also a serious problem because they are incredibly elusive and difficult to track and hunt down.

In a city environment, the Devil Serpent Tongue finds a dark, isolated location that people seldom frequent. This could be a dark, dank place where many people walk over or under to get to work or travel every single day, but rarely notice. This could be an access tunnel, or a dark corner up in the rafters of an attic or warehouse, or the struts and support beams on the underside of a bridge, tower, or building. Other favorable lairs include under the stairs, inside access tunnels and elevator shafts, corners and ceilings in parking structures, under the porch, down in a sewer or cave or tunnel, and inside abandoned buildings and crumbling ruins. As long as the beast's hiding place goes unnoticed and undisturbed by people, and it feels safe, the Devil Serpent Tongue is content to sleep during the day and wait, munching on whatever kill it has dragged to its lair to munch on, until the next hunt. This safe lair may be just a few feet (a meter) from where great masses of humanity walk past every day. The Devil Serpent Tongue is that bold and brazen. As long as it is not bothered by the people, it is content. Moreover, it may be a place where the monster can observe potential prey and snatch an unsuspecting passerby, especially at night and during commotions, when its attack and people going missing are not likely to be noticed. Like most predators, it is attracted to "animals" (and people) that get separated from the herd or exhibit some sort of incapacitation (injured, sick, drunk, lame, elderly, a child, etc.).

As ground animals ourselves, our lives tend to be rooted to the ground. We think of monsters lurking in caves and subterranean places and often forget to *look up above* our noses. That myopic conditioning works to the monster's advantage, because Serpent Tongues prefer to make its lair up in high places. The monster likes to go up and hide where it can lurk, like a spider, waiting for prey to walk under it or come close enough to strike. Likewise, the beast may hang from the ceilings of caves, tunnels, ruins, and trees large enough to support its weight, as well as from the ceiling and sides of buildings and the underside of tunnels and bridges. A favorite





tactic is to drop down upon unsuspecting prey from above. Or to hold on with one hand and swing down, like an ape, to grab prey with its other hand. Better yet, it loves to find a nice, dark corner or area to hide, unseen but able to see out (or down) and send out two or more of its mouth tentacles to incapacitate prey and pull it up to itself. A cunning predator, the nocturnal hunter often climbs along the sides of buildings only 20 or 30 feet (6.1 to 9.1 m) above the sidewalk. Moving slowly and sticking to the shadows of dark, poorly lit streets and alleys, it waits for the right moment to strike. Using its long reach or tongue tentacles to literally pluck victims off the street and to their doom.

Whenever possible, the Devil Serpent Tongue prefers to use its tentacles to fight and kill prey from a distance, rather than come down to the ground or out from the sheltering shadows. This means anyone who falls under attack is likely to face a barrage from its flailing tentacles rather than fight the beast face to face. Those who manage to escape or fight off the barrage may not even realize what the “snakes” or “tentacles” really were or where they came from. Never suspecting it was a Devil Serpent Tongue. The monster is not opposed to climbing down and fighting with fists and mandibles, but it is safer and more efficient to use the element of surprise to attack and kill prey via its tongue tentacles than open itself up to attack.

The creature is a nocturnal hunter, but may come out during the day and certainly takes advantage of any prey that may come its way or enter its lair. Devil Serpent Tongues are generally solitary hunters, though a mated pair may hunt together. Likewise, a female that is still caring for her 1D4 young will take them on hunts to teach them how to be efficient stalkers. These young (half the size, M.D.C., and number of attacks of an adult) follow mother’s cue, and will fight to protect her, just as she will fight to protect them.

In many cities, the Devil Serpent Tongue has one more thing going for it, a *cover-up*. Most authorities and civil leaders want their citizens and visitors to feel safe, so they try to never mention the monsters and cover-up when people go missing. They blame bandits, D-Bees, practitioners of magic, or any number of other candidates, rather than identify the true culprit as a Serpent Tongue. This kind of cover-up is so ubiquitous and effective that

the average citizen has never heard of nor seen pictures of this monster. And because the creature is so big, and seems impossible to hide for long, they believe it when the authorities claim to have quickly tracked down and “exterminated” the monster. Of course they have! How could something that big hide for long. Right?

Most people living in the Chi-Town ‘Burbs and most cities have no idea this danger exists. In fact, though they deny it, rumors in certain circles have it that the Serpent Tongues have successfully infiltrated the walls of Chi-Town itself. Surviving on the lower levels and in the labyrinth of service tunnels. Feeding on rodents and people alike, and somehow managing to escape the Dog Boys that hunt them. (See *Natural Abilities* for insight on how that is possible.) If a rat infestation in your neighborhood suddenly seems to go away, odds are you have a Devil Serpent Tongue in the area. If pets and homeless people start to go missing, it’s almost a certainty. Pray that it is only one or two of the monsters.

Devil Serpent Tongue – Carnivorous Predator

Also Known As: The Cave Lurker and simply as the Serpent Tongue.

Alignment: As a predator and waylaying killer, it is considered to be Diabolic or Miscreant.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+7 (high animal predator intelligence), M.E. 1D6+10, M.A. 1D6, P.S. 1D6+20 (Supernatural), P.P. 2D6+10, P.E. 1D6+15 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D4, Spd 1D6+13 running and climbing, that’s 10 mph (16 km) and can be maintained for up to four hours. 15 mph (24 km) in a short burst lasting one minute. 5 mph (8 km) trotting for up to seven hours. 1-3 mph (1.6 to 4.8 km) walking.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 1D6x10+100

Neck (thick) – 1D4x10+80

*Mouth Tentacles (4) – 1D6+30 each

Arms (2, long) – 1D6+46 each

*Hands (2, large) – 1D6+24 each

Legs & Feet (2) – 1D6+60 each

Main Body – 1D6x10+150

* Items marked with an asterisk are difficult to strike, so the attacker must make a “Called Shot” and even then is -4 to strike.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Devil Serpent Tongue has a main body of 2D4x10+20 S.D.C., 1D6x10+70 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 10. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (1D6x10+100 M.D.C. = 1D6x10+100 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D. (i.e. 2D6 M.D. = 2D6 S.D.C.).

Horror Factor: 15

Size: 10-12 feet (3 to 3.7 m) tall in a hunched over stance. 4-5 feet (1.2 to 1.5 m) wide at the shoulders.

Weight: 700-1,000 pounds (315 to 450 kg).

Average Life Span: Unknown, believed to be 30-50 years. Mates every two or three years. Males stay with the female and young for one or two years before leaving the child-rearing exclusively to the female. Young are half the size and possess half the number of melee attacks and M.D.C. of a mature adult. They leave their mother’s side when they reach full maturity and full strength in 3-4 years.

P.P.E.: 1D4x10

Disposition: Quiet and stealthy, this predator is a lurker that watches and waits like a spider, attacking when opportunity presents itself and when it can no longer stave off its hunger pangs. This makes the Serpent Tongue a methodical, patient and somewhat lazy hunter. If the prey has too much fight in it or quickly hurts the monster (losing two tentacles or having its main body reduced by 60%), it flees back into the shadows or climbs up and away until it is out of sight.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 98%/98% (-10% on slimy surfaces), Detect Ambush 70%, Land Navigation 90% (+8% to find its lair), Prowl 65% (+10% at night and in its lair and immediate home territory, knowing all the hiding places and dark corners), Swimming 70%, and Tailing 70%.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision and infrared vision 3,000 feet (914 m), adequate daytime vision (1,000 feet/305 m), good sense of smell, Track by smell 40% (+20% to follow blood scent, +30% to track the scent of its mate and young, or to track a female in heat during mating season). Hisses and clicks to communicate with its own kind. Bellows only when it loses one of its tentacles or is near death. Can hold breath for one minute per P.E. attribute point. Favors dark, damp, and cool or humid locations and can Swim 70%. It does not mind shallow water, but dislikes deep and fast moving water. Bio-Regenerates lost limbs, fingers, toes, mouth tentacles, and mandibles within 1D6 days; severed forearms and lower legs within 2D6 days. Cannot regenerate an entire limb or the eyes. Recovers from damage at a rate of 3D6 M.D.C. per 24 hours, but 1D6x10 M.D.C. per 24 hours at ley lines and the creature knows this.

Can go for as long as four weeks without eating if necessary, but likes to hunt daily when feeding on small prey like rats and pigeons, every day or two when feeding on larger prey like cats and dogs. Eats most land animals from frogs, snakes, birds and rodents to cats, dogs and people. In fact, people are seen as easy prey and a preferred, big meal. A Serpent Tongue does not have to eat for five days after feeding on an adult human. Devouring virtually every part, bones and all. Eats live food and carrion.

Disguise Scent (special): The creature has glands that enable it to disguise its own scent by mimicking the scent of the animal or people that dominate the area or once lived in its lair/nest, like a bear, wolverine, wolf, Burrower Bruin, or humans or a particular D-Bee, to *throw off scent trackers* like hunting dogs, Dog Boys, and certain D-Bees and wild animals. This can also be used as a hunting tactic. For example, a bear returning to its den is not expecting to be attacked by a Devil Serpent Tongue, because it only smells its own scent! An easy ambush for this terrible monster.

Maw and Triple Mandibles (special): Three sets of mandibles for slicing through M.D.C. flesh and bone, biting off limbs, and swallowing them in large chunks. Eats the flesh and bones of its prey, including the skull. Also see Mega-Damage, below.

Mouth Tentacles (special): Actually located under the mouth, but the tentacles appear to be coming out of the maw and create the illusion that they are the beast's *tongues*. The tentacles coil and compress inside channels in the monster's long, thick neck, and can extend for a staggering 24 feet (7.3 m). They are completely prehensile and can entangle prey to be drawn to the deadly mandibles. However, more often than not, they are used like hammering bludgeons or dagger-tipped tentacles to pound, slash and stab prey. Small prey like rats, birds, cats and dogs can be impaled and killed with a single blow and

brought back to the mouth to be gobbled up in one or two bites; sometimes while still alive.

The ends of the mouth tentacles can morph and change shape to become a thick bludgeon, like a blackjack or club capable of striking with the full strength of a punch, or formed into a pointed spike to stab, slash and impale prey. The latter is especially useful in spearing and retrieving small and medium prey. However, they are just as deadly against large prey, including armor-clad humans and D-Bees. The Devil Serpent Tongue has no fear of humans, though it is smart enough to understand that it should avoid large groups of them and that armored humans are stronger and fiercer prey than unarmored people. Still, with eight attacks per melee round and slashing and pounding mouth tentacles that can strike from 24 feet (7.3 m) away, this is a deadly creature even for seasoned adventurers and soldiers. Moreover, when speared or entangled by two tentacles, even large and heavy humans and D-Bees can be pulled toward its slobbering maw and powerful mandibles.

As noted earlier, the Devil Serpent Tongue likes to remain hidden in a tunnel, behind a fence or wall, or in the shadows up high on the ceiling or the side of a wall, or in the rafters or a tree, and use its tentacles to do all or most of the fighting. This clever tactic keeps the rest of its body out of harm's way in melee combat as well as gives the creature the opportunity for an easy retreat, when necessary. If the tentacles are fighting through holes in a wall or from a hole or tunnel or sewer in the ground, the victim(s) may not even know what they are fighting, because all they see are these long snake-like things attacking them.

See Mega-Damage for complete combat and damage capabilities.

Suction Cups on Fingers and Prehensile Toes (special): Provide superior climbing capabilities and the creature can hang upside down or on the side of a wall or ceiling indefinitely even while sleeping. Can scale most surfaces, including metal, plastic, glass and slick and slimy surfaces.

Attack per Melee: Eight attacks per melee round, plus one when defending a mate or young.

Mega-Damage: As per bite, tentacle strike or as per Supernatural P.S. which is typically P.S. 23.

Bite/Nip, Restrained – 1D6 M.D.

Bite, Full Strength – 3D6+3 M.D.

Tentacle Strike, Restrained (Blunt) – 1D4x10 S.D.C.

Tentacle Strike, Full Strength (Blunt) – 1D6 M.D.

Slashing/Stabbing Tentacle Strike – 2D6 M.D.

Simultaneous Dual Strike by 2 Tentacles – 4D6 M.D.; cannot perform a simultaneous strike with more than two.

Punch, Restrained – 1D6x10 S.D.C.

Punch, Full Strength – 2D6 M.D.

Head Butt – 1D6 M.D.

Body Block – 2D6 M.D.

Pouncing/Drop Down Attack from Above – 2D6 M.D. and counts as one attack. It is likely (01-75% chance) that opponents up to 12 feet (3.7 m) tall are knocked off their feet. Victims that are knocked down lose initiative and one melee attack, AND there is a 01-40% chance the monster has its victim *pinned* and unable to physically move/fight. (Time for psionics or magic!) That means the Serpent Tongue is able to continue its attack on the pinned prey with bites and/or tentacles. Cannot kick or stomp with legs.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 on Perception Rolls involving prey, +3 on initiative, +3 to strike, +2 to parry and disarm, +1 to dodge, +4 to roll with impact, impervious to disease, resistant to cold (half damage), and +2 to save vs Horror Factor.

The Four Tongue Tentacles (each): +3 on initiative, +3 to strike and entangle, and +4 to auto-dodge.

Vulnerabilities: Slow. Lazy. Overconfident. All of which can get the creature into trouble.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Dark, dank places high or low to make a lair just about anywhere across North America. Prefers cities and 'Burbs with plenty of places to hide, and those that develop a taste for humanoids seek out such environments. But tend to avoid living in small towns and villages, though they may raid them and farms from their hiding place in the nearby wilderness. Rather lazy hunters, Serpent Tongues dislike having to travel more than eight miles (12.8 km) in search of prey. When prey becomes scarce, the monster moves on to find a more plentiful hunting ground.

In the wilderness the creature is found where there are caves, tunnel networks (natural or man-made), ruins of pre-Rifts cities, fallen trees, large animal burrows, and low mountains where prey are plentiful. There are too few animals at higher elevations.

Enemies: They have no enemies, per se, but consider most animals and humanoids to be prey.

Allies: None, really, other than a mate or a mate and 1D4 young for until they reach maturity in 3-4 years. Cannot be controlled and commanded by Simvan Monster Riders, but can be summoned and used by Shifters.

Value: None, except perhaps in the gladiatorial arena. As monsters for the arena, they fetch 2,000-8,000 credits. They are not edible and their soft, squishy hide is not suitable for textiles. The mouth tentacles decay within 24 hours. The mandibles, however, are sometimes used as axe blades, hoes and digging implements.

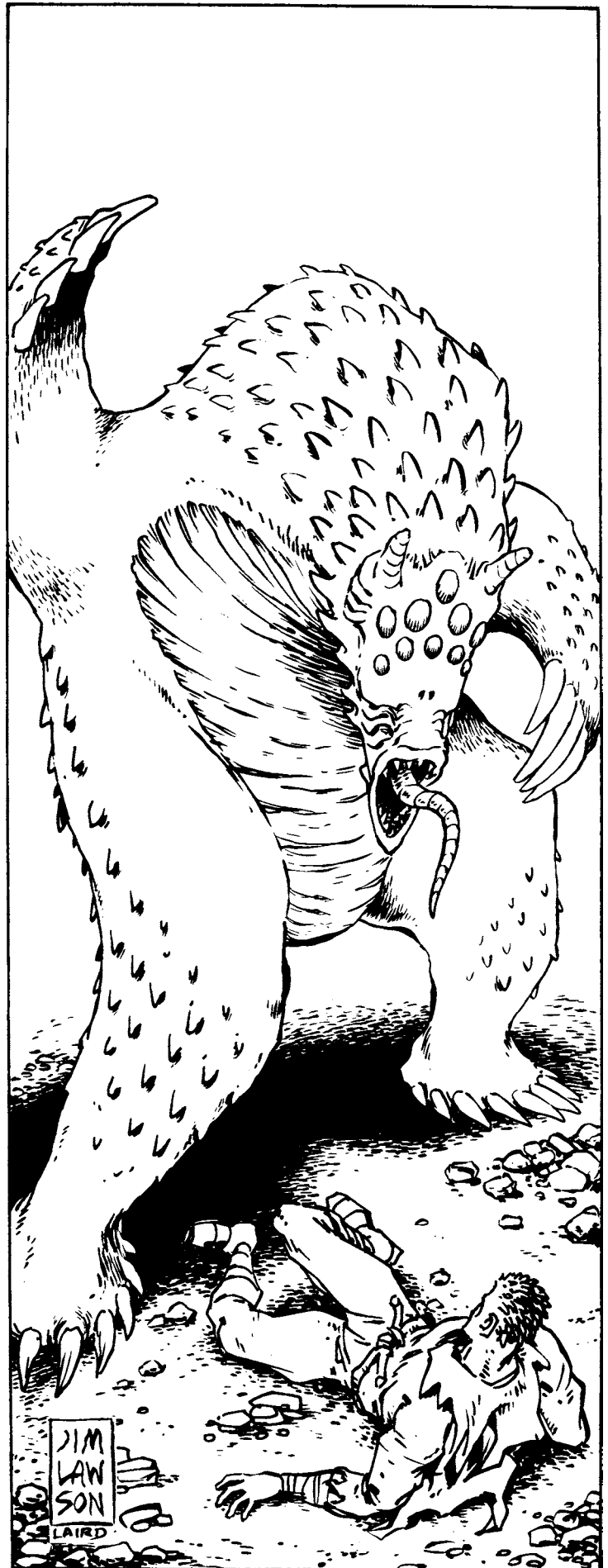
Note: This is a new creature appearing for the very first time. Inspired by the art of Nicholas Bradshaw.

Devil Sloth

By Kevin Siembieda

The Devil Sloth is an ugly, hulking brute that has a massive, thick, sloth- or bear-like body with short arms that end in claws the size of pickaxe blades. The claws are meant for digging and shoveling, but they are nonetheless deadly when the irritable Mega-Damage animal is on the attack. The beast's body is covered in a short brown, tan, or gray fur, with a bare, pink or cream colored underbelly. Protruding from the body are hundreds of dull, V-shaped spines that point down, making it difficult to climb or wrestle with the monstrosity. The spines start at the back of the head and run down the neck, along the back and shoulders and on its legs.

It gets its name from the pair of "devil" horns on the top of its head and its hideous visage. The head and face are the most ugly and demonic-looking aspect of this animal. The top of the head is crowned with a pair of widely spaced horns. What you would consider the forehead is dotted with 10-12 oval nodules that many



people assume are the monster's eyes, but they are just additional armor protection against attacks leveled at the head. The nose is two small slits in the center of its face just before the snout. The three ridges under the cheek bone and along the upper part of the snout are the Devil Sloth's six, tiny eyes; three on each side. The mouth ends in a weird muzzle filled with sharp, jagged teeth and an armored, snaking tongue. The overall impression is you are looking into the face of the devil or something monstrous and unholy.

The shovel-like claws are for digging through mounds of garbage and digging through deep snow, ice and dirt to get at the carcasses of dead animals, but they make excellent weapons when combat is necessary. As a scavenger and carrion eater, the massive creature only fights to defend itself, protect its food, or make an escape from an opponent with superior power and/or numbers. Unafraid of people, Devil Sloths have learned that places of human habitation are treasure troves of food. As a result, the monstrosity is a common sight rummaging through the alleys of the 'Burbs, towns and cities where it joyfully feeds on garbage and waste, dead bodies, worms, slugs, insects, and small animals like snails, toads, snakes, mice, rats, other rodents, house cats and small dogs. The behemoth may also devour people that appear to be sick, injured, dying or helpless. The animal is especially attracted to slaughterhouses and butcher shops, where it happily feasts on scraps and blood. Some slaughterhouses deliberately place out scraps for these scavengers or purchase domesticated Devil Sloths to dispose of their waste. **Note:** Cyber-Snatchers, assassins and other cutthroats are known to feed the remains of those they kill to a hungry Devil Sloth to get rid of the bodies of their victims or to make someone vanish without a trace. The hulking beasts are happy to oblige.

Devil Sloths are docile beasts but can be cranky and irritable when disturbed, especially when eating or sleeping. Since they cannot see well at a distance and tend to become oblivious to things happening around them when eating like gluttonous pigs, the creatures are easily startled. The problem is, when startled, threatened, cornered, hurt, defending a mate or young, or protecting its food, the Devil Sloth stands on its hind legs like a bear, only twice as big, and bellows a horrible shriek. This is the animal's warning to interlopers to leave or die. Back off fast and you might survive to tell about this encounter. Delay making your retreat, stand your ground or make a sudden or threatening motion, and the monster strikes with its heavy, slashing claws. For an animal as big and slow as a Devil Sloth, it is wickedly fast in combat. Lumbering forward like a heavyweight boxer and smashing its opponents with a devastating barrage of claw strikes. (An astonishing 7 attacks per melee round!) Its size and mass, and perhaps its near-sightedness, has led it to challenge squads of Coalition soldiers, Dog Boys, Combat Cyborgs, power armor and even robot vehicles before lumbering off when it realizes the thing is not edible or is not a threat after all, or has been rendered unconscious.

If a Devil Sloth kills its attacker or whatever startled it, and it is organic, the monster probably stops to eat him. Otherwise, it fights humanoids and predators only to frighten and chase them away, or until it can lumber away itself. In fact, when you move very slowly, don't make any sudden movement or loud noise, and do not make eye contact, you can slowly walk past the beast as close as five feet (1.5 m) without the Devil Sloth taking the slightest action against you. Every Wilderness Scout, City Rat and Cyber-Snatcher in the 'Burbs knows this, and they sometimes use the animal to elude authorities and enemies by going down a back alley or past a business where Devil Sloths are known to frequent, and slowly,

softly tiptoe past the beast without a problem. However, when pursuers, especially the police, CS military forces, mercenaries and out-of-towners come shouting, shooting and charging around the corner, perhaps sirens or weapons blazing, the docile Devil Sloth, minding its own business, turns into a ferocious wall of terror and slashing claws. Giving the clever street urchin or criminal the opportunity to make good an easy escape while their pursuers must contend with or flee from the bellowing, charging Devil Sloth. The only other time a Devil Sloth might attack a humanoid is when it is starving or the person is obviously weak, seriously injured or dying.

Despite its prickly disposition and ugly, brutish appearance, the Devil Sloth is a surprisingly intelligent animal that can be at least partially domesticated and trained like a dog. However, even trained animals are still jumpy and lash out when they are startled or feel threatened. Simvan monster riders love them as massive watchdogs and riding animals.

As one might expect, the creatures are found in urban environments at garbage dumps, behind Body-Chop-Shops, slaughterhouses, butcher shops, restaurants and taverns, gladiatorial arenas, and the darkest corners of the city. Illegal and legal fight clubs and gladiatorial arenas sometimes keep one to several Devil Sloths around to devour the remains of the animals and combatants who lose a limb or their life in the arena. The beast is also a frequent "monster" combatant in the arena because its appearance, screeching and bellowing are very dramatic and make it seem even more dangerous than it is. Always a crowd pleaser.

Devil Sloth – Omnivore Predator and Scavenger

Also Known As: The Spiny Bear and Corpse Eater.

Alignments: Considered Anarchist or Miscreant.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+5 (high animal intelligence), M.A. 1D6, M.E. 1D6, P.S. 1D6+30 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+12, P.E. 2D6+18 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6, Spd 1D4+15 running, or 12 mph (19.2 km). The Devil Sloth is a lumbering beast that can only maintain this speed for 20 minutes before slowing down. Trotting speed is 6 mph (9.6 km) and can be maintained for up to six hours. Walking speed is 1-3 mph (1.6 to 4.8 km) and can be sustained for up to 10 hours.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Horns (2, short, on head) – 30 each

*Head – 4D6x10+160

*Clawed Arms (2) – 140 each

Clawed Legs and Feet (2) – 220 each

Main Body – 1D6x100+200

* A single asterisk means a small and/or difficult target to strike and requires a Called Shot to hit. Even then the attacker is -3 to strike. Destroying one leg or arm reduces speed by 30% and requires the monster to run on all fours. Destroying two legs reduces speed by 50% and requires the hideous beast to walk and run using its arms. Lost limbs regenerate! See Natural Abilities.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Devil Sloth has a main body of 1D4x100 S.D.C., 4D6x10+100 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 15. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (140 M.D.C. = 140 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D., so a bite that does 3D6 M.D. on Rifts Earth does 3D6 S.D.C. damage on S.D.C. worlds.

Horror Factor: 15



Size: Adult 13-16 feet tall (3.9 to 4.9 m) standing erect. Juvenile animals 9-10 feet (2.7 to 3 m).

Weight: One to two tons!

Average Life Span: 2D6+20 years in the wild, domesticated Devil Sloths have been reported to live up to 40 years when well cared for. Females are 10-20% larger than males and give birth to two young after a 13 month pregnancy. Young are the size of a cocker spaniel but are half the size of Dad after one year.

The Juveniles reach full adult size in three years and that's when they leave their mother's side to go off on their own. The animal reaches sexual maturity in four years. Females can give birth as often as every three years and most (80%) mate for life.

The male always stays with his mate and young for the first year after cubs are born, but afterward has a habit of wandering off to explore and scavenge. Sometimes wandering 100 miles (160 km) away and may be gone for 1D6+1 weeks at a time, but always seems to find its way back to its mate. Devil Sloths may be encountered as a lone individual, a mated pair, a pair of hunting pals (usually two males or two females), a family clan (one male, one female, one or two cubs, one or two juveniles) or a small pack of 1D4+4 and probably all related.

P.P.E.: 6D6+10

Disposition: Generally, docile and peaceful but have prickly personalities. Easily startled and provoked to attack, especially when cornered or protecting its mate or young. Devil Sloths spend most of their time searching for food. They are blindly aggressive when they feel threatened in any way.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 60%/50%, Dowsing 60%, Land Navigation 70%, Swimming 50% (only a fair swimmer), and Tracking 60% (+30% to track decaying food/garbage, corpses and blood scent up to five miles/8 km away or under 20 feet/6.1 m of dirt or snow, and to locate its mate).

Natural Abilities: The nodules on the head were once thought to be sensory clusters, but six tiny eyes in the folds along the base of the snout are how it sees. Ironically, though the beast is able to see the invisible and see all spectrums of light, it is somewhat nearsighted and anything more than 300 feet (91.4 m) away is a blurry shape; Nightvision 300 feet (91.4 m). Keen hearing, impervious to wasp and most insect venoms, and Bio-Regenerates

at a rate of 6D6 M.D.C. every 24 hours and can completely regrow a lost horn, claw, eyes and tongue within 1D4+1 weeks. The shovel-like claws are for digging through mounds of garbage, smashing through wasp nests and beehives. It digs to uncover food like buried garbage, bodies in shallow graves, old bones and carrion, not for tunneling. It also digs shallow holes to lay in on hot summer days or to dig under fences and walls to get to food.

Sense Supernatural Evil (special): The lummoX can also sense the supernatural, identical to Dog Boys and, like them, hates evil supernatural beings and either flees from them or attacks them, often fighting to the death.

Track the Dead and Dying (special): Most Devil Sloths hunt a little, eating small animals and scavenging a lot. They travel alone or in mated pairs, or in small groups of 3-5 members. As specialists in scavenging, they can smell carrion/corpses up to five miles (8 km) away or buried as deep as 20 feet (6.1 m) under snow or dirt. Battlefields strewn with the dead are a paradise for these beasts, and they are known to dig up the freshly buried (within the last eight weeks) in graveyards. They also eat rotting meat, food, garbage and waste, as well as small insects and worms. The latter includes Ripper Fruit Wasps and Dragon Wasps as well as ordinary wasps, bees and their honey and other bugs. They do not hunt large bugs nor Xitixix, insectoids or arachnoids.

Attacks per Melee: Seven.

Mega-Damage: The Devil Sloth fights mainly to protect itself and its food. When startled, it automatically lashes out at the source of what surprised it.

Bite, Restrained/Nip – 4D6 S.D.C.

Bite – 1D6 M.D.

Swat (blunt attack) – 4D6 M.D.

Claw Strike, Restrained – 1D6 M.D.

Claw Strike, Full Strength – 6D6 M.D.

Claw Strike, Power Punch – 1D6x10+8 M.D., but counts as two attacks.

Body Block/Body Bump – 1D4 M.D.

Body Ram – 4D6 M.D., but counts as two attacks, and has an 80% chance of knocking down opponents up to 15 feet (4.6 m) tall and weighing as much as two tons. Victims of knock-down lose initiative and two melee attacks. **Note:** Pretending to be knocked out by a Devil Sloth's ram or any onslaught has a 70% chance of getting the creature to stop its attack and move away.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls involving food of any kind, finding the dead/carrion, and sensing supernatural danger, +1 to strike, +2 to parry and disarm, +2 to pull punch and roll with impact, +5 to save vs most disease, poison and toxins, impervious to most insect venom (including wasps and bees), and +6 to save vs Horror Factor.

Vulnerabilities: Vulnerable to all M.D. weapons and attacks, and is only a fair swimmer and may struggle and drown in deep water and strong currents. Its nearsightedness means it may not recognize a threat until it gets within 300 feet (91.4 m). When eating, the Devil Sloth loses sight of what's happening around it and tends not to care what's going on as long as its dining is not being disturbed. Both of these characteristics make the domesticated animal not a very good watchdog or hunter, but it is an excellent cadaver-sniffing animal.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: The creature can be found across what were the Old Canadian and American Empires into Northern Mexico. However, Devil Sloths prefer cool and cold climates and forest, and avoid hot, arid and tropical regions, as well as deserts. They are about as common as bears once were in pre-Rifts North America, and are fond of slipping into urban environments such as the 'Burbs around Chi-Town, Iron Heart, Free Quebec, and cities like Lazlo, Tolkeen, Kingsdale, El Paso, and Ciudad Juarez. Devil Sloths are most common in the forests of the Midwestern and Northern United States and throughout Canada as far as Alaska. According to legend, the Devil Sloth came from the St. Louis Rift before the CS rose to prominence at the end of the 200 Years Dark Age and before the CS began to contain that Rift.

Enemies: None per se, as only humanoids, some M.D.C. pack hunters and large predators dare to attack such a large and imposing animal as the Devil Sloth. The Coalition consider them a "dangerous pest" on one hand, but also a useful means of controlling vermin (both animal and D-Bees) in the 'Burbs. While there has been talk of an extermination campaign to wipe them out in the 'Burbs and around cities and military bases and camps, Devil Sloths have their uses and are the least of the Coalition's problems.

Devil Sloths hunt small to medium-sized animals if they come across them – wasps, bees, worms, all kinds of bugs, as well as mice, rats, rodents of all kinds, small birds, frogs, toads, snakes, lizards, rabbits, cats, small dogs, foxes, and other small or young livestock such as sheep, as well as pine cones, honey and sweets – but their main food is carrion, rotting meat, garbage, rotting fruit and vegetables. Wasps, hornets and bees of all kinds and sizes are among the Devil Sloth's favorite foods. Its long, armored tongue is ideal for penetrating ground nests and reaching hanging tree nests within its 10-16 foot (3-4.9 m) reach plus another foot or two for its tongue. The Devil Sloth and its armored tongue are impervious to the insects' stings and venom. Its shovel claws and M.D.C. hide well suited to digging them up and chopping through the nests of larger species such as the notorious Dragon Wasp and Ripper Fruit Wasp.

The Devil Sloth's instinct to hunt wasps makes them wary of Xiticix, but instead of hunting them, the animal avoids the Xiticix Hiveland as well as other insect-based D-Bees and giant bugs.

Allies: Only their own kind and may be encountered as solitary hunters, mated pairs, sibling pairs and small family clans of 1D4+4 animals. Solitary by nature, Devil Sloths have no natural allies. The Simvan love to use them as guard beasts that can also double as walking garbage disposals. Wild Psi-Stalkers and Native Americans use the hulking animals in the same way and as guardians/watchdogs against supernatural monsters.

Value: Minimal. A wild, captured Devil Sloth can be sold for 1D6x1,000 credits to arenas looking for an exciting/noisy attraction.

A domesticated Devil Sloth trained to be a cadaver tracker or guard animal or walking garbage disposal usually sells for 1D4x1,000 credits. However, as noted previously, they make terrible guard animals. For one, they are nearsighted. Two, they are easily lured away and distracted by food. Three, they might accidentally hurt someone when startled, and lastly, they may accidentally eat other people's food and pets. For similar reasons, they make poor attack animals. And not being a predator,

the beast is usually satisfied with scaring away intruders, not capturing or slaying them.

The Devil Sloth's meat is actually quite tasty, resembling a somewhat gamy beef, but most people refuse to eat it because the animal eats rodents, bugs and dead things, including people. Tribal people use the claws for necklaces and tools, including pickaxes (2D4 S.D.C.) and war clubs (1D6 S.D.C.) or hand carved bone knives (1D4 S.D.C.).

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 11: Coalition War Campaign™**, page 211, and inspired by the artistry of Jim Lawson.

Devil Unicorn

By Kevin Siembieda

The Devil Unicorn is a hideous and terrifying supernatural monster from the Rifts. It walks on all fours, the body is thick with muscles and the top of its ugly head, neck, spine, and long, thick tail are protected by thick ridges of bone. The creature's tough skin is gray with hues of green, its underbelly a tan or khaki color for males and a creamy pastel yellow or yellowish white for females. Its face is a pale, whitish-gray with touches of pink around its mouth and yellow eyes. The bone ridges along its spine are a medium brown, sometimes with hues of raw sienna or orange, while the horn is a light, pastel tan color, like aged bone.

The abomination gets its name from the long, single horn, demonic appearance and hellish laugh. Devil Unicorns have a deep, rasping and maniacal laugh that is often heard in the distance as the creature stalks its prey, as well as during combat (at least as long as it thinks it is winning the battle), as well as when it is happily engaged in torturing captives. The horn is used to butt and stab, and is especially lethal against large prey that, if not careful, can find themselves impaled, ripped open and gutted. The monster uses the horn to tear at the inner leg, belly and groin of large opponents to cripple and slow them down before moving in for the kill. However, it is the monster's wicked claws and slashing tail that people have to worry about.

Most people consider the Devil Unicorn to be an actual demon of some kind, from the pits of hell. However, studies have proven it to be a vicious and powerful Mega-Damage animal. Mortal, not supernatural, nor a creature of magic. What makes this particular animal so dangerous is that it is a cunning predator possessing near human intelligence and a sadistic nature. The cruel, sadistic monstrosity can understand a number of languages and is actually able to speak. Usually broken American and/or Spanish, but other languages as well. When it speaks it does so in a low guttural voice that resembles a rasping whisper, accompanied by husky, hoarse growls, heavy breathing and its trademark demonic cackle. Despite its intelligence, the beast is driven by instinct and a lust to hunt and kill.

As a predator, it is incredibly cunning, tricky and kills for pleasure as well as for food. This is much more than cat-and-mouse games. The Devil Unicorn is known to enjoy taunting, maiming and crippling its prey before it slays it, and often takes captives, holding 1-6 prey in its lairs where the fiend engages in mental and physical torture. Devil Unicorns love to abduct, torture and torment people, and slaughter livestock and pets to terrorize an entire town or region for months or years.

Mental torture includes intimidation, taunts, threats, stalking, pretense to torture or kill, pretending to let a captive escape only



to hunt it down and return the escapee to captivity. The creatures also like to torture or kill a friend or loved one within a group of people right before the eyes of their loved ones. Likewise, it enjoys eating a captive alive and in front of other prisoners to horrifying effect, and engage in similar horrendous acts of cruelty. Physical torture includes being nicked, cut, stabbed and lacerated by its mandibles and claws, or being bitten, chewed upon, mauled, and battered. Victims who have been rescued before the monster had finished with them are covered in bruises and lacerations, have broken bones, missing fingers or toes, or ears, and bear physical and emotional scars that will last their lifetime.

Black-hearted in the extreme, these devilish beasts enjoy the deliberate slaughter of animals, from pets to livestock, without taking a bite to eat, and often display them out in the open with their intestines and internal organs pulled out or missing. They also enjoy kidnaping women and children and displaying their remains. The wicked monster knows such deplorable actions terrorizes and demoralizes the surrounding community and drives the victim's loved ones and neighbors into despair. Often the males or local protectors are driven into a reckless frenzy to hunt down their killer. The heat of their emotions making them reckless and giving the Devil Unicorn the advantage. All of this provides the Devil Unicorn with more fun and games. When it knows people are coming to hunt it down, it can set traps and ambushes, turning the hunters into the hunted, and causing emotional people to fall victim to the methodical and deliberate monster waiting for them. And this

monster is smart enough to divide and conquer. Separating those hunting it and picking them off one or two at a time.

Devil Unicorns actually seem to seek out and murder preachers, local protectors and traveling heroes like Cyber-Knights and adventurers. It delights in the murder of heroes and preachers, again, leaving them gutted and on display for all to see, spread-eagle on the ground or impaled on a tree or fence, or hung from a pole, tree or the rafters. Priests and heroes of renown may be laid out at the doorstep of a church or town hall, or only their head left at the entrance to town. For the Devil Unicorn this is all a twisted game in which it is demonstrating that it is superior to those who hunt it.

One reason rumors persist that the creature is a true devil or demon is because it often targets shrines, churches, hospitals, shelters, and holy places as well as priests, shamans, druids and the people who visit, work or worship at such places. Why do this if the monster is not a demon lashing out at symbols of love and goodness? The answer is quite simple, the malicious and cruel Devil Unicorn recognizes such places are special and important to people, even sacred, so it targets them knowing that whatever evil it may unleash there will have a greater impact on the inhabitants. Likewise, the monster likes to prowl the streets and alleys of towns and cities, and enter buildings and homes to steal or destroy the objects, possessions, and things people hold dear. This is done to hurt and demoralize the residents, because such actions are another way to taunt and spook the community, and draw out heroes. Such actions declare to the monster's victims, "I was here and look what

I did. Just think what I can do to you any time I want to hurt you. I am in control. I am power. And you cannot stop me.”

That summarizes the Devil Unicorn in a nutshell, a psychopathic tormentor and killer not unlike human serial killers. A beast that thrives on the fear and pain it causes. That’s what gives it joy.

It is fortunate then that Devil Unicorns usually live and hunt alone or in small groups of 2-4, probably a family clan. They do not much like their own kind, and see each other as rivals. As a result, the animals frequently clash and fight among themselves, or try to outdo each other. The people who suffer most are those living in a community targeted in such rivalries. The competition between the monsters is often to see which one of them can do the most damage to those communities. Resulting in greater carnage and tremendous loss of life.

When hungry, Devil Unicorns are predators that hunt and feed upon their victims, both animals and people. When there are no juicy humans or D-Bees to torment and hunt, the creature preys upon animals, but sentient beings are the fiend’s preferred target.

Devil Unicorn – Carnivore Predator

Also Known As: The Devil’s Hound, Swamp Devil and Widow-maker.

Alignment: Diabolic or Miscreant.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+5 (low human intelligence), M.E. 1D6+18, M.A. 1D6, P.S. 1D6+38 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+18, P.E. 1D6+24 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D4, Spd 1D6+30 running, or 24 mph (38.4 km), which can be sustained for as long as two hours, but a trotting speed of 10 mph (16 km) can be maintained for 12 hours before it needs to stop and rest. 30 mph (48 km) in a short burst lasting two minutes. Walking speed is 3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km) and can be maintained for up to 20 hours.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Horn (1) – 100

*Head – 1D4x10+100

Front Legs (2) – 140 each

Rear Legs (2) – 190 each

Tail (1) – 220

Main Body – 1D6x100+200

* A single asterisk indicates a small and/or difficult target to strike. It may be protected by armor plating, boney ridges, or just located in a place that is hard to target. The shooter or attacker must make a Called Shot to hit at a penalty of -4 to strike.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Devil Unicorn has a main body of 1D4x100 S.D.C., 4D6x10+120 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 15. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (100 M.D.C. = 100 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D. (i.e. 2D6 M.D. = 2D6 S.D.C.).

Horror Factor: 15

Size: 5 feet (1.5 m) at the shoulders, 12-14 feet (3.7 to 4.3 m) long from the point of its muzzle to its hindquarters, plus another 10-12 feet (3 to 3.7 m) for its tail.

Weight: 1.4 to 2 tons.

Average Life Span: 1D6x10+130 years. The animal reaches full maturity in 18 years. Females give birth to 1D4 live young after an 18 month pregnancy, but do not usually mate again until her last litter are five or six years old.

Young usually stay with the mother for six years before going off on their own. The males are not involved in the rearing of the young nor is there any lasting connection between the

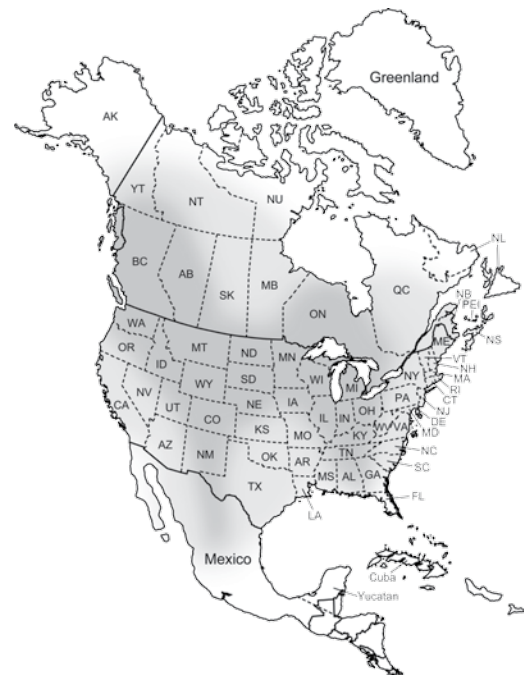
male, female and its offspring. By three years old, the juveniles are half the size of an adult (and half the M.D.C., speed, bonuses, and three attacks per melee round). The animal reaches full size by age 14, but not sexual maturity until 18. Juveniles can be recognized because they are more green than gray color with a yellow or light, creamy orange underbelly. While adults are darker and more gray. Males are larger than females.

Typically encountered as a lone individual or a pair, but sometimes in a small group of 3-5. When encountered in numbers they are usually a family clan: A mother and one or two generations of young, or a small band of juveniles, probably the offspring of the same female. 2-4 adult Devil Unicorns sometimes form temporary alliances when on the prowl hunting, especially against a large or dangerous prey, or when they seek revenge upon the same enemy. Oddly, such pairings and small groups are often all the same sex; i.e. all males or all females, and no juveniles among them. That said, sometimes an adult male will take one or two juveniles no younger than 12 years old, under its wing, provided they are subservient to him. This strange and wicked animal may also make a temporary alliance with other evil creatures such as the Devilsaurus, Field Reaper, Oborus-Slitherers, Black Faerie, Witchling, and similar evil beings, though rarely a human or D-Bee.

P.P.E.: 6D6

Disposition: A cunning and malicious predator, their intelligence allows them to understand what humanoids hold dear and how they react to violence and tragedy. It also comprehends and enjoys the wicked and cruel acts they commit. Devil Unicorns see themselves as smarter and more ruthless than their prey and like to challenge themselves against the humans they hunt and the heroes and defenders they entice to hunt them. That said, Devil Unicorns are not suicidal and are happy to leave an area when things get too hot for them. Feeling confident and happy that they have shown humanoids who is the boss.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climb 90%/80%, Detect Ambush 55%, Detect Concealment 25%, Land Navigation 80%, Prowl 60%, Tailing 75%, Tracking (People) 80% and 60% to track animals (+10% to follow a blood scent), Swim 90%. Additionally, it can



understand and speak American and 1D4+3 other languages at 6D6+50% proficiency, and knows a total of 1D4+2 additional skills! The selection of these 3-6 skills are made from *Rogue*, *Technical*, and *Wilderness Categories* only, and excludes skills that require a full understanding of technology or the use of tools to perform. Skills are at the base level and do not advance with experience or age.

Natural Abilities: Fair speed, can run without pause and without exhaustion for two hours, leap up to 30 feet (9.1 m) lengthwise and 20 feet (6 m) high, loves to swim and can hold its breath for 1D6+6 minutes, survive depths of up to 400 feet (122 m), heals at a rate of 1D6x10 per 24 hours, and regrows lost mandibles, fingers/claws, and toes in 2D4 weeks and tail within 4D4 weeks.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Mega-Damage: Depends on the amount of damage it desires to inflict with its array of natural weapons – Prehensile mandible, fingers and toes, bite, even its claw strikes – as the monster has excellent control and likes to toy with and torture prey before it decides to finally kill it. All-out combat occurs when it is fighting for its life.

Tiny Mandibles – 1D6 to 4D6 S.D.C.

Nipping Bite – 6D6 S.D.C. to 1D4 M.D.

Bite, Full Strength – 2D4 M.D.

Claw Strike, Restrained – 5D6 S.D.C. to 1D4 M.D.

Claw Strike, Full Strength – 6D6 M.D., or less in increments of 1D6.

Claw Power Strike – 1D6x10+10 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks.

Horn/Head Butt, Restrained – 1D6 M.D.

Horn/Head Butt, Full Strength – 2D6 M.D.

Horn Stab – 3D6 M.D.

Tail Slash – 1D4x10 M.D.

Pounce Attack (special): 2D4 M.D. from impact plus a 75% likelihood of humanoid prey up to 10 feet (3 m) tall, and animals as large as a horse or buffalo, being knocked down, pinned and helpless for one melee round! After a successful pounce attack, the Devil Unicorn continues to attack small prey to human-sized prey with its mouth/bite attacks and/or mandibles, but against large prey, it can claw with all four legs inflicting a massive 2D6x10 M.D., but the attack counts as four attacks and the prey must be released. It can pounce on the back of even larger creatures such as the Dark Behemoth and Fury Beetle, hang on with three claws and continue to attack with one claw and bite attacks, but uses up three attacks per melee round to hang on to moving, bucking prey, and is knocked off if the giant animal rolls on the ground.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 on initiative, +3 to strike, +1 to parry, +3 to dodge (possibly with a leaping move), +6 to pull punch, +4 to roll with impact, +3 to save vs psionic attack and possession, +12 to save vs Horror Factor – fearless.

Vulnerabilities: Its wicked nature causes it to taunt, torment and hunt humans and D-Bees, which results in retaliation and extreme measures to find and destroy the monster. Moreover, the monster's lust for blood and desire to cause suffering compels it to taunt and dare humans to challenge it. That can be dangerous for the fiend because it often underestimates humanoids and takes daring risks.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Only a few hundred to a thousand are believed to exist on the North American continent – Canada, USA and Mexico. Though a Devil Unicorn can be found anywhere, they seem to prefer forests, grasslands and mountain areas with lakes and waterways, and though they may go into hiding from time to time, they eventually find their way near people they can torment and hunt. Devil Unicorns are most commonly reported in the Canadian Southwest, the province of Ontario, the entire Rocky Mountain range, the Sierra Madre mountains, the American Northwest, Montana, Wyoming, Nebraska, Colorado, the Dakotas, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, and the Magic Zone. In Dinosaur Swamp, the creature is most often encountered in the forests of Georgia and Alabama, as well as in and around the Appalachian Mountains.

Enemies: Considers most people and animals to be prey, but favors large animals and people. Large predators, people and pack hunting predators and any other animal that might stalk the beast are all considered enemies.

Allies: A Devil Unicorn tends to be a lone hunter, but sometimes allies itself with others of its own kind and creatures like the Devilsaurus which it sees as a kindred spirit and fun and easy to manipulate, and sometimes a powerful practitioner of magic and other powerful, wicked beings with agendas that involve mass murder, torture and mayhem, such as the Black Faerie and Witchling.

Value: None.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 14: New West™**, page 140 and inspired by the art of Ramon K. Perez.

Dilophosaurus Dinosaur

By Todd Yoho and Kevin Siembieda

The Dilophosaurus is a theropod predator that some think of as a Long-Necked Velociraptor. Their coloration varies widely among individuals, ranging from deep blue-black to the occasional gray and even white albino, but most are green, tan, orange or yellow with black stripes and emerald eyes. Brightly colored Dilophosaurs can fetch a high dollar amount (double and triple the usual price) depending on the buyer.

Unlike Velociraptors, this predator hunts as a lone individual or as a mated pair, not in a pack. This hunter-scavenger dinosaur kills using its claws and bite, and its quick reflexes and long neck can snatch a bird from a tree branch or out of the air with startling speed. The long neck lets it get at prey up in trees and to reach down into holes and burrows to get prey like a rabbit or mole. Likewise, it can put its head underwater, like a duck, to pluck out a fish, frog or turtle. These animals are just as happy to pick at the remains of dead animals left by other predators. For that reason, 1D6 individuals sometimes follow an Allosaurus, Devilsaurus and other predators from a safe distance, like jackals or hyenas, to finish off whatever the big predator leaves behind.

The Dilophosaurus is also attracted to the villages, towns and camps of people for the same reason: meat scraps to scavenge and easy prey. One or more individuals of Dilophosaurus may sneak into a town, particularly at night, to rummage through garbage in search of food scraps, mainly meat and bones, as well as gobble up house pets, and livestock such as chickens, ducks, sheep, goats, donkeys, calves, and piglets. All are attractive targets for this hunter-scavenger, as are eggs and food left sitting out on a porch or inside a tent or hut. Unfortunately, this includes the remains of



the dead. The recently deceased that have not yet been buried are nothing more than carrion to this animal. As hunter-scavengers, the Long-Necked Raptor may eat or run off with bodies not yet interred, or it might dig up a fresh, shallow grave with its large feet.

The dinosaur's dramatic leaping ability means it can easily hop any fence and most barriers (can leap 12 feet/3.7 m) high and across; double with a running start. In an urban setting, that includes being able to leap over people's heads, trucks and combat vehicles, as well as bound onto the roof of 1-3 story buildings and run across the rooftops. This is an especially great way to escape people who may be after it. As a shy hunter-scavenger, the Dilophosaurus usually avoids large, bustling towns and cities because there is too much noise and too many people and vehicles. However, smaller towns, most rural communities, traveling caravans, and adventurer camps are all fair game and sources for food. And at night, a Dilophosaurus may brave venturing into a large city, where butcher shops, slaughterhouses, Body-Chop-Shops and animal pens are the main attraction for it, as well as alleys filled with garbage and vermin.

Though the animal usually hunts medium to small prey – they love to eat dogs, house cats, racoons, muskrat, groundhogs, squirrels, rabbits, and rodents as well as birds – the dinosaur may attack a child or an injured or dying person. Such an easy target may just be too tempting to resist. As an opportunistic predator and scavenger, this dinosaur is known to sneak into camps and onto farms, towns, and even inside of trucks left open and unattended, to steal eggs, food, and kill and eat livestock. They are also known to rummage through backpacks and open the doors to cages, pens and vehicles in search of food. They sometimes stalk battlefields feed-

ing on the dead and dying, and sneak into military camps where they eat garbage, rodents and rifle through bags and knapsacks. Bold and fast, the Lonely Hunter dares to slip into towns and cities at night, like a coyote, when few people are active, to root through garbage, hunt for rats and mice, and to gobble up the neighbor's dog or cat before slipping out, probably unseen.

Excellent runners, the Dilophosaurus have long legs and stiffened tails for balance. The fleet-footed dinosaur can easily chase down deer and leap over most fences and walls. The skull is topped with a pair of crests that look similar to the comb of a rooster and deepen in color when they are flushed with blood, serving as a mating display and as a warning to others. This brilliant display has led them to be popular among some fight clubs and gladiatorial circles for beefed-up "cockfights."

The dinosaur possesses a fairly high animal intelligence, but is shy and skittish. As a result, most keep to themselves as solitary hunters, mated pairs or a small family brood, earning it the common nickname *Lonely Hunter*. The Dilophosaurus can be found throughout the entire range of **Dinosaur Swamp** hunting for smaller game animals in the forests and marshland, or probing streams and lakes for fish and other aquatic prey.

One important note about this animal is that it has an unusually high level of P.P.E. for not being a creature of magic. This curious fact has not yet been satisfactorily explained. Theories range from a hidden, higher level of intelligence, to inherent magic capabilities or just random evolution. Their popularity for use in cockfighting, high levels of P.P.E. useful in blood sacrifice, and inherent solitary nature makes them rather desirable for capture by people. As a result, the Dilophosaurus has learned it is best to avoid hu-

Dilophosaurus – Raptor-like Carnivore Dinosaur

Also Known As: The Lonely Hunter and Long-Neck Raptor.

Alignment: Considered to be Miscreant or Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+3 (medium to high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+3, M.A. 1D6, P.S. 1D6+19 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+16, P.E. 1D6+16 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6+14, Spd 1D6+32 running, or 25 mph (40 km), which can be sustained for up to four hours. 35 mph (56 km) for a short burst lasting 1D4 minutes. 12 mph (10.4 km) trotting can be maintained for up to 10 hours.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Head – 55

*Tail – 70

*Neck – 60

Hind Limbs (2) – 100 each

*Forelimbs (2) – 45 each

Main Body – 2D6x10+80

* A single asterisk indicates a small and/or difficult target to strike, or just located in a place that is hard to target. The shooter or attacker must make a Called Shot to hit at a penalty of -3 to strike.

Note: On S.D.C. worlds, the Lonely Hunter Raptor has a main body of 1D6x10+20 S.D.C., 1D6x10+80 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 13. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (45 M.D.C. = 45 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D. (i.e. 2D6 M.D. = 2D6 S.D.C.).

Horror Factor: 12

Size: 18-20 feet (5.4 to 6.1 m) long from the snout to tip of the tail. 5 feet (1.5 m) tall at the shoulders. The neck has a five foot (1.5 m) reach and can turn to look completely behind.

Weight: 900-1,000 pounds (405 to 450 kg).

Average Life Span: 30-35 years. A mated pair may stay together for years or part after their brood reaches one year old. The animal lays a clutch of 4D6 eggs every spring and cares for the

young like birds until they are 12 months old and half the size of their parents. Upon reaching one year old, the juveniles young begin to scatter and leave their parents one and two at a time to hunt and survive on their own. Juvenile Young reach full size and sexual maturity at three years of age. Less than half the young reach full maturity, falling victim to other predators such as Allosaurus, Carnosuchids, Devil Eels, Dragon Fish, young Devil Kraken, Raptors, and a wide range of predators as well as people who consider them to be dangerous pests and actively exterminate them.

P.P.E.: 1D6x10+10

Disposition: Alert, stealthy and quick to react. This animal is a sneaky and shy hunter that likes to hunt alone or in small family groups; typically a mated pair or two adults and 1D6 young or juveniles.

The animal may be active any time of the day, but prefers to hunt at dusk, nighttime, and at dawn. As a hunter and scavenger, it is happy to steal food from other predators and people. Making a grab and sneaking away or dashing off before anyone can stop it. Sometimes steals backpacks, knapsacks, bags, and boxes. Is attracted to places where livestock is kept as well as slaughterhouses and butcher shops, and can easily leap over most walls and barriers, even onto rooftops.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Land Navigation 98%, Pick Locks 50% (+10% to open doors, gates, pens), Prowl 60% (+20% in darkness and twilight), Tailing 70%, and Track by sight 55%.

Natural Abilities: Excellent vision day and night, Nightvision 2,000 feet (610 m), track by scent alone 60% (+20% to follow the scent of meat, blood or decay, and can smell a corpse buried less than 8 feet/2.4 m deep), built for running and leaping, the Lonely Hunter can leap 12 feet (3.7 m) high and 12 feet (3.7 m) across from a standing position, twice that with a running start, and can hold its breath for 1D6+2 minutes underwater when looking for fish, frogs, crustaceans and other aquatic prey along the shore or in a marsh.

Magic Enhanced Bio-Regeneration (special): Heals at a rate of 1D6 M.D.C. per hour, triple along a ley line. Regrows lost limbs and portions of its tail within 1D6 days, but only 24 hours when it spends time healing on a ley line.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Mega-Damage: Fights tooth and claw.

Bite, Restrained – 5D6 S.D.C. or 1D4 M.D.

Bite, Full Strength – 2D6 M.D.

Claw Strike, Restrained – 1D6 M.D.

Claw Strike, Full Strength (foreclaws) – 2D6+2 M.D.

Claw Strike (hind legs) – 2D6+4 M.D.

Tail Slash – 2D6 M.D. with a 20% chance of knocking down a human-sized target. Counts as one attack.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 on Perception Rolls to recognize prey, +1 on initiative against small prey, +3 to strike, +2 to parry, +2 to dodge, and +2 to save vs magic and possession.

Vulnerabilities: Vulnerable to all M.D. weapons and attacks. As a predator and scavenger that takes risks to get food, even sneaking into campsites to steal food, attack pets, livestock, riding animals and injured personnel, such actions can get it into trouble or provoke people to retaliate and hunt the creature down.

Dilophosaurus can run and leap, but it cannot climb nor swim. It is not afraid of water and can handle the shallow waters of marshlands and swamps, but has difficulty in deep or fast moving water, and will drown if swept away or held under.

Magic: Can perform the equivalent of a *Chameleon spell*, at will, but only when on a ley line; equal to a third level practitioner of magic. Also Bio-Regenerates lost M.D.C. at a rate of 3D6 points per hour when on a ley line, and completely regenerate lost limbs with 24 hours! How this “animal” is able to channel magic energy so efficiently to heal and regrow lost appendages remains a mystery. **P.P.E.:** 1D6x10+10.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: The marshes and forests of Dinosaur Swamp and southeastern United States. Sometimes farther north during the summer months when the animal follows a river like the Mississippi. Most common in South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. To a lesser degree, Arkansas, Texas, and along the Gulf side of Mexico with thinning numbers in territories further south and west.

Enemies: Other predators and people.

Allies: None other than its own kind. Velociraptors tend to leave their Dilophosaurus cousins alone. Likewise, the big predatory

animals like the T-Rex, Allosaurus, Devilsaurus, and Alien Rex don't seem to mind that the stealthy hunter-scavengers tail them and pick at their leftover carrion.

Value: The owner of a gladiatorial arena will pay up to 10,000 credits for a live, uninjured Dilophosaurus. They are popular for so-called “cockfighting” because of their prominent skull frills and are easier to control than the average Allosaurus, Tyrannosaurus, or Raptor. Though their meat has no market value, it does not taste too bad and is edible by people.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 26: Dinosaur Swamp™**, page 18.

Dogs

See **Canines** for details about wild canines such as wolves as well as domesticated dogs, page 76.

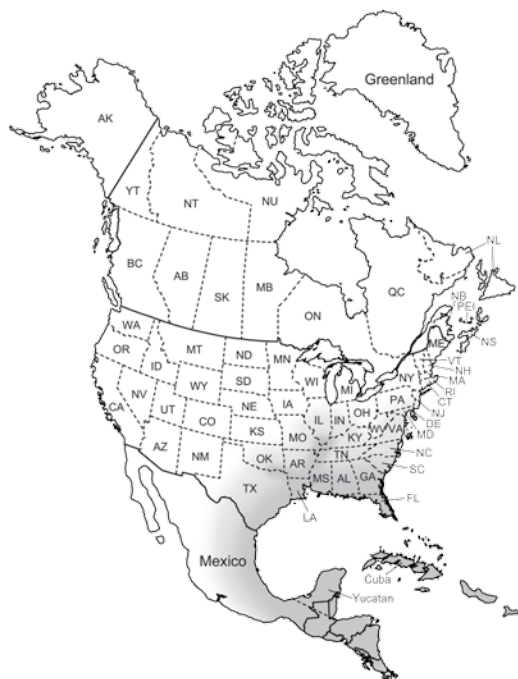


Dimetrodon Dinosaur

By Kevin Siembieda

Think alligator with a 3-4 foot (0.9 to 1.2 m) tall, fan-like fin on its back. Only instead of scaly skin like a reptile or the cold, lumpy flesh of an alligator, the skin is soft and smooth like a rat with its

fur shaved off. Actually, the Dimetrodon, also known as the *Sail Fin* and *Marsh Monster*, looks nothing like an alligator, but more like some kind of reptile with a more rounded head and snout. If from Earth's past – the early Permian period – this lizard-looking appearance is deceptive, because the animal is more mammalian than lizard. The Dimetrodon is larger than a tiger, warm-blooded, capable of good running speed, and is an ambush hunter with rows



of pointed, serrated teeth and a pair of canine teeth for cutting through flesh and biting through muscle.

Though a fair swimmer, the Dimetrodon does the majority of its hunting in waterlogged wetlands as well as in the tall grass, flowers and underbrush along the edges of lakes, rivers and streams. Marshes or wetlands are filled with tall grasses, reeds, and rushes. Here among the cattails, cordgrass, sawgrass, cypress trees, mangrove trees and other marshland flora, the Dimetrodon is king. Its tall, golden fin with hues of brown and green blends in perfectly with the marshland flora and sways with them in the wind. The predator is able to tread and crawl through the thick mud or swim through the shallow layer of water that covers the marsh with surprising stealth and speed. Where the marsh meets dry land, the Sail Fin is able to run in hot pursuit up to 30 mph (48 km) for several minutes. Any marsh, whether freshwater or saltwater tidal marsh, is satisfactory for the Dimetrodon, but it prefers the hot and humid, marshlands of the American south – Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, and along the Gulf Coast into Mexico, the Yucatan and Central America.

The Marsh Monster preys upon animals small and large – snakes, turtles, ducks, geese, and other water fowl, muskrats, raccoons, wild boar, deer, livestock and people, even coyotes, wolves, panthers, alligators under eight feet (2.4 m) long, and other predators, provided the beast can get the jump on them. On cool nights in Dinosaur Swamp and other marshlands, the warm-blooded hunter is as alert and quick as it was during the day, giving it an advantage over reptiles which become sluggish in cool temperatures and birds that come to roost at night. When hidden in the reeds close to the shoreline, the beast may seem to appear out of nowhere. Crashing through the tall grass and reeds to charge a momentarily startled deer, cattle, or person. This can be especially unexpected in a serene and beautiful meadow filled with signing birds and buzzing dragonflies. **Note:** Young Dimetrodon feed upon insects, frogs, toads snakes, lizards, turtles, crayfish, mice, small birds and rodents, before working their way up to larger prey.

People, riding animals, and cattle are too tempting to ignore and a hungry Dimetrodon is often lured out to attack them. People in a small water vessel like a canoe, rowboat or other small boat, may attract an attack as well, with the dinosaur climbing right into the

boat to get its prey. People in the boat may see the large fin coming their way, or they may not, as it visually blends in with the trees and vegetation on shore. Distressed people and animals in the water may also lure the creature to swim out and attack. Otherwise, the beast sticks to the marshland and shadows of the forest.

It should be noted that travel and movement in the muddy, water-soaked marshlands are difficult for most people and large animals. Though the water may be as little as a foot (0.3 m) to three feet (0.9 m) deep, the sucking mud and tangles of roots and vegetation makes walking through it a slow, difficult and exhausting process. Cyborgs and those clad in power armor as well as people possessing Robotic and even Supernatural strength sink deep into the mud, and have as much trouble slogging through a marsh as anyone else. **Marsh Movement Penalties:** Reduce speed by 70%, -2 melee attacks unless standing still and shooting at or fighting an opponent directly in front of you, -6 to dodge and -2 on all other combat maneuvers (strike, parry, disarm, etc.). Good luck if a Sail Fin attacks while you are stuck in the mud.

The Dimetrodon is a quiet and stealthy ambush predator that waits in the reeds and tall grass of the marshland for prey to come within striking distance. Possessing good speed, the Dimetrodon can close distance quickly even in the muck and shallow waters of the marsh, and is able to run at 20 mph (32 km; with short bursts of 35 mph/56 km) on dry land to chase down prey which includes humans, livestock, cattle, deer, dogs, etc. The Marsh Monster regularly crawls out of the marsh to hunt animals on land, traveling as far as 20 miles (32 km) away from water before returning to the marsh. May fight to the death, especially if cornered or angry. Enjoys sunning itself.

Dimetrodon Dinosaur – Carnivorous Predator

Also Known As: Marsh Monster and Sail Fin.

Alignment: As a predator it is considered to Anarchist or Miscreant.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+6 (good animal predator intelligence), M.E. 1D6+10, M.A. 1D6, P.S. 1D6+20 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+18, P.E. 1D6+18 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6+1, Spd 1D6+26 running, or 20 mph (32 km) on dry land, 15 mph (24 km) in the marsh (no movement penalties) and swimming in water. It can reach 35 mph (56 km) on dry land for a short burst that lasts 1D4 minutes. 12 mph (19.2 km) mph trotting for up to five hours before needing to rest. 3-4 mph (4.8 to 6.4 km) walking.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 1D4x10+100

Tail – 1D6x10+80

*Legs & Feet (4) – 4D6+40 each

*Sail Fin (large) – 1D6x10+40

Main Body – 1D6x10+120 (+50 for the larger males)

* Items marked with an asterisk are difficult to strike, so the attacker must make a “Called Shot” and even then is -3 to strike.

Note: On S.D.C. worlds, the Dimetrodon has a main body of 1D6x10+30 S.D.C., 1D6x10+60 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 9. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (1D6x10+100 M.D.C. = 1D6x10+100 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D. (i.e. 2D6 M.D. = 2D6 S.D.C.).

Horror Factor: 10

Size: 2-3 feet (0.6 to 0.9 m) at the top of its head, fin adds an additional 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m) but blends in with the environment,

especially when directly facing the animal. 12-16 feet (3.7 to 4.9 m) long from snout to tall tip. 2 feet (0.6 m) wide at the shoulders. Males are larger than females.

Weight: 600-900 pounds (270 to 405 kg).

Average Life Span: 12-20 years. Mates annually in the spring, laying 1D6x10 eggs and burying them in a mud nest in the marsh. The eggs hatch seven months later. The young are left to fend for themselves and half will fall victim to predators in their first year of life. Dimetrodon reach full size and maturity in 3 years. Several males may mate with the same female and do not stay together. They are solitary hunters. As usual, young have half the M.D.C., and half the bonuses and attacks as an adult.

P.P.E.: 2D6

Disposition: A patient, stealthy and cunning ambush predator. Most aggressive when hungry, provoked or cornered.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 70%/10%, Land Navigation 80%, Prowl 50% (+25% in marshland and in water), Swimming 65%, and Tailing 60% (+10% in marsh).

Natural Abilities: Good daytime vision, Nightvision (1,000 feet/305 m), good sense of smell, Track by smell alone 40% (+20% to follow blood scent), hisses and growls to communicate, can hold breath for two minutes, favors warm to hot, damp, humid environments and does not mind shallow water, but dislikes deep and fast moving water. Bio-Regenerates lost limbs, toes, teeth and sail fin within 2D6+18 days. Cannot regenerate its eyes. Recovers from damage at a rate of 2D6+6 M.D.C. per 24 hours. Can go for as long as five weeks without eating, but hunts every day, throughout the day, when only small prey such as rodents, birds, snakes, amphibians, fish and lizards are available. Hunts only every two days when large prey like deer, wild boar or people are available as prey. Eats most land animals from frogs, snakes, birds and rodents to coyotes, deer, livestock, dinosaurs and people. In fact, people are generally seen as easy prey. Eats live food and carrion.

Attack per Melee: Four.

Mega-Damage: As per bite or claw strike.

Bite/Nip, Restrained – 1D4x10 S.D.C. or 1D6 M.D.

Bite, Full Strength – 3D6 M.D.

Claw Strike, Full Strength – 2D6+2 M.D.

Tail Slash – 2D6 M.D.

Head Butt – 1D6 M.D.

Body Block – 2D6 M.D.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 on Perception Rolls involving prey, +1 on initiative, +3 to strike, +1 to parry and dodge, +1 to roll with impact, Critical Strike (double damage) on the roll of a Natural 19 or 20, and +2 to save vs Horror Factor. **Vulnerabilities:** All M.D. weapons inflict full damage. Only a fair to good swimmer, the animals can get into trouble in deep water, fast moving water and strong currents. It may also take on more than it can chew and often strikes before completely assessing its opponent.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Marshlands across the Americas but primarily those in the American South, Mexico and Central America. Marshlands is the most desirable habitat, but it may hunt along any body of water and does well in light forests and other hot, damp environments. Dislikes cold and is seldom found in Canada except in the lower south. The beast may raid a humanoid's camp, farm, village or garbage dump, but lingers only long enough to make a kill, feast and leave.

Enemies: None per se, other than other large predators, pack hunters and people.

Allies: None.

Value: None, though their meat is edible and doesn't taste bad; resembles rabbit. 100-200 credits for the meat.

Note: This is a new creature appearing for the very first time. Inspired by the real world dinosaur and the art of Nicholas Bradshaw.

Dinostang Dinosaur

By Charles Walton Jr. and Kevin Siembieda

It is unknown whether this is a dinosaur-like creature that heralds from beyond the Rifts, or is a dinosaur from Earth's past (though there is no such a creature in Earth's known fossil record). It is possible the Dinostang could be the creation of magical or genetic engineering by the likes of the Splugorth or Lemurians, though both deny it. The reason for such speculation is because the Dinostang is easy to domesticate and train, the animal is calm under fire, and it makes a reliable, fast, surefooted, armored war steed. Since the discovery that the Dinostang can be easily domesticated, its use as an intelligent and loyal Mega-Damage riding animal has increased dramatically.

The Dinostang gets its name from the New West cowboy-adventurer *Chris Gravel* said to have been the first to tame the wild creature and use it as steed. He called it a "Dinostang" because, to him, it was *dinosaur-horse*. To this day it can be seen grazing in the open plains with other dinosaurs or running with wild mustangs. While there is considerable question as to whether he was the first to domesticate and use Dinostangs as a riding animal – Native Americans are said to have ridden Dinostangs for 50 years prior – Chris Gravel was the first to capture, domesticate and sell the animal as a war mount in large numbers on the open market. It was his marketing of the Dinostang to people fleeing into the Pecos Empire and New West to escape Coalition States occupation that brought the "Dinostang" to the public's attention. The catchy name has stuck despite the fact that the so-called Dinostang "dinosaur-horse" is a not a dinosaur at all.

In fairness to Gravel, the animal does resembles a cross between a large horse and a Pachycephalosaurus or Ankylosaurus, and even a Stegosaurus. It has the thick-dome head, crown of horns, lizard-like features and beak mouth of the Pachysaurus along with the armored body and spiked tail of the Ankylosaurus or Stegosaurus. However, while many people, including scholars, rank it as a dinosaur, the Dinostang is a warm-blooded quadruped, built more like a horse or rhinoceros, than a dinosaur, and is capable of long-distance running and agility. It is a herbivore that is not aggressive toward humans or most other animals, and in the wild is often seen grazing with other herbivores from horses, bison and Aegis Buffalo, to a wide variety of herbivorous dinosaurs.

Its thick, hard skull crowned in short spikes, gives the Dinostang the means to defend itself with vicious head butts and ramming attacks against threatening rivals and predators. Its long thick tail that ends in spikes is the other weapon in its arsenal. The tail is used like a counterweight when running and turning at high speeds, but gives the animal a defensive weapon to bat away wolves, raptors and other predators or troublesome people. At the tip of the tail are three sets of spikes that can be used for clobbering and slashing pursuers even when running at top speed.



Dinostangs are a bit faster than most Earth horses and are able to run longer at high speeds before suffering from fatigue. They possess remarkable stamina and are so surefooted that they can handle uneven, rugged mountain terrain, provided the path of travel is wide enough and not too steep.

The animal is known for running right through fencing and battering down gates and other light barriers, as well as barreling through crowds of people, armed troops, and hostile animal packs. Not only can their reinforced armored skulls and shock absorber-like neck muscles handle head butts and ramming attacks, but the Dinostang is able to emit an energy field around itself and its rider to protect against incoming bullets, arrows, and other projectiles as well as lasers and similar attacks. Bandits, Gunfighters, Cyber-Knights, Native Americans and horseback warriors of all kind find the animal's density field to be helpful when charging an enemy or making a fast getaway under fire. The energy field making it possible to ride into a hail of bullets and dodge them all. (See Natural Abilities for complete details.)

Dinostang

– Herbivorous Riding Animal – Dinosaur?

Also Known As: Armored Mustang, Armored Horse, and Dinosaur Horse.

Alignment: Considered to be a good or selfish alignment.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+8 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+12, M.A. 1D6+15, P.S. 1D6+30 (equal to Robot Strength), P.P. 1D6+14, P.E. 1D6+14, P.B. 1D6+11, Spd as follows, below.

70 mph (112 km) at a full gallop which can be maintained for an astonishing 5D6+40 minutes.

50 mph (80 km) at a steady run that can be maintained for three hours without pushing the animal beyond its limits.

20 mph (32 km) at a steady trot which can be maintained for eight hours with minimal fatigue.

3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km) walking. Much slower when grazing.

Like a horse, the Dinostang switches up from a steady trot to running, to a walk, back to a steady run, to allow the animal to pace itself and avoid damaging exhaustion and physical stress. Seldom runs at maximum full gallop unless it is to escape a predator, or at the prodding of its rider. A Dinostang can comfortably travel 180 miles (288 km) over a 9-10 hour trek across open plains; 90 miles (144 km) when traveling over rough, uneven terrain; and a distance of 30-40 miles (48 to 64 km) when traveling over very rugged, rocky, debris-filled terrain or fores. 10-15 mph (16 to 19.2 km) in mountainous terrain.

M.D.C. by Location (unless stated otherwise):

*Legs (4) – 1D6+100 each

*Small Center Horn – 15

Head – 1D6+135

Tail – 1D6+110

Main Body – 1D6x10+160

* A single asterisk means a small and/or difficult target to strike and requires a Called Shot to hit. Even then the attacker is -4 to strike. Reducing the M.D.C. of one leg to zero reduces speed by 30%. Destroying two legs reduces speed by 80%. Lost limbs do not regenerate.

Note: On S.D.C. worlds, the Dinostang has a main body of 1D6x10+40 S.D.C., 1D6x10+80 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 13. All other locations are S.D.C. at the same number as M.D.C., above, i.e. 2D6+90 M.D.C. = 2D6+90 S.D.C./Hit Points. The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent

amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D., so a bite that does 1D6 M.D. on Rifts Earth does 1D6 S.D.C. damage on S.D.C. worlds.

Horror Factor: 8, maybe 9 or 10 when the animal is angry and attacking.

Size: 5 to 5.6 feet tall (1.5 to 1.7 m, or 15-16 hands) at the shoulders, 2-3 feet (0.6-0.9 m) wide.

Length: 7-8 feet (2.1 to 2.4 m) long from nose to rump with a 6-7 foot (1.8 to 2.1 m) long tail.

Weight: 1,100-1,500 pounds (495-675 kg).

Average Life Span: 2D6+20 years, +8 years for domesticated Dinostangs. The animal reaches full maturity in three years. Females give birth to one foal after 11 months of pregnancy. Young usually stay with the herd of its parents for 1D6 years, but may leave to start its own herd or join another when the herd reaches 20 or more members. A small herd or family clan is 1D6+4 Dinostang. A typical herd is 2D6+10. A large herd is 4D6+20. A herd is lead by an Alpha and Beta stallion, but they and other members of the herd are combative only when cornered, injured or directly attacked. Otherwise these speedy animals flee and can outrun most predators and humanoids on foot.

P.P.E.: 5D6+6

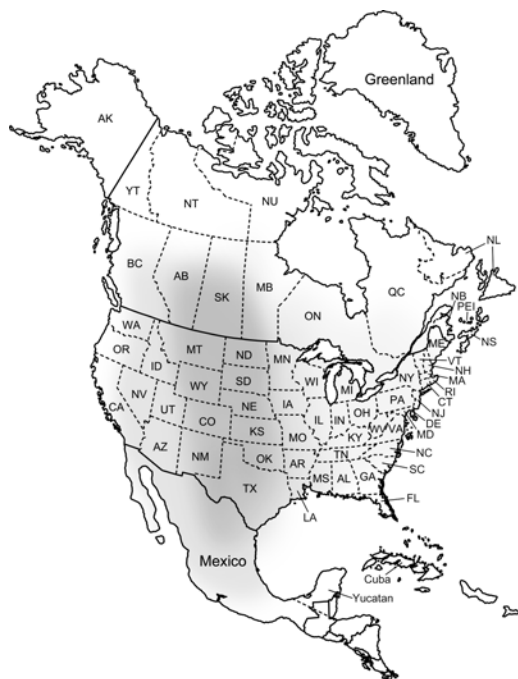
Disposition: Dinostangs are cooperative, steady and loyal, calm under fire, stable, loving, playful, tolerant and gentle with their young and their rider and friends. A very reliable mount, but not suited to farm work or hard labor as they are born to run and become stubborn and despondent when they are not allowed to do so. Most do not have a mean bone in their body and fight only when threatened or abused.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 55%/0%, Dowsing 50%, Herding/Cutting 75%, Identify Food and Plants 90% regarding plants that are edible for it, Land Navigation 90%, Prowl 20%, Swimming 75%, and Tailing 50%.

Natural Abilities: Running, excellent speed, great strength (equal to Robot P.S.), high Physical Endurance, can leap 6 feet (1.8 m) high and 15 feet (4.6 m) across (30% greater with a running start), Nightvision 1,000 feet (305 m), communicates in a similar way as a dog with grunts, growls, barks, whimpers, and whining. Recovers from damage at a rate of 4D6 per 24 hours and Bio-Regenerates a lost tail, toe, horns or spikes within 2D4+14 days. Cannot regenerate an entire limb or the eyes.

Density Field Bubble (special): The Dinostang is able to emit an energy field around itself and its rider for protection against incoming bullets, arrows, thrown objects, lasers, ion beams and similar attacks. The 20 foot (6.1 m) radius energy field looks almost like the animal and rider are surrounded by a semi-transparent sphere of liquid, as the energy refracts light in a strange way. Somehow the energy field surrounding and following the Dinostang and its rider disrupts and slows down projectiles and focused energy directed at it, such as lasers and ion beams that pass through the field.

The result is that projectiles, shrapnel, lasers and ion beams slow as if passing through a dense liquid or gelatin, even though it is air. Thus, most projectiles fired from a gun, rifle, shotgun, machine-gun, as well as arrows, thrown spears, knives and objects (including Vibro-Weapons), flying shrapnel, etc., are slowed down so tremendously that the Dinostang and its rider may be able to dodge out of their way (+3 to dodge bonus in addition to the animal's or the rider's usual dodge bonuses. Think the bullets fired at Neo in the Matrix movies.) If they do hit their intended target, damage is HALF! **Note:** Powerful, heavy M.D.



weapons such as *plasma blasts*, *particle beams*, *lightning bolts*, *electrical blasts*, *rail gun rounds*, *cannon rounds*, *Boom Gun rounds*, *mini-missiles*, *rockets* and *missiles*, enter the density field at such devastating speed and power that it makes no difference (no extra bonus to dodge) as they pass through the field and deliver full damage, unless they miss their target entirely. Roll to strike as usual.

The Density Field Bubble can be emitted while the steed is standing still, walking or running, and does not slow down the animal itself. **Note:** Any weapons fired by a rider, however, are affected and diminished (-4 to strike and reduce range and damage by half). Even heavy weapons like a rail gun, mini-missiles, and plasma or particle beams fired by anyone inside the density field are -3 to strike and range is reduced by half. Melee combat is not impaired and everyone within the field fights as normal.

Duration: When the field is in place for seven seconds, it counts as two of the animal's melee attacks. Maximum is 15 seconds (one entire melee round) and counts as four of the animal's attacks.

Note: The Density Field has no effect on force fields or magic barriers.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Mega-Damage: As per bite, head butts, ramming, kicks and tail swats. Robot equivalent P.S. which is typically P.S. 33.

Bite/Nip, Restrained – 3D6 S.D.C.

Bite, Full Strength – 1D4 M.D.

Head Butt/Swat, Restrained – 1D4 M.D.

Head Butt, Full Strength – 2D4 M.D.

Power Head Butt/Short Ram – 4D4 M.D. but counts as two attacks.

Stomp (front legs) – 1D4 M.D.

Kick (hind leg) – 2D4 M.D.

Mule Kick (both hind legs) – 3D6 M.D., counts as one attack.

Spiked Tail Swat, Restrained – 1D4 M.D.

Spiked Tail Strike, Blunt – 2D4 M.D.

Spiked Tail Strike, Full Strength – 3D6 M.D.

Short Ram Attack – 2D6 M.D., counts as one attack.

Trotting Ram Attack – 3D6 M.D., counts as two attacks and has a 01-50% chance of knocking down opponents up to 12 feet

(3.7 m) tall and weighing less than 1,000 pounds (450 kg). Victims of knockdown lose initiative and one melee attack.

Running Head Ram Attack – 4D6+4 M.D., counts as three attacks and has a 01-60% chance of knocking down opponents up to 12 feet (3.7 m) tall and weighing less than one ton. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and one melee attack.

Full Gallop Ram Attack/Body Block – 1D4x10+8 M.D. and counts as four attacks. It has a 01-80% chance of knocking down opponents up to 12 feet (3.7 m) tall and weighing less than two tons. Victims of this high-powered knockdown lose initiative and two melee attacks.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 on Perception Rolls involving spotting predators, danger, and escape routes, +1 on initiative, +3 to strike, +1 to parry with head or tail, +2 to dodge standing still or trotting, +4 to automatic dodge while running at speeds greater than 25 mph (40 km), +2 to roll with impact, and +2 to save vs Horror Factor. **Note:** The Dinostang is so calm, steady and cooperative that riders get a +10% bonus to their *Horsemanship: Exotic Animal* skill.

Vulnerabilities: The animal's loyalty to its mate, young, and for domesticated Dinostangs, its kind master/rider and other human friends, can get the animal hurt or killed because it is unlikely to leave them and will stand its ground and fight attackers. Its combat capabilities also makes the animal more confident and aggressive than a horse, which can also get it into trouble. Dinostangs hate captivity and will try to escape or starve itself when caged or corralled for more than a month. Also refuses to do work as a plow-horse or pulling wagons/weights for more than 1D4 minutes. It is born to run.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Mainly the Great Plains of USA and of southwestern Canada as well as the plains of Mexico. The Dinostang can be found from Montana, Wyoming and the Dakotas down through Texas and into Northern Mexico, but is most numerous in the northwestern plains states of the Old American Empire through Saskatchewan. That said, they can handle mountains and are found at lower elevations throughout the Rockies and Sierra Madre mountains. Those brought from the West into the forests of the Midwest and Eastern North America and Canada generally do well, though they do not like winter cold, snow and ice. The animal is not a fan of deserts either, they love grassy plains.

Enemies: Predators, especially very fast and large predators and those that hunt in a pack or lay in ambush, including Burrower Bruins, Panthera-Tereon, Field Reapers, Gwylack, Grigleapers, Leatherwings, Silonar, Raptors, T-Rex, and others.

Allies: Its fellow Dinostangs and human or D-Bee masters. These calm animals are accepting and tolerant of most grazing animals from bison and cattle to herbivore dinosaurs, and even people who are not loud or threatening.

Value: A trained and domesticated riding Dinostang can fetch 4,000-12,000 credits. Dinostang are not suitable as farm and work animals and will not do the work of a plow horse, mule, or pack animal and will not pull wagons, even when beaten. They need to run free. Those forced to work will run away at the first opportunity or starve themselves to death. Their meat is fatty, tough as rawhide and lacks flavor, so not good to eat. Nor do their thick, heavy hides have any value.

Note: This is a new creature appearing for the very first time. Inspired by the art and ideas of Charles "Chuck" Walton Jr.



Dragon-Ape

By Peter Murphy and Kevin Siembieda

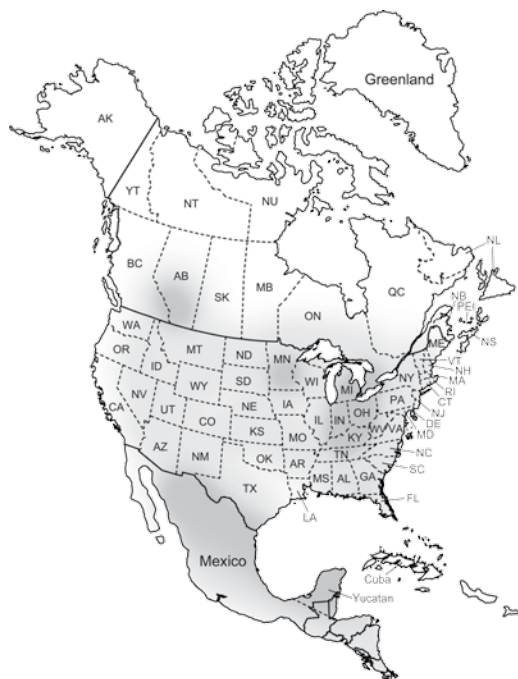
Dragon-Apes are weird creatures that seem like they could have evolved from an Earth dinosaur like a raptor or Pteranodon. They have a small head mounted on a long neck that rather resembles that of a Dilophosaurus or a dragon. The upper body resembles a human's chest, but its lower torso and double-jointed legs and prehensile feet more resemble those of a chimpanzee. Its long, thin tail is also prehensile like a monkey's, but is much, much longer than any monkey, easily twice as long as the Dragon-Ape's entire body. Its size (and power) is deceptive, because the Dragon-Ape is large, standing 6-7 feet (1.8 to 2.1 m) tall when standing erect on its two legs, its long neck and head slung forward. However, the beast is often perceived to be smaller than a human because it usually stands hunched over like an ape, and walks on all-fours.

What really gives the creature the "dragon" part of its name are the massive dragon or bat wings it has in place of arms. That and the fact that the head, neck and tail seem more reptilian than mammalian. Even then, the Dragon-Ape defies easy description. At a quick glance, the beast's head has the shape and appearance of a dragon or lizard, yet at the same time it also resembles that of a baboon, only its nostrils are large and wide like that of a chimp or gorilla. Though it has canine teeth, they too are more like a

chimp's than a lizard or even a baboon. The only hair on its entire body is a short streak of bristly strands that sprout from the top of its head, but too sparse and scraggly to be considered a mohawk. The skin color ranges from a pale, grayish pink to a pale, greenish-gray, with dark gray or black for the back of the wings and reddish-brown for the interior of the wings. Its chest and underbelly a light, grayish blue.

The Dragon-Ape is just as difficult to categorize. It is either a highly intelligent animal on par with apes, or a brutish creature of magic, but that classification does not seem to quite fit either. It seems to be a Chimera animal that might have been the product of a strange bio-engineering experiment involving a winged ape from an alien world perhaps further warped by magic or dimensional energies. Dragon-Apes are driven by instinct and base emotions and seem to have society similar to chimpanzees so they gather in small troops of 3D4+2 animals.

It is obvious the weird creature can fly, but they can also crawl and even run in a loping manner along the ground, climb through trees (provided the tree is large enough and strong enough to handle the creature's mass), as well as hang upside down like bats, scale walls and the sides of buildings, and dive down from rooftops, bridges, cliff facings, and mountain peaks. The legs are double-jointed, the feet ambidextrous and function like hands. The prehensile tail provides additional support, able to curl and wrap around tree limbs, outcroppings, ledges, rocks, girders, etc., to pro-



vide additional support when climbing or the means to hang upside down.

The animal exhibits intelligence, cunning, resourcefulness, and a twisted sense of humor. In fact, the winged brutes are infamous for their sadistic sense of humor – which leaves physical or emotional scars and sometimes debilitating injury on the recipient of the beast’s pranks. Most Dragon-Apes enjoy engaging in acts of mental and physical torture, blackmail, and cat-and-mouse games. They are bullies that like inflicting beatings, torture, and suffering upon those smaller and weaker than them, which includes humans and most D-Bees.

Dragon-Apes also enjoy mean-spirited slapstick humor such as tripping people and animals, knocking them down, tipping cows as they sleep, pushing or tricking animals or people into pits, down stairs and out of trees, all of which get a big laugh from such pain and injury inflicting antics. They also enjoy dropping rotten fruit, buckets of water, or rocks on people’s heads as they fly by. Likewise, the playful ruffians may knock debris off rooftops or mountain ledges onto people or animals below, or pull a person out of a window or off an open vehicle like a hovercycle.

Another thrill for Dragon-Apes is scaring people. They love to scare people and animals. This can be done by leaping out from a hiding place and dive-bombing people. Sometimes the dive-bombing monster snatches weapons or belongings out of peoples hands or their hat or helmet right off their heads, and fly off with them, or drop them nearby or put them in a tree or drop them at the foot of a monster or in the middle of a herd or pack of animals. Worse, like the flying monkeys from *The Wizard of Oz*, Dragon-Apes like to dive and snatch prey from tree branches and pets and livestock – and all too often, a person – right off the street and fly away with them. If just having fun without intent to do harm, the creature may drop their screaming victim in a haystack, a pond, or mud puddle, or deposit them up in a tree, or on the roof of a building, or a giant vehicle, or even deposit their trembling victim back on the ground as gentle as can be. Then the beast (or beasts if a flock of them) gather around nearby, or hover in the air, hooting and howling like happy chimpanzees. Having a great laugh and fun at the person’s or animal’s or both’s, expense. (“Hey, how did my dog get up there?!”) Speaking of laughs, Dragon-Apes can laugh. It sounds

more like “hoot, hoot, hoot,” or “heh, heh, heh,” as their head and upper body bob up and down. And there’s nothing worse than being laughed at by a giant, winged monkey that got the best of you.

Of course, dive-bombing snatch and grab attacks can be used to hurt and kill prey and people. Though a typical attack involves being struck by the feet or whipped by the tail as the Dragon-Ape flies by, as well as being knocked to the ground, being kicked in the head, chest or back, and grabbed by the feet or tail and thrown to the ground or into a wall, vehicle, tree, or object. Grabbing and dropping people and animals from the sky does happen, but not nearly as much as you would imagine. For one, in a fight, the victim of a snatch and grab struggles or fights back. The Dragon-Ape is smart enough to realize the danger to itself and prefers not to be clutching onto an opponent for any length of time.

When fighting other airborne creatures and flying humans in power armor or using jet packs, the Dragon-Ape latches on with its feet and tries to strangle prey with its tail, or whip them with the tail. All the while, it uses its own weight, wings and maneuvering to push or spin its flying adversary to the ground or into a tree or wall. The Dragon-Ape is agile enough where it can usually let go and avoid the crash. When fighting people on motorcycles, hovercycles or rocket bikes, the beast is adept at pulling or knocking the pilot off the vehicle, causing the vehicle to keep going until it crashes and the pilot falls to the ground. People manning open gun turrets or man-portable weapon systems like machine-guns, mortars, etc., are dive-bombed and either kicked in the head, grabbed and tossed aside and away from the weapon, or the weapon is grabbed and carried off before being dropped 1D6x100 feet (30.5 to 183 m) away.

Dragon-Apes are gluttons that eat like pigs and love to get drunk! In the wild, they hunt small- to medium-size prey, and sometimes large deer-size to human-size prey. However, they are omnivores that can eat anything humans can eat, including processed food, prepared meats, pies and cookies, etc. They do tend to avoid vegetables and raw grains, but eat just about everything else.

We mentioned earlier that Dragon-Apes are intelligent, on par with apes, but that means they have a rudimentary understanding of common languages, and can actually speak words and short phrases. “Do as told or I hurt you.” “This way, you go.” “I know not of the master’s intentions.” “I but humble servant.” “Money. You pay. I tell.” “I like.” “I no like.” “No hurt, me.” “Now, I hurt you.” “Suffer you will. “Eat your nose, I will.” “No one defies the master.” “Go.” “Stop.” “Hungry.” “I want.” “Whiskey, yum.” “Beer, good.” “Hah, funny.” “Just a joke.” “No humor you have.” And similar short sentences and awkward statements are standard fare for these monsters.

This ability to understand language and speak has some people wondering if Dragon-Apes are animals or primitive people. An important question when it comes to using them as domesticated animals. Are they an animal like a dog or horse, or an enslaved person? They have simple needs and instincts like an animal, and don’t seem to mind being treated like a pet or work animal, especially when treated well and made to feel like they are a member of the human or D-Bee troop/family. They can speak, but have trouble understanding math and cannot count, nor learn to read, though they do come to recognize certain symbols and insignias.

This issue is becoming a greater concern as more and more people are using Dragon-Apes as animals. Specifically as trackers/scouts, hunting animals, guard animals, attack animals, thieves, and saboteurs. In the role of thief, the target has to be very simple, like take the man’s gun(s) or take his backpack, or find and bring

me this weapon, magic item, or object. However, the Dragon-Ape's idea of stealing is probably more like a violent mugging. Forcibly taking the item it believes its master wants. Things like jewelry, coins, nuggets, and devices are too complicated for it and all look the same to the Dragon-Ape. Likewise, the beast cannot comprehend numbers or math. One, two, several and many, or many, many, or an army is about the best it can comprehend.

As a saboteur, its missions must be kept very simple. "Put this package (a bomb that is already set to explode on impact or on a set timer) at the foot of the gate or tower, or under or on top of vehicle X or building Y." Or, "Drop this package/bomb on the barrels," or "the generator," or "sensor cluster that looks like this (better have a photo), or "at the entrance to the tunnel or bunker." Anything more complicated than that will end in trouble and hit the wrong target.

Dragon-Apes can make a decent messenger delivering packages, supplies and small- to medium-size devices, but only if the animal knows the place or the person. The beast cannot read maps or follow directions unless they are super-simple and obvious, ideally go from A to B, with few twists or turns or confusing landmarks. It cannot recognize strangers from a description nor from a photo, but can chase, attack or capture somebody that its master may point to or introduced earlier. However, such a person is likely to get lost in a crowd, unless the Dragon-Ape knows him.

Dragon-Apes are being domesticated more and more by Lord Dunscon, Shifters, Witches, and powerful practitioners of magic (especially in the Federation of Magic, not much elsewhere) as well as by some mercenary companies, Dimensional Raiders, Bounty Hunters, spies, assassins, Psi-Ghosts, Mind Melters, Mind Bleeders, and Greater Demons. People of Anarchist or evil alignments usually have no qualms about using the "animals." The CS doesn't care whether they are animals or D-Bees, they are terminated whenever encountered. Such "pets" are forbidden in the 'Burbs. If discovered there, the animal is put down on the spot and its master taken into custody for interrogation, given a beating and branded a troublemaker to keep an eye on. A second offense means jail time on a work detail. A third means execution and the offender's family is put at the end of the CS citizen's 20 year Waiting List.

Dragon-Ape – Predatory Carnivore

Also Known As: The Demon Bat and Treacherous One.

Alignment: Considered Anarchist at best, most people see them as Miscreant or Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+10, M.E. 2D6+8, M.A. 2D6+6, P.S. 1D6+18 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+19, P.E. 1D6+15 (Supernatural), P.B. 2D4+1, Spd 1D6+11 running, or 15 mph (24 km) scurrying across the ground or through tree branches on all fours; 8 mph (12.8 km) running erect on two legs. 3-4 mph (4.8 to 6.4 km) walking. Does not have a bursts speed running.

Flying Speed: As indicated below. Maximum altitude is 10,000 feet (3,048 m), but usually flies 500-600 feet (152 to 183 m) above the ground or tree line. Below the tree line when hunting prey on the ground. Despite its size and wingspan, Dragon-Apes are agile flyers who can zoom through trees and make sharp turns, bolt upward, and land on a dime. It is this agility that enables the Dragon-Ape to snatch small prey off the ground or from a tree branch with its feet, grab weapons and objects out of the hands of people as it zooms by, kick opponents in the head, and whip or lasso prey with its tail, all while flying by at dazzling speed.

90 mph (144 km) for a short burst of speed lasting one minute. 180 mph (288 km) when diving!

70 mph (112 km) at a fast speed sustainable up to four hours.

20-40 mph (32 to 64 km) is a more comfortable and relaxed speed that can be maintained for up to 10 hours.

It hovers in place by flapping its wings, but can only hover for 1D4 minutes. It can also glide on air currents like a vulture.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Head – 1D4x10+60

*Tail – 35

*Neck – 1D4x10+80

*Hind Limbs/Arms (2) – 60 each

*Wings (2) – 120 each

Main Body – 1D6x10+160

* A single asterisk indicates a small and/or difficult target to strike, or just located in a place that is hard to target. The shooter or attacker must make a Called Shot to hit at a penalty of -4 to strike.

Note: On S.D.C. worlds, the Dragon-Ape has a main body of 1D6x10+60 S.D.C., 1D6x10+60 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 13. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (35 M.D.C. = 35 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D. (i.e. 2D6 M.D. = 2D6 S.D.C.).

Horror Factor: 10 for one or two, 13 for a troop of 4-12 of them.

Size: 6-7 feet (1.8 to 2.1 m) tall at the shoulders when standing erect on its two legs; 4-5 feet (1.2 to 1.5 m) when on all fours like a bat or chimp. The Dragon-Ape's long neck and head is always slung forward. The neck is 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m) long and flexible enough to look in all directions, including directly behind it.

The thin prehensile tail is an impressive 12-14 feet (3.7 to 4.3 m) long.

Wingspan is 20-28 feet (6.1 to 8.5 m) fully extended, but can fold up, like a bat, to be a very compact 2-3 feet (0.6 to 0.9 m) when the creature lands on the ground, on the side of buildings, hangs upside down or to navigate narrow tunnels and hallways. The wings must be folded to walk and function like arms/legs when running on all fours.

Weight: 200-300 pounds (90-135 kg). The size of the wings cause some people to mistakenly believe the creature weighs twice this amount.

Average Life Span: According to legend, the Dragon-Ape is a distant cousin to dragons, is a creature of magic, can read, write, do math, learn magic, and can live to be 700 years old. All very of which is *false*. Pure myth spawned during the Two Hundred Year Dark Age.

In reality, the Dragon-Ape lives for 80-120 years. The animal can mate any time of the year, but typically in the early winter, giving birth to one live young 8 months later. Young are nursed and carried by its mother for the first two months of its life but can fly within three weeks, and starts hunting small prey, insects, worms, small toads, frogs, and mice by the third month. The animal reaches full size within nine years, but does not reach sexual maturity until age 20. Females do not usually mate again until her last pup is at least three years old.

Young stay with the mother and her troop of fellow Dragon-Apes, which probably includes the male that fathered the young. Males protect all members of the troop, including young and juveniles. The typical Dragon-Ape troop is small, 1D6+6

animals. When the maximum number of 16 is exceeded, juveniles, starting with the juvenile males, are driven out of that social group. This is less unfair than it may sound, as most juveniles are ready to go off on their own to hunt and see the world by the time they reach the age of five or six. These outcasts may go off on their own as individuals, or in pairs, and sometimes form a small troop with 1D4+3 members. All juveniles. Mostly males and a few females, because females have to be lured or stolen from other troop. If a troop has too many members and plenty of females, the alpha and beta males will allow juvenile females to be wooed and leave their troop. If not, the males will fight rogues looking to steal their females. Juveniles hunt and explore the world for the next 1D4x10 years before joining or forming their own permanent troop of adults. Some never join a troop, and remain lone hunters, pairs, or trios for the rest of their days.

Juveniles are half the size and M.D.C. of an adult, but their attributes, speed and attacks per melee are already the same by age five. They reach full size by 12 years old and sexual maturity at 20 years old. Males are only slightly larger than females.

P.P.E.: 2D6x10+70 and an additional 10 P.P.E. for every 20 years of age. Also see Magic, below.

Disposition: Dragon-Apes can be mischievous and playful, or cruel and deadly. However, the animal's idea of fun is often at the expense of others. Wild Dragon-Apes have little to no empathy for other animals and people. Worse, their innate bullying and sadistic nature means they often torment and hurt their prey or unwilling playmates in a fashion that is not unlike a child tearing the wings off of a fly or drowning kittens. Some Dragon-Apes are downright wicked and cruel, and almost all take a sadistic pleasure in hunting, torturing and killing. The monsters have their own family clans called "troops" and a pecking order where the strong dominate the weak. Most Dragon-Apes live by the rule of the jungle where only the strongest, most cunning and ruthless survive. Even among their own, Alpha and Beta males are bullies that love to lord-over and punish others.

As noted earlier, Dragon-Apes enjoy cruel pranks and jokes. Sometimes subjecting their victims to such relentless or punishing "games" until they are physically broken, collapse from exhaustion or are killed. A Dragon-Ape thinks nothing of playing catch with a baby animal or human, engage in cat and mouse games, mock hunts, torture or mocking and tormenting the weak and helpless. Their strong, hand-like feet have an opposable thumb and are agile enough to use simple melee weapons and tools. A Dragon-Ape may use knives, picks, and sharp objects for the task of torture and killing victims/prey or simply to whip and beat their victims into submission.

This cruel streak and sadism is actually appealing to evildoers and ruthless individuals who use the creature as a domesticated work animal, pet, or companion. In this capacity, Dragon-Apes make excellent snitches and spies, slave wranglers, hunting or attack animals, guard animals, and loyal animal-like henchmen that are only too happy to keep slaves and prisoners under their thumb, abused and harassed.

It should be noted that like most bullies, Dragon-Apes do not like to be mistreated or physically abused themselves. They become quite vengeful and cruel toward those who abuse them, even murderous, turning on cruel masters when the opportunity presents itself.

It should be no surprise then that Dragon-Apes are impressed by beings who are more powerful and wicked than themselves.

This includes Shifters, Necromancers, Witches, and other evil practitioners of magic, powerful psychics, evil monsters, and Greater Demons. As long as their master is wicked and tolerates the Dragon-Apes' own sadistic and cruel nature, they can be a good match, with the monster exhibiting surprising loyalty. When a Dragon-Ape's master is slain or imprisoned, the beast gorges on food and drink, gets drunk for as many days as possible, and takes to the hills, but only after taking a handful of items it knows to have been valued possessions of its master, most notably booze, gems, Universal Credits, and magic items even if the creature cannot use the items.

As awful as all of this sounds, domesticated Dragon-Apes raised and nurtured by good, kind people, can break the legacy of cruelty and have alignments of Anarchist or Unprincipled, and on rare occasion, Scrupulous. However, the animal's sadistic and cruel nature is hard for it to overcome. Even an Unprincipled or Scrupulous aligned Dragon-Ape tends to be greedy when it comes to food and drink, selfish, self-serving and a bit of a bully when it can get away with it. That said, those raised and cared for by kind and fair people are fiercely loyal and protective of their human or D-Bee master and think of him/them as the leaders of its troop. A leader they are willing to protect and die for if necessary.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Acrobatics 80%, Climbing 90%/80%, Escape Artist 55%, Find Contraband 60%, I.D. Undercover Agent 45%, Intelligence 70%, Interrogation 60%, Land Navigation 90%, Lore: Magic 45%, Palming 50% (+10% with prehensile tail), Tailing 60% (+20% from above/flying), Tracking (People) 55%.

Natural Abilities: Fly, prehensile tail, prehensile feet/hands (has hands instead of feet where the feet should be), double-jointed arms, hands/feet and legs, neck can turn 360 degrees and look completely behind it, articulated finger on each wing for climbing and holding onto walls and ceilings, as well as other simple uses, Hawk-like vision able to see a rabbit or magic item from one mile (1.6 km) away, Nightvision 500 feet (152 m) even in total darkness, sees the invisible, takes half damage from heat and fire (including M.D. magic attacks napalm and plasma weapons), Supernatural Strength and Endurance, and is impervious to poison and disease.

Flying (special): See the Speed attribute, above, for details.

Prehensile Feet and Tail (special): As previously described, the feet of the Dragon-Ape are the equivalent of articulated hands suitable for climbing, hanging upside down, fighting, grabbing and using basic tools and melee weapons, and even simple magic items. The fingers and hands are very strong, Supernatural P.S. 1D6+14.

The long, thin prehensile tail is used like a whip and to strangle prey in combat as well as for hanging upside down and climbing.

Super-Bio-Regeneration (special): Bio-Regenerates 1D6 M.D.C. per melee round! Regrows lost limbs and portions of its tail within 1D6 days, but only 24 hours when it spends time healing on a ley line.

Understands all Languages 80% (special): Whether this is an innate magical ability or whether the animal is a language savant is unknown, but it can learn any language it hears spoken in a matter of days; 20% per day stopping at 80% total.

Also see Magic.

Attacks per Melee: Seven, takes into consideration a range of attacks.

Mega-Damage: Fight with bites, claw strikes, punches, kicks, whipping or constricting tail, wing swats or via magic, and sometimes a simple melee weapon using its prehensile feet and/or tail. Prefers blade, blunt and magic weapons.

Combat Penalties: -2 to strike with melee weapons. -5 to strike when trying to fire a gun or any long-range weapon.

Bite, Restrained – 4D6 S.D.C.

Bite, Full Strength – 2D4 M.D.

Grab and Toss Victims (feet or tail) – 4D6 S.D.C. against S.D.C. opponents, or 1D6 M.D. via a power toss against M.D. opponents, but the latter counts as two melee attacks and has a 33% chance of human-sized victims up to 10 feet (3 m) tall being knocked down or momentarily stunned and lose initiative and one melee attack. This applies to pulling people from hovercycles and open-air vehicles.

Punch, Hand/Foot, Restrained – 3D6 S.D.C.

Punch, Hand/Feet, Full Strength – 1D6 M.D.

Power Punch – Not possible.

Kick, Full Strength – 2D6 M.D.

Kick, Diving Power Kick – 4D6 M.D. but counts as two melee attacks.

Wing Swat, Restrained – 1D4 M.D.

Wing Strike, Full Strength – 1D6 M.D.

Whipping Tail – 2D6 M.D.

Body Slam – 2D4 M.D.

Flying/Diving Body Slam – 3D6+3 M.D. but counts as three melee attacks. Has a 70% chance of knocking down human-sized victims up to 10 feet (3 m) tall. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and two melee attacks.

Diving Pounce (special): 1D6 M.D. and 80% likelihood to knockdown any opponent smaller than 10 feet (3 m) tall or weighing less than 1.1 tons! Victims of knockdown (with no attempt by the beast to pin), lose initiative and two melee attacks. This attack counts as two melee attacks, three if also trying to pin its prey. **Note:** Whenever the Dragon-Ape pounces it can try to knock down and *pin its victim* and has a 60% chance of success. Any prey that is knocked and *pinned* is helpless and cannot move or physically fight for one melee round, but neither can the Dragon-Ape.

Strangle with Tail (special): 1D6 M.D. in the initial attack in which the tail wraps around its victim's throat. Each additional crushing and choking constriction does another 1D6 M.D. and counts as one melee attack. Tail has a 14 foot (4.3 m) reach. Also used to hang upside down, assist in climbing and whipping attacks.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 on Perception Rolls to notice prey, danger and magic items, +4 on initiative when flying, but only +1 on the ground, +2 to strike, parry, and dodge, +3 to dodge when flying at speeds greater than 60 mph (96 km), +2 to disarm, +3 to pull punch, +2 to save vs magic, +1 to save vs psionic attack, and +3 to save vs Horror Factor.

Tail Strike Bonuses (special): +3 to strike, disarm and entangle with tail. **Note:** When so desired, a successful "disarm" by the Dragon-Ape via the tail or the feet, means the weapon or object has been grabbed and plucked out of the hands of an opponent and carried off by the creature.

Vulnerabilities: Most M.D. weapons and attacks inflict their normal damage, heat and fire-based attacks do half damage. However, M.D. cold and ice inflict 50% greater damage to the Dragon-Ape.

Gluttony can get the horrid beast into trouble on a regular basis. The beast likes to overeat and drink alcohol or use drugs to the point of being falling down drunk, dazed, unobservant, and slow to react. **Penalties:** A drunk, drugged or overstuffed Dragon-Ape loses 1D4 melee attacks and has no combat bonuses (strike, parry, etc.) available to it while so intoxicated. Exertion like chasing or fighting someone for more than two melee rounds (30 seconds) causes the inebriated Dragon-Ape to pass out for 3D6 minutes. Recovers back to full capabilities within 2D4x10 minutes thanks to its super healing ability.

Avarice and sadism also gets the monster into trouble, like overstaying its welcome, taking foolish chances to get what it wants most, or engaging in depraved or sadistic pleasure that gets itself captured or killed.

Magic: All Dragon-Apes have an innate ability to cast a number of specific spells common to its species. The creature does not understand magic but just knows certain spells in a similar way as the Mystic O.C.C. **P.P.E.:** 2D6x10+70 and an additional 10 P.P.E. for every 20 years of age.

Death Trance (1), Chameleon (6), Cloak of Darkness (6), Frostblade (15), Globe of Daylight (2), Horror (10), Influence the Beast (12), Invisibility: Simple (6), Shadow Meld (10), and Power Weapon (35). **Note:** A few of these spells are found in both the **Rifts® Book of Magic™** and **W.B. 16: Federation of Magic™**.

Additional Spells of Choice: Select one additional spell at age 20, 40, 60, 80, 100, and 120, from Spell Invocations levels 1 and 2 only. Most are likely to be combat magic or spells that help it spy or steal. Spells are cast equal to that of a 3rd level mage regardless of age.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: While Dragon-Apes prefer temperate zones and warm climates, not very hot and especially not very cold climates, they can live anywhere. Most common around places of magic and communities of magic and powerful beings such as the Magic Zone, Federation of Magic, Lazlo, New Lazlo, the ruins of Tolkeen, Calgary, the Vampire Kingdoms in Northern, and to a much lesser degree, Southern Mexico, and the Yucatan. Some have been imported to Atlantis but are either combatants in the gladiatorial arena or animals owned by a wide range of foul beings from merchants and practitioners of magic to dimensional raiders and assassins.

Enemies: Considers most animals and people to be prey to hunt and bully. Everyone who is not an associate or on their side. Regards most beings as victims and playthings.

Allies: Their own kind and powerful beings, psychics, and practitioners of magic. Dragon-Apes really only respect Master Psychics and practitioners of magic, and even then only if they are more powerful, smarter and more wicked than the creature itself. They also enjoy working with assassins, spies, bandits, raiders, mercenaries, slavers and any evil being that treats it with a modicum of respect and kindness, and lets the beast vent its own dark inclinations to bully, frighten, hurt, and kill others. The animal may also serve Greater Demons but does so out of fear or as a slave, not out of respect or a willingness to serve such dark and dangerous forces. They also dislike vampires.

It is interesting to note that Dragon-Apes do not like nor respect or willingly serve dragons and other creatures of magic. The feeling is mutual.

Value: None per se. The Splugorth sometimes sell them as slaves to evil masters, but the strange beast cannot be domesticated nor

easily controlled or commanded except with frequent displays of force and punishment when one disobeys.

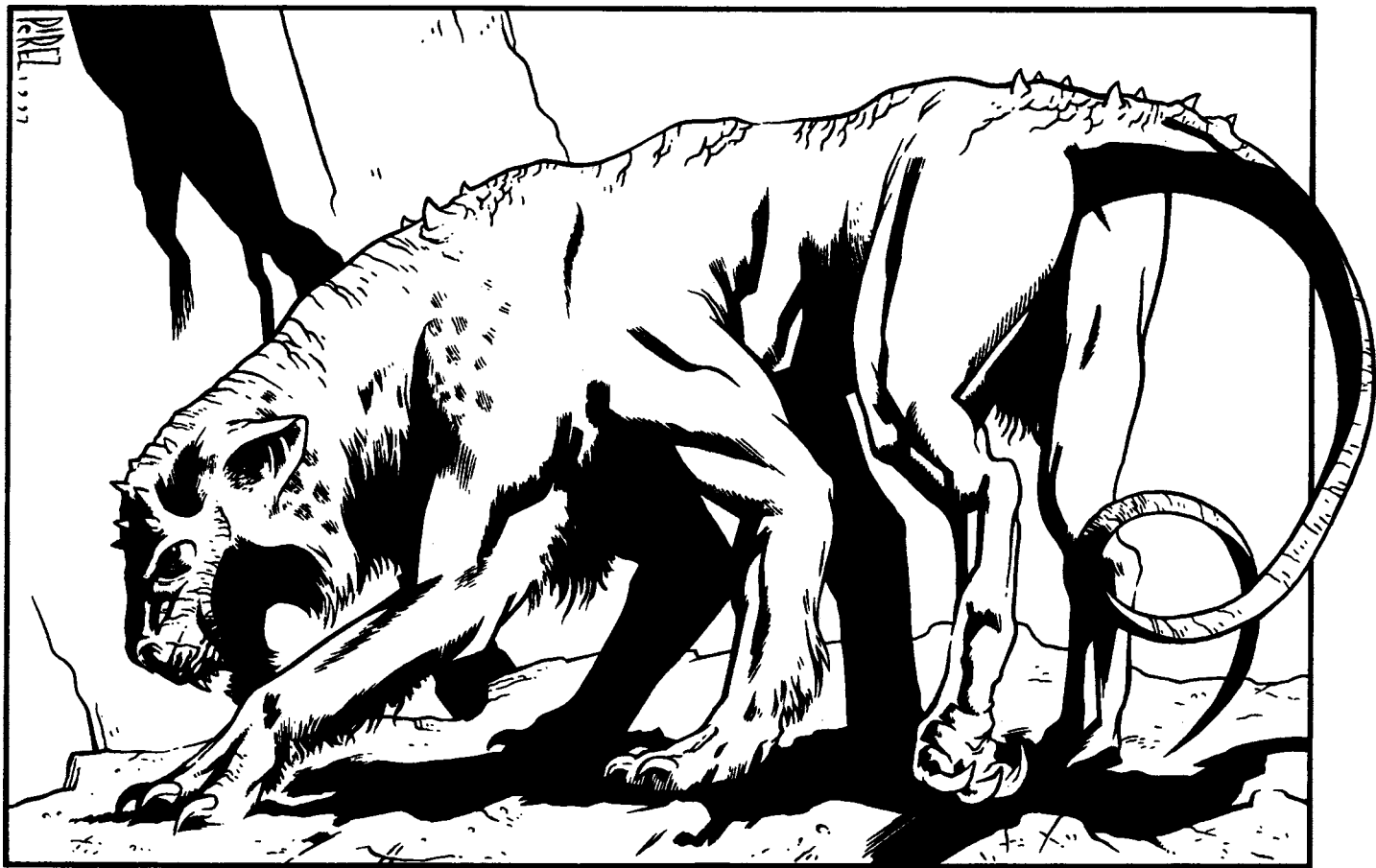
Weapons, Equipment and Money (special): Dragon-Apes covet and collect magical items, even if they don't know how to use them. They may also acquire/steal gems, jewelry, credits and other valuables, but mainly because they see humans and D-Bees value them so much and to get food and alcohol. When allowed, Dragon-Apes hoard booze.

Other common possessions may include a utility belt with pouches and a holster for one or more blade weapons, a Vibro-Blade or knife, perhaps tools of torture, a wine skin (less prone

to damage than bottles), a pocket mirror for signaling, a walkie-talking/radio, a backpack or satchel.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 12: Psyscape™**, page 98, inspired by the ideas of Peter Murphy and the art of Michael Dubisch.

Player Character Note: The Dragon-Ape is not recommended as a player character, but it is feasible if a Game Master, in his or her sole discretion, allows it. However, the character must try to think like an animal or primitive person driven by instinct and base desires.



Dragon-Cat

By Patrick Nowak and Kevin Siembieda

Judged by its appearance alone, the Dragon-Cat seems to be nothing more than a huge alien feline that resembles a combination of a hunting cat and a dinosaur with six legs. The adult stands some 7-10 feet (2.1 to 3 m) tall at the shoulders and measures 15-20 feet (4.6 to 6.1 m) long from the tip of its nose to its hindquarters. The slender semi-prehensile tail is 10-15 feet (3-4.6 m) long by itself, but hangs down and coiled behind the animal. The large retractable claws of all six legs are able to rend steel and M.D.C. flesh. The feline's face, legs and underside are covered in a shaggy, tawny fur, but the top of its head, neck, back, upper body, and tail is a tough, scaly skin resembling both a rhino and a reptile. With its explosive speed and cat-quick reflexes, there can be no question that the fearsome Dragon-Cat is a deadly hunter.

The big feline is much less monstrous than most alien beasts from beyond the Rifts, and some people, particularly Wilderness Scouts, Psi-Druids, Psi-Stalkers, psychics, and Native Americans

claim the animal means people no harm. They insist the animal desires only to live in peace as a hunter of animals, live off the land and enjoy the splendor of nature. As if to punctuate the point, the big cat is known to come to the aid of people in need, and there are countless accounts of one or several appearing from the underbrush or leaping out of the shadows to protect the innocent, regardless of race or species, from monsters and dangerous animals. In fact, Dragon-Cats seem to have an instinctual hatred of demons and supernatural evil and a wary affinity toward humans.

The debate rages as to whether or not the Dragon-Cat is a cunning animal predator with innate magic and psychic powers, or an intelligent creature of magic akin to the sphinx or dragon. Like the latter, each Dragon-Cat possesses its own individual personality, which is usually playful, friendly and curious. The animal is clearly aware of its surroundings and seems able to make rational and intelligent decisions. It is known to show mercy in combat and exhibits rudimentary strategies and tactics in combat and when hunting. It is its unique empathy and compassion for other intelligent beings that sets it apart from other predatory carnivores.

The giant cats are clearly self-aware, and though incapable of human speech, Dragon-Cats are able to communicate via Telepathy. Further evidence, to many, that the creature is much more than an ordinary animal and is not dangerous to people if left alone.

Like many tribal people, the cats have simple needs and desires. Dragon-Cats gather in small family clans or tribes and live off the land as nomadic hunters. They hunt medium and large prey such as wild boars, deer, elk, caribou, moose, horses, buffalo, medium-sized dinosaurs, and other animals – and sometimes even larger prey when they hunt as a group. When they share their thoughts and feelings via Telepathy, they are usually curious about the intelligent beings they are communicating with, followed by concerns for the welfare of its mate, young, family and members of its community/clan/tribe (if it has one), new dangers entering the area, the availability of game to hunt, fresh water to drink, a good place to rest and camp, avoiding monsters, fighting demons and the forces of evil, and protecting family first, and innocent people, second.

Dragon-Cats are smart enough to understand the concept of property, even if they do not accept it for themselves, and know enough not to hunt the cattle and livestock of humans and D-Bees. Only rogue and desperate, sick or starving Dragon-Cats hunt animals belonging to man. Nor do they hunt people, except for the purpose of justice, revenge and to destroy evil, human or otherwise. They have no need for money, wealth or power, and care little about the concerns of humans, D-Bees and other intelligent beings, except when their actions affect the woodland environments and the Dragon-Cats directly. As a result, most Dragon-Cats have no hostile feelings about humans, D-Bees or any sentient beings that are not overtly wicked or cruel. The alien felines do not fully understand why some people, especially some humans and D-Bees, hate and kill over territory, property/belongings, money, arguments, physical difference, magic, social status, and emotional stimuli. And as a result, regard most humanoids as lacking in self-control and compassion for others.

Dragon-Cats completely understand the emotions, love, joy, fear, and anger. They also know the difference between right and wrong, good and evil, and to a lesser degree, understand emotions like jealousy and revenge, but they do not understand wanton acts of cruelty and destruction, greed, gluttony, lasting hatred, prejudice based on appearance and differences, species or beliefs, and find most of the laws and rules of “civilization” silly and confusing. It’s not that the felines lack intelligence, they just see the world and their place in it very differently than humans and D-Bees.

Dragon-Cats are content with a life of wandering, hunting, and exploration. Their needs are simple and revolve around food, survival and family. Dragon-Cats are not themselves territorial and find the habitats of people to be loud, smelly and unpleasant. They despise slavery and cruelty, and tend to be peaceful and honest creatures, killing only what they need to comfortably survive, and prefer to stay in the wild where they, generally, keep to themselves.

That said, there are some selfish and wicked and cruel Dragon-Cats who have no love for the soldiers of the *Coalition States* or humans, in general. Though uncommon, the most wicked may elect to hunt and feed upon people, and engage in acts of harassment and destruction. This may include preying on human livestock, slaughtering cattle and pets out of spite, chasing and scaring people, acts of torture and murder.

As is the case with most felines, especially the young and juvenile Dragon-Cats, they are exceedingly curious and may choose to interact with humans, D-Bees and other sentient beings. Sometimes sharing the meat of a kill, leading people to a safe location

and communicating as best they can via Telepathy and body language. A far from perfect way to communicate, misunderstandings do sometimes occur, which is another reason the felines try to keep encounters short, simple, non-threatening and straightforward. Other Dragon-Cats express indifference toward humans and other sentient beings, while some who have had bad experiences with people, dislike them.

The typical Dragon-Cat has the heart of a Cyber-Knight and holds dear the virtues of life, freedom, honesty, loyalty, and fair play. That’s why Dragon-Cats frequently volunteer to temporary alliances and allow themselves to be used as mounts and hunting companions to Cyber-Knights, heroes, Native Americans, and psychics of good alignment. All of whom the Dragon-Cats see as kindred spirits; in particular, Mystical Indian Warriors, Wilderness Scouts, Cyber-Knights, Psi-Stalkers, Psi-Druids, and Psi-Warriors.

As one might expect, Dragon-Cats dislike slavers and big game hunters, and not only do they try to avoid them, but have been known to slip into their camps to free prisoners and caged animals. Moreover, they consider such armed and dangerous people “fair game” to hunt and kill. The same holds true for soldiers of the Coalition States and others known to hunt and kill Dragon-Cats and other beings based solely on their alien appearance and superhuman powers. However, Dragon-Cats seldom eat such foes, because they are sentient beings.

If Dragon-Cats have a natural enemy it is the demonic. They cannot tolerate demons or any wicked and cruel monster that hurts, enslaves, and torments others for pleasure. The more murderous and cruel the being, the more it is despised by the Dragon-Cat. Though the cats happily hunt and destroy such fiends, they do so intelligently, never blindly leaping into a fight. The cats wait, watch and attack only when the fight is fair or the situation demands immediate action, say to save its mate or young, it is cornered, etc.

Dragon-Cat, Predatory Carnivore

Alignment: Any, but most are Principled (20%), Scrupulous (45%) or Unprincipled (10%).

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+9 (high animal intelligence, but more equivalent to a low or average human intelligence), M.E. 1D6+10, M.A. 1D6+12, P.S. 2D6+22 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+21, P.E. 1D6+20, P.B. 1D6+14, Spd 2D6+92 running, or 75 mph (120 km). This speed can be maintained for an hour before requiring the cat to slow down or stop and rest. 90 mph (144 km) in short bursts lasting up to six minutes. A fast trotting speed of 15-25 mph (24 to 40 km) can be maintained for up to five hours. Walking speed is 4-7 mph (6.4 to 11.2 km) and can be sustained for up to 10 hours.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Head – 100

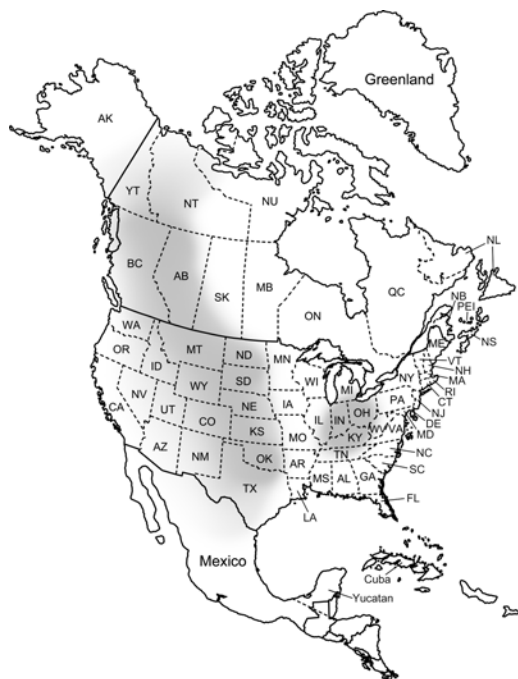
*Tail – 60

Legs (6) – 100 each

Main Body – 1D6x10+190

* A single asterisk indicates a small and/or difficult target to strike. The shooter or attacker must make a Called Shot to hit at a penalty of -3 to strike.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Dragon-Cat has a main body of 1D6x10+60 S.D.C., 1D6x10+10+100 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 12. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (60 M.D.C. = 60 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D. (i.e. 2D6 M.D. = 2D6 S.D.C.).



Horror Factor: 11 for one. 13 for 6-10 and H.F. 16 for a group of 20 or more.

Size: 7-10 feet (2.1 to 3 m) tall, 15-20 feet (4.6 to 6.1 m) long from snout to haunches. The tail is an additional 5-8 feet (1.5 to 2.4 m) long all by itself.

Weight: One ton.

Average Life Span: 200-300 years. A female Dragon-Cat can bear 1D4 young every 5-6 years, usually as her previous litter approaches adulthood. The animal reaches full physical maturity by age six but not sexual maturity until age 10. Offspring usually leave their family clan between 5-6 years old, but some remain to form a larger pride.

Dragon-Cats sometimes gather in groups or prides in a similar way as African Lions, with some groups as large as 40 members (1D4x10; rare). However, a typical pride is usually 4-10 members: the adult male and female, 1D4 young, and 1D4 adults from a previous litter or two young adults that have remained with the family group. A large pride is 12-24 with 1D4+1 mated pairs and their offspring.

P.P.E.: 2D4x10+30

Disposition: A cagey and cunning hunter that uses basic strategy and tactics and may hunt as a group using teamwork. Inquisitive and friendly, the big cats are direct and straightforward, honest, caring, compassionate and kind. Though accepting of most intelligent beings, including humans and D-Bees, they are fiercely protective of their families and pride, and will not hesitate to kill anyone who threatens them. However, they are satisfied with defeating and chasing away intelligent foes rather than killing them outright. Hates and hunts evil supernatural beings and evil monsters. Hates enslavement and cruelty. Dislikes bullies.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 65%/55%, Detect Ambush 60%, Detect Concealment 50%, Dowsing 65%, Gymnastics 70%, Intelligence 80%, Land Navigation 90%, Prowl 70%, Swim 50%, Tailing 90%, and Track by sight 60% (+10% to track humans).

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 1,000 feet (305 m), can leap 20 feet (6.1 m) high or 30 feet (9.1 m) across (50% greater with a running start), fire/heat resistance (half damage), track by smell

60% (+20% to follow a blood scent and demons), Bio-Regenerates at a rate of 1D6 M.D. per hour, and completely regenerates a damaged or lost tail. Only a fair climber and a poor swimmer.

Also see Magic and Psionics.

Attacks per Melee: Five physical or psionic attacks, or by magic.

Mega-Damage: Bite, claws, tail or pounce attacks.

Bite, Restrained – 5D6 S.D.C.

Bite, Full Strength – 3D6 M.D.

Paw Strike, Blunt (no claws) – 3D6 M.D.

Claw Strike, Pawing, Restrained – 5D6 S.D.C.

Claw Strike, Full Strength – 5D6 M.D.

Clawed Strike, Power Punch – 1D6x10 M.D. but counts as two melee attacks.

Whipping Tail – 2D6 M.D.

Head Butt – 2D4 M.D.

Body Butt/Bump – 2D6 M.D.

Leaping Pounce (special): 5D6 M.D. and 88% likelihood to knock down any opponent smaller than 20 feet (6.1 m) tall or weighing less than 3 tons! Victims of knockdown (with no attempt by the beast to pin), lose initiative and two melee attacks. This attack counts as two melee attacks, three if also trying to pin its prey. **Note:** Whenever the feline pounces it can try to knock down and *pin its victim* and has a 75% likelihood of success.

Any prey that is knocked and *pinned* is helpless and cannot move or physically fight for one melee round! After a successful pinning pounce attack, the Dragon-Cat may elect to simply hold its prey down or continue to attack using its bite. After one melee round, the victim of a pinning can try to pull or wiggle free. The victim and Dragon-Cat both roll 1D20 without bonus modification. High roll wins, victim wins ties. Success for the victim means he manages to get free but only has half his usual number of melee attacks for that round. If the Dragon-Cat wins, its victim remains pinned for another melee round, but the cat can only bite twice that round. The rest of its melee actions are used to keep the prey pinned.

Bonuses (in addition to probable attribute bonuses): +3 on Perception Rolls to notice prey or danger, +3 on initiative, +1 to strike and parry, +2 to dodge, +5 to roll with impact, +2 to pull punch, +1 to save vs magic, and +4 to save vs Horror Factor.

Vulnerabilities: As a giant predator the size of a buffalo, they are themselves targets for predators, hunters and those who fear such “monsters.” The Dragon-Cat’s peaceful and tolerant nature can also get them into trouble sometimes. They tend to be too trusting and always seem surprised by betrayal and treachery, especially when it comes from someone they consider to be an ally or friend.

Likewise, the Dragon-Cat’s instinct to hunt and slay demons and other evil supernatural beings and monsters can, even when done with care and cunning, make the felines the enemy of such monsters who hunt and destroy them.

Dislike fire but are not afraid of it any more than a human.

Magic: Spell casting abilities are limited to the following innate magic abilities: Blinding Flash (1), Breathe Without Air (5), Climb (3), Cloud of Smoke (2), Death Trance (1), Repel Animals (7), Shadow Meld (10), Turn Dead (6), Manipulate Objects (2+), Sustain (12) and Telepathy (4). **Note:** See the **Rifts® Book of Magic** for descriptions of all spells listed. Spells are cast equal to a 3rd level Ley Line Walker. **P.P.E.:** 2D4x10+30.

Psionics: The equivalent of a Master Psychic with limited abilities; Impervious to Cold (2), Mind Block (4), Presence Sense

(4), Resist Fatigue (4), Resist Hunger (2), Resist Thirst (6), See Aura (6), Telepathy (4) and Telekinetic Push (4), plus one Physical, one Sensitive and two Healing abilities of choice. Needs a 10 or higher to save vs psionic attacks. **I.S.P.:** M.E. attribute number x10; typically I.S.P. 130.

Sensitivity to the Supernatural (special): Similar to Dog Boys; detects/senses the presence of supernatural evil at a range of 500 feet (152 m). Cannot pinpoint the exact location, but puts the beast on alert that danger is near.

Telepathic Bond (special): A Dragon-Cat has the ability to forge a telepathic bond with one person/non-feline whom it respects and trusts – most often this is its rider or hunting companion. This link allows instant, secure communication via Telepathy between rider/companion and Dragon-Cat *without I.S.P. cost* at a range of up to 3,000 feet (914 m). The bond also works on a subconscious level, enabling the pair to function with complete synchronization and in total simpatico as if a single organism.

Bonuses from Telepathic Bond for the Rider/Companion: +20% to Exotic Horsemanship skill when riding the Dragon-Cat, add one attack per melee round when riding the big cat, +1 on initiative, +1 to strike, +1 to parry, and +6 M.D. on charging attacks with a melee weapon (spear, lance, sword, etc.). Limited to ONE link with another species at a time.

Telepathy with fellow Dragon-Cats (special): The animals communicate between themselves via various sounds – growls, purrs, howls, and body language as well as via Telepathy. **Range:** 3,000 feet (914 m) with as many as 12 of their own kind at a time. Very useful in hunting and coordinated attacks, alerting of danger or intruders, etc.

Habitat: Dragon-Cats are found in the Magic Zone, New West, and Canadian Northwest, but are comparatively rare, with less than an estimated 1,000 throughout North America, but that number is extremely difficult to calculate and there could be 2-5 times as many of the elusive and canny animals. However, they are not known to exist in Central or South America or anywhere else in the world. Legend has it that they appeared sometime during the middle of the Two-Hundred Years Dark Age.

The terrain of their native dimension consists mainly of dusty savannas dotted with dwarf trees and scrub brush. Despite the differing conditions, the species has adapted quite easily to North America, with the American Northwest and Western Canada being its favorite. Dragon-Cats are found in greatest abundance in three main areas: 1. Along the border of Lone Star's (Texas) northern quadrant and Oklahoma. 2. The area around the Calgary Rift including Alberta, British Columbia, Montana, and the Dakotas. 3. The Ohio Valley/Magic Zone, mainly because of the diversity of magical and psionic life forms, as well as heroes.

Enemies: Instinct and goodness dictate that most Dragon-Cats are champions of good and therefore oppose evil in all its forms. They loathe such beings as evil Shifters, Witches, demons, and other evil supernatural beings, as well as despicable and evil creatures such as vampires, Black Faeries, Worm Wraiths, Devilsaurus, Devil Unicorns, Oborus-Slitherers, and other wicked monsters that torture and kill for pleasure. They also dislike slavers, Coalition Soldiers and the Minions of Splugorth, among others. They hate demons, poachers and people who enslave others, above all. Many a Dragon-Cat will perish fighting demonic beings during the Minion War.

Allies: Dragon-Cats are willing to befriend any creature that is good and honorable, especially if they share similar ethics. When selecting a rider or “bond-mate,” these creatures prefer Mystical Indian Warriors, Wilderness Scouts, Cyber-Knights, Psi-Druids and Psi-Warriors, but also like Dog Boys and most psychics and honorable heroes.

Value: None, because they cannot be domesticated or enslaved and forced to do much against their will. To use as a riding animal, the Dragon-Cat must accept and embrace the rider. Their meat is too tough and gamy, and their fur too matted and foul to have any value. In the arena, the Dragon-Cat can fetch as much at 3,000 credits, but again, the creature must be forced to fight and it will look for every opportunity to escape, set other animals and slaves free, and/or kill those who hurt and enslave it. Some Necromancers will pay 1D4x1,000 for the cat's claws or head/skull.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 12: Psyscape™**, page 99, and inspired by the ideas and writing of Peter Murphy.

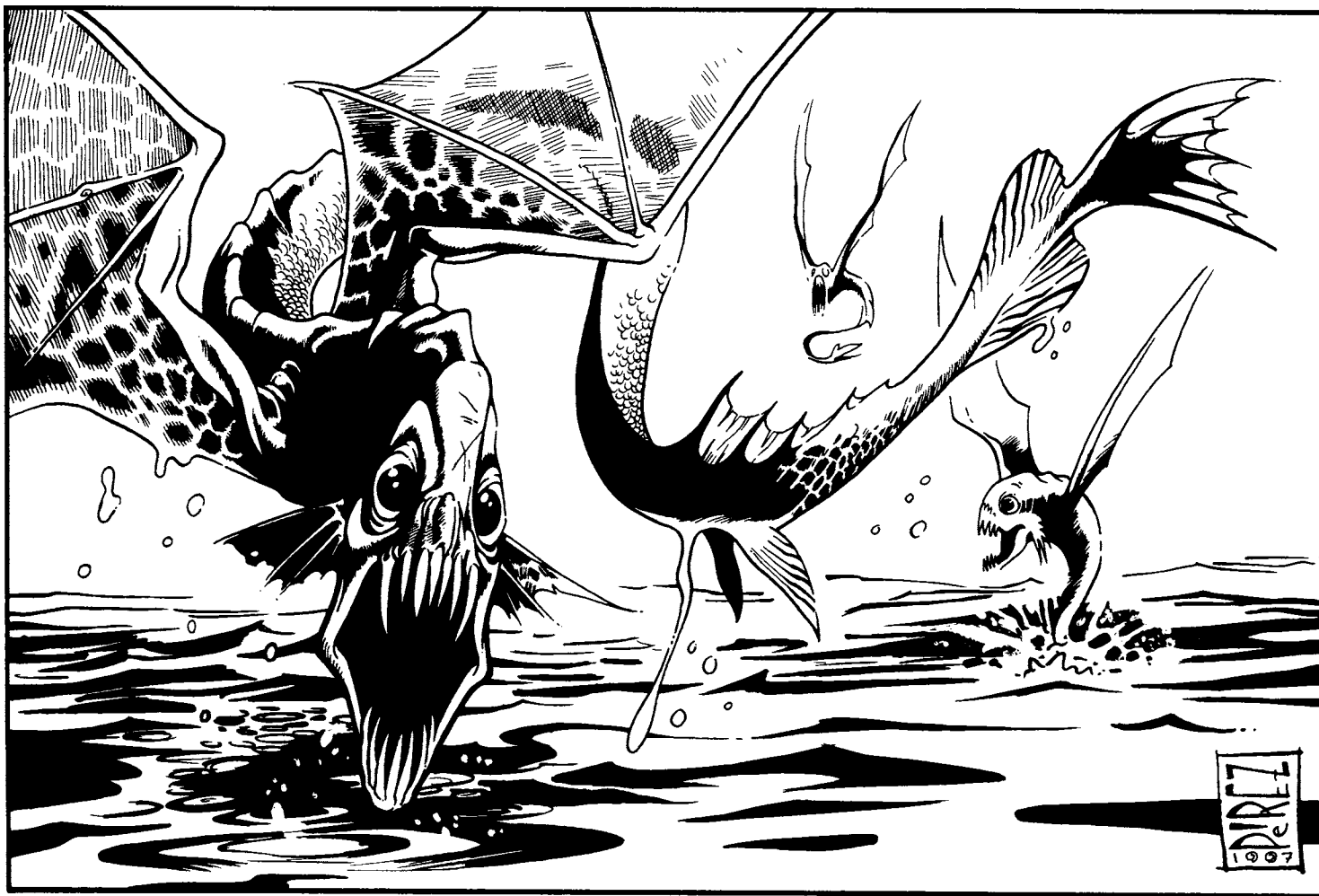
Dragonfish

By Patrick Nowak and Kevin Siembieda

These devouring “sea serpents” plague the Great Lakes and connecting tributaries including the Detroit and Hudson Rivers. They are aquatic predators called Dragonfish because the scaly beasts have leathery wings which serve as fins underwater, but enables them to soar and glide on air currents when they leap out of the water. Dragonfish have long, scale-covered, serpentine bodies, and gaping maws filled with long snapping teeth. They are not related to actual dragons in any way, shape or form and do not have a high intelligence nor magical abilities. Unlike so-called *flying-fish* that just leap above the water, Dragonfish have wings and can actually fly through the air like a bird. They use this flying ability to hunt, enabling them to locate prey at great distances, and to attack surface creatures including birds and animals on dry land and the crews of ships on the Great Lakes and rivers. A dull-witted predator, Dragonfish are known to attack nonedible targets like flying power armor, robots, planes, helicopters, sails, flags, and anchor chains.

Schools of Dragonfish are brazen and willing to attack almost anything that moves regardless of its size. It is not unheard of for the fish to assault Pterodactyls, Gryphons and adult dragons, as well as besiege a ship or submarine! However, they give up quickly when they realize their target is hard M.D.C. steel and move on in search of real prey. Attacks by Dragonfish en masse against large ships are uncommon though sailors must always be on alert, because even one or a few of these creatures can be dangerous, killing and devouring crew members right on the deck of the ship or slithering down into the lower decks or into the hold. The beast must slither down corridors too narrow to fly, which is most, but can still lunge and bite at unsuspecting sailors. If the horrid creature(s) should make it into a hold with fresh catch, it will eat until full and probably go to sleep on top of a mound of fish or crustaceans – its next meal – rather than look for a way out to vacate the ship. Bad news for fishermen because they lose some of their hard-earned catch and may come face to face with one or more of these Mega-Damage serpents when it's time to unload.

Dragonfish have gills and primitive lungs, so they can survive out of water for up to 8 hours, x6 if they are in a cool, moist en-



vironment, like among the cool, wet bodies of fish in a hold. Half that time when in a dry, hot environment.

Dragonfish are long, slender creatures covered with fine multicolored scales that range from bright red to yellow to light blue. Their fins and large leathery wings are dark in color yet still semi-translucent, usually a dark green, purple or blue. The tail is long and serpent-like with top and bottom fins near the tip. What ruins the otherwise attractive appearance of the Dragonfish is its ugly, blunt face, dominated by bulging eyes and a large maw filled with rows of razor-sharp, needle-like teeth. The fin on the end of the tail is lined with seven sharp barbs which the monster uses to slash and cut prey or strike like a barbed whip.

As noted earlier, these ravenous hunters will try to take a bite out of anything that moves, and like sharks, are attracted by erratic movement and the scent of blood in the water, or carried on the air. The serpent can smell blood up to two miles (3.2 km) underwater and one mile (1.6 km) on land, the deck of a ship or in the air. Though attracted by the scent of blood, Dragonfish do not exhibit the frenzy of sharks, nor do they eat their own kind. On the other hand, they attack and eat just about anything that's edible from livestock, pets, humans, otters, beavers, and birds to insects, fish, crustaceans, amphibians, turtles, and sea mammals. The monsters tend to leave really large sea animals, such as whales, alone. In fact, they are sometimes seen sunning themselves on the backs of whales, Devil Kraken, sea serpents and Metztla floating on the surface, as well as on the decks of ships and floating wreckage.

During an attack, the beasts abandon combat as soon as they get through their thick skulls that their intended prey is covered in armor, is inedible, or is too powerful for them. Though fairly

stupid, the fish have come to recognize vessels common to the Great Lakes, including Coalition ships, Dead Boys, SAMAS and armored crew members. Dragonfish have learned they are too dangerous a foe and hard to crack out of their shell, so they tend to avoid CS vessels and armored troops unless they smell blood. In fact, Dragonfish abandon an attack against any opponent(s) who prove to be too deadly and hard to kill even if the fishes outnumber them six to one.

Dragonfish prefer easy prey and seldom fight to the death. Though they travel in schools that can number more than one hundred, even such large schools typically send small groups to attack in waves; 2D4+3 serpents at a time. Such waves of 2D4+3 Dragonfish attack, biting and slashing with their tails for one or two melee rounds before flying off or diving into the water to let another 2D4+3 continue the attack. This is the only instinctive tactic they use, but it is very effective in wearing down and slowly slaying ship crew members and large animals.

This monster can be encountered as lone individuals and groups as small as 2D4, especially when the flying fish has flown off over land and gotten lost or separated from its larger school. A typical school of Dragonfish has 4D6+6 members, a large school 1D6x10+20, and the largest school 1D4x100!

Dragonfish – Aquatic Carnivore Predator

Also Known As: Flying Serpent Fish and Devil Piranha.

Alignment: Animal predator, generally considered to be Miscreant.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+1 (low animal intelligence), M.A. 1D4, M.E. 1D6, P.S. 1D6+10 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+14, P.E. 1D6+16,

P.B. 1D6+7, Spd 10, or 7 mph (11 km) slithering across dry ground or on the deck of a ship.

Swimming speed is 10 mph (16 m or 8.9 knots) and can be maintained indefinitely. 20 mph (32 km or 17 knots) in a short burst lasting 1D6 minutes.

Maximum flying speed is 40 mph (64 km), but it can only maintain flight for one hour. Flying 20 mph (32 km) can be maintained up to three hours before needing to rest and take a dip in a nice refreshing body of water.

Maximum flying height is 1,000 feet (30.5 m) above the surface of the water, usually under 100 feet (30.5 m). Maximum ocean depth is one mile (1.6 km).

M.D.C. by Location: 4D6 + P.E. attribute number.

*Head – 20

*Tail – 20

*Wings – 20 each

Main Body – 1D6x10

* A single asterisk indicates a small and/or difficult target to strike, or just located in a place that is hard to target. The attacker must make a Called Shot to hit at a penalty of -3 to strike.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Dragonfish has a main body of 4D6 S.D.C., 4D6+6 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 12. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (20 M.D.C. = 20 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D. (i.e. 2D6 M.D. = 2D6 S.D.C.).

Horror Factor: 9 for one or a few, 11 for a school of 12-20, 13 for a school of 50 or more.

Size: 6-10 feet (1.8 to 3 m) long with a wingspan of 10 feet (3 m).

Weight: 60-100 pounds (27 to 45 kg).

Average Life Span: 1D6+14 years. Females lay 2D4x10 eggs in a safe location once a year underwater, and leave them to fend for themselves. Young the size of a minnow hatch five months later and scatter, hiding in the vegetation on the lake or river floor until they get some size. More than half will not survive their first year of life. By the end of one year, the young Dragonfish is a foot (0.3 m) long and grows an additional foot (0.3 m) every year until it reaches its maximum length of 10 feet (3 m). Achieves sexual maturity by age four.

P.P.E.: 2D6

Disposition: Aggressive and bold when hungry, angry, or cornered. Quick to attack, but also quick to retreat if an opponent is inedible or too dangerous. The animal's actions are driven by an instinct and a hunger that is never satisfied for long. Most schools break off an attack when 20% of their numbers are killed or severely wounded.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 45%/35%, Prowl 30% (+20% when silently gliding in the air or underwater), and Swimming 98%.

Natural Abilities: Swim, fly, sees in color and infrared spectrum of light, can see in murky water, Nightvision 1,500 feet (457 m), keen hawk-like vision in the air able to spot a rabbit at 2 miles (3.2 km) away, impervious to S.D.C. cold, resistant to M.D. cold (half damage), aquatic but can survive out of water for 8 hours, triple if in a cool, damp or humid environment. Depth tolerance is one mile (1.6 km), maximum flying altitude is 1,000 feet (30.5 m). Bio-Regenerates 1D4 M.D.C. per 24 hours (double on a ley line), and can regrow a tail, fin or wing within 4D4 weeks. When seriously injured it retreats underwater.

Attacks per Melee: Three.

Mega-Damage: Fighting primarily via bite or tail slash.

Nipping Bite/Restrained – 3D6 S.D.C.

Full Strength Bite – 2D6 M.D.

Tail Strike, Blunt – 1D6 M.D.

Tail Strike, Slashing – 2D4 M.D.

Flying Body Ram – 1D4 M.D. and has a 40% chance of knocking human-sized opponents weighing less than 300 pounds (135 kg) off their feet. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and one melee attack.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on initiative, +3 to strike and dodge underwater, +2 to strike and +5 to dodge while in the air/flying, +8 to save vs Horror Factor in any environment because it is too stupid to be afraid.

Vulnerabilities: All M.D. weapons inflict full damage. Dull-witted, hyper-aggressive predators that often attack without thought and take on more than they can chew.

Magic: None.

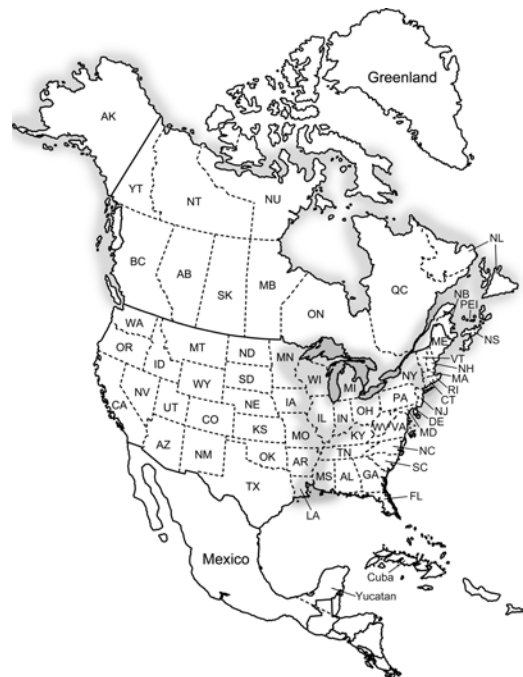
Psionics: None.

Habitat: In North America, Dragonfish are concentrated in the Great Lakes, the Detroit and Hudson Rivers, Gulf of St. Lawrence, and other large, deep lakes in Wisconsin and Minnesota, as well as a few large river systems like the Mississippi River, especially the delta region, and the Colorado River.

Dragonfish can survive in fresh or salt water indefinitely, but avoid deep ocean waters in preference to shallow coastal waters, shallow seas and large freshwater bodies of water, like lakes and deep, wide rivers. They also seem to prefer cool waters, and are found throughout the northern waters around the USA and Canada.

Enemies: Anything that can be killed and eaten is considered prey. Anything that threatens it is an enemy, including humans, D-Bees and other predators. For some reason, Dragonfish are hostile to all flying creatures and attack them immediately regardless of size, and even adult dragons will be attacked.

Allies: None per se, although they generally leave healthy Aqua-Hydras, Devil Kraken, Horned Demon Fish, Rhino-Whale, Maelstrom, and other giant aquatic predators alone, and sometimes school around a single Horned Demon Fish to feed on its



kills or to attack prey that might be knocked off of boats and into the water by the beast.

Value: None, though the tail is fairly tasty and its meat fetches one credit per pound; tastes like chicken. Tribal people and artisans sometimes use the teeth to make needles and jewelry.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® Sourcebook 4: Coalition Navy™**, page 102.

Dragon Ray

By Kevin Siembieda

Dragon Rays are sentient beings with intelligence on par with humans. They are included in the **Rifts® Bestiary** because of their animal appearance and nomad ways of the wandering hunter. The creature can be any alignment, but the vast majority seem to be good or selfish. The creature is a large, elegant and graceful being of air and water. It resembles a serpentine dragon with leathery wings for arms and a snaking body instead of hind legs. A bony ridge runs along the spine from the back of the head to the tip of the tail, and ends in a flat, spatula shaped fin. The underside of the tail is rimmed with a pair of similar bony protrusions which helps to dissuade giant predators from taking a bite out of it.

The Dragon Ray has adapted well to life on Rifts Earth which is very similar to its alien homeworld. Despite its aquatic nom de plume, the Dragon Ray is equally at home underwater, soaring in the air, and on dry land, but usually lives underwater or near a body of water so that it can elude trouble on dry land.

On land they can “snake” along the ground with relative ease, their wings folded and tucked behind them. Or the creature may pull itself along by its wingtips like a bat. Their wing-arms are surprisingly strong and articulated with a single, pointed tip on each wing that can be used like a powerful finger. This “finger” can be used to operate computers and machines – Dragon Rays love electronics and computers – and are also strong enough to enable the beast to climb or perch on a branch, cliff, rooftop or the side of a building like a giant bat. Underwater, the wings and tail are used to glide on water currents, swim and dive with the same grace and speed as a manta-ray. And though the Dragon Ray sometime pretends they are only able to pull themselves along the ground and when swimming, especially if the creature is a con artist or thief, they can fly and soar through the sky with the skill and control of an eagle.

The ever curious Dragon Ray is a friendly and social creature fascinated by other sentient beings, especially humans and D-Bees. In fact, the creature likes to join adventurers and heroes on their travels to see the world, meet new people and to share adventures. Dragon Rays have excellent memories and dramatic speaking voices which they use to exchange stories and information. The beast loves to hear stories almost as much as they like to tell stories. The intelligent creature has no aversion to physical labor and is happy to contribute to its “team” or any community that welcomes it into their fold. The creature almost always seems to become an active and well-liked resident of the places where they put down roots. Fishing villages, seafarers and coastal communities frequently and happily adopt one or a few of these gregarious creatures. What better towns-person to have than one that can help find the best places to fish, scout ahead, guide vessels through treacherous waters and through fog, fly up into the sky ahead to watch for storms or pirates and other dangers, assist in searches and rescue missions, pull small boats and rafts in distress to safety,

chase away sharks, and keep its shipmates in good spirits with enchanting stories and tall tales?

Back on dry land, the Dragon Ray can engage in delivering messages to neighboring towns, villages and farms, run messages and/or bring basic supplies to ships at sea, help hunt game animals and find people lost in the wilderness (and at sea), as well as warn of approaching storms and terrestrial threats, chase away predators, aid in the defense of a community or ship, barter for goods and services, serve as a diplomatic liaison, and most of all, tell stories and entertain people.

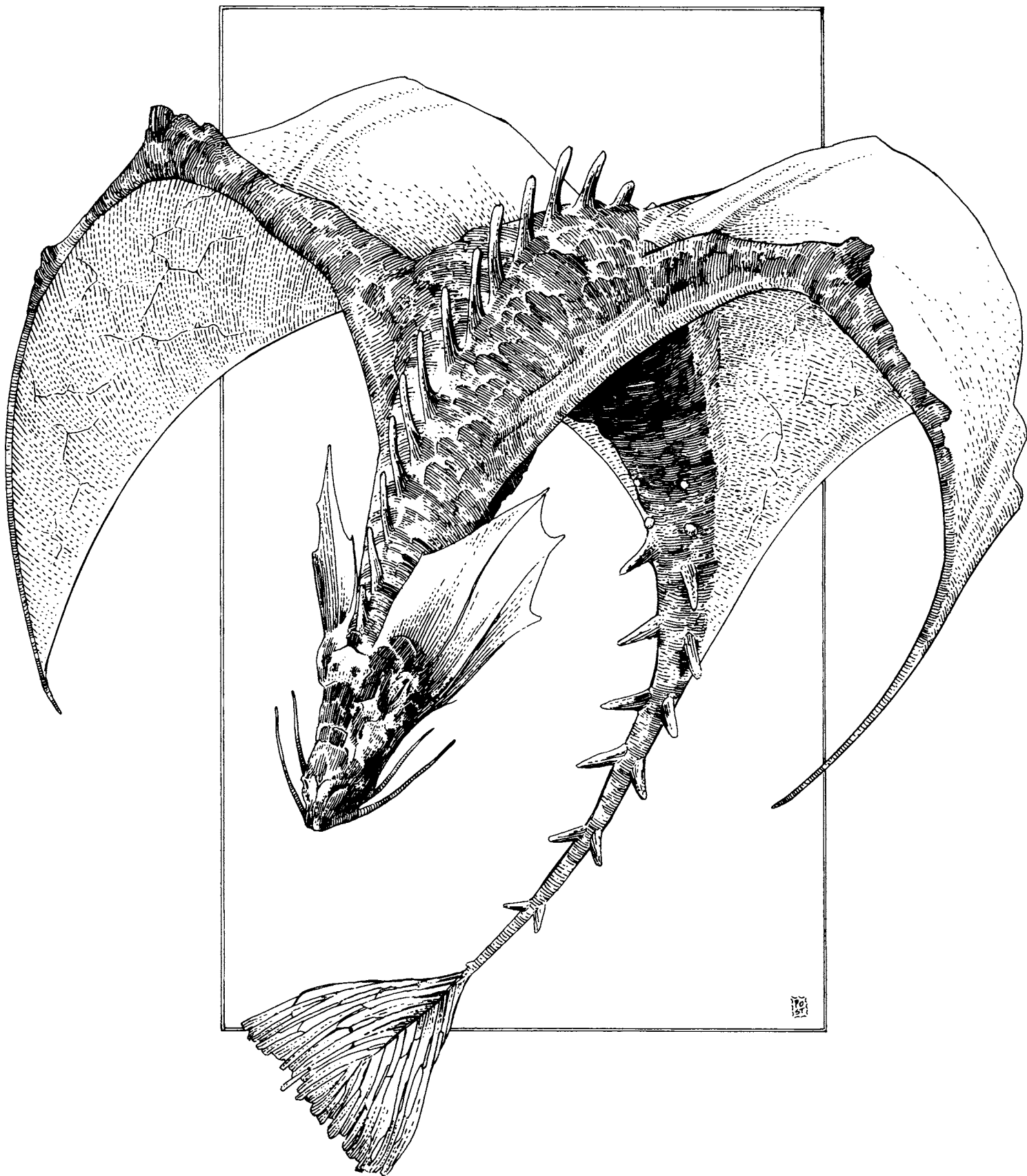
Dragon Rays seem to have an unlimited library of yarns about the sea and waterways, exotic lands, and sea creatures as well as stories, legends and rumors about Lemurians, the Naut’Yll, Whale Singers, the Lord of the Deep, and epic adventures on land and sea. Some stories are humorous, some dramatic, others scary, and some are life’s lessons, but they are always entertaining, though seldom very informative. Most Dragon Rays love to chat and tell stories so much, that they cheerfully do so at the drop of a hat. The slightest amount of encouragement can keep these affable creatures talking and spinning yarns for hours. This can be fun and entertaining, but also a problem when the creature is supposed to be on guard duty or doing some other time sensitive or important chore. Telling stories or listening to them from other people, makes the Dragon Ray easily distracted and forgetful.

For anyone who spends any amount of time with a Dragon Ray, it becomes clear that they are prone to exaggeration and extrapolate upon their stories for dramatic effect. However, they spin such spellbinding tales that anybody seldom cares if the story is only half true. Telling tall-tales for laughs and amusement is one thing, but some, especially Dragon Rays of Anarchist or evil alignments, can turn into compulsive liars. The most cunning and foul-hearted may be confidence artists, thieves, pirates, spies, and assassins who use their masterful storytelling abilities and natural charisma to win people’s trust so they can trick them, rob them, hurt them, take advantage of their kindness, and talk themselves out of trouble or weasel themselves out of work.

Evil Dragon Rays may conquer and rule a community through lies and deceit or via treachery and fear. Weaving stories about monsters and dangers that do no exist, but which make people kowtow to their demands or hire them as their protector. Masters of gab and bluffing, a conniving and scheming Dragon Ray can be quite convincing and threatening when it wants to be. A Dragon Ray may prefer to work alone, looking for power and/or wealth for itself, or happily work with brigands such as bandits, pirates, mercenaries, monsters, and demons. In most cases, the Dragon Ray is either the person in charge or the one pulling the strings.

This is an intelligent, social, Mega-Damage creature that possesses great respect for other life forms, particularly fellow sentient beings. In the wild, they hunt fish, sea mammals, and small- to medium-size animals. And yes, they usually eat them raw, like an animal. That said, Dragon Rays only hunt and eat what they need, and generally try to live in harmony with their environment and other people. As omnivores, the beast can eat prepared, cooked and processed foods from meats to fruit, salads and seaweed, to cakes and processed grain. However, the Dragon Ray’s favorite food is fish, squid, crustaceans/shellfish, seaweed, and fresh caught animals.

While some people mistake Dragon Rays to be small dragons, and the ignorant and fearful might think they are baby dragons, they are not. And though some Dragon Rays learn to wield magic – a rarity, as most Dragon Rays are too laid back, undisciplined



and curious about the world to master the secrets of magic – they are not creatures of magic. Instead, the unique beings rely upon their physical and psychic abilities, clever minds, and gift for gab to survive in the world of humans and D-Bees. Few Dragon Rays may learn magic and cast spells, but most love to collect magic items and see the value of magic.

They appreciate technology and use bits and pieces of it, like computers, cameras, recorders, and radios, but are not technophiles. Computers and recorders are used to record their adventures and keep audio journals to memorialize their adventures and to record stories and history. Nor do they build machines or cities, they live off the land, and though social, they prefer the compa-

ny of people other than their own kind. Their greatest pleasure is meeting new sentient beings, learning about them and their ways, and spending time with people to share their stories.

Dragon Ray – Omnivore Land and Sea Creature

Also Known As: The False Dragon and Kite Dragon.

Alignment: Any, but most are Scrupulous (30%), Unprincipled (25%), or Anarchist (25%).

Attributes: I.Q. 2D6+5, M.E. 2D6+10, M.A. 2D6+18, P.S. 1D6+19 (Supernatural), P.P. 2D6+8, P.E. 2D6+11, P.B. 2D6+8, Spd 1D6+19, or 15 mph (24 km) moving across the ground and climbing along the sides of cliffs or tall buildings.

Swimming speed up to 20 mph (32 km or 17.8 knots) and can be maintained indefinitely. 30 mph (48 km or 26 knots) in short bursts lasting up to 10 minutes. Can swim and float indefinitely, but must surface to breathe air every 60 minutes, like a dolphin. Depth tolerance is one mile (1.6 km)

Flying speed up to 40 mph (64 km) can be sustained for up to seven hours. 60 mph (96 km) in short bursts up to 15 minutes. 180 mph (288 km) when diving. It can also glide silently on air currents like an eagle. Maximum altitude is 30,000 feet (9,144 m).

M.D.C. by Location: A Mega-Damage creature.

*Head – 120

*Tail – 110

*Wings (2; large) – 120 each

Main Body – 1D6x10+130

* A single asterisk indicates a small and/or difficult target to strike. The attacker must make a Called Shot to hit but still suffers a penalty of -3 to strike.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Dragon Ray has a main body of 1D6x10+30 S.D.C., 1D6x10+60 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 13. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (125 M.D.C. = 125 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D. (i.e. 2D6 M.D. = 2D6 S.D.C.).

Horror Factor: 9 when attacking or angry.

Size: 16-20 feet (4.9 to 6 m) long from the snout to the tip of the tail, with a wingspan of 20-25 feet (6.1 to 7.6 m) wide. Typically 6-7 feet (1.8 to 2.1 m) tall standing raised up by its wing arms or coiled like a snake ready to strike.

Weight: 600 to 900 lbs (270 to 405 kg).

Average Life Span: 700-900 years, but according to rumors, some have lived two or three times longer. The creature reaches full adult size at the age of 20 and sexual maturity by age 30. Females give birth to one, live young after carrying it for three years. Young typically stay with the mother until 20-30 years old. Some Dragon Rays mate for life, but others do not. Either way, the raising of young usually falls to the female.

P.P.E.: 1D6x10+18. Those with high P.P.E. (40 or more points) may be targeted for sacrifice in blood rituals by evil practitioners of magic and the likes of the Splugorth.

Disposition: Most are quick thinking, fast-talking, convincing, and confident. All Dragon Rays are impetuous and curious, friendly and very affable. Heck, they are downright charismatic and charming. Easily winning the trust and friendship of those they meet even when the creature may be a lying freeloader, scoundrel, thief, or con artist. Most Dragon Rays are foolishly optimistic and cheerful even during dark times. They love to adventure and explore. Their curious nature means they find

everything interesting. All of which can be endearing or annoying traits depending upon the individual Dragon Ray and circumstance.

Equivalent Skill Abilities of the Typical NPC Dragon Ray: The skills listed are the most common and typical of Dragon Rays; a blend of practical survival and communication skills.

Basic Math 80%, Barter 85%, Climbing 80/70%, Dowsing or Find Contraband 70% (pick one), Intelligence 75%, Land Navigation 90%, Lore: One of choice 70%, Palming or Pick Pockets 80% (pick one; done via mouth, wing fingers, and Telekinesis), Prowl 50% (+20% underwater and flying in the sky), Public Speaking 85%, Radio: Basic 80%, Sing or Computer Operation 70% (pick one), Swim 98%, Tailing 70% (+20% from the sky or +10% underwater), Track Animals 80% (+10% to find fish), and Track People or Detect Ambush 70% (pick one).

O.C.C. Character Note: Instead of the skills above, a *player character* or specialized NPC (*Non-Player Character*) can select a specific O.C.C. available to humans and which does not demand the use of hands with an opposable thumb. They tend to be *Wilderness Scouts*, *Explorers*, *Rogue Scholars*, *Vagabond*, *entertainers*, and *storytellers* rather than warriors or laborers. Remember, all Dragon Rays have a gift for gab and a high Mental Affinity regardless of their O.C.C.

Those of a darker nature may be a *Con Artist*, *Thief*, *Spy*, or even an *Assassin*. A small percentage (4%) are *Mystics* and a tiny percentage (2%) are practitioners of magic, typically a *Ley Line Walker*. In Europe and Russia, the Dragon Ray also be any of the Gypsy O.C.C.s.

Level of Experience: 1D6 or as set by the Game Master for NPCs.

Player characters should start out at first level. **Note:** Use the experience table of the Psi-Stalker for the typical Dragon Ray NPC. Use the experience table of the chosen O.C.C. for those with a specific and specialized occupation as noted above.

Natural Abilities: Keen hawk-like vision that enables the beast to see a rabbit 2 miles (3.2 km) away, swim, fly, climb and scale walls/cliffs, impervious to cold (no damage), and has a prehensile tail that can be used to swat enemies. It can remain on dry land indefinitely, but loves water and likes to spend half its time in lakes, deep rivers, and seas; can hold its breath for 60 minutes. Bio-Regenerates 1D6 M.D.C. per hour, double on ley lines, and can completely regenerate lost fins, parts of the tail, wing membrane, finger and spikes along the spine and tail within 1D6+10 days and an entire wing within 2D6+22 days.

Aquatic Abilities (special): A graceful swimmer completely comfortable underwater. Swimming speed is 30 mph (48 km or 26 knots), depth tolerance is one mile (1.6 km), and it can hold its breath for 60 minutes at a time. A Dragon Ray can also sense magnetic north the same as dolphins and whales and its underwater vision enables it to see in murky and dark waters, as well as through fog and rain up to 1,200 feet (366 m) ahead!

Flying Capabilities (special): 40 mph (64 km) up to seven hours. 60 mph (96 km) in short bursts, 30,000 feet (9,144 m) maximum Altitude. See Spd Attribute for additional details.

Mid-Air leap: 30 feet (9.1 m) out of the water or from a standing position without actually flying. Counts as two melee attacks/actions.

Mid-Air Precision Leaping: 50 feet (15.2 m) out of the water or from a standing position, performed to startle or attack beings or vehicles flying close to the surface of the water or ground, or to grab or knock an item out of an opponent's hand.

At sea, this is similar to the way a dolphin can leap out of the water.

Quick Turns & Stops: Roll as if this maneuver was an automatic dodge or parry. A roll of 12 or higher means success. A failed roll means the Dragon Ray could not turn, swerve or stop in time and either zooms past its target or slams into something or somebody. Does 3D6 M.D. impact damage to itself and 2D6 M.D. to whatever it struck.

Speed Burst: Can swim or fly at double its normal speed for 1D4+1 minutes. This maneuver can be performed six times per hour before tiring the Dragon Ray too much to try it again. This move is performed for a quick dodge (+2 in addition to other bonuses) or a quick strike (+2 in addition to other bonuses), or to move toward or away from somebody or some place quickly.

Tight circle/turn: Can make reasonably tight circles and turns in an area as small as 21 feet (6.4 m) in diameter.

Understand and Speak all Languages (special): Magically understand and speaks all languages at 80%.

Many Dragon Rays cannot read. They have considerable difficulty learning how to read the written word (-15%). It's probably the way the Dragon Ray's brain is wired as the creature seems to have difficulty staying focused on any one subject for very long. This is also why so few learn magic or study the sciences. Their animal instincts and way of life as hunters and wanderers has them constantly looking around – up, down, sideways and behind – for predators, danger, prey, things of interest, creatures to observe, exploring and opportunities for fun, entertainment, and storytelling.

Attacks per Melee Round: Five for adults, three for juveniles, two for young under the age of five.

Mega-Damage: May bite, head butt, swat with wings or tail and ram.

Bite, Restrained – 5D6 S.D.C.

Bite, Full Strength – 3D6 M.D.

Head Butt, Restrained – 4D6 S.D.C.

Head Butt, Full Strength – 1D6 M.D.

Tail Slap, Restrained – 1D6 M.D.

Tail Strike, Blunt, Full Strength – 2D6 M.D.

Tail Strike, Power Punch – 4D6+2 M.D., but counts as two attacks.

Wing Jab, Restrained – 4D6 S.D.C.

Wing Swat, Full Strength – 2D6 M.D.

Flying Body Ram – 3D6 M.D. and has a 70% chance of knocking human sized opponents weighing less than a ton off their feet, but counts as two melee attacks. Victims of a knock-down lose initiative and two melee attack.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls regarding tracking, tailing and searching as well as looking for prey and fun, +3 to strike, +1 parry, +1 to dodge on the ground, +3 to dodge underwater, and +4 to dodge in the air, +1 to pull punch, +4 to roll with impact, +1 to save vs magic and poison, +2 to save vs disease, +3 to save vs Horror Factor, and Critical Strike (double damage) on the roll of a Natural 19 or 20. **Note:** Ranged weapons fired or melee weapons wielded by Ectoplasm limbs do NOT get the bonuses above. Unmodified die rolls only.

Vulnerabilities: Mega-Damage weapons and attacks inflict full damage, except cold; impervious to cold.

Fire attacks inflict 50% greater damage than normal.

Most Dragon Rays are so optimistic, confident, and glib, that they sometimes get themselves into trouble before they realize

it, and some can be annoying with their stories, double-talk, or con games. Dragon Rays of good alignment also tend to be trusting of others, assuming the best in people.

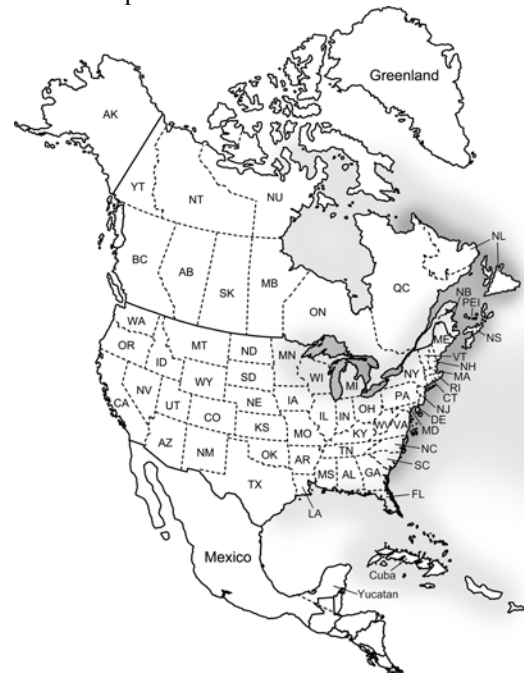
In a world dominated by humanoids, non-humans stand out like a sore thumb. As a large, inhuman dragon-like creature, it is a target for people who hate, fear or hunt dragons and monsters. As a member of an adventuring group, it is likely to be targeted first by an opponent who is likely to assume the Ray to be a dragon or similar powerful creature. That makes it a primary target to subdue or eliminate.

Magic: Only 4% of Dragon Rays are Mystics with psionic and intuitive magic spell casting capabilities. A mere 2% actually learn some form of magic, typically a *Ley Line Walker*, but most find the study of magic to be too tedious, demanding and time consuming to pursue. There's too much else to see and do, so they tend to avoid magic O.C.C.s.

Psionics: All Dragon Rays are Major psychics and possess the following abilities: Bio-Regeneration (Super, 20), Ectoplasm (6+; which they use to form hands to manipulate objects, use weapons and operate machines), Resist Fatigue (4), Mind Block (4), Total Recall (2), Speed Reading (2), and two of choice from Sensitive or Physical. **I.S.P. Base:** 1D6x10+18, plus 1D6+1 per level of experience.

Habitat: Dragon Rays can live in fresh water or the sea for any length of time, but like dolphins, must surface for air. The creature can live on dry land and among the mountains such as the Alleghenies, but love the water and divides its time between the land and water. Spending at least 40% of its time in the water, even if it is only a small lake or river. Consequently, they are most commonly found living along the American and Canadian Atlantic coastline, the Great Lakes region and other places with large or many lakes, deep rivers, seas, and oceans. Dragon Rays have been found living on islands and lazing on beaches of the Caribbean islands and the shores of Atlantis and Hudson Bay, but don't seem to care for hot climates.

On the others side of the Atlantic Ocean, Dragon Rays have been encountered along the coasts of Greenland, Iceland, the British Isles, Scandinavia, Europe, and Northern Africa. They seem to prefer moderate to cool climates and stick mainly to the Northern Hemisphere.



Enemies: That depends on how you define “enemy.” Dragon Rays accept almost everyone, so from their point of view they have no enemies. On the other hand, many humans and D-Bees would see the Dragon Ray as a fearsome monster to be chased away or destroyed. None per se. Evil beings tend to see the good and kind Dragon Ray as a potential enemy, while large predators like Devil Kraken, Giant Squid, and others see them as prey.

Allies: None per se, but they are attracted to humans, Lemurians, most D-Bees, and anyone who is friendly toward them. Dragon Rays are known to ally themselves with good, selfish and evil beings and help people in trouble. They are, of course, smart enough to recognize evil and murderous intelligent beings and avoid them unless the Dragon Ray is of similar alignment or targets them for some opportunity.

Ironically, Dragon Rays tend to avoid their own kind, except to mate. As a result, you rarely see more than 2-4 of them together at any given time, and when you do, it is probably a mother and her offspring.

Value: None, per se. Some slavers, gladiatorial owners, Necromancers, and mages are willing to pay 400-2,400 credits for the beast. Sometimes captured and sold as slaves, arena combatants, pets or for blood sacrifice. The Dragon Ray makes a terrible slave and attempts to escape at every opportunity, freeing others if it can, before flying away or diving into a body of water.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 7: Rifts® Underseas™**, page 20.

Notes for using the Dragon Ray as a Non-Player Character or NPC Villain:

The Dragon Ray is one of those “animals” that does not quite fit the definition of animal, nor does it fit the definition of D-Bee, a bipedal, sentient humanoid. It may resemble a dragon, but it is not a creature of magic. Yes, it looks like an animal and hunts, but it has human-level intelligence, similar emotions and desires, can speak and likes the company of others. Thus, it makes for a strange and fun non-player character to encounter, or a possible ally and resource for the player group. In the alternative, a selfish and conniving Dragon Ray could become a trouble-making con artist or affable scoundrel who tricks and uses your heroes for its own gain.

An evil Dragon Ray might become a reoccurring villain and adversary. Perhaps a member of the Black Market, or the leader of a gang of bandits or raiders, or a treacherous trickster and opportunist who cheats and robs the ... well, everyone, rich and poor, the player characters included. A rare evil Dragon Ray might be a spy or thief or bounty hunter working for anyone from the Federation of Magic or the Black Market, or the Splurgorth to Northern Gun or a powerful and ruthless power monger, mercenary company, pirates, merchant, madman, or would be king. Or function as the henchman of a nefarious monster.

Can a Dragon Ray be a player character? Yes, provided the Game Master is comfortable with the character and allows it in his or her game. If a dragon hatchling can be a player character, a Game Master may want to allow a Dragon Ray as well. However, unlike a dragon which can use its power of *Metamorphosis* to change its size and appearance to fit in among ordinary people, the Dragon Ray cannot. It is what it is, and there is no easy way to conceal its appearance and identity. That alone can make it very difficult to run as a player character and for the player to stay in character. Such a large, dragon-like creature cannot remain inconspicuous, and is likely to be a target for

big game hunters, slavers, the Coalition Army, and just about anyone who assumes it is a dangerous monster and shoots first and asks questions later.

Dragon Rays are not very common, especially in dense population centers like the cities and ‘Burbs of the Coalition States and other cities. The beast is most known and accepted by people and communities living along the Atlantic coastline and the Great Lakes region of the old American and Canadian Empires. The farther west and south inland the Dragon Ray travels, most people will have never seen or heard of one, especially west of the Mississippi River. They are likely to mistake it for a dragon or a dangerous monster, shoot first and ask questions later. Xenophobes like the Coalition States will only see a dangerous monster to be exterminated, especially when they learn it possesses human intelligence and psionic abilities. For them, the fact that the Dragon Ray is intelligent and can speak is all the more reason to destroy it!

All of this makes playing a Dragon Ray as a player character a challenge for both the player and the Game Master. Players may feel like their weird, inhuman character is constantly under attack and treated poorly, but that is the dangerous and xenophobic setting. Anyone playing a Dragon Ray needs to accept that. Ultimately, it is the Game Master’s decision as to whether or not a Dragon Ray is allowed as a player character. Players, please accept that decision whether you agree with it or not.

Dragon Wasp

By Greg Diaczyk and Kevin Siembieda

The Dragon Wasp is one of many notable insects from another dimension that has found a place in Rifts Earth’s ecosystem. First discovered by *Christine Stevens*, they get their name because they somewhat resemble a dragon, especially while flying, and the fact that their venom burns like dragon fire. Dragon Wasps normally measure one foot to one and a half feet (0.3 to 0.46 m) long. Their wings resemble those of a dragon complete with a pair of spikes that resemble the claws or fingers on the wings of bats and some dragons. Their long, curved toes also bring to mind the clawed feet of dragons and the underside of the abdomen is a different color from the rest of the insect, again, reminiscent of the belly of a dragon. When flying, long, white or bluish-white hairs rise up from its back in clusters to create the illusion of fins or spikes that run down the spine of many dragons. The fine hairs are longest toward the end of the wasp’s body, so when it takes flight they trail behind and rather resemble the long tail of a dragon. Coloration is various shades of red or orange with black markings, and a yellow or cream colored underbelly, reddish-black eyes, and white or bluish-white hairs along its back and rump. The insect’s jagged wings are transparent with a bit of a blue or violet tint.

There is one more reason for the Dragon Wasp’s name: when it is found along ley lines or at nexus points, where the wasps often makes their nests, the insect is able to *grow to giant-size* (4-6 feet/1.2 to 1.8 m long), and becomes an M.D.C. creature! Nobody understands exactly how this is possible. Thankfully, the Dragon Wasp only grows giant when angry, threatened or it or the hive is attacked. That’s good news for people, because at giant-size the S.D.C. insect becomes an M.D.C. monster able to inflict Mega-Damage with its bites and stings.

Fast and agile fliers, just like their terrestrial wasp cousins, Dragon Wasps can hover stationary and fly with considerable



speed and grace. The poison released by its sting is painful and causes intense burning and numbness to cripple and terrify prey before the wasp comes in for the kill, unleashing a barrage of stings and bites. Dragon Wasps do not lose their stinger after an attack and can sting many times to stab prey or to stab and inject more venom, causing greater fiery paralysis.

An omnivore, Dragon Wasps are able to eat a wide range of food, including other large insects, their larvae, large to giant spiders, sweet substances such as syrups, honey, jam, and soda pop, as well as plant matter and fruit. However, these large insects prefer hunting and feeding upon live prey. Primary targets are small and medium-sized animals like birds, rabbits, squirrels, other rodents, raccoons, possum, etc., but may include larger animals such as ground hogs, muskrats, beaver, cats, dogs, wild boar, deer, caribou, and even humans and D-Bees, including Xiticix. Those foolish enough to disturb or attack a Dragon Wasp's mud nest is likely to become dinner. The average nest is the size of van or small truck, sometimes larger, and inhabited by a minimum of 1D6x10+40 Dragon Wasps and a Queen.

Dragon Wasps seem to prefer to prey upon insects, Xiticix and other insectoids and arachnoids over most people and large animals. As a result, they are more numerous in and around the Xiticix Hivelands and Great Lakes region. In fact, the Coalition States once considered a plan of breeding and setting more Dragon Wasps loose in Xiticix territory to hunt them. However, the plan

was scrapped for fear that the Dragon Wasps would spread out beyond the Xiticix Hivelands in search of easier prey, and become another dangerous and invasive alien species to threaten human existence.

Dragon Wasps are most aggressive and likely to hunt humans when the bugs grow to giant-size along ley lines. People who are injured or traveling alone in the forest are also at greatest risk of attack. People in M.D.C. armor are usually protected from the foot-long insects, but even at this size, Dragon Wasps seem skilled at finding and attacking the weak spots in armor. And even the S.D.C. Dragon Wasp can be a nuisance, steal food and threaten pets, riding animals and livestock.

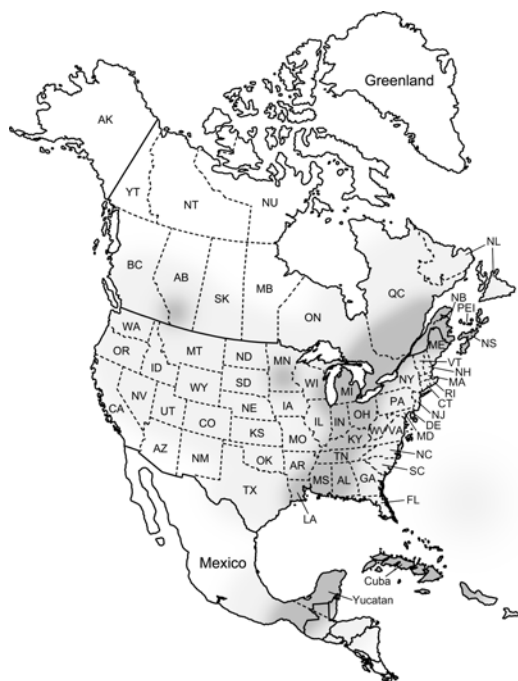
Faeries, Sprites and other diminutive Faerie Folk have been known to establish their own villages near Dragon Wasp nests for additional protection. They befriend the insects with gifts of honey, syrups and fruit, and are able to magically Charm and ride Dragon Wasps as war steeds or use them as pets and attack animals.

Dragon Wasp – Omnivore Insect

Also Known As: Giant Wasps, Transforming Wasps and Faerie Dragons.

Alignment: Considered to be Anarchist or Miscreant.

Attributes (Adult): I.Q. 1D4+2 (low animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+4, M.A. 1D6, P.S. 1D6+7 (Supernatural when giant), P.P.



1D6+14, P.E. 1D6+16, P.B. 2D6+3, Spd 1D4+4, or 4 mph (6.4 km) crawling or climbing.

Flying Speed is 25 mph (40 km) and can be maintained for up to six hours straight. It can achieve 30 mph (48 km) for a short burst lasting 1D6 minutes, and it can also hover. Maximum altitude is 6,000 feet (1,829 m). Double speed and altitude when giant-size!

Hit Points: 1D6+15. Only the Queen has 1D6+36 Hit Points. M.D.C. when giant.

S.D.C. by Location: See M.D.C., below, when it turns giant-size on ley lines.

*Legs (6) – 10 each

*Wings (2) – 30 each

*Stinger (1, female only) – 10

Main Body – 1D6+16 S.D.C. (+15 for the Queen only)

* A single asterisk indicates a small and/or difficult target to strike. The shooter or attacker must make a “Called Shot” to hit at a penalty of -5 to strike.

Note: Natural A.R. 11, and any roll to strike with an S.D.C. weapon/attack that is 11 or less may hit the wasp but does no damage. 12 or higher hits and does full damage.

M.D.C. by Location – ONLY when Giant-Size:

*Legs (6) – 10 each

*Wings (2) – 30 each

*Stinger (1, female only) – 10

Main Body – 2D6+50 (+30 for the Queen, only; takes into account S.D.C. and Hit Points).

* A single asterisk indicates a small and/or difficult target to strike. The shooter or attacker must make a “Called Shot” to hit at a penalty of -3 to strike.

Note: On S.D.C. worlds, a giant-sized Dragon Wasp has 6D6 S.D.C., 5D6+6 Hit Points, and a Natural A.R. of 14. The damage inflicted by the creature’s bite and other attacks is detailed under the Damage stat, below. Can only become giant on a ley line, nexus point or place of magic.

Horror Factor: 8 when small and facing only 1-4, 12 when facing a swarm of 5 or more, but H.F. 13 when facing 1-3 giant-sized Dragon Wasps and 16 when facing a swarm of 5 or more giants.

Size: Normal: 1 to 1.5 feet (0.3 to 0.46 m) long, with a wingspan of 1.5 to 2.5 feet (0.46 to 0.76 m).

Giant-Size (on ley line only): 4-6 feet (1.2 to 1.8 m) long.

Queen is 30% larger.

Weight (normal): 0.5 to 1.7 lbs (0.22 to 0.7 kg). 100 pounds (45 kg) as a giant.

Average Life Span: 1D6 years; +6 years for the Queen. As male drones/workers die off, the Queen lays more eggs. As many as 1,000 annually. Eggs hatch within four weeks and reach full size and maturity within two month.

A typical mud nest houses 2D6x10+60 Dragon Wasps and a queen, seldom more. The smallest 1D6x10+40 Dragon Wasps and a Queen. When a Queen is killed a special pheromone is released that triggers a metamorphosis in 2D4 of the drones turning them into females that can become the new Queen. The young would-be new Queens fight among themselves to determine which one shall reign the hive. However, sometimes one or two of the new Queens are able to convince 1D4+4 male workers to abandon the old nest and come with them to start a new one.

P.P.E.: 4D6+2

Disposition: They are predatory bugs whose insect nature makes them seem alien, cold and merciless. Dragon Wasps react to situations on an instinctive basis and attack to kill prey or to protect themselves or their nest as well as when they feel cornered, threatened or under attack. Most aggressive during autumn and when the wasps become giant-sized, and when the nest falls under attack. They hunt for food, and humans and D-Bees are on their list of prey, especially when the alien insect is giant-size.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Winged Flight, Climbing 95%/95% on most surfaces, Dowsing 70%, Identify Fruits and Plants 90%, Land Navigation 95% (+4% to find its nest or queen), Prowl 45% and Tailing 60%.

Natural Abilities: Hovering and flying with a maximum flying speed of 25 mph (40 km) which can be maintained for 2D6+10 minutes, but the wasp can fly at half that speed for 1D4+8 hours without tiring. Maximum altitude is 6,000 feet (1,829 m); double speed and altitude when giant-size! Bio-Regenerates 1D6+6 S.D.C. or Hit Points per every 24 hours whether it is at rest or active, but can Bio-Regenerate 1D6 M.D.C. per melee round when giant or 4D6 S.D.C./Hit Points per melee round at normal size when on a ley line. A damaged or lost stinger or antenna regrows within 2D4+2 days.

Climb Most Surfaces (special): Like most insects, the Dragon Wasp is able to land, walk and climb on most surfaces. This means in caves and inside buildings they are able to land and walk on ceilings and walls, as well as able to cling to the side or undercarriage of most vehicles and aircraft traveling under 120 mph (192 km).

Grow to Giant-Size on Ley Lines (special): As noted, the Dragon Wasp has the ability to grow to approximately four times larger (4-6 feet/1.2 to 1.8 m), and increasing in mass to 100 pounds (45 kg). *This transformation is only possible on a ley line or nexus point and similar places of magic, such as within a ley line triangle.* Even then, the Dragon Wasp only assumes giant-size when it is angry, hunting M.D.C. prey, feels threatened or cornered, falls under attack or is defending its nest and/or Queen. Not surprising then that Dragon Wasp nests are often built somewhere along a ley line, but not always.

Giant-size turns the S.D.C. insect into a light M.D.C. creature that inflicts Mega-Damage from its attacks. The Dragon

Wasp instinctively knows they can become giant M.D.C. creatures along ley lines and are able to change size at will. The transformation occurs in a heartbeat and can last for up to 1D6 hours. However, most revert to normal size as soon as combat is over or the threat is gone or slain. Double speed and altitude when giant-size.

The mud nest is always designed for the normal, foot or so long sized wasps, not for giants. A typical nest of Dragon Wasps is much fewer in number than its much smaller Earth cousins, but still a formidable force. A typical Dragon Wasp nest is the size of a van or small truck with 1D6x10+40 wasps. A large nest has 2D6x10+70 wasps and a huge nest (rare) has 3D6x10+140.

Insect Predator Vision (special): Long-range vision (can see a rabbit two miles/3.2 km away); 180 degree vision, making it very difficult to surprise or attack from behind or above; Night-vision 300 feet (91.4 m), has polarized vision negating bright light and glare, and can see the invisible via the ability to see in the infrared and ultraviolet range of light, including being able to see heat emanations like thermal optics (1,000 foot/305 m range).

Silent Attack/Warning Signal (special): All Dragon Wasps are able to release a pheromone that alerts other Dragon Wasps within a mile (1.6 km) radius to danger and which serves as a call-to-arms and summons reinforcements that can follow the pheromone trail to the exact location where it was released. The pheromone can be detected by other Dragon Wasps who recognize their brethren and know to join the fight in order to defeat large prey or a dangerous intruder.

Venomous Stinger (special): Only females have stingers, but males/workers can fight and kill via biting and butting attacks. Sixty percent of the wasps in a nest are female, with one active Queen. The stinger is a retractable needle located in the rump/tail of the female. Venom is automatically released unless the insect deliberately chooses not to do so. Saving throw vs non-lethal poison requires a roll of 16 or higher to save. A successful save means damage from the sting but no penalties from the venom. See Damage for details.

Attacks per Melee: Two attacks per melee for males via bite or body block/ram or obscuring hovering attack. Three melee attacks for females via bite or stinger. Four for the Queen. ONLY females have stingers and 60% of Dragon Wasps are female.

S.D.C. Damage at Normal Size: See M.D. stats, below, when giant.

Bite – 1D4 S.D.C./Hit Point damage.

Body Block/Ram/Butt – One S.D.C. point of damage.

Obscuring Hovering Attack (Special) – Male Dragon Wasps have no stinger, so they attack by biting and butting into a person, or by flying in their face. The face flying attack is intended to, a) encourage an intruder (animal or humanoid) to back off and go away, and b), to distract and obscure the intruder or attacker's vision while other Dragon Wasps gather to join the fight; 50-60% of which are females with stingers and venom.

Sting Without Venom (special) – 1D4 S.D.C./Hit Point damage, used to finish off prey or to convince a threatening intruder or attacker to flee or die.

Sting Plus Venom (special) – 1D4 S.D.C. damage plus venom. The initial 3-6 attacks by a Dragon Wasp ALWAYS inject the venom to incapacitate prey or attackers. Dragon Wasp venom is very powerful and burns so bad that it is difficult for the victim to focus and concentrate. Worse, the area or limb

(hand, forearm, upper arm, foot, neck and chest, etc.) where the person was stung burns as if it were on fire and becomes numb.

The Cumulative Penalties from Burning/Paralyzing Venom by Location:

Being stung anywhere on the body: Negates its victim's bonuses on initiative, and Perception Roll bonuses, and imposes a -20% to skill performance.

Face/Head: -2 on all combat maneuvers (Perception Rolls, initiative, strike, parry, dodge, etc.), and cannot make a Called Shot. Face puffs up, lips and tongue go numb, and eyelids droop. It is difficult to keep the eyes open and the victim sees through a squinted, narrow slit of vision. It is also difficult to speak. Words are slurred and the victim cannot shout, and spell casting takes twice as long. Bite attacks by the victim are not possible and suffers from an additional -15% penalty to the performance of skills that require speech.

Neck: The victim of a sting in the neck *cannot speak*, spell casting is impossible, and has trouble breathing. -1 one melee attack, -1 to strike, parry, dodge, etc., and reduce speed by 20% because the victim has difficulty breathing.

Hand: -1 to strike, parry and disarm. Special combat holds are impossible and it is difficult to hold weapons and objects, or to perform skills that require finger motion, pulling a trigger, hand strength and manual dexterity, like Climbing, Computer Operation, Palming, Pick Lock, Surgery, and similar, all of which suffer an additional -20% to the performance of such skills.

Arm (anywhere/forearm, upper arm, shoulder): -2 on initiative, -2 melee attacks, half damage from punches, -4 to strike, -2 on all other combat maneuvers (parry, dodge, etc.) because the arm is weak, responds slowly and is difficult to raise and hold in any position such as pointing a gun. Entanglement, bear hugs and special combat holds, attacks and skills that require arm strength, quick reflexes and manual dexterity like Climbing, Boxing, Wrestling, Swimming, etc., suffer an additional -20% to the performance of such skills.

One Leg (anywhere/upper or lower leg): Reduce speed by 50%, -2 on initiative, -1 melee attack, jumps and kick attacks are impossible as the stung leg will not respond and to kick with the other leg requires standing/leaning on the numb, weak, stung leg; -4 to dodge, -2 on all other combat maneuvers (strike, parry, disarm, etc.) because the leg is weak, numb and makes the victim wobbly and unstable. Special combat attacks and skills that require leg strength, quick movement and speed like Acrobatics, Climbing, Boxing, Wrestling, Swimming, etc., suffer an additional -20% to the performance of such skills.

Both Legs Paralyzed (Biped): Reduce speed 95%, can only crawl or pull self along, cannot drive a vehicle or get on the back of a riding animal. -2 on initiative, -2 melee attacks, jumps and kick attacks are impossible, -8 to dodge, -3 on all other combat maneuvers (strike, parry, disarm, etc.) because both legs are weak, numb and unable to support the victim; cannot stand, run or walk! Entanglement, bear hugs and special combat holds, attacks and skills that require leg strength, quick reflexes and manual dexterity like Climbing, Boxing, Wrestling, Swimming, etc., suffer an additional -30% to the performance of such skills.

Duration of Initial Burning, Paralysis and Penalties: 1D4+1 melee rounds per EACH venomous sting attack. Being stung on different parts of the body results in an increase of duration and additional penalties.

Continuing Penalties: When the initial duration of severe burning pain and penalties come to an end, the victim continues to feel diminished burning pain and suffers the following penalties for the next 1D6x10 minutes: -2 on Perception Rolls, -2 on initiative, -1 to all combat maneuvers (strike, parry, dodge, etc.), -10% on skill performance and -10% to Spd.

Saving Throw vs Non-Lethal Poison: 16 or higher to save. A successful save means damage from the sting but no burning, numbness or penalties from the venom.

Mega-Damage When Giant-Sized: The S.D.C. numbers, above, become M.D. whenever the Dragon Wasp becomes 4x larger (4-6 feet/1.2 to 1.8 m long) and turns into an M.D.C. monster! This is only possible when on a ley line, nexus point or similar place of magic. Even on a ley line the Dragon Wasp keeps its natural 1-1.5 foot size most of the time, becoming giant-sized only when it feels threatened, cornered, caged, or attacked, or when the wasp, the mud nest or the Queen is attacked.

Bite – 1D4 M.D.

Body Block/Ram/Butt – 1D4 M.D.

Obscuring Hovering Attack – Several to dozens of males gather to block a path or entrance with their bodies, or to surround an intruder or prey to prevent him/them from being able to see beyond the giant bugs and preventing passage/holding them to that location. Those blocked or surrounded must either fight their way through the hovering and swarming bugs or find an opening and run away. Flying attacks by giant-sized Dragon Wasps are intended to, a) encourage an intruder or attacker to back off and go away and b), to distract and obscure the intruder or attacker's vision while other Dragon Wasps gather to join the fight; at least some of which will be females with stingers and venom.

Sting without Venom – 1D6 M.D.

Sting with Venom – 1D6 M.D. plus venom as described under S.D.C. Damage, above. Same saving throw and penalties apply. **Note:** There is a 20% chance an M.D.C. stinging attack penetrates M.D.C. body armor, even environmental armor and power armor that has less than 210 M.D.C. If the armor is penetrated, the stinger injects venom into the person *inside the armor*. The usual burning and penalties apply. Combat Cyborgs/full conversion cyborgs are not susceptible to the venom, but the human limbs of partial cyborgs are.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 on initiative, +2 on Perception Rolls regarding hunting prey and defending the Queen, +1 to strike, +2 to dodge on the ground/landed, +3 to automatic dodge when airborne/flying (the act of dodging does not use up a melee attack), and +3 to save vs Horror Factor. **Note:** Dragon Wasps defending their Queen or the nest will fight to the death or until the attackers flee at least 2,000 feet (610 m). They remain in a hyper-aggressive state for 1D4x10 minutes after such an attack; double the initiative, Perception Rolls and bonus to strike during that period.

Vulnerabilities: Water, frost, ice, and anything that impairs flight and movement. The bugs scatter for shelter when it begins to rain. Anything greater than a shower or light rain sends a Dragon Wasp flying to its nest or to find shelter. The insect has a great dislike for getting rained on or wet at all, *cannot swim* and will drown when held under water for more than four melee rounds (one minute).

Adhesives sprays, thick, sticky liquids, Dream Butcher Beams, and frost, snow or ice (usually via magic) that *coats the wings* impair movement of the wings and cripples the bug!

A *light coat* reduces speed and combat bonuses by *half* (round down). A *heavy coat* of ice makes flying impossible, ground speed is reduced by half, and combat bonuses are also reduced by half. However, cold does NOT inflict additional damage (normal damage), and the insect can survive for 1D4x10+40 days in freezing and colder temperatures.

Dislikes smoke. Being forced to fight in a cloud of smoke or a smoke-filled environment imposes the same penalties as frozen/impaired wings, above.

Magic: None. Rumors and tall tales claim the Dragon Wasp can breathe fire, spit lava, create smoke and cause fires, but none of that is true. The Dragon Wasp has no spell casting abilities.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Anywhere in North America, but especially in the swamps of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, the Magic Zone, Southeastern Canada and ley line locations. The bugs are attracted to ley lines for obvious reasons, so they are found in largest numbers in and around magic environments, including the ruins of Old Chicago and Detroit, Tolkeen, Freehold and other parts of Minnesota, Wisconsin, lower Michigan, the Magic Zone, Lazlo, Calgary, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Southeastern Canada, Southern Mexico, and other places known for magic, including locations within the Devil's Triangle like Atlantis and other Caribbean islands. But may also exist (in their normal size) anywhere.

Note that the Dragon Wasp likes to make its nest in caves, tunnels, ruins, inside abandoned buildings, the remains of vehicles and giant robots provided they are large enough to contain and conceal the nest.

Enemies: Though Dragon Wasps may hunt humans and D-Bees, humanoids are not high on the creature's list of prey, unless they are *insectoids*, *arachnoids* or *plant creatures* like the *Xiticix*, *A'rac*, *Ee-Bee* *Gee-Bees*, and *Ganka*, respectively. Moreover, they generally hunt as lone individuals, attracting 1D6 others only when a Dragon Wasp is killed or falls under attack. Like Earth wasps, the insect releases a chemical signal that alerts other Dragon Wasps in the area (within a mile/1.6 km) to danger. That scent, invisible to most humanoids, tells other Dragon Wasps to come and fight "the threat." This pheromone is also released when the Dragon Wasp is defending the nest, which is likely to cause 2D6 additional Dragon Wasps to join the fight every time one is killed.

The D-Bee known as the *Ganka* and Dragon Wasps see each other as food, and prey upon each other. The *Ganka* and other sentient plant creatures are known to be immune to the wasp's paralytic venom.

Allies: None, per se, other than their own kind, and then only to protect each other, their Queen and the nest. Can be tamed and used as pets, riding or attack animals by Psi-Druids and Faeries, and are sometimes summoned and used by Shifters or other practitioners of magic and used as a familiar.

Faeries are known to sometimes use Dragon Wasps as riding animals and protectors, and as such, Faeries are likely to come to the defense of a Dragon Wasp or nest that falls under attack, especially if the attacker is a Minion of Splugorth, Horune Pirates or a monster.

Value: None, per se. Wilderness Scouts, Psi-Stalkers, Simvan and other wilderness people sometimes eat the wasps for food, but only under the most dire of circumstances as the soft "meat" of the insect is not very tasty, but will keep you from starving if there is no alternative.

The wasps' paralyzing venom is sometimes collected and sold by those who know how to do so. A single use vial of poison (2 ounces) sells for 20 credits a vial, but the market is limited. If digested, the poison does 1D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage the first melee round and one point of damage for the next 1D6 additional melee rounds. The venom has a pungent aroma and foul taste so it is not something that can be disguised when slipped into food or drink. Victims of such poisoning are likely forced to drink the venom.

When a two ounce dose of the venom is injected into a victim, it has the same burning and numbing effect and penalties as the bug's sting. However, unless the venom is properly preserved and prepared for such re-purposing (roll under the Holistic Medicine or Brewing: Medicinal skills), the venom becomes inert and harmless within 1D6x10 minutes after successful extraction. (Requires Lore: Animals, or Holistic Medicine, or Brewing: Medicinal skills to extract). A slain Dragon Wasp expels its venom onto the ground when killed so there is nothing to collect from a wasp that is killed.

Possible Treasure at the Nest Site: The above notwithstanding, there may be loot to be found inside and/or around

the Dragon Wasps' nest. These would be common weapons and items like E-Clips, flashlights, walkie-talkies, canteens, portable equipment, salvageable pieces of body or power armor, etc., and sometimes, the occasional magic item or Universal Credit cash card (4D6x100 credits), and maybe even one or two small vehicles such as a motorcycle, hovercycle or jet pack. These are items that once belonged to humans or D-Bees attacked by the bugs and dropped and abandoned while fleeing from the ornery insects or when they were killed by them. Skeletal remains of such victims may also be found in the area, especially skulls, though most remains are likely to have been dragged away and eaten by other creatures. **Game Design Note:** When it comes to possible "treasure," Game Master discretion applies, and should be something an adventurer might have had. Likewise, the player character(s) should have to work for it. This should not be a heaping pile of free stuff waiting to be picked up off the ground and stuffed into a backpack.

Note: This is a new creature appearing for the very first time. Inspired by the ideas and writing of Greg Diaczky.

Dream Butcher

By Kevin Siembieda and Charles Walton Jr.

The Dream Butcher looks like it just stepped out of a nightmare. Its ribbed and armored body is a dark charcoal gray with shades of black and hues of purple broken by a few patches of red on its neck and inner arm. The spikes that run down its spine are a dark brown, its retractable claws a yellowish, light tan or off-white color, while the many small spikes and spines on its upper arm are a dark crimson. The larger spines on its forearms are a creamy white and gray that move in tempo with the beast's breathing or open and close like flexing fingers. When the Dream Butcher tenses to pounce, the forearm spines lay flat against the arm, but open like outstretched fingers in mid-leap. The weird head has a wide "V" shape, a pair of small mandibles, and a large, yellow Cyclopean eye in the center that transitions into a smoky violet as it feeds on the fear and pain of its victims. On each side of the large central eye are a pair of smaller, fuchsia colored, cat-like eyes said to be able to see the invisible and Astral Beings.

The body shape of the Dream Butcher is vaguely humanoid with two arms and legs. The hands have four, widely spaced fingers, but no thumb. Retractable claws can be extended from each fingertip to sink into and rip apart armor or to climb cliff facings and the walls of buildings. To a point, the legs also resemble a humanoid's, but are shaped more like the haunches of a dog or cat. The feet have two, large, thick, widely spaced toes and a third on its heel, more like the talons of a bird than a human or mammal. Like a bird, it can curl its talons to hold onto a thick tree branch, rock, pole or girder. Though it has an armored tail, it is used for balance, not as a weapon, and it is not prehensile.

The Dream Butcher can stand upright and erect on its legs like a person, but does not walk upright. Instead it runs on all-fours in a loping manner, and can leap up to 15 feet (4.6 m) high and 30 feet (9.1 m) across (increase by 30% with a running start). When running to attack or when fleeing an enemy, the Dream Butcher may leap and bounce off the sides of walls or large pieces of debris and even moving vehicles and large animals, to change direction or to

reach a ledge or to scale a building, wall or cliff. In that regard, it is rather like pursuing a nimble, gorilla-sized monkey that is constantly bounding and leaping as it runs. Their physiology, claws and strength enabling the animal to easily scale vertical surfaces and run along the sides of walls and even ceilings as well as to rip through walls and doors.

When standing still, the Dream Butcher assumes a crouched stance and always seems ready to pounce or leap into action. When walking, it slowly prowls along on all-fours, turning its head from side to side looking for potential prey or danger. When it sleeps, it either sleeps in a sitting position or on its side curled into a fetal position.

One can make the argument that the entire body of the Dream Butcher is a weapon. Large curved spikes on the knees can be used to gore large prey and are especially effective against humanoid opponents. Likewise, the forearm spines can flare out like a fan to slash and parry. The clawed hands can rake or dig into an opponent or prey, but are evolved for tearing and ripping away pieces of armor, be it a natural exoskeleton, hard shell, insect chitin or man-made body armor. The sides of the beast's thick, armored head is solid bone and used to strike and butt without fear of hurting the eyes. The jagged ends can sometimes be used to slash and gore large opponents or pull away armor plates.

The above are just the obvious weapons in the Dream Butcher's arsenal, there are more. The weird alien animal can fire an inverse energy beam – a sort of *cold beam* that damages armor and impairs movement. The cold beams can be fired from the palms of the animal's hands as well as from a nodule behind each of the shoulder blades. The nodes extend up from a hollow area on the monster's back and are able to turn side to side and up and down 30 degrees to fire at prey or attackers.

It is these long-range energy weapon features that has led many to believe the Dream Butcher is no ordinary animal, but a bio-engineered weapon of war. A killing machine designed to hunt



and slay armored military opponents. There are more than a few forces on Rifts Earth capable of creating such a creature, with the Splugorth of Atlantis and the Gene Splicers of Europe at the top of that list. However, the Federation of Magic's Lord Dunscon or an evil Bio-Wizard could also be responsible. Just as an experiment gone awry among the Lemurians or at the Coalition's Lone Star Complex could be the maker of such a biological weapon. Truth be told, any number of alien civilizations from beyond the Rifts are the more likely source of a bio-engineered monstrosity such as the Dream Butcher. Or not.

Famed mercenary and explorer *Ryan Fuerst*, who has observed and faced Dream Butchers in combat, believes they are nasty predatory animals that evolved on an alien world and found its way to Rifts Earth like so many other "monsters." Unfortunately for people, it has managed to adapt and carve out a niche for itself in North America. It especially prospers and slowly grows in number in and around the Xiticix Hivelands. Fuerst points out that though deadly and stealthy, the Dream Butcher is no more intelligent than most predatory animals. Moreover, though the animals often hunt in mated pairs and small groups of 3-5, they never gather in large numbers nor do they exhibit even rudimentary combat strategies and tactics other than prowling and using surprise. While it is true they target armored opponents, including soldiers clad in armor,

cyborgs and power armor, their primary target is armored animals, particularly giant insects like Fury Beetles and Gwylack, as well as insectoid D-Bees like the Xiticix. In fact, Dream Butchers and Xiticix are mortal enemies, with the Dream Butchers being bold enough to take on Xiticix Hunters, as well as sneak into their hives to attack and feed upon Workers, Nannies and larva or eggs. As a result, there are more Dream Butchers in and around the Xiticix Hivelands than anywhere else on the continent.

It seems reasonable then, to assume the deadly bug hunter comes from a world where most species are heavily armored, and it has evolved to hunt armored, probably insect, prey. That's why, unless cornered or attacked first, the Dream Butcher seldom attacks people, livestock or wild animals! They are almost always ignored. The unarmored, civilian population and their pets and livestock would be easy prey for these apex predators, yet they are not on the Dream Butcher's radar. The monster specifically targets *armored animals* because they are the prey it has evolved to hunt. Soft, squishy people and animals are not on the menu. Humans and D-Bees are only targeted when they wear armor, because to the Dream Butcher recognizes armor-clad beings as their prey. As a result, armor-clad soldiers, adventurers, Cyber-Knights, power armor troops, and cyborgs of all variety are seen as prey, attacked and slain, while those not in armor are left alone. Robots and some-

times vehicles are also attacked, but as soon as the animal realizes there is no life inside (or it tears open a hole and finds armored troops inside to feast upon), it abandons its attack and moves on in search of more suitable prey. Native Americans, Psi-Stalkers, Simvan, Cyber-Knights and wilderness people familiar with the Dream Butcher all confirm these facts about the armor-stalking monster.

The only time people not clad in armor are injured or slain by a Dream Butcher is when the animal feels threatened, is defending its young or mate, or is attacked first. Otherwise, an encounter by unarmored people is likely to either be completely uneventful with the animal keeping an eye on them, but ignoring them, or involve one or two inquisitive Dream Butchers approaching them to sniff, poke, and visually studying them for 1D6 melee rounds (15-90 seconds) before losing interest and moving on. Likewise, the monster may rifle through backpacks, crates and boxes, or climb into an open vehicle to look around, but has no use for anything inside them. There have even been reports of people screaming and punching or kicking the creature without it hitting back, as S.D.C. attacks do no damage to the armored monster, and such reactions are simply confusing to the beast. However, hit the Dream Butcher with a punch, weapon or blast that *inflicts Mega-Damage* and the monster may (50% chance) strike back with deadly force, or back off and walk away confused why that thing “stung” it.

The Ghost Whip Tongue

The Dream Butcher’s most bizarre weapon and attack is the **Ghost Whip Tongue**. Many point to it and the energy weapons as clear evidence that the monster is a bio-engineered weapon. However, most naturalists disagree. They insist the Ghost Whip Tongue is not a bio-engineered weapon designed to torture or punish the enemy, but rather a natural psionic-based attack intended to paralyze and pacify prey animals.

This makes perfect sense, especially if many of the creatures preyed upon by the Dream Butcher in its natural habitat are gigantic. This paralyzing attack enables the Dream Butcher to feed upon giant prey without actually having to fight a long, arduous battle to kill it. Think, bloodsucking “leech” that feeds on much, much larger animals until its belly is full and drops off. Only in the case of the Dream Butcher, it is not that tiny and its prey are much larger. The monster is more like a lion leaping on the back of an elephant, or atop a blue whale or Aegis Buffalo, and then uses its psychic Ghost Whip Tongue to incapacitate its prey with paralyzing pain and mind-numbing fear and confusion. This keeps the giant prey animal (or insect) immobilized or barely moving, long enough for the Dream Butcher to feed. When the monster is done, it leaps off the armored giant and runs away, leaving its prey dazed and weakened for several minutes, but alive and able to recover and live on. Smaller, man-sized to Rhino-Buffalo-sized prey are pacified in the same way, except they are usually drained of their blood and killed. Once slain by draining their blood, the Dream Butcher rips its prey open to devour the soft tissue (guts and internal organs). The rest of the carcass left for the scavengers.

Adding to the horror of this attack is that the paralyzed animal or giant insect is still alive as the Dream Butcher first drains it of its life fluids. Conscious, intelligent, human-sized prey understand they are being eaten alive!

It is only after the prey is drained of its life fluids and dead that the monster takes its time to peel away the armor/chitin to feed upon its innards, postmortem. As gross and horrifying as that may

be, it gives humans and D-Bees who fall under attack some hope to be rescued by teammates, provided their comrades act quickly.

The attack and feeding process. Dream Butchers like to pounce upon and hold or grapple with prey, tear open a chunk of armor so that it can access the flesh below (or in the case of body armor at the person underneath) and unleash the Ghost Whip Tongue to paralyze its victim.

The following chain of events is typical for the Dream Butcher looking to incapacitate prey and feed. However, if the prey struggles too much, the beast may cripple or kill it with slashing claws, bites and beam attacks.

First, the Dream Butcher must breach the armor by puncturing it or tear off a piece of the armor to get to the flesh underneath. An opening as small as a golf ball is sufficient for both the Ghost Whip Tongue and the monster’s feeding tube to access the body. The battle to rend an opening in the armor buys the victim some amount of time. Even prey that is being held down has at least a full melee round (15 seconds) to be rescued before the monster can bite or rip a hole in its armor. Unlike most predators, this means the Dream Butcher fights to incapacitate its prey, not kill it as quickly as is can, because it is trying to avoid spilling too much blood.

Second, after an opening in the armor is made, the Dream Butcher sends its psionic *Ghost Whip Tongue* through the opening to worm its way to the head where it plunges into the skull to affect the brain and nervous system. This takes the equivalent of one melee round (15 seconds). Once the Ghost Whip Tongue enters the brain (without doing any obvious physical damage to the body or skull), it inflicts paralyzing fear and agony that immobilizes its victim. Animals whimper and wail, but cannot move. Humans and D-Bees scream and writhe, but all victims are so consumed with terror and pain, they are unable to fight back or move other than twitch.

After the Ghost Whip Tongue enters the skull, according to victims who have managed to survive the process, they are so lost to fear and agony they are unaware of anything else, including what the Dream Butcher is doing to them. The passage of time and everything else stops being important. That’s how consuming and paralyzing this attack is against, at least, mortal opponents. Sometimes, the monster attacks sleeping targets whose head is unarmored and exposed just with its Ghost Whip Tongue, which has a reach of 10 feet (3 m). **I.S.P. Cost:** 10. Paralysis lasts only for as long as the Ghost Whip Tongue is in the prey’s skull scrambling the brain and nervous system. Keeping the Tongue in place uses up two of the Dream Butcher’s attacks every melee round. **Note:** After the tongue is removed, its victim remains paralyzed for 1D4 minutes.

Saving Throw Note: Animals and non-psychic characters need a 15 or higher to save. *Minor and Major psychics* need a 12 to save vs psychic attack, and *Master Psychics* need a 10 or higher to save. Creatures of magic like dragons, Black Faeries, etc., get a bonus of +1 to save. Lesser supernatural beings (demons, etc.) are +2 to save, Greater Demons are +5 to save, while Demon Lords, deities and Elementals are impervious to this attack.

A *successful save* means the victim can resist the Ghost Whip Tongue from inflicting paralysis, for the moment, but the effort to resist is almost as debilitating because ALL of the victim’s energy must go into resisting the monster’s psionic attack. Leaving them with no other melee attacks/actions per round.

During this battle of wills, the Dream Butcher is completely focused on overcoming its prey, and other than pinning and holding its victim, or blasting it with damaging cold energy from its

palms or energy nodes, it cannot engage in any other type of attack. This means it is not likely to notice others coming to the aid of the victim it is trying to overcome. At least not until they attack it, at which point the monster is likely to retract the Ghost Whip Tongue and get off its prey to fight back, or possibly to retreat. Dream Butchers seldom fight to the death unless cornered.

Roll once per melee round to represent an ongoing struggle vs Ghost Whip Tongue, regardless of the number of attacks the beast or its opponent/victim may possess.

If the victim can resist the Ghost Whip Tongue for 1D4+4 melee rounds, the Dream Butcher responds as follows (roll percentile dice): **01-60%** It abandons its attack, leaps off and runs away to find easier prey; or **61-00%** Lashes out physically in anger and frustration with punches, claw strikes and energy blasts for 1D4+1 melee rounds before running away or attacking another target. **Note:** The only minds a Dream Butcher refuses to try to invade are vampires and other undead, Crazies and greater supernatural creatures.

A failed roll to save against this psionic attack paralyzes the victim for as long as the Ghost Whip Tongue is in place, plus 1D4 minutes after.

Third, only after the victim is paralyzed by the *Ghost Whip Tongue* does an M.D.C. tube-like tongue/feeding tube emerge from the mouth to slip through a breach in the armor to puncture to the flesh underneath. Once in place, it slowly draws out the life fluids of its victim. This is the attack that usually kills its prey, but even here there is hope. The drinking of the blood via the feeding tube takes roughly four minutes to kill the average adult human; as much as double that for large D-Bees like the Grackle-Tooth or Mastadonoid, and animals like a bear or bison.

Life and Death Note: One pint of blood is removed per every two melee rounds (30 seconds); two pints per minute. Act quickly to knock or pull the monster off its prey, slay it, or sever the feeding tube and its victim is saved. Or attack the Dream Butcher so ferociously that it must release its prey to defend itself or flee. (**Note:** The feeding tube/tongue has 12 M.D.C., but requires a *Called Shot* to strike, and is a very difficult target to hit, so the attacker suffers a penalty of -5 to strike. Same applies to the Ghost Whip Tongue, but any damage less than 12 M.D.C. only causes this appendage of psychic energy to flicker. Inflicting 13 or more M.D. to the Ghost Whip Tongue momentarily severs the link between the Dream Butcher and its victim, forcing it to recreate the energy tongue to insure its victim remains paralyzed. However, victims of paralysis do not recover for 1D4 melee round even after the tongue is removed, and it can continue to feed on the victim's blood if the feeding tube has already been inserted into the body. A Natural 20 is always a successful strike and does double damage.)

A Note About Surviving Blood Loss: Victims that have lost half to two-thirds of their life fluids are weak as a kitten. They have only two melee attacks/actions per round, reduce speed by 80%, reduce skill performance by 50%, and no combat bonuses are available to them (unmodified die rolls only) for 48 hours! Such victims will recover naturally, over time, but until then they are so weak they cannot run and may need to be carried and provided assistance to function. In a fight they will collapse within 1D6 melee rounds. Receiving a blood transfusion is highly recommended and is the only way for them to fully recover in only 1D6+6 hours instead of 48.

Losing more than two-thirds of their blood leaves that victim in a coma and requires a successful roll to save vs coma and death or the victim dies. If the save is a success, it buys the victim 1D6

hours in which time he needs to receive a blood transfusion or restoration magic or he still dies. Magical Healing Touch provides a +10% bonus to save vs coma and death and should heal the wound and stop bleeding caused by the insertion of the feeding tube. Otherwise, the victim **NEEDS** to be well bandaged or get field surgery (or psionic Stop Bleeding or Psychic Surgery) to stop the bleeding and stabilize the victim. However, such severe blood loss still requires a transfusion or the character *will die*.

Fourth, once the victim is dead, because all of the life fluids are drained and consumed by the monster, more of the victims armor is torn away so the Dream Butcher can gut the carcass and feast upon the soft tissue, intestines and organs.

Feeding Note: One adult human is usually enough to satisfy the monster's hunger for 1D6+4 hours. Three makes the Dream Butcher content and lethargic for the next 2D4+20 hours. This predator is not a glutton and stops eating when it is full, so it seldom consumes more than this amount at a single feeding. Only hunts when it is hungry.

Survivors Continue to Suffer from a Ghost Whip Tongue Attack

It is the effects of the Ghost Whip Tongue that gives the predator its name, **Dream Butcher**. Humans, D-Bees and most sentient beings, such as a dragon, that survives the Ghost Whip Tongue attack, suffer lasting mental and emotional damage as a side-effect of this powerful and invasive attack. They are as follows.

1. Temporary Paralysis. The fear and pain induced paralysis lingers for 1D4 minutes after the Ghost Whip Tongue is withdrawn. Leaving the victim in tears and quaking like a frightened child, unable to move or take action. He or she can be carried or dragged away, but cannot muster the strength to even stand on his own.

2. Lingering Combat Penalties. For the next 5D6 minutes, the individual feels shaken and spent: Reduce speed, attacks per melee round, all combat bonuses, and skill performance by half for the duration!

3. Permanent Memory Loss. There is a 01-70% likelihood that pieces of memories are missing due to the psychic trauma. Typically, bits and pieces of recent events like what the individual was doing moments before the attack by the Dream Butcher, what happened next, who rescued him or how, when and where the attack took place, who may have died in the onslaught, the day and time, and similar memories may be gone. Only memories from the last 24 hours are scrambled and may be lost. G.M. discretion, but be fair and logical.

4. 01-50% Chance of a Phobia regarding Dream Butchers or one-eyed creatures, or beings that drink the blood of their victims, or of being eaten alive. Pick one or something similar.

5. Lingering Nightmares. Anyone whose was paralyzed by the burrowing mind probe is haunted by the monster in their dreams. Survivors are plagued by nightmares about the Dream Butcher as often as 2D6 times a week for a year. After that, the nightmares lessen, occurring 2D6 times a month for the next 1D6 years. After that the nightmares happen only 1D6 times a year for the next 1D6 years. And finally, only once or twice a year and when under tremendous stress or facing a life and death situation, or when the beast is rumored to be in the area. These nightmares remain for the rest of the victim's life

6. Scarred for Life: Hidden and Lasting Trauma. Whenever the survivor of a Dream Butcher's Ghost Whip Tongue attack

believes he is going to have to face/fight the monster again, his hands sweat and tremble, his mouth becomes dry, and his anxiety level and apprehension increases. The survivor is +2 on Perception Rolls regarding attacks from and avoiding Dream Butchers, and is +1 to dodge. However, when face to face with the monster he is -2 to save vs Horror Factor, -2 on initiative, and -2 to strike and parry when fighting the beast.

Note: The Ghost Whip Tongue is a bright rose energy color.

Dream Butcher – Predatory Carnivore

Also Known As: Spiked Leaper and Armor Hunter.

Alignment: Considered to be Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+8 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+9, M.A. 1D6, P.S. 1D6+20 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+17, P.E. 1D6+19, P.B. 1D4, Spd 2D6+38 running, or 30 mph (48 km) can be maintained for up to four hours. 25 mph (40 km) when climbing/running up the sides of walls, buildings, cliffs, or ceilings, and capable of spectacular leaps. Can reach a speed of 35 mph (56 km) for a short burst lasting 1D4 minutes. Walking speed is 4 mph (6.4 km).

M.D.C. by Location (Armored):

*Head – 2D4x10+120

*Legs, Hind (2, large) – 1D6x10+100 each

*Legs, Front (2) – 1D6x10+60 each

*Tail – 1D6x10+80

*Large Spine Spikes (10) – 16 each

*Knee/Leg Spikes (8) – 12 each

*Forearm Spikes/Blades (5 per each arm) – 15 each

*Energy Emitter Nodules (2, back) – 30 each

*Center Eye (large) – 15 (+15 when protective cover is in place).

**Tongue Feeding Tube – 12

Main Body – 1D4x10+250

* A single asterisk means a small and/or difficult target to strike and requires a Called Shot to hit. Even then the attacker is -4 to strike. Destroying one leg or arm reduces speed by 30%. Destroying two legs reduces speed by 60%. Lost limbs do not regenerate, but toes, claws, feet, tail, spikes and tongue regrow. See Natural Abilities.

** The feeding tube/tongue has 12 M.D.C., but requires a Called Shot to strike, and is a very difficult target to hit, so the attacker suffers a penalty of -5 to strike.

Note: On S.D.C. worlds, the Dream Butcher has a main body of 1D6x10+40 S.D.C., 1D6x10+120 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 14. All other locations are S.D.C. at the same number as M.D.C., above, i.e. 1D6x10+80 M.D.C. = 1D6x10+80 S.D.C./Hit Points. The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D., so a bite that does 2D6 M.D. on Rifts Earth does 2D6 S.D.C. damage on S.D.C. worlds.

Horror Factor: 13 when encountering just one, 15 when dealing with two or more.

Size: 7-8 feet (2.1 to 2.4 m) tall standing erect, but usually crouches and runs on all fours. The tail adds an additional six feet (1.8 m) of length.

Weight: 400-600 pounds (180 to 270 kg).

Average Life Span: 2D6+12 years. The animal reaches full maturity in three years. Females give birth to two live young after 10 months of pregnancy. The young usually stay with their parents for three years before going off on its own to find a mate and

start its own family. Juveniles have a red or violet hue to their tough skin, while adults are darker and more gray. Males are larger than females.

Typically encountered as a lone individual, a pair, or small numbers of three or four when on the prowl hunting, but may gather in small family packs of 4-6 and sometimes as many as 6-12 members. In the latter case there will be 2-4 adults and the rest being young from two or three birth cycles. Males are slightly larger and lighter and brighter in coloration than females.

P.P.E.: 5D6

Disposition: A highly intelligent hunter and survivor. Social and playful animals when dealing with its own species. It may hunt alone, in pairs or in small family groups whose members may work together to take down large prey and to protect each other from hostile forces. The creature is tolerant of its own kind and hunts giant insects and other armored animals, including cyborgs and people inside body armor, power armor, and vehicles, but ignores most people and animals not in armor. Unarmored people are only attacked and slain when they attack the Dream Butcher first or threaten its mate, young or pack members. A typical family group/pack is 1D4 adults and 2D4 young, seldom more.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Acrobatics 75%, Climbing 95/85%, Escape Artist 55%, Land Navigation 90%, Prowl 55%, Swimming 70%, Tailing 70%, and Tracking 75% (+10% to track insectoids and giant insects).

Natural Abilities: Climbing, leaping, agility, superior vision, good hearing and sense of smell, track by scent alone 50% (+20% to track insects and insectoids), thick leathery armor, and spike covered body. Bio-Regenerates at a rate of 5D6 M.D.C. per 24 hours and can completely regrow lost spikes, spines, claws, toes, back mounted energy blasters, and tail in 1D6+8 days, and the feeding tube tongue or eyes (any, large or small) within 1D4 days. The Ghost Whip Tongue is psychic energy and does not have a physical form.

Defensive Spikes and Spines (special): The small spikes on the upper arms and the large, bone spikes along its spines and lower legs, and knife-like spines on the forearms makes grappling with the Dream Butcher a painful experience. Trying to grab an arm or leap onto the back or wrestle with the beast inflicts 2D6 M.D. to its attacker! Double damage when an attacker pounces on top of a Dream Butcher or when a large predator like a T-Rex bites a Dream Butcher. In both cases the attacker is stabbed by the many sharp spikes and barbs that covers the animal's body. Similarly, blades on the arms and legs can be used to slash and gore attackers as well as prey. Similarly, the tail is mostly hard bone plates that can take a lot of punishment without inflicting serious damage to the Dream Butcher itself. The boney tail has very few pain receptors.

Enhanced Vision (special): Five eyes: One large, yellow cyclopean eye and four small, fuchsia-colored almond-shaped eyes. Nightvision 4,000 feet (1,219 m), excellent day vision, and can see the invisible including Astral Travelers and energy beings that are invisible to most animals. The large, cyclops eye has a translucent, armored membrane that can fold over the eye, much like that of a crocodile, to protect it from dust, dirt, and flying particles, wind at high speeds, flailing prey and deliberate attacks, but reduces vision by half the usual distance.

Inverse Energy Blasters (4): Two nodules between the shoulder blades rise up out of the back on short stalks, at will,

combat where the Dream Butcher can unleash the Inverse Energy Beam wherever it lays the palms of its hands. This can be done by touch, palm down, or firing the beam at close range. While the palm blasts are most effective at close range (120 feet/36.6 m), they can fire at more distant targets, but without a bonus to strike.

Primary Purpose: Hobble prey and weaken armor of prey.

Range: 1,000 feet (305 m).

Mega-Damage: 2D6 M.D. per blast against **man-made, hard-ened materials**, including M.D.C. ceramics, plastics, glass, metal, wiring, concrete, rock, and rubber.

4D6 M.D. against hard, **organic armor** including M.D.C. scales, plates, bone, resin, shell, chitin, exoskeletons (insects, crustaceans, etc.), quills, and similar.

Far less damaging against **soft organic structures**. 3D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage to most *soft organic materials* such as S.D.C. flesh/tissue, muscle, hair, fur, feathers, rope, cloth fabric, leather and vegetation (grass, leaves, vines, trees, etc.). 1D6x10 S.D.C. damage against hard, S.D.C. armors and processed wood, ceramic, plastic, metal, concrete, etc.

Note: Double damage to materials and creatures vulnerable to cold and ice. Inflicts Mega-Damage to M.D.C. creatures and S.D.C./Hit Point damage to S.D.C. beings and materials, as above.

Damaging Side-Effects and Penalties of Cold Blasts: The joints and muscles of living beings ache and stiffen from each cold blast; machine parts freeze and joints, wheels, gears, and bearings grind and slow as they take damage and ice crystals form to cover them. When the same joint or moving part is blasted two or more times, reduce speed by half and inflict a -2 penalty to strike, parry, or dodge.

Bonuses: Beam Nodes on Back: +1 to strike on a Called Shot with beam emitter nodules within its optimum range of 1,000 feet (305 m), but no bonus to strike opponents closer than 20 feet (6.1 m).

Palm blasters: +1 to strike at a range up to 100 feet (30.5 m), +2 to strike at *point-blank range* of 10 feet (3 m) or closer. An automatic hit when the monster's palm is pressed against its victim's body. No bonus to hit distant targets beyond 120 feet (36.6 m) using palm blasts. Unmodified roll to strike only.

Rate of Fire: Single shot only. Each blast counts as one melee attack and when the Ghost Whip Tongue is deployed it uses up two attacks per melee round.

Payload: Limited but regenerate quickly. 10 blasts per each nodule on the back, 20 total, and 10 per each palm blaster, per hour. Automatically regenerates two full payloads within one hour.

Leaping and Agility (special): The Dream Butcher can leap and bound as high as 15 feet (4.6 m) and 30 feet (9.1 m) across; increase height and distance by 30% with a running start.

Agile and possessing good running speed (30 mph/48 km and only 20% slower when climbing/running up the sides of walls, buildings, and cliffs or suspended from ceilings), the Dream Butcher is capable of spectacular leaps to grab and pull down low-flying targets right out of the air. Against large prey, the Dream Butcher likes to leap onto the animal's back – including the back of large flying insects and animals (or power armor or vehicles) – where its prey cannot easily get to it, rip a hole in its armored hide and attack with its Ghost Whip Tongue. It also leaps on the back of large flying animals to hitch a ride and make a fast getaway.

Unafraid of heights, Dream Butchers are known to hurl themselves from rooftops, the sides of buildings, towers, cliffs, and other high places – even from the back of one flying animal or vehicle onto the back of another – to bring down flying prey or to make an escape. This includes flying power armor, small aircraft, and dragons. This display of daring and acrobatics is always spectacular to witness.

Armored flying beasts are brought down the same as any other armored prey, by ripping a hole in the armor, helmet or hull and paralyzing it via the *Ghost Whip Tongue*. The monster is able to regulate the pain and fear inflicted upon the flyer just enough to force a fluttering, but hard landing, not an uncontrolled crash into the ground or trees. However, in the event of a crash, especially with power armor and aircraft, the Dream Butcher should be able to leap off before hitting the ground, and roll with impact to avoid serious injury. Similarly, when wrestling with the pilot of a Sky Cycle, rocket bike, or hover-cycle, the beast may successfully unseat and leap away with the armor-clad pilot in its clutches, and let the vehicle veer off and crash. You can only imagine that these leaping assaults and aerial acrobatics are common practice on its home world against man-sized to jet aircraft-sized armored insects and other flying prey. This makes the Xiticix very attractive and favorite prey, but so do all manner of man-made power armor including SAMAS, the Samson, the Flying Titan, Glitter Boys and all the rest.

Psionic Ghost Whip Tongue (special): The Ghost Whip Tongue is a bright rose color tendril of energy released from the mouth and has a 10 foot (3 m) maximum reach. It is a focused, intangible energy weapon that can pierce through the flesh and skull, even skulls that are M.D.C. structures, to scramble the brain and the nervous system of living prey and paralyze them with fear and incapacitating pain. Victims remain paralyzed for as long as the Ghost Whip Tongue is inside their skull. An action that counts as two melee attacks per melee round. **I.S.P. Cost:** 10 points. **Note:** The Ghost Whip Tongue can snake its way through an opening in armor as small as a golf ball. **Damage:** The Psionic Ghost Whip Tongue is like a painful, burrowing mind probe that has a lasting impact on those who may survive a Dream Butcher's assault. **See the detailed description** of how this monstrous predator uses the Ghost Whip Tongue to paralyze and feed upon its victims, above, in the main description.

The *Ghost Whip Tongue* is also effective against the ethereal, inflicting 2D6 M.D. (or S.D.C. depending on the being's nature) to Astral Beings, Astral Travelers, Entities, energy beings and ethereal life forms not usually vulnerable to attacks in the physical plane. And remember, the Dream Butcher can see the invisible and knows when they are present. Though the damage to these spirits and energy beings is not great, it is painful, shocking and frightening for such beings to be attacked while intangible. The *Inverse Energy Beam* also inflicts 1D6 M.D. per blast to such beings. Both attacks, but especially the Ghost Whip Tongue, is likely to cause such creatures to back off and flee. **Bonus:** +2 to strike Astral Beings and other ethereal and energy beings.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Mega-Damage: Claws, bites, spike and pouncing attacks as well as special attacks from *inverse energy beams* or the *Ghost Whip Tongue*, the latter two described above, and pounce attacks.

Bite, Mandibles, Restrained – 4D6 M.D.

Pincer/Mandible Bite, Full Strength – 2D6 M.D.

Claw Strike, Restrained – 1D6 M.D.

Claw Strike, Full Strength – 3D6 M.D.

Head Butt (blunt attack) – 2D6 M.D.

Knee Strike with Blade-like Spikes – 4D6 M.D.

Forearm Strike with Blade-like Spikes – 3D6 M.D.

Ghost Whip Tongue – varies, paralyzes mortal opponents, damages Entities and energy beings.

Inverse Energy Beams – varies, but typically 2D6 M.D. per blast.

Leaping Pounce Attack (special): 2D6 M.D.; counts as one melee attack and is intended to knock its prey down and underneath the Dream Butcher where it continues to fight with biting mandibles, head butts, claw strikes and cold blasts. The pounce attack is used primarily to pin and hold prey down while the armor is punctured by the mandibles to unleash the Ghost Whip Tongue to completely paralyze its victim and let the monster feed via a feeding tube through the armor breach. In addition to damage, the victim of the leaping pounce loses initiative and two melee attacks.

The Dream Butcher has a 01-70% likelihood of knocking humanoid prey up to 10 feet (3 m) tall and weighing up to half a ton (1,000 pounds/450 kg) off its feet. Even cyborgs take damage from a pounce attack and characters inside body armor or power armor suffer 2D4 S.D.C./Hit Point damage from the jolting impact, fall and weight on top of them.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 on initiative against armored prey and opponents, +1 to strike, +1 to dodge, +4 to roll with impact, Critical Strike (double damage) from surprise attacks and on an unmodified roll of 19 or 20, +3 to save vs Horror Factor, impervious to disease, unafraid of heights or flying, or leaping upon large, moving targets.

Also see Psionics.

Vulnerabilities: Though a fairly good swimmer when it is absolutely necessary, the Dream Butcher hates water and tries to avoid it. Cold, ice and fire attacks do normal damage. Armored troops are seen as prey, so the monster sometimes attacks cyborgs, robots and power armor-clad troops that are more than it can handle.

Since the beast ignores people and animals that are not armored, it leaves it vulnerable to attacks from unarmored or partially armored members of an adventuring group, such as mages, druids, troops in uniforms, unarmored personnel protected by magic or force fields, and so on. For example, a Dream Butcher would see a Splugorth Slaver inside a barge or an armored Overlord or Kittani as prey and therefore a target or a threat, but not the unarmored and scantily clad Blind Warrior Women.

Magic: None.

Psionic Powers: Considered a Master Psychic. Death Trance (1), Detect Psionics (6), Ghost Whip Tongue (10; special, see above), Mind Block (4), Presence Sense (4), Resist Fatigue (4), Sense Magic (3), and Suppress Fear (8). **I.S.P.:** 1D6x10+80.

Habitat: Anywhere in North America, but more so in Ontario Canada, Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan, and to a lesser degree, the Magic Zone, New West and Northern Mexico. Fortunately, Dream Butchers appear to be a new invasive species to Rifts Earth and comparatively few in numbers. As a result, they are not very common nor encountered in large numbers, but can be found almost anywhere in North America, especially where giant insects like Fury Beetles and Xiticix are found, or other armored creatures including Gwylack, dinosaurs and Ae-

gis Buffalo. They must have found their way to Rifts Earth via a Rift in the Midwest or Magic Zone because the predator has not found its way to Dinosaur Swamp. **Note:** There are more Dream Butchers in and around the *Xiticix Hivelands* than anywhere else on the continent.

Allies: Mainly their own species. The Dream Butcher's unique abilities and preference for armored prey make the monsters appealing as bodyguards and attack creatures, except they are very difficult to control. This is likely due to their own psionic abilities and alien natures. Cannot be domesticated.

The Splugorth themselves, Splugorth Conservators, Splugorth Bio-Wizards and the Splugorth Slaver enjoy using Dream Butchers as hunting and attack animals. However, the only way they have been able to control the monster is via the use of an alien symbiotic organism. The symbiote makes the Dream Butcher more docile, pliable, and accepting of the Splugorth Minions as its master, and willing follow basic commands. They are most obedient when the commands are simple, like stop, sit, stay, attack, and kill, or when they appeal to the monster's nature of hunting, capturing and paralyzing designated targets, fighting and feeding. However, the symbiote that makes this possible, also reduces the predator's usual bonuses by half, speed by 10%, and -1 melee attack.

Enemies: Dream Butchers are evolved to hunt "armored" prey from giant insects to armored soldiers. Dream Butchers and Xiticix are mortal enemies and the animal constantly hunts them as prey. Arachnoids like the A'rac, Ee-Bee Gee-Bees and Spinne as well as insectoids, Crab Warriors, Cyber-Centaur, and other armored animals or armor-clad D-Bees, humans and animals, even dragons, are all considered prey. In a group, it is such beings that are targeted first by the Dream Butchers, before contending with unarmored adversaries that appear less threatening. Vehicles of all kind, Robot vehicles, Automaton, power armors, Golems, TW Iron Juggernauts, full conversion Combat Cyborgs, partial cyborgs, Cyber-Knights and armor-clad soldiers are all prime targets.

Evil, or foolish and/or desperate *Shifters* sometimes summon and try to control Dream Butchers to use against their enemies and rivals. However, the animal is too alien and dangerous to use for long (it is best to release them after five hours), and can never be domesticated. They can, for short intervals, be controlled by powerful beings such as Demon Lords, deities and powerful magic, but even then only for 9-24 hours. After which, the animal becomes increasingly stubborn and aggressive to those who try to command it.

The creature is too stubborn, powerful and unpredictable even for *Simvan*, *Psi-Stalkers* and *Psi-Druids* to control. All of them have tremendous difficulty managing the monster for more than a few minutes. At best, they can get the Dream Butcher not to attack them while they and their armored companions pass near the creature. Even then, the Psi-Stalker or Simvan, or Psi-Druid, must keep the monster's attention on them, not their teammates, there can be no vehicle (large or small), nobody in the group can make a hostile or sudden move, or loud noise, and they must all pass the monster slowly. The notorious Simvan "Monster Riders" NEVER try to ride the Dream Butcher, and they dislike the creature because it preys upon many of the monstrous creatures they do ride. Of course, Simvan, Psi-Stalkers, Psi-Druids, Wilderness Scouts and those versed in Lore: Demons and Monsters know the habits of the Dream Butcher and that the creatures should ignore them if they

are not wearing armor and don't make any sudden or threatening moves. Some young Simvan and Psi-Stalkers have taken it upon themselves to slay a Dream Butcher in one-on-one combat as a right of passage into adulthood, and to prove they are ready to join the warriors of their tribe. Only half are successful and return with the creature's head or tail as proof of their deed.

Value: None per se, though operators of gladiatorial arenas have been known to pay 1,000 to 6,000 credits for one. However, the creature is so dangerous and its reputation so menacing, that most arenas don't want the bizarre monster.

Note: This is a new creature appearing for the very first time. Inspired by the art and ideas of Charles "Chuck" Walton Jr.

Duckbilled Honker

By Kevin Siembieda

Whether these are Hypacrosaurus, Duckbilled dinosaurs from Earth's past, or similar creatures from another world is unknown, but they are found in large numbers west of the Mississippi River as well as throughout the Dinosaur Swamp region. Sometimes venturing even further north in the summer.

These herbivores have a large, flat, bill-like muzzle with large, flat teeth in the lower jaw for grinding and chewing vegetation. They feed on conifer trees, pine cones, acorns, oak tree leaves, berries, ferns, and a wide variety of other leaves and plants found in mixed forests. Out west, Duckbilled Honkers tend to gather in large herds of 100-600 animals. In Dinosaur Swamp, Duckbills are usually encountered in much smaller herds of 20-80. Here in the Swamplands, smaller herds are more mobile and less vulnerable to the multitude of predators, but there are a great many of these small to medium-sized herds. They are a favorite prey animal for the *Alien Rex*, *Allosaurus*, *Devilsaurus*, *Tyrannosaurus Rex*, *Raptors*, *Dragon-Cat*, and other carnivores, as well as the barbarians and local humans and D-Bees of Dinosaur Swamp. Out west, some Native Americans and ranchers raise them like cattle, but this is uncommon in Dinosaur Swamp.

Duckbills rarely fight unless panicked, backed into a corner and attacked, or to defend their nest or young. Generally, they ignore small unmounted humanoids, and run away from danger whenever they can. They are called "honkers" because they make loud honking sounds like geese with a loudspeaker. The Canadian Duckbill or Honker is a more beefy and aggressive cousin to the common Duckbill and sometimes the herds mix and travel together for a while.

Though always on the move, once a year for three weeks, a herd of Duckbills stops and congregates when it is time to nest a new clutch of eggs. Nesting sites are usually near a large body of fresh water after the spring rains have come, creating a rich, muddy environment in which to lay their eggs. The herd returns to roost at the same nesting site (or at least the same general area), for their entire lives, and with them come the predators who take advantage of the Duckbill's nature.

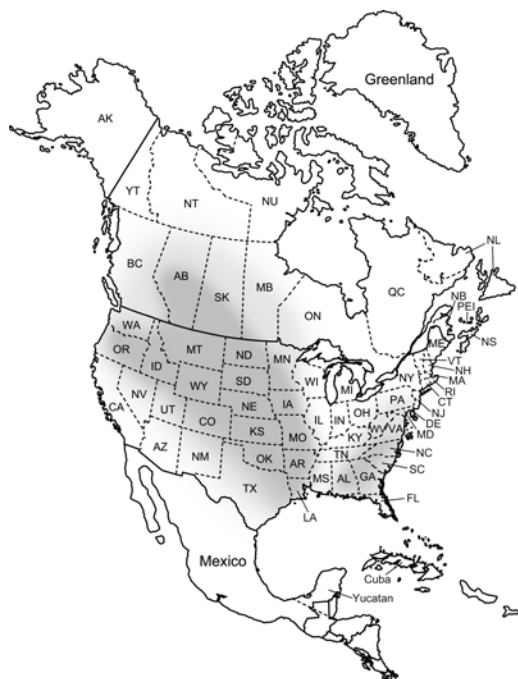
Duckbilled Honker

Also Known As: Honkers, Leaf-Eating Dinosaur and Harrosaur.

Alignment: Animal, generally considered to be Anarchist.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4 (low animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6, M.A. 2D6, P.S. 1D6+20 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+14, P.E. 1D6+18 (Supernatural), P.B. 2D6+3, Spd 1D6+34 running, or 27 mph (43 km) which can be maintained for up to three hours. A speed





of 16 mph (25.6 km) can be maintained for as long as six hours. Grazing speed is a mere one mph (1.6 km) or slower. 30 mph (48 km) in a short burst lasting one minute. While not as fast as a T-Rex and some other speedy predators, Duckbill Honkers can often outdistance them as they can maintain there 27 mph (43 km) for a longer period of time.

M.D.C. by Location:

- *Head – 100
- *Small Arms (2) – 20 each
- *Hind Legs (2) – 130 each
- *Underbelly – 120
- Main Body – 1D4x100+100

* A single asterisk means a small or difficult target to hit and requires a Called Shot at -1 to strike.

Note: On S.D.C. worlds, the dinosaur has 4D6x10 S.D.C., 6D6x10 Hit Points, and a Natural A.R. of 12. The damage inflicted by the creature's attacks does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D.

Horror Factor: None.

Size: 20-30 feet (6.1 to 9.1 m) from head to tail, about 18-20 feet (5.4 to 6 m) standing erect.

Weight: 2-3.2 tons.

Average Life Span: 30 years. Mated pairs of Duckbilled Honkers are most aggressive in the spring while the mated male and female take turns sitting on the eggs and guarding the nest. This extra vigilance and aggressiveness continues until the young are 8 weeks old. However, young stay with the protective parents for 5-6 months before instinctively leaving their parents. Though the young may appear to be nearly the same size as their parents after 12 months (20% smaller until full maturity), they do not reach full size until three years old and sexual maturity until four. Females lay 2D6 eggs at the end of March or in early April, which hatch six weeks later. The parents nesting that entire time, like ducks or geese. One going off in search of food, while the other stays near the nest, but never going too far from it and the eggs.

P.P.E.: 4D6

Disposition: Honkers are much more placid than their muscle-bound Canadian cousins. The only time Duckbills get excited

is when they spot predators or are under attack. Very similar to cattle, they are most dangerous to people when stampeded by some larger threat. These herbivorous herd animals, like cattle or bison, are not fighters and run from threats like large predators and noisy packs of humans.

When a predator attacks the herd, the animals flee, running away and with the same coordination and movement as a flock of birds. If water is nearby, they head for it in the hope that the predator in pursuit is unable or unwilling to follow them into the water, especially deep water, because they are good swimmers.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climb 30%/0%, Land Navigation 75%, Identify Plants and Fruit 90% (for eating), and Swimming 70%.

Natural Abilities: Excellent speed, can run without pause and without exhaustion for four hours, leap up to 8 feet (2.4 m) long or high, likes water, can hold breath underwater for 1D4+3 minutes, and although constantly eating, can go without food or water for up to six weeks without ill effect. Honkers recover 2D6 M.D. per 24 hours and regrow lost portions of their tail within 1D6 weeks. Their honks are so loud they can be heard up to a half mile (0.8 km) away.

Attacks per Melee: Three.

Mega-Damage: Fight with bites, head butts, tail slashes and clawed feet.

- Bite – 4D6 S.D.C.
- Butt with Head or Beak – 3D6 S.D.C.
- Small Forearm Claws – 3D6+6 S.D.C.
- Clawed Hind Legs – 2D6 M.D.
- Tail Slash – 2D6 M.D.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls in regard to finding edible (for them) plants, +1 to strike, +2 to dodge, +4 to leaping dodge, +3 to roll with impact, +6 to save vs disease and poison, and +2 to save vs Horror Factor.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Woodlands and scrub plains in the New West and the drier regions of Dinosaur Swamp, such as Georgia, the Carolinas, and the mountain valleys and lowlands of the Appalachian Mountains. They are most common, however, out west, where millions are found between the Rocky Mountains and the Mississippi River, especially in southern Alberta, Saskatchewan, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and parts of Texas/Pecos Empire. It is mostly the cold and snowy winters that keep them out of Canada year long and from venturing farther into the northeast. Small herds do migrate to the northern forests in the summer, but head back south in the winter.

Enemies: Allosaurus, Devilsaurus, T-Rex, Dragon-Cat, Panthera-Tereon, and other large predators, pack hunters, and humanoids.

Allies: None other than its own species.

Value: 900-2,000 credits per animal. Though fatty, the meat of the Duckbill is good tasting. Oil extracted from the animal is used in a variety of products, including lamp oil, and the hide can be used to make a light M.D.C. fabric (poncho or overcoat has 8 M.D.C., overcoat with extra armor padding 12-16 M.D.C., or tent with 15 M.D.C.). They are impossible (and uncomfortable) to ride or domesticate except by Simvan and Psi-Stalkers (-10% on riding skill).

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 14: New West™**, page 141, and later in **Rifts® World Book 27: Adventures in Dinosaur Swamp™**, page 36.



Ee-Bee Gee-Bees

By Charles Walton Jr. and Kevin Siembieda

"The more they are exposed to, the more they learn to adapt even if twenty of them died to learn that one single lesson. The prize for the survivors is the lesson learned."

— A quote from a battle weary CS Juicer named Derek Boudreaux

The Ee-Bee Gee-Bee is a small, cute, shaggy, fur-covered, lion-like, centaur animal that is easy to mistake as a D-Bee of some kind. They stand 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m) tall, supported on four wide-spread legs. They are covered from head to toe in soft, long, silky fur that is luxurious to the touch and beckons to be stroked. In some ways these little, clever animals resemble a cuddly, shaggy African lion, only with longer, softer fur and a bushy mane. They stand on furry, crab-like legs and have a somewhat humanoid upper body and a cute, pug-nosed, kitten's face. The fur of males is a tan color, like a lion, while the fur of the larger females is a warm, coppery orange more like that of an orangutan. Only babies and juveniles have blond or creamy white colored hair. The young and

adults both make little cooing sounds like a dove, and gurgle and giggle like a baby. When communicating with each other they also make soft whining and purring sounds like a kitten, and a loud, bird-like chirping when calling out to their brethren.

Many people have reported that Ee-Bee Gee-Bees seem to have a gentle, harmless child-like personality. Looking at human and D-Bee adventurers with a cheery, whimsical expression and allowing themselves to be petted and hugged. Ee-Bee Gee-Bees move slowly when approaching people or livestock, and always seem friendly and welcoming. They are known to wave and beckon people to approach them while beaming a wide smile and cooing. The animal's head often moves from one side to the other in a quizzical manner as it looks its new humanoid "friend" up and down. If you let it, the beast will take your hand or tug at your clothing to lead you down a path or around a danger such as a predator, bog or man-eating plant. Just one more kind and friendly gesture from these shaggy, little fur-balls.

Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are so soft, cute and sweet, that it takes most people a long while to realize they are dealing with some sort of semi-intelligent *arachnid*. A cunning and sneaky predator that has been sizing them up since the moment they first spied them, and is leading them to slaughter!

Despite their small stature, these arachnids are surprisingly strong and fast, and beneath all that shaggy fur is a tough exoskeleton that provides M.D.C. protection. One Ee-Bee Gee-Bee can single-handedly drag or carry away a full-sized man in environmental body armor up into the trees where these arachnids usually live. Like a spider, Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are able to crawl along the sides of walls and across ceilings with the same speed and agility as on the ground. They prefer to live up in the trees and other high places, but are just as at home in the ruins of buildings, under bridges, in the cliffs of mountains, or down in sewers and cave systems. Standing 3.5 to 4 feet (1 to 1.2 m) tall, the Ee-Bee Gee-Bees' small size enables them to easily find cover and hiding places. They skitter around at good speeds, are able climbers, and can cut corners or change directions or spin with the agility of a spider. Their four legs are packed with muscles and flexible tendons that enable them to spring like a cat to pounce upon prey or to dodge and leap away.

Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are crafty and deadly predators that hunt people as well as animals. In fact, humans and D-Bees are a favorite prey because they are so easy to lure and trap, and taste delicious. The little monsters have learned that most people find them attractive and harmless, enabling them to be approached and lured into ambushes and traps with minimal effort. Children, women and people not familiar with this creature are very susceptible to the Ee-Bee Gee-Bees' charm. Due to their size and cute personalities, children tend to see them as fellow kids or as big, cuddly doggies. This is also due in part to the creature's high Mental Affinity and its ability to release an invisible pheromone that make humans and most sentient beings find them to be child-like and non-threatening.

Clever and observant, Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are fast learners able to mimic and ape human behavior. By watching, they learn simple things, such as how to open doors and containers, how to turn on and off a particular machine, what a particular machine or weapon/tool or vehicle or power armored suit is capable of, its importance to people, and what to watch out for and avoid. The cunning predators also learn human behavior, habits, and routines, including military patrols, the type and number of troops on such a patrol or mission, and other common practices, routines and schedules. All of which these devious and treacherous predators use to capture people, be they humans or D-Bees, common folk or trained and well equipped soldiers.

Capable mimics and pretenders, Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are able to understand and copy human behavior such as smiling, laughing, waving hello, shaking hands, the thumbs up sign, taking a hand to lead, petting, hugging and comforting people, and behaving in a shy and submissive manner. All in accordance with appearing to be friendly, kind and helpful, they are often able to win the trust and confidence of outsiders and gleefully lead them to their doom. All of it an act of deception to lure away one or two people at a time from their teammates so that their cute, fuzzy, new friend can jump them without warning, or lead them into a trap. Victims of such an attack are incapacitated with venom, or beaten into submission, secured in a web cocoon and carried back to the Ee-Bee Gee-Bee's lair or camp for it and its fellow tribe members to eat at a later time!

As a general rule, Ee-Bee Gee-Bees do not lash out and attack like a wild animal. Rather, they are patient, observant, and always willing to wait and lure their human prey into a false sense of peace and security before launching an attack or leading them, like sheep, to slaughter. Whenever possible, the little fuzz balls will

walk their intended victims right into their lair, or a into a trap or ambush (2D4+1 other Ee-Bee Gee-Bees laying in wait).

Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are another critter that seems to straddle the line between animal and primitive D-Bee. They gather in small social groups known as "Clusters" (4D6+10 members), watch and learn, and use simple tools – sticks, rocks, reflective materials, etc. – similar to Earth chimpanzees, but are more skillful and consistent with their use of them. This includes the uses of sharpened sticks and thick tree branches as primitive spears and cudgels, and may pick up and use a man-made knife, hammer, axe, staff and similar melee weapons. They also work as a coordinated team, watch out for each other, set traps, use ambush tactics, create diversions, and throw rocks and makeshift sacks of fruit containing **Ripper Fruit Wasps** (description below) and other, simple strategies and tactic such as using lures and trickery to attract prey and ambush it. They also sometimes use *Impaler Ticks* and *Acid Moss* to defend their lairs.

When they strike, Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are likely to pick people off one at a time and use the element of surprise whenever possible – attacking without warning from above or behind, from an ambush point, while their target is distracted or sleeping, etc. – or by overwhelming opponents with sheer numbers.

Clusters of Ee-Bee Gee-Bees sometimes unite to build giant communal webs that can span for 1D4 miles (1.6 to 6.4 km), covering tree tops and crossing over canyons, rivers and lakes. These webs can have multiple layers of walls and floors, and tunnels, with numerous traps and snares placed throughout the web and the area surrounding its perimeter. These massive webs compel savvy travelers to go to great lengths to avoid traveling under or along their paths, and find ways to go around the web, even if it adds several hours or days to the journey. It is best to avoid such larger web construction, because they are home to scores of these arachnids watching from above. The farther you travel under their web canopy, the more movement you see and excited chirping you hear. You are also likely to start seeing man-sized cocoons strung up in the trees and feel countless, hungry eyes watching you.

Like the Frostweaver and other spiders, Ee-Bee Gee-Bees can create webs that cover the ground or fill a tunnel. As with any web trap, the Ee-Bee Gee-Bee feels the vibrations of the struggling prey that gets stuck in its web and springs to attack while it is confused and impaired. However, Ee-Bee Gee-Bees do not often create web traps along the ground, because such traps during the daytime and among the forests and city environments where Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are most commonly encountered, such ground level web traps are obvious and alert humans and D-Bees to danger.

Instead, Ee-Bee Gee-Bees mainly use their webbing to hide in high places and to create their lairs and sprawling, communal tree-top villages. The typical Ee-Bee Gee-Bee web lair is a safe haven built inside a cave, tunnel, abandoned building, ruin, and sewer, or up in trees, the rafters, the underside of a bridge, in a cliff wall and other high places. Web traps inside the lair/nest protects every member of the Cluster living within it. Carpets and tents of web fill the area, forcing any invader to travel through the network slowly and carefully. Every tug of the web lets every Ee-Bee Gee-Bee present, know exactly where the invader is located and where he/it/ they are traveling. Moreover, the intruder(s) is likely to get caught in the webbing, rendering him vulnerable to attack by one or several of the furry arachnids. The webbing inside an Ee-Bee Gee-Bee's lair also provides many hiding places from which defenders can attack the invader(s).

Similarly, when on the prowl among the trees or the buildings of human cities, the arachnids use their webbing to raise and lower themselves above the ground. An Ee-Bee Gee-Bee suspended from a rooftop or tree can quietly lower itself behind, or drop on top of, unsuspecting prey from above. They also create hunting blinds and makeshift trapdoors (a combination of silk webbing, dirt, debris, leaves, trash, etc.) behind which they hide and observe. Pouncing from its camouflaged web wall when the opportunity presents itself.

When stalking prey, the arachnid's upper torso hunches forward and almost hugs the grounds (+5% to Prowl), giving them a much stronger arachnid appearance and lower profile. When they are traveling in troops (small groups of 2D4+1) to hunt prey away from their lair, or invade another Cluster's territory, they walk quietly in a single file line, stepping directly into each other's exact footprints. This conceals their numbers and avoids them stepping into traps or making accidental noise. It is only when the troop comes within a few hundred yards (meters) of their prey or objective, that they decide to spread out to surround their prey and get into position for an ambush attack. In some cases, certain members of the troop spin web netting between trees to contain their target should it flee in that direction. Other times they close in on two flanks or in an ever tightening circle. When the moment is right, the leader signals for the fastest members to charge the prey or more likely, to drop down upon it/them from the trees like a commando squad. If web netting is in place, the hunters might try to flush the prey or enemy into the web traps.

Carnivorous predators, Ee-Bee Gee-Bees capture and eat live prey. The monster's first attack is usually a quick bite that injects the prey with a fast-acting, paralyzing venom that affects both S.D.C. and M.D.C. creatures, though for half the duration against the latter. Ee-Bee Gee-Bees possess powerful jaws and M.D.C. fangs and teeth, able to bite into Mega-Damage creatures and M.D.C. armor. However, the venom is injected by the fang-like appendages from the smallest arms attached to the monster's head.

Once their victim is incapacitated, the Ee-Bee Gee-Bee cocoons its victim in webbing, and hangs them up someplace safe and continues to hunt. If the hunting expedition is over, it carries its victim back to its lair to eat later, at its leisure. After the paralysis wears off, victims find themselves unable to move, wrapped tight in a web-blanket. The horrid little arachnoids feed upon captured prey while still alive, but webbed. Their victims feeling every bite and teeth gnawing and cracking into their bones. The lucky ones are rescued before such a fate befalls them, as the monsters may keep prey for up to 72 hours before feeding on them. The fortunate victims quickly pass out from blood loss, while the least fortunate endure a long, torturous death as they are eaten alive.

The Cluster leaders eat first, often devouring the best parts – organs, muscle and body fat – while the victim is still alive. The carcass is then passed along the cluster members in order reflecting their importance in the creatures' society. The weakest and youngest members eat last. Rarely is anything left, except for the largest bones and skull, and parts of armor or the occasional weapon or piece of gear that was inadvertently taken along when the humanoid prey was first captured. This means an Ee-bee Gee-Bee's lair or tribal camp may be littered with basic gear like canteens, holsters and sidearms, belts, helmets, and boots. Since these animals use tools, knives, Vibro-Blades, Neural Maces, and tools are likely to be taken and used by various members of the tribe for hunting and defense.

Ee-Bee Gee-Bees can function in daylight, but they do not like it. They are nocturnal hunters that make their lairs and communal web in the shadows under the canopy of trees, in caves, tunnels and other dark places. They come out in daylight only to scout and hunt, or to investigate a commotion, preferring to hunt at night. This gives them an advantage over daytime prey like humans and most D-Bees, horses, cattle, livestock, deer, etc. Often attacking while their prey is asleep and vulnerable. Ee-Bee Gee-Bees abhor fire and steer clear of it as long as it is burning. They recognize flamethrowers and avoid anyone wielding one, relying on traps against such threats or just letting them pass unmolested. Dragons and other fire casters such as *Bursters* also usually get "hands off" treatment from Ee-Bee Gee-Bees and are avoided whenever possible. Only when young or the lair is threatened or the arachnid is cornered does it choose to fight against fire threats. Though fire wielders have an advantage, they need to be careful not to set a wilderness ablaze. They above all others should understand how dangerous and lethal the use of fire can be in the wilderness.

Ee-Bee Gee-Bee – Arachnid Predatory Carnivore

Also Known As: EB-GB, Fuzzy Friends, Forest People and Spider-Beast.

Alignment: An animal predator that is Anarchist. However, since they prey upon people, many consider them to be Miscreant or Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+8 (high animal intelligence and a cunning social predator), M.E. 1D6+14, M.A. 1D6+22, P.S. 1D6+19 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+18, P.E. 1D6+16, P.B. 1D6+16 (cute, fluffy and cuddly), Spd 1D6+24, or 20 mph (32 km) running on flat ground or across walls, ceilings, or webbing. This speed can be maintained for up to three hours straight, though 10 mph (16 km) can be maintained for as long as eight hours. Walking speed is 3-4 mph (4.8 to 6.4 km). A poor swimmer and avoids water.

M.D.C. by Location: As a minor Mega-Damage creature on Rifts Earth, the Ee-Bee Gee-Bee has the following M.D.C.

- *Arms, Large (2) – 20 M.D.C. each
- *Arms, Small (2, on head) – 12 M.D.C. each
- *Legs (4) – 28 M.D.C. each
- *Feelers (2, head) – 2 M.D.C. each
- *Head – 1D6+60 M.D.C.
- Main Body – 1D4x10+60 M.D.C.

* A single asterisk means a small and/or difficult target to strike and requires a Called Shot to hit. Even then the attacker is -3 to strike. Reducing the M.D.C. of one leg to zero reduces speed by 20%. Destroying two legs reduces speed by 50%, but lost limbs regenerate in a week or two.

Note: On S.D.C. worlds, the Ee-Bee Gee-Bee has 2D4x10 S.D.C., 1D4x10+50 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 13. The head has 4D6+40 S.D.C. and all other locations have 2D6+12 S.D.C./Hit Points. The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C./Hit Point damage rather than M.D., so a punch that does 1D6 M.D. on Rifts Earth does 1D6 S.D.C. damage on S.D.C. worlds.

Horror Factor: 13 but only when they are threatening, attacking or eating people alive.

Size: 3-4 feet tall (0.9 to 1.2 m) in arachnid-centaur form; 1.5-2 feet (0.4 to 0.6 m) in low profile stalking mode. Females are 10-20% larger than males.

Length: 3 feet, 5 inches to 4 feet (1 to 1.2 m) in arachnid-centaur form or 5 to 5 feet, five inches (1.5 to 1.7 m) when in the more flattened stalking mode.

Weight: 150 to 300 pounds (68 to 135 kg). Males tend to average 180 pounds (81 kg), while females are rarely below 250 pounds (112 kg) and some rare specimens have reached 360 pounds (162 kg).

Average Life Span: 2D6+18 years. Females lay a web sack filled with 2D6+6 eggs at the beginning of every spring and hangs it someplace safe in the web. She then stands guard until the young hatch; the males and young females bringing the females who have laid eggs food during this duration of time. Eggs hatch after four months. The spiderlings are about the size of a robin and instinctively know to climb up onto mother's back where she carries and protects them until they reach the size of a squirrel. After that, they follow her everywhere in a small cluster.

After a year, the spiderlings are about the size of a German Shepard Dog or Coyote and are allowed to go off on their own and no longer enjoy mother's protection. This period, until the young reach full size at age three, is the most dangerous period for them, because 2D4x10% go off on their own to explore the world in small clusters (2D4 members) composed of their siblings with half or more being killed or eaten by predators and enemies.

Young Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are half the size and possess half the bonuses and attacks per melee round, but have the same speed. They reach full size by age three but not sexual maturity until five years of age.

P.P.E.: 5D6.

Disposition: Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are living examples of not judging any creature by its appearance. They pretend to be friendly and cuddly to lure people into their clutches, but they are treacherous and deceptive predators, merciless when they hunt and fight, with most mammalian life forms seen as potential prey, nothing more.

Among their own kind they are gentle, loving and protective, but all other species, including people, are regarded as food and rivals to be quietly and subtly hunted and eaten.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Acrobatics 80%, Camouflage 85% (webbing), Climbing 98%/95%, Detect Ambush 55%, Detect Concealment 40%, Escape Artist 55%, Land Navigation 85% (+10% to find its lair/nest/hiding place or tribe), Prowl 50% (+10% at night and in webbing, another +5% when their body is flat and prone, low to the ground), Swimming 20% (a poor swimmer and easily drowned), Tailing 70%, Tracking (People) 60% (+10% to follow blood scent), and Track & Trap Animals 70% (+10% to follow blood scent). **Note:** As intelligent as Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are, they are driven by primordial instinct, and they do not actually understand human words, emotions or desires, and cannot learn to read, write, or speak words.

Also see *Web Roping* under *Natural Abilities*.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 1,000 feet (305 m), keen vision and hearing, a good sense of smell, can hold breath 1D6 minutes, can leap 12 feet (3.7 m) high and 22 feet (6.7 m) across, can walk, run, climb on most porous surfaces including trees/bark, rock, concrete and most metals and painted surfaces with the same speed and agility as running across the ground. This applies even when running on webbing, and climbing upside down on ceilings, the sides of walls, cliffs and caves, etc. Reduce speed by half on ice and glass (-30% penalty to Climbing),

and has difficulty in thick mud and snow more than two feet (0.6 m) deep. Dislikes long periods of cold and environments with deep snow, and either migrate to warmer climates when winter arrives or finds someplace warmer and reasonably dry, like a cave, ruin, abandoned building, or subterranean location. Clever and observant, they are fast learners able to mimic and ape human behavior and use simple tools. Theoretically, an Ee-Bee Gee-Bee could fire a gun or use a grenade, but their fingers are thick and technology still seems to elude them, so they do not even try to use human ranged weapons, explosives or electronic devices. (Discussed earlier in the description, above.) Bio-regenerates at a rate of 3D6 M.D.C. per 24 hours and regrows hair, feelers, fingers, teeth and claws within 1D4+1 days, and an entire appendage within 2D4+6 days. Cannot regrow eyes.

As noted, Ee-Bee Gee-Bees chirp like birds, and unless you are a trained person well acquainted with the various animal calls and noises on Rifts Earth, like a Wilderness Scout, most people are unable to distinguish the difference between them and birds or animal sounds.

Digestive System (special): Ee-Bee Gee-Bee's digestive system contains some of the nastiest enzymes found on Rifts Earth. They are able to dissolve M.D.C. flesh, bone and natural armor, as well as S.D.C. and M.D.C. rubber, plastic and some ceramics. This enables the arachnids to eat venomous prey as well as parts & equipment belonging to people clad in armor, which might normally gag or kill most other predators.

Double-Jointed Neck and Limbs (special): The arachnid is able to rotate its neck 360 degrees like an owl, and its fingers, legs and arms are extremely flexible and can bend at the joint in ways you would not expect. This is the main reason it has the Escape Artist skill.

Pheromone of Innocence and High Natural M.A./Mental Affinity (special): Ee-Bee Gee-Bees release an invisible pheromone whenever they come in contact with people and animals. This invisible chemical attack affects anyone who is not clad in full environmental armor or wearing a gas mask. An air filter alone is not enough to escape the power of the pheromone, which has an immediate if subtle effect on everyone within a 100 foot (30.5 m) radius. That effect is to make most mammals – dogs, felines, livestock, etc., including humans and most D-Bees – to regard the arachnid to be child-like and non-threatening. Most people and animals do not feel threatened by them. In fact, most find them strangely attractive, appealing, friendly and trustworthy. An effect further advanced by the creature's high M.A. attribute of 20-30 and its pretense of being gentle, innocent and kind, until it or its brethren pounce, or lead their beguiled victim's into a trap. **Note:** Fellow Arachnids, Arachnoids, aquatic and amphibian D-Bees, and D-Bees composed of plants, minerals or energy are NOT susceptible to the pheromone, but insects and Insectoids are.

Capable mimics and pretenders, Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are able to understand and copy human behavior such as smiling, laughing, waving hello, shaking hands, the thumbs up sign, taking a hand to lead, petting, hugging and comforting people, and behaving in a shy and submissive manner. All in accordance with appearing to be deceptively friendly and nonthreatening.

Web-Spinning Capabilities (special): The Ee-Bee Gee-Bee can spin a durable webbing which it uses to build all its webs and traps, but mainly uses it to climb and ensnare and cocoon prey. The spider can spin a web line at a rate of 200 feet (61 m)

per melee round (15 seconds). The web is tough, like a light M.D.C. rope, and has 1 M.D.C. per strand. The silk is especially susceptible to extreme heat and fire, and burns quite easily even from S.D.C. fire. M.D. Fire does double damage to burns away webbing like cotton candy exposed to flame. S.D.C. Fire does normal damage and melts away webbing almost as easily.

Similar to many of Earth's much smaller spiders, the classic spider web is used inside the Ee-Bee Gee-Bee's subterranean or treetop lair. The animal is not so much a web trap creating spider as an ambush predator that likes to create a webbed-camouflaged covering like a hunter's blind, with leaves, grass, twigs and dirt stuck to it, but from which the arachnid can still see. It then hides behind its hunting blind web-wall and strikes when prey gets within range. Ambush is a favorite tactic of the Ee-Bee Gee-Bee, so this technique is used by groups of them hiding and waiting on the ground or in the trees. They also like to silently lower themselves from above to either attack from behind or drop on top of unsuspecting prey. They do not make web traps like the Frostweaver Spider.

See the **Frostweaver Spider** for how to escape from a web wall in an Ee-Bee Gee-Bee's lair or communal web.

1. Web Cocoon (special): No damage, but wraps prey up tight like a mummy, usually after a venom bite to immobilize their victim. The web cocoon prevents its captive from using its limbs to fight back or flee. There is a 60% chance the cocoon covers the head and mouth to muffle the captive's cries. Which also prevents practitioners of magic from casting spells and at least partially impairs the captive's vision! The trapped individual is completely immobile and unable to perform any physical actions. The only way to get free is to be cut or torn out, but the average cocoon has 2D6 M.D.C. or requires a *combined P.S. of 70* to be pulled out. It takes the Ee-Bee Gee-Bee only 1D4 melee rounds to completely cocoon a human-sized prey.

Combined P.S. means if the prey caught in the webbing does not possess sufficient strength to pull itself/himself free, he either requires teammates to help pull him free (which makes them all potential victims of an attack by the Ee-Bee Gee-Bee), or needs one hand free and a suitable weapon to cut, burn or blast his way free of the webbing.

After the paralysis wears off, victims find themselves unable to move, wrapped tight in a web straightjacket. The horrid little arachnids feed upon captured prey while they are still alive, but webbed. Their victims feeling every bite and teeth gnawing and cracking into their bones. Lucky captives are rescued before such a fate befalls them, as the monsters may keep prey for up to 96 hours before feeding on them, but may suffer a lasting phobia.

Ee-Bee Gee-Bees may scrape their clawed feet across the head or leg or exposed flesh to terrorize the victim, sometimes even taking small slivers of flesh to snack on and making the victim scream.

Note: The Ee-Bee Gee-Bee's cocoon is fundamentally the same as the **Frostweaver Spider** on page 245 of this book, minus the applications involving snow and ice. Also see possible phobias of survivors of having been cocooned and kept by this creature in its lair at the end of this description.

2. Web Lair/Communal Web/Web Wall (special): Inside caves, tunnels, sewers, hallways, stairwells, and nests/communal webs up in the treetops, there is usually intervals of web walls/sheets of webbing strung across from one wall to the other, from floor to ceiling, as well as up in corners and

creating web net-like floors or levels for lairs that go upward like inside an empty missile silo. This creates a series of silky walls reminiscent of the nest of tent caterpillars in trees, that must be pushed through in order to pass. Such web lairs and tunnel webs usually fill a length of tunnel that is 2D6x10 feet (6.1 to 36.6 m) long. In trees they sometimes go on for 1D4 miles (1.6 to 6.4 km), though most seldom extend for more than half a mile (0.8 km) in diameter. The shape of large communal lairs can vary considerably. A communal lair is when 2D6+12 different clusters (family clans) of Ee-Bee Gee-Bees move in together in peaceful co-existence to create a tribe-like Mega-Cluster. However, while all present will defend the Mega-Cluster, each family based Cluster continues to function as its own individual and independent unit/clan, able to come and go as they please. The rest of the individual Clusters in a communal nest are more like friendly, like-minded neighbors.

Note: Details about a Web Lair and how to cut through webbing is fundamentally the same as the **Frostweaver Spider** on page 245 of this book, minus the applications involving snow and ice.

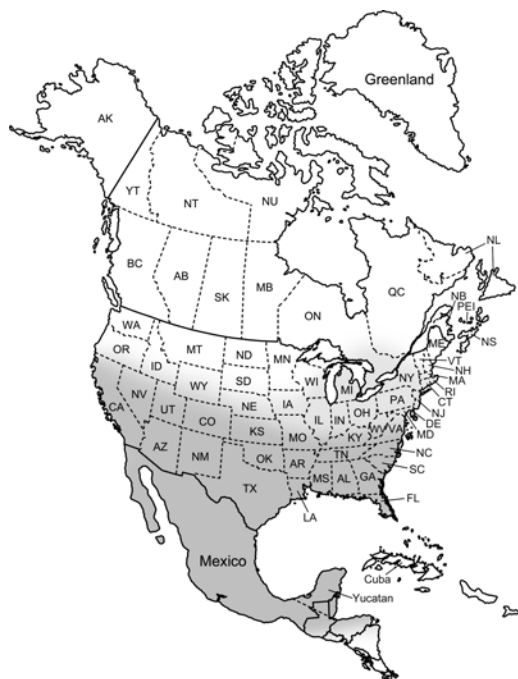
3. Web Line (special): Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are able to effortlessly spin thin web lines with considerable strength to lower themselves down from positions of height (ceilings, rafters, trees, towers, ledges, etc.) or lower itself to drop on prey from above or lower themselves behind a potential target for a surprise attack. Web lines can also be used to create a network of web lines to climb. Also see *Web Rope*, below.

4. Web Rope and Roping Skill (special): Strong M.D.C. silk webbing can be released from six web ducts built into both of the Ee-Bee Gee-Bee's palms as well as from a gland in its rump. The web spinning capabilities in the hands gives the Ee-Bee Gee-Bee the equivalent skill of **Roping** (equal to 4th level skill proficiency), only in this case, the beast creates a rope-like webbing that sticks to its target, out of thin air from its hands. Up to 1,000 feet (305 m) of a web cord for a single rope line. Bonuses to strike apply to the use of the web rope as a *lasso* to snare, rope, trip, entangle, etc., opponents and prey in much the same way that the Cowboy Roping skill is used to lasso cattle. When coming down from up high, the Ee-Bee Gee-Bee simply adheres one end of the Web Rope to an anchor location and reels down as if on a winch, making web to order as it goes down with one hand and able to create a lasso or fire webbing from the other. It uses web lines effortlessly from which to raise and lower itself from heights like trees, high ceilings, rafters, towers and rooftops. **Range for Throwing a Lasso:** 30 feet (9.1 m) against a moving, live target. 60 feet (18.3 m) against a stationary target.

5. Web Streamers/Entanglement (special): The creature can also fire thin lines of webbing from its hands to ensnare prey or to disarm people of a weapon or package. A single rope-like line has a range of 30 feet (9 m) and may be knocked off course by a strong wind (20 mph/32 km or greater).

In the alternative, the beast may fire Web Streamers of six thin lines per hand, palm up, to create a loose, sticky, web-like net that falls over its target. This is used to either entangle the arms and upper body (victims are -3 to strike, aim and shoot, -3 to parry), or to tangle the legs and feet (-3 to dodge and reduce speed by 80% until the webbing is removed). **Streamer Range:** 10 feet (3 m).

Also see *Venom*, under *Damage*, below.



Attacks per Melee: Four. The creation of a web rope or streamers counts as one melee attack. Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are able to lower themselves on a web line from a position high up to drop down on prey from above or silently lower itself behind a potential target for a surprise attack.

Mega-Damage: By tooth, claw, venom, and web rope. The Ee-Bee Gee-Bee can inflict both S.D.C. and Mega-Damage with its various attacks. Does double damage with attacks from behind.

Bite, Restrained – 4D6 S.D.C.

Bite, Full Strength – 2D6+1 M.D.

Bite, Venom – minimal physical damage (1D6 S.D.C. or one M.D.), but poison paralyzes its victim, see below for details.

Punch, Restrained – 4D6 S.D.C.

Punch, Full Strength – 2D6 M.D.

Pouncing Attack – 2D6 M.D. and has a 50% chance of knocking human-sized prey off their feet. Victims of knock-down lose initiative and one melee attack. A pounce can be a leap attack on the ground or dropping or leaping from above.

Leg, Claw Strike – 2D6+3 M.D.

Use of Webbing (special): To entangle, lasso, and capture. See details, above, under *Natural Abilities*.

Paralytic Neural Venom (special): The venom of the Ee-Bee Gee-Bee causes its victims to suffer temporary paralysis. The two small arms on the side of the head are the venom delivery system, and a strike by just one is enough to do the job. The attack/bite is a quick stabbing injection that does 1D6 S.D.C. damage to S.D.C. creatures or one M.D. to Mega-Damage creatures. The fang-like claws are able to penetrate the M.D.C. hides/skin of Mega-Damage D-Bees and animals, and has a 50% chance of penetrating light environmental body armor with less than 100 M.D.C. to inject the person inside the armor!

Victims must roll to save vs non-lethal poison (16 or higher). A failed save means the victim immediately begins to suffer paralysis in whichever part of the body that got injected with venom first.

If venom is injected into the neck or chest: The victim feels a tightness in his chest, cannot turn his head, vision begins to blur and his arms feel heavy (-2 to strike, parry, disarm and -2 on initiative). After one melee round (15 seconds), the victim's entire

body goes into paralytic shock and collapses. Twitching and unable to move or speak, only gurgle for 1D4+4 melee rounds.

If venom is injected in an arm or leg: That one specific limb goes numb and becomes useless within 1D6+1 seconds. The victim's other limbs feel heavy and are slow to respond (-2 to strike, parry, dodge, -3 on initiative, reduce speed by half, and climbing and other physical skills are -50%). After another melee round (30 seconds after having been bitten), the victim's entire body is paralyzed and collapses! Unable to move or speak for 1D4+2 melee rounds.

In both cases, this is plenty of time for the Ee-Bee Gee-Bee to place its prey in a cocoon, unless it is forced to engage other opponents or take other action. If the fallen prey is nearby, it injects its prey again and again, whenever it begins to recover and come around.

If venom is injected in the face: The results are different and dramatic. Immediately, the face goes numb. The tongue feels like a dead weight, throat numb. The victim has difficulty swallowing, cannot speak or make a sound, ears ring, vision begins to blur and eyelids droop for the rest of that melee round (-2 to strike, parry, disarm and -2 on initiative). Starting with the next melee round, the victim is temporarily blind and mute (-10 to strike, parry, dodge, etc.), cannot speak, only gasp and wheeze, and has trouble concentrating and moving: reduce speed by 50%, reduce attacks per melee by half, -30% on skill performance, and -3 on all combat maneuvers (strike, parry, dodge, etc.), for a duration of 2D4+1 minutes. HOWEVER, this victim does NOT fall into complete paralysis, and additional venomous bites on other parts of the body do not cause paralysis. It's as if being bitten on the face affects the nervous system differently and somehow neutralizes the effects of additional venomous bites. This enables the victim to continue to move, attack, and use psionics, albeit in a severely impaired condition.

Note: In each case above, the victims remain conscious, and if psychic, is able to use his psionic abilities, but cannot speak nor cast spells. Note that the *Negate Poison spell* returns a victim to normal within one melee round (15 seconds).

A successful save vs Ee-Bee Gee-Bee Venom (16+), means the victim's body shudders and suffers a momentary sensation of weakness and tingling in the extremities. This impose a penalty of -1 on all combat maneuvers (initiative, strike, parry, dodge, etc.) for one melee round (15 seconds). After which he feels a bit shaken but fine.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls regarding determining potential prey and the level of danger it represents, +1 on initiative (double when launching an ambush or surprise attack), +3 to strike and parry, +2 to dodge, +3 to roll with impact, does double damage with surprise attacks from behind, impervious to poison and toxins, and is +3 to save vs Horror Factor.

Vulnerabilities: Takes damage from all forms of M.D. weapons and attacks, one reason it uses subterfuge to lure victims to their doom and attacks from ambush positions; flees when attacked.

Dislikes fire, but is not terrified of it, though it may pretend to be in order to trick potential humanoid prey. As a Mega-Damage creature, normal fire will burn its luscious, silky hair, but does not hurt the arachnid's exoskeleton underneath.

Ee-Bee Gee-Bees prefers to live in moderate to warm climates, but can still function in the cold weather of Winter, but are uncomfortable and irritable in temperatures lower than freezing. Reduce speed by half, -1 attack per melee round, and

-3 on all combat maneuvers when temperatures drop below zero degrees Fahrenheit (-18 C). Does not mind cool temperatures and even the near freezing temperatures of nighttime in desert environments, provided it warms up to above freezing during the day. Ee-Bee Gee-Bees function well in hot climates up to 125 degrees Fahrenheit (52 Celsius), but prefer more moderate environments.

Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are poor swimmers and are easily drowned, even in shallow water only a few feet (a meter) deep. Suffocate and drown within 2-7 minutes when held underwater. As a result, they try to avoid water, thick mud and are not fond of snow either.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are found throughout Mexico and the lower United States, particularly the American Southwest, South and the Dinosaur Swamp regions. Rarely found north of Missouri, Kentucky and Virginia in large clusters, but individuals and small Clusters have been reported as far north as Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and Ontario, Canada during hot summers. They are also encountered in a wide range of environments from woodlands, plains and deserts to caves and underground facilities and tunnels of all kinds, including abandoned factories, warehouses, basements, sewer tunnels, stadiums and skyscrapers. Though they can survive deserts and grassy plains, Ee-Bee Gee-Bees tend to prefer woodlands, city ruins and cave networks where food is ample and there are plenty of places to climb and nest.

Enemies: Animal predators, creatures that hunt insects and arachnids, and people, particularly Psi-Stalkers, humans and many D-Bees.

Ee-Bee Gee-Bees generally regard all living animals and people as nothing more than prey to be hunted, captured and eaten. Some of the largest female Ee-Bee Gee-Bees also consume the male after mating with him, or tear him apart to feed her brood when prey is sparse. So male Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are usually submissive and cautious around the larger females. It is also the larger and more aggressive females that lead the Cluster, lead hunting parties and may try to steal males from other Clusters to add to their own harem of obedient males.

Allies: Only members of its own kind and its maternal family Clan or Cluster. Some Clusters have learned to tolerate other animal species like squirrels, bats and small birds, and use these species' alarm calls as a natural warning system to guide and protect their Cluster. However, all wildlife is generally considered to be prey. That said, Ee-Bee Gee-Bees target medium-sized animals from coyotes and deer to people, cattle and bears. They tend not to attack very large animals such as Duckbilled Honkers, adult Fury Beetles and other large animals, even when they have superior numbers, and humanoids are among their most favorite prey.

May hunt alone, but more often than not, in pairs or a small group of 1D4+2. A large hunting party is the equivalent of a small Cluster. **Note:** A lair will always have at least 1D6 additional members present. A lair is where the Cluster gathers, keeps prey and lives. All or most of the members of a Cluster are most likely to be inside a lair during daylight hours as they tend to be nocturnal hunters. Percentile numbers are included for random determination or pick the one most appropriate to the setting and situation.

01-20% Tiny Cluster: 1D4+6

21-50% Small Cluster: 1D6+14

51-70% Medium Cluster: 2D6+26

71-80% Large Cluster: 4D6+60

81-90% Communal Lair (rare): 2D6x10+100

91-100% Sprawling Communal Lair that covers a half a mile (0.8 km) or more area (very rare): 1D4x100+300

Note: Several Tiny, Small or Medium Clusters may exist within the general area, like a number of small tribes. They may be friendly or warring rivals.

Hunting Packs: A typical Ee-Bee Gee-Bee hunting pack ranges from 4-6 members to 8-12 members, and are usually part of larger Cluster.

Value: None per se. Their meat is oily, fatty and foul tasting. Their venom goes inert in a matter of minutes after the animal is slain. Their lush hair grows out of the chitin so there is no pelt to harvest. However, the Ee-Bee Gee-Bees' lair or a nearby dump site is usually littered with the belongings of their unlucky humanoid victims.

Possible Treasure at an Ee-Bee Gee-Bee Lair/Nest: There may be loot to be found inside and/or around the Ee-Bee Gee-Bee's lair, especially when there is a Cluster of the animals. However, the animal is most dangerous in and around their web lair. Items likely to be found may include of the following, G.M. discretion: Common light weapons (mainly handguns), E-Clips, ammo clips, rail gun ammo drums, flashlights, walkie-talkies, canteens, portable equipment, salvageable pieces of body or power armor, and miscellaneous salvageable bionic parts, and similar. Sometimes, the occasional magic item or Universal Credit Card (with 4D6x100 credits available). Never a vehicle or large pieces of equipment, including rifles and rail guns, those were probably dropped and left behind at the ambush site. And seldom explosives, except perhaps mini-missiles that were a part of power armor or a cyborg, or large heavy weapons like rail guns. Only items that were on a victim's person when cocooned and hauled to the web lair. **Note:** Simple tools like hammers, screwdrivers, and similar, as well as knives of all kind, are likely to be used as tools by the Ee-Bee Gee-Bees themselves. Knives and Vibro-Blades are likely to be used as such, or made into the tips/blades of their makeshift spears. These are all items that once belonged to people who met a grim fate at the hands these bushwhacking arachnids. Skeletal remains of such victims are minimal, because the little monsters eat the bones, even skulls, after smashing them into smaller pieces.

Game Design Note: When it comes to possible "treasure," Game Master discretion always applies, and should be something an adventurer or soldier might have had. Likewise, the player character(s) should have to work for any treasure. This should not be a heaping pile of free stuff waiting to be picked up off the ground and stuffed into a backpack.

Note: This is a new creature appearing for the very first time. Inspired by the art and writing of Charles "Chuck" Walton Jr.

Survivor Trauma/Phobias – Optional

Phobia of Survivors: Many people who survive having been cocooned, carried off to an Ee-Bee Gee-Bee lair and held prisoner for more than 24 hours have a 15% chance of developing a phobia, especially if they see other cocooned people and animals *eaten alive*. Odds of a developing a phobia increases by +10% for every additional 24 hours of captivity. Roll percentile dice for random

determination of a phobia that develops or pick one. **Note:** This is an optional table for your gaming consideration.

01-10% Spiders and scorpions of all kinds (Arachnophobia).

11-20% Hairy/furry spiders only, especially if they are large (a specific Arachnophobia).

21-40% Ee-Bee Gee-Bees and giant hairy spiders only.

41-50% Any alien beings that are arachnids or resemble spiders or aliens as well as giant spiders.

51-60% Webbing of all kinds (Webophobia). All types of spider webs, cob webs, and anything that closely resembles spider webs. This individual fears webbing, not the spider or other creatures that might spin a webs, itself. They don't like that creature, but they are not terrified of them.

61-70% The environment where the Ee-Bee Gee-Bees captured them or where it held the victim captive: Treetops, caves, tunnels, sewers, the underside of a bridge, etc.

71-80% Alien beings that are arachnids or resemble spiders.

81-90% Humanoids that resemble lions or have long, golden/tan fur and/or bushy manes.

91-00% Confined Enclosures (Claustrophobia).

Characters who suffer from a phobia become terrified when the object of their fear is encountered. If the character is surrounded by friends who can talk and soothe away his fears, the person *may* be able to contain himself long enough to safely avoid *phobic panic* (60% chance). However, the character gets the chills and sweats heavily, feels faint, nauseous, and trembles while doing so. Reduce melee attacks/actions per round, combat bonuses, skill performance and Spd all by half. Speed is at full only when the character is running away from the source of his fear/phobia.

If the character is alone, already nervous, or feels threatened, he will be overcome by fear. This is *phobic panic*.

Phobic Panic: Upon reaching the breaking point, the character's mind defends itself by responding in one of the following ways:

01-25% Pass out/fall unconscious for 2D4 minutes.

26-80% Flee/run/fly away at top speed! Panic-stricken, the character ignores the outcries, pleas or needs of others, including his teammates. All the terrified individual can think about is escaping and fleeing from the object of his fear. The person may fight only if there is no other way to escape, and then only until he can get away and run. To prevent flight, teammates must subdue and restrain this panicked individual.

81-00% Paralyzed with fear, the character can only whimper, sob or scream as he faces the horror of his phobia. Physically, the individual stands completely rigid or huddled in a corner, immobilized with fear. He can not run, fight, use skills or move in any way (no attacks per melee) until the object of the fear is removed or destroyed, or he is dragged away from it.

Ripper Fruit Wasp

Concept by Carmen Bellaire

Written by Walton and Siembieda

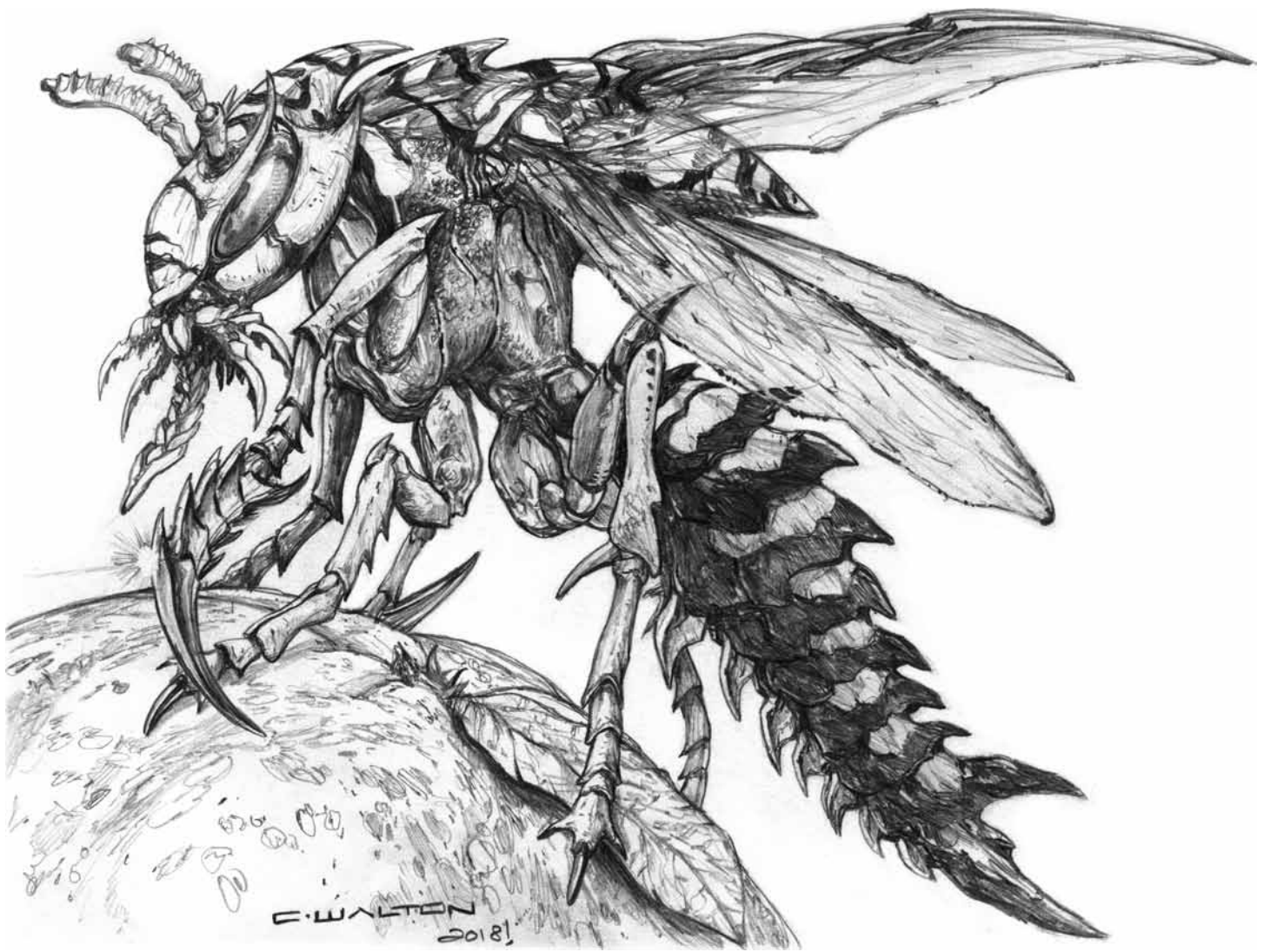
Ripper Fruit Wasps are insects roughly twice the size of Earth's own Yellow Jacket wasps. The bugs can range from a metallic mercury color with lime and black stripes and spots to a shiny copper color with yellow or white and black stripes. When flying, their metallic colors sparkle in the sunlight, and can cause an eerie glare effect when in large numbers.

Ripper Fruit Wasps mainly feed upon nectar and large, sweet fruits like melons, cantaloupes, apples, pears, oranges, grapefruit and other citrus, burrowing down into the fruit as they consume it. They never touch berries, grapes, plums and other small fruit unless it is on the ground rotting; only large fruits, but sometimes also eat other insects, carrion, and human garbage, particularly decaying fruit and sweets, as well as honey, syrups, fruit jelly and jams, and soft drinks like juices and soda pop. The wasps buzz and hum to soothe each other and to communicate to other members of their hive as well as while worker drones are busy excavating the fruit as it is hollowed out and the meat and juices taken back to the main, central hive and their queen.

The hive leader is called *the Captain* and leads groups of hive drones to the fruit he has selected. The Captain starts to burrow into the fruit but then leaves his 1D4+3 drone males to finish the job on small, apple-sized fruit, twice that number on larger fruit and three or four times that number (4D4+9) into melons. There is only one, single hole made into the fruit, so that the fruit is not destroyed at once and so that their presence is concealed. The workers enter, eating a path, single file, deep into the burrow before each branching off in their own direction, eating away tunnels, feeding upon the fruit from the inside out over a period of days.

Ripper Wasps are extremely aggressive and territorial. Attacking anything that disturbs their temporary fruit home or any animal or people they perceive to be a threat. **Ee-Bee Gee-Bees**, however, have learned they are able to pluck Ripper Fruit Wasp infested fruit and keep the insects inside calm by imitating the wasp's humming noises. They then seal the opening with a bit of webbing, but still allowing air to enter. The clever arachnids can then carry and throw the wasp inhabited fruit like hand grenades, unleashing the insects inside, provided the fruit is thrown hard enough to shatter or crack open when it hits. The angry and confused Rippers attack whatever animal or people are in the immediate area of impact, assuming they are the ones who just attacked them and their temporary fruit home. Such tactics are usually deployed by Ee-Bee Gee-Bees to scatter a group of people or a herd of animals, and create panic and confusion. As the people or animals under attack from the Rippers *run* and *scatter*, an Ee-Bee Gee-Bee hunting party can pick off prey that appears to be the easiest targets. Once prey is caught, they run off with 1-4 captives before the rest of the members regroup and realize they are missing people. By then, the Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are up in the trees, hiding behind webbed camouflage, or heading off to their own lair with their cocooned captives slung over their shoulders.

Wilderness Scouts have often seen Ee-Bee Gee-Bees engage in such tactics of dropping Ripper Wasp filled fruit from the trees above or throwing them at prey from a distance on the ground or at an ambush junction. Maximum throwing distance is 80 feet (24.4 m). The cunning little beasts are even known to carry a number of infested fruits (1D6+6) in web sacks, the wasps kept calm and complacent via the Arachnids' soft humming, to be unleashed in a bombardment against enemies and prey. The shattered fruits releasing a temporary cloud of angry, serrated Ripper Wasps out to make somebody pay for the destruction of their fruit home. The wasps lash out and attack any animal larger than a fox and/or people within a 100 foot (30.5 m) radius of impact. Some of the aggressive bugs possibly giving chase and continuing their attack against various fleeing targets for 2D6x100 feet (61 to 366 m).



Ripper Fruit Wasp – Insect

Also Known As: Ripper Wasps and just Rippers, as well as Saw-Leg Wasp and Bullet Wasp because their attack stings like being shot by a small caliber bullet.

Alignment: As an insect, scavenger and pollinator, this wasp is Anarchist, but due to its aggressive nature, many people think of it as nasty, dangerous and Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+1 (low animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6, M.A. 1D6, P.S. 1D4+3, P.P. 1D6+11, P.E. 1D6+9, P.B. 1D6+4, Spd 3 mph (4.8 km) crawling on the ground.

Flying speed is 15 mph (24 km) and can be maintained for 10 hours straight. 30 mph (48 km) for up to one hour before needing to slow down or stop and rest. 45 mph (72 km) as a very short bursts lasting only for one melee round (15 seconds), as often as three times per hour. Maximum altitude is 20,000 feet (6,096 m).

Hit Points/S.D.C./M.D.C. by Location:

*Wings (4) – 16 S.D.C. each

*Legs (6) – 22 S.D.C. each

Main Body – 100 S.D.C./Hit Points (equal to 1 M.D.C.) for the worker drone. 200 S.D.C./Hit Points (equal to 2 M.D.C.) for the Captain; one Captain per every 100 wasps. 300 S.D.C./Hit Points (equal to 3 M.D.C.) for the Queen at the main hive. Fruit and nectar is brought to her.

* Items with an asterisk can only be attacked/damaged when the bug has been incapacitated and the appendage is attacked

close up. They can NOT be targeted by ranged weapons nor in melee combat. All attacks leveled at the minuscule wasp go to its main body.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Ripper Fruit Wasp has 1D4x10+10 S.D.C., 1D4x10+20 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 13. All other body locations have S.D.C. same as listed above (4D4 S.D.C. = 120 S.D.C.). The S.D.C. damage inflicted by the creature is unchanged.

Horror Factor: 10 for 1-4 individual wasps. 13 for a swarm of 6-18, and H.F. 15 for a swarm of 24 or more.

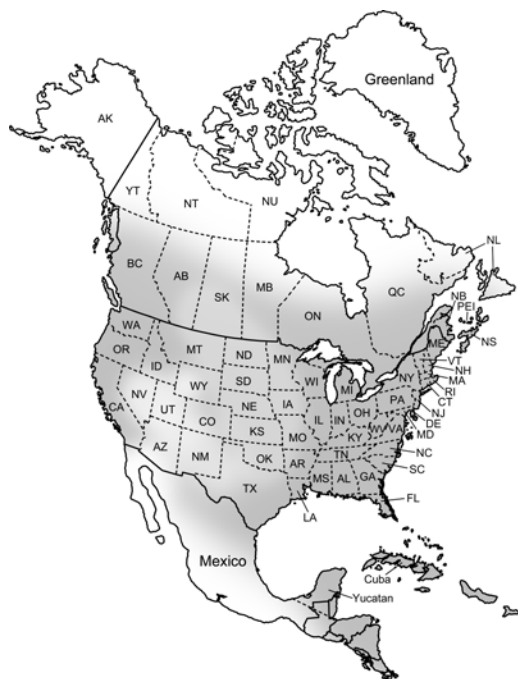
Size: One inch (25 mm) long.

Weight: 1D4 ounces.

Average Life Span: Drones live for 2D4x10 days and are constantly replaced by the Queen. The Captain lives for 10-12 months, also replaced by the Queen and the Queen lives for two years. A typical nest has 1D4x10+50 members. In cold climates the Queen stops laying eggs in November and the hive dies out within 1-2 months, with only a few of the Captains and the Queen surviving by taking refuge inside the mud nest or finding a warm place to survive in the corner of a home, basement, cave, vehicle, etc. during the winter months, living off the stored food in their bodies and in effect, hibernating.

P.P.E.: Half of one point each.

Disposition: Highly aggressive and territorial. Quick to attack via bites, slashes and impalement with their clawed front leg, and stinger.



Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 95%/95% on most surfaces, Identify Fruit and Plants 98%, Land Navigation 95% (+4% to find its nest or Queen), Prowl 50% and Tailing 40%.

Natural Abilities: Winged flight, hovering (see speed above for details), maximum altitude is 20,000 feet (6,096 m), track/locate fruit by smell alone 90% up to two miles (3.2 km) away, burrow into fruit, and Bio-Regenerates 1D6+6 S.D.C. or Hit Points per every 24 hours whether it is at rest or active. A damaged or lost leg, stinger or antenna regrows within 2D4 days. A lost or destroyed wing cannot be regrown.

Chemical Scent Trail Communications (special): The Ripper Fruit Wasps leave behind a chemical trail to mark their way home and to fruit/food. They also release a warning scent that tells other Rippers there is threat in the area and to come flying to the scent and attack. A separate scent tells the wasps when the queen is in danger or the main hive/nest is under attack.

Climb Most Surfaces (special): Like most insects, the Ripper Fruit Wasp is able to land, walk and climb on most surfaces. Only glass cannot be climbed. Can cling to the side or undercarriage of a vehicle traveling under 45 mph (72 km).

High Frequency Drill Proboscis (special): Similar to that of a butterfly, the Ripper's proboscis acts a reinforced straw to drink sweet nectar, fruit juices and pulp, honey or tree sap. However, should the need arise, the proboscis can also vibrate at high frequencies and serve as a makeshift drill in order to penetrate hard-shelled fruits, tree bark or protective S.D.C. containers that have sweet fruit, nectar, spices, honey, sap or other deserts or drinks that contain fruit.

Attacks per Melee: Three.

Mega-Damage: Bite, sting, stabbing claw strike. The Ripper may sting repeatedly without losing its stinger. If the stinger is lost, it regenerates within a week.

Nipping/Warning Bite – One S.D.C./Hit Point damage.

Bite, Full Strength – 1D4 S.D.C./Hit Points.

Stabbing/Slashing Claw Strike – 1D4 S.D.C./Hit Points.

Stinger (non-venomous) – 1D6 S.D.C./Hit Points.

Weaponized Body (special) – Attackers take 1D4 S.D.C./Hit Point damage every time they swat and hit a Ripper Fruit Wasp, because the insect's hard body is covered in blade-like

barbs. 2D4 damage if a power punch or stomp attack is used to try to squash the bug.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 on Perception Rolls to locate fruit and Captains, +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, +3 to dodge, and +5 to save vs Horror Factor.

Vulnerabilities: Ripper Wasps are S.D.C. and very minor M.D. creatures that can be damaged and killed by any attack, including punches, stomps and melee weapons (very difficult to target and hit with an energy weapon or any long-range weapon, which can only hit on a natural roll, no bonuses and require a 17 or higher to strike). It just takes a lot of S.D.C./Hit Point damage to kill one, but just 1-3 M.D.

Ripper Fruit Wasps dislike fire and smoke and try to avoid them, and are affected by pesticides and poisons.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: Found across North America wherever fruit trees and melons can be found, so most of the Old Mexican and American Empires and lower Canada.

Enemies: Insectivores (insect eating creatures) and people in general, but most people and animals are potential rivals/competitors for their fruit and a danger to be shooed away.

Allies: Only their own species. Tolerate humming Ee-Bee Gee-Bees and other wasps unless they are competing for the same food or attacking them or their nest.

Value: None. In fact it is becoming a serious pest for farmers and orchards. Thankfully, it is affected by pesticides. Completely inedible by humans and most D-Bees. In a pinch can be used as bug grenades the same way Ee-Bee Gee-Bees do, provided the fruit is plugged and the person grabbing it makes a quick getaway. Otherwise, the help/danger chemical is released the moment the fruit is picked up, and all fellow Ripper Fruit Wasps in nearby fruits will fly out to help their brethren and to protect their fruity food source. This makes it difficult for anyone other than Ee-Bee Gee-Bees to use infested fruit as grenades.

Note: This is a new creature appearing for the very first time. It is inspired by an idea from Carmen Bellaire, developed by Charles "Chuck" Walton Jr. and further developed and written by Kevin Siembieda.



Eeracrech Riding Lizard

By Kevin Siembieda and Charles Walton Jr.

The Eeracrech is a giant, gold colored reptile from another world. It is the size of a rhinoceros, though much leaner and built more like a cat than a rhino. Like a rhinoceros, it has a large horn on the tip of its nose used more for slashing and goring large prey rather than for ramming or butting. Like a bull, a pair of slightly curved horns provide more combat capabilities. When the lizard puts its head down low, it is getting ready to charge or pounce. Again, the lizard uses these horns to gore as well as to snag and toss opponents aside or over its head. The lizard's head is protected in combat by the horns and the animal's thick skull. The body of the lizard is covered in fine scales, predominantly golden in color with a warm cream or creamy gray underbelly, brownish red horns, black markings at the end of its tail and black claws. Its eyes a sparkling green.

The Eeracrech is much smarter than Earth lizards, exhibiting an intelligence on par with a dog or horse. Its front legs and feet actually resemble those of a feline, though its claws are not retractable. Its hind legs are built for running, leaping and climbing. The back feet are large and clawed, but the bottoms of all four feet are covered with suction-cup pads for climbing rock and scaling cliff walls. The tail is longer than its body and used for balance as well as to lash rivals and strike attackers like a whip, but it is *not* prehensile like a monkey's tail.

In the wild, the Eeracrech is a savvy predator that hunts other reptiles, dinosaurs, bison and other herd animals, but most creatures that are the same size or smaller than itself are regarded as prey, including other predators like raptors. That should include people. However, the lizard is smart enough to realize that humanoids are different and dangerous, and that it never knows which ones can strike back with Mega-Damage attacks of their own. As a result, Eeracrech generally leave people alone, though the predator is happy to sneak over to raid and feed upon their cattle and livestock. That changes when the creature is very hungry or if the person seems to be sick, injured, or in a weakened state. Then all bets are off and the reptile *may* attack. However, the Eeracrech is more likely to attack and drag off a person's horse, mule, or livestock than the person himself.

The Riding Lizard is surprisingly stealthy for an animal its size, and possesses excellent running speed and the agility of a jungle cat. Whether a lone hunter, mated pair or small pack of 1D6+3 animals, the Eeracrech usually stalks its prey, waiting for the right moment to strike. Until that moment, it quietly prowls in as close as it can, and waits to make its move. Launching an attack when the prey has its back to it or is distracted by something else. Excellent wall climbers and leapers, the Eeracrech may surprise its prey by striking from above, especially in mountains, along cliffs and ravines, canyons and buttes, and in city environments from the walls of buildings. On the plains the lizard sneaks through the tall grass unseen and silent until it is too late. Rogue Scholars and scientists have speculated the animal originates from a world that is mountainous or filled with canyons, ravines and caves. As a result, the Eeracrech has evolved to scale sheer cliffs and canyon walls or may live and hunt in cave networks.

Riding Lizards are especially desirable as riding animals in the deserts of Mexico and the American Southwest and so-called New West, where they romp across the deserts and plains, and climb the arid mountainous and canyon-filled terrains as if they were born to

do so. The beast can scale and run across the walls of cliff facings, canyons and steep mountains as well the sides of buildings and the ceilings of caves, with the same surefootedness as they do across flat ground. The creature loves sunny, hot, arid environments and can store enough water to survive for 36 days without water. Moreover, the animal gets most its fluids (85%) from the animals they hunt and eat.

The Eeracrech were first used as riding animals by the Simvan Monster Riders. In response, Wild Psi-Stalkers began to use the beasts as war mounts as well. It was the Psi-Stalkers who realized Eeracrech can be tamed and began to trade domesticated, trained Riding Lizards to human adventurers and mercenaries.

A well-treated and well-fed Eeracrech Riding Lizard can become a loyal and reliable riding animal on par with a horse. As a result, they have a strong appeal to *Simvan Warriors*, *Shemarrians*, *Wild Psi-Stalkers*, *Pecos Bandits*, *Highwaymen*, *Raiders*, and *Shifters*, as well as certain adventurers, Headhunters, mercenaries, assassins, and D-Bees. *Kittani* and certain other *Splugorth* minions and off-world clients of the Splugorth, including *Tattooed Men* and the infamous *Sunaj Assassins*, find the Eeracrech to be very desirable riding animals. They like that the animal has an M.D.C. hide (no armor necessary), and Mega-Damage combat abilities, but most of all, they appreciate the animal's climbing and stealth capabilities. After all, there are few riding animals that are able to prowl, and fewer still that can climb and run along walls and ceilings, and when necessary, can be sent to fight an enemy like a trained attack dog. The perfect steed for an assassin or Raider.

Eeracrech Riding Lizards live to hunt, prowl and run. As long as they have ample opportunity to do any or all of those things, they are happy and don't mind having a rider on its back or a master issuing it commands. Adventurers, mercenaries and bandits who retire are wise to set their animal free or to sell it to someone who understands the Riding Lizard's nature and needs. Assassins, hunters and warriors love this creature, because it is not afraid of combat, loves to tail and stalk prey (i.e. an enemy or game animal) and can do so with surprising stealth.

Eeracrech – Predatory Carnivore

Also Known As: Eeracrech Stalker and the Silent Hunter.

Alignment: Wild animals are considered Anarchist and dangerous. Domesticated animals often reflect the alignment of their master.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+7 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+11, M.A. 1D6+13, P.S. 1D6+19 (Supernatural P.S.), P.P. 1D6+15, P.E. 1D6+19, P.B. 1D6+7, Spd, as detailed below.

60 mph (96 km) at a full tilt but only in short bursts lasting 1D6+6 minutes, usually to catch prey or escape danger.

35 mph (56 km) at a steady run that can be maintained for five hours without pushing the animal beyond its limits.

20 mph (32 km) at a steady trot which can be maintained for eight hours with minimal fatigue.

20 mph (32 km) running across the sides of walls and building, or on ceilings.

3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km) walking.

Like a horse, the Eeracrech switches up from a steady trot to running, to a walk, back to a steady run, to allow the animal to pace itself and avoid damaging exhaustion and physical stress. Under normal conditions the animal seldom runs at maximum speed unless it is to chase down prey or escape a predator, or at the prodding of its rider. A Riding Lizard can comfortably travel 120 miles (192 km) during an 8-9 hour trek across most ter-



rains from plains and deserts to travel over very rugged, rocky, debris-filled environments. Half that distance when traveling over mountainous terrain or the walls of canyons, ravines, and plateaus, as well as woodlands. Eeracrech do not feel safe or at home in forest environments and are jumpy and travel through them no faster than 10-20 mph (16 to 32 km).

M.D.C. by Location (unless stated otherwise):

*Legs (4) – 1D6+75 each

*Large Center Horn (1, nose) – 1D6+50

*Horns (2, bull-like; back of the head) – 1D6+45 each

Head – 1D4x10+80

*Tail – 1D6+75

Main Body – 1D6x10+130 (half the M.D.C. for Juveniles, one third for babies).

* A single asterisk means a small and/or difficult target to strike and requires a Called Shot to hit. Even then the attacker is -4 to strike. Reducing the M.D.C. of one leg to zero reduces speed by 30%. Destroying two legs reduces speed by 80%. Lost limbs regenerate, but it takes time to regrow a leg.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Eeracrech Riding Lizard has a main body of 1D6x10+30 S.D.C., 1D6x10+30 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 10. All other locations are S.D.C. at the same number as M.D.C., above, i.e. 5D6+50 M.D.C. = 5D6+50 S.D.C./Hit Points. The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D., so a bite that does 2D6 M.D. on Rifts Earth does 1D6 S.D.C. damage on S.D.C. worlds.

Horror Factor: 8 for one Eeracrech. 10 when facing a mated pair or parent and young. H.F. 13 when there is a pack of 1D6+3 or more. A pack may consider attacking a lone individual or just one or two people, but are not likely to attack a group of people unless the animals are starving, are cornered and feel threatened. No sudden moves and travelers should be fine. Wild Eeracrech are most aggressive toward humanoids when they are in a large pack of 10 or more (rare). However, kill the leader of the pack, usually the largest male, and the rest should either run off or engage in tearing their fallen leader apart and eat him. Ignoring any people nearby unless they are attacking or behaving in a threatening manner. Even then, if there is an avenue for the lizards to run and escape, they are likely to take it.

Size: 4 feet to 4.6 feet tall (1.2 to 1.4 m, or 13-14 hands) at the shoulders, 2-3 feet (0.6-0.9 m) wide at its widest. 8-10 feet (2.4 to 3 m) long from snout to rump. The tail is 9-12 feet (2.7 to 3.7 m) long.

Weight: 1,000-1,400 pounds (450-630 kg).

Average Life Span: 2D6+20 years in the wild, +10 for most domesticated Riding Lizards used as mounts that are not constantly subjected to combat or used as trained attack animals.

Females lay 3D6+10 eggs in a nest of grass and twigs inside a crack or crevice in the side of a cliff or canyon wall, sometimes the wall of a cave or rooftop of a building or butte. If out in the plains, she digs a hole, usually at the base of a boulder, and cover the eggs with dirt. After the eggs are laid, mother leaves and never looks back. The young are on their own. Eggs hatch nine months later. Each baby Eeracrech scattering into the wild to fend for itself. By the end of the first year, the young that survive will have grown to three feet (0.9 m) long from snout to rump, plus that long, thin, whipping tail of equal length.

By year three the juveniles are half the size of an adult. The lizards reaching full size in seven years, and sexual maturity in

nine. Half of all Eeracrech spend their lives as solitary hunters, though they may gather to bask in the sun, like alligators and crocodiles, in groups as large as 1D4x10 of them. Likewise, while individual lizards may tolerate and travel with 2D6 others of their species, or alongside a pack (typically 1D6+3 lizards), they remain individuals that go off on their own to hunt. Individuals and mated pairs that are allowed to travel alongside or behind a pack of Riding Lizards, but are not accepted members of the pack, are NOT allowed to hunt with the pack nor share in the packs' kill, even if there is enough to spare.

It is interesting to note that though the lizards do not care for their young, and may eat babies and juveniles, half of the Eeracrech mate and stay together until one or the other dies. This pairing is always of the largest and strongest animals and guarantees that superior males are present to fertilize prime females. A rival male may try to usurp a prized female, which results in a battle between the males like rutting deer. A battle that ends with one of the males being battered and run off; 10% are slain and eaten. Mating season is August and September; eggs hatching nine months later.

As noted, a typical pack of *adult Eeracrech* has 1D6+3 members. A rare large pack of adult lizards is seldom more than 1D6+9 animals, most of them mated pairs. However, **juveniles** often gather in larger groups of 1D6+16 members for protection from other predators, including adult Eeracrech. Adults often prey upon young and juvenile members of their own species until they reach full maturity at age seven. The larger packs of juveniles also enjoy greater success hunting, with each member of the pack sharing in the kill of large prey.

P.P.E.: 4D6+20

Disposition: Riding Lizards are playful and inquisitive, but can also be finicky, stubborn and irritable. They definitely have strong personalities. A well loved and well treated domesticated animal can show surprising loyalty, affection and obedience to its masters and caretakers. Such a loyal animal will stand guard and defend their owners from other predators and threatening people, and is likely to fight to the death to protect them. However, the beast can be stubborn, lazy and disobedient to those it dislikes. **Defiantly disobedient** to those who mistreat it. To the point of functioning at two-thirds to half speed, lazy behavior, insisting on long rests (1D4 hours) in the sun, farting in their abuser's direction and even defecating and urinating on their belongings and where they walk or sit.

Eeracrech are not easily spooked and love to prowl, hunt, run, climb and laze around in the hot sun. Those trained to be an attack animal or riding animal that is also trained to hunt and attack on command, are happiest when allowed to fight and hunt, and return to their master with prey.

Wild Eeracrech are wary of people and usually keep their distance. The animal is smart enough to recognize and stay away from armored humans and combat vehicles. Like cats, the lizard is not fond of water but is a good swimmer and will dive into water to escape a threat or to get prey when necessary.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Acrobatics 80%, Climbing 95%/50%, Land Navigation 70%, Prowl 70% (+10% on walls, ceilings and in tall grass), Swimming 75%, Tailing 90%, and Track by Smell 50% (+20% to track blood scent or decaying meat/carrion).

Natural Abilities: Leap 20 feet (6.1 m) high or 30 feet (9.1 m) across, increase by 50% with a running start, and can survive drops from heights as great as a 12 stories (120 feet/36.6 m)



Enemies: Large predators, animals that hunt in packs, including Field Reapers, Grigleapers, Silonar, Raptors, Ostrosaurus and Grigleapers as well as Gwylack, Leatherwing, and people.

Allies: In the wild, it associates mainly with its own kind and other reptilian beasts and dinosaurs of similar size to twice as large. Anything smaller is likely to be considered potential prey, including people. Domesticated Earacrech Riding Lizard seem to accept humans and most D-Bees, except Insectoids and Arachnoids.

A favorite riding animal of the Simvan and Psi-Stalkers, and a growing number of assassins, Highwaymen, Raiders and Pecos Bandits. An estimated 10-15% of Pecos Bandits have adopted the Riding Lizard as their preferred war mount.

Note: Most Native Americans prefer true horses, Psi-Ponies, and Dinostangs, even cyborg and robot horses over the Earacrech and most other exotic animals from other worlds. For many Native Americans, the horse is regarded as part of their heritage and legacy. Many Cowboys, Cyber-Knights, Gunfighters and Gunslingers of the New West share that sentiment, preferring horses, Dinostangs, and other riding animals over “a dang, giant lizard.” The animal is especially popular in Utah, Nevada, New Mexico, Arizona, and Mexico.

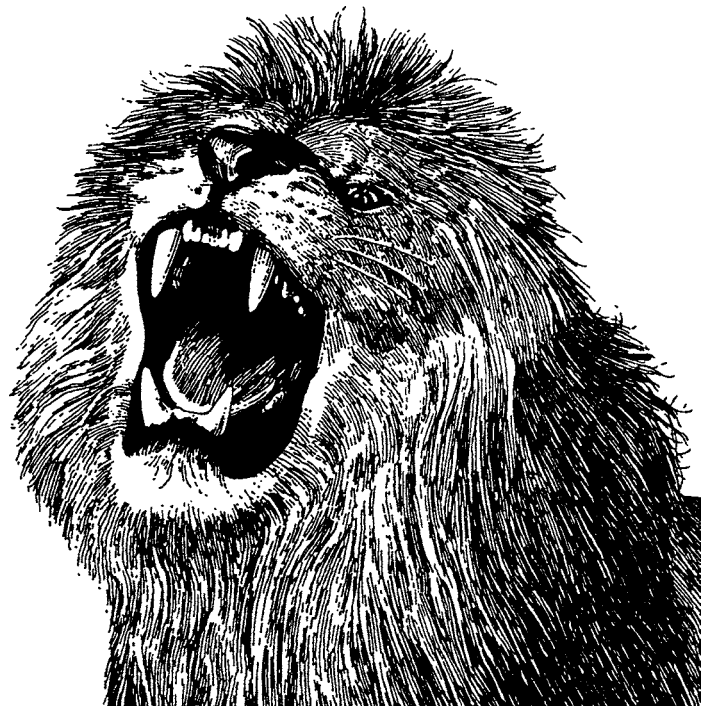
Value: A domesticated and trained Riding Lizard sells for 4,000-8,000 credits. An Earacrech that is a trained hunting and attack animal as well as a riding animal, sells for 8,000-12,000 credits.

It is important to note that the Eerecrech is a very poor beast of burden. The giant lizards love to run, climb and hunt, so they don't mind being a war mount or attack animal. However, the creature becomes unhappy and belligerent when forced to plow fields, pull stumps or pull wagon loads. They also dislike being idle, unless it is to sun themselves for hours at a time. Riding Lizards forced to perform labor can be more stubborn than a mule. Worse, it has the teeth, claws and the strength to tear such taskmasters to pieces when pushed beyond its limit.

An unhappy or mistreated Eerecrech – and being forced to perform manual labor is mistreatment for this beast – works at a snail's pace, if at all, and butts and snaps at the person forcing it to do the mundane work, as well as anyone who comes within reach. Given the opportunity, the disgruntled lizard may attack and slaughter other beasts of burden, cattle, livestock, and pets out of spite or rage to show its displeasure, or to extract bloody revenge. At some point an angry or abused Riding Lizard will attempt to kill its wicked master, unless it can make an escape first, fighting anyone who tries to prevent it from getting away. A miserable Riding Lizard forced to work and unable to escape may try to kill itself in any number of ways or simply stop eating and waste away.

Their meat is lean and tough, and easy to overcook, rendering it as dry and tough as tree bark. When cooked and prepared properly however, the meat is good. It tastes like chicken and is especially good in soup and meat pies. Despite that, there is no market for its meat or the animal's hide. The horns are rumored to have medicinal/herbal properties and even uses in making magic potions. A Necromancer, and sometimes other sorcerers, may be willing to pay 1,000 credits for an Earacrech adult's claw/foot, 2,000 for the large nose horn, and 3,000-5,000 for an entire head with all the horns intact.

Note: This is a new creature appearing for the very first time. Inspired by the art and ideas of Charles “Chuck” Walton Jr.



Felines/Predatory Cats

By Kevin Siembieda

Felines of all kinds, both wild and domesticated, are found throughout the Americas and most of the world. What follows are some of the most notable living in North America and can be adapted to most of their cousins around the world. A little, easy research online should help you find a good equivalent. Also see **Monsters and Animals** for the Palladium Fantasy RPG® for a wide array of S.D.C. animals (and monsters) that could find their way to Rifts Earth or have an Earth equivalent.

Notes About Felines

Alignment: Anarchist for wild felines. Anarchist or Unprincipled for the typical domesticated house cat and trained wild felines.

Attributes: Varies with the breed and size of the animal, but here are some *general guidelines* for wild felines.

Attributes of Wild Felines (general): I.Q. 1D4+7 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+8, M.A. 1D6+12, P.S. varies widely (1D4+11 small, 1D4+15 medium, 1D6+18 large breeds), P.P. varies (1D6+8 small, 1D4+15 medium, 1D6+16 large breeds), P.E. 1D6+15, P.B. 1D6+15, Spd varies with breed and listed for each cat. Typically, 20-25 mph (32 to 40 km). Speed is indicated in each of the stat blocks.

All wild felines are considered to be cunning, stealthy predators with a medium-high animal intelligence. Predatory felines are wild animals and cannot be domesticated. A lion trained from a kitten/cub can learn to understand around 130 words and phrases, but remains a wild animal driven by instinct, and difficult to command and control. It is not obedient and loyal like a dog, and can easily maim or kill people, even its master, when frightened, angered, or provoked. The animal does not work well with other trained or domesticated animals. Horses, livestock, and most animals are afraid of predatory cats and want to run to a safe distance away from them. Wild cats may look graceful and beautiful, but they are

powerful and dangerous hunters. Only people seem to be foolish enough to take their chances with such dangerous predators. Even domesticated house cats exhibit less loyalty and empathy to their owners than dogs, and still stalk and hunt.

Running Speed: Felines are built for prowling, leaping, climbing and short bursts of tremendous speed, but not long distance running or trotting. All felines can maintain their running speed, the first number listed (typically 25-30 mph/40 to 48 km) for up to 15-30 minutes, or as listed in their stat block.

Maximum speed is indicated as a *short burst* of speed than can only be maintained for a few minutes before the animal needs to slow down or pause to rest. A speed burst is used to catch prey or to make a quick retreat or escape. Feline's exhibit tremendous bursts of speed, greater than canines. The difference is that canines and other animals built for running can maintain their running and trotting speed for a much longer period of time than felines.

A *comfortable trotting speed* is a steady traveling speed over a period of several hours. It is, generally, one third the animal's running speed. For most felines that would be about 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km) and maintainable for one or two hours, or as listed in the stat block each specific animal.

A *comfortable walking speed* for most medium to large felines is 3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km) and can be maintained for 1-4 hours.

Swimming Speed: 4 mph (6.4 km), on average. Most predatory cats don't mind water and are decent swimmers. Some, including the lynx, jaguar, and tiger, love the water and hunt, swim and play in it on a regular basis. They are such strong swimmers, they are able to swim across marshlands, rivers, and lakes up to 5 miles (8 km).

Climbing: Most medium and some large felines, like the leopard, are outstanding climbers and love to pounce from an elevated position up in a tree, the rocks, or the wreckage of large vehicles and ruins. Some large cats like the African Lion and Tiger are not as good at climbing than their smaller cousins, but they too can climb to some degree.

Combat: Felines are cunning and patient predators that quietly watch and stalk their prey before attacking. They wait and position themselves to pounce when its target will least expect it. Though a predatory feline may chase down prey, unlike canines, most cats lie in wait, or slowly, quietly, prowl closer to get within striking range. Then, pounce without warning. They are cunning and capable stalkers and ambush predators. While some people imagine cats stalking prey by pouncing from a tree or ledge above, some do and some don't. Predatory cats in the Americas such as the lynx, jaguar, cougar, and mountain lion are equally adept stalking prey from above and from the ground. Other big cats such as the African Lion, Tigers, and Cheetah are plains hunters, stalking prey in the tall grass.

While a feline may not be able to hurt a completely armor-clad opponent, cyborg, or M.D.C. opponent, the powerful cat may wrestle, tangle, hold, claw and pounce to trip or knock people down to the ground. Ambushes and pouncing attacks are common with the feline, and the beast goes for the throat, head and limbs. Large felines are also likely to grab and hold or pull at boots, belts, bags, backpacks, clothing and limbs (hands, arms, legs, etc.) to hold or pull to wrestle and knock down people. Once on the ground, the cat pounces or climbs on top of the prey, using its weight, strength, and claws to impair movement as it continues its attack and otherwise engage and confound its victim. A large cat is likely to be able to keep an M.D.C. opponent off balance or knocked off his feet for several melee rounds to several minutes. And when it can,

it goes for vulnerable (unarmored?) parts of the body. Big cats are also strong enough to drag human-size victims long distances and up into the rocks.

All the above notwithstanding, felines are smart enough to avoid people and their weapons, unless the cat knows it has the jump on them. Instead, it is much more likely to go after livestock, riding animals and unprotected people it can tell are not encased in armor.

Pouncing Attack: Felines are ambushers that like to sneak up on prey and pounce. Against large prey animals they go for the throat to make a quick kill, or the haunches/legs to impair the animal's movement and prevent an escape. If the attacking feline has a strong hold, it will let the animal struggle and bleed out while it holds tight. Or the cat jockeys for a better position so it can wrestle its prey down and inflict more damage with bites and claw attacks. **Note:** A predatory feline's pouncing attack is always to make a kill and does grievous S.D.C./Hit Point Damage from bite and claws.

A pouncing attack by a medium-large feline, 50-140 pounds (22.5-63 kg), inflicts 3D6+10 S.D.C. damage, and has a 60% chance of knocking human-size prey off balance or even off their feet (victim loses initiative and one melee attack). *A pounce attack counts as three melee attacks!* A victim of knockdown loses initiative and two melee attacks, and sustains damage from the impact and simultaneous bite and claw damage that comes with a feline's pounce attack.

The pouncing leap of a large feline, 150-800 pounds (70-360 kg), inflicts 5D6+16 S.D.C. damage, and has an 80% chance of knocking human-size prey weighing less than 600 pounds (270 kg) off their feet. *A pounce attack counts as three melee attacks!* A victim of knockdown loses initiative and two melee attacks, and sustains damage from the impact and simultaneous bite and claw damage that comes with a feline's pounce attack.

Food/Feeding/Hunting: Cats are meat-eating carnivores. Some will eat fresh carrion or butchered meat from a recent kill, but do not eat carrion that is more than 10 hours old, nor will they eat most processed food or human garbage. Most felines like to hunt prey that serves as its entire meal and eat once or twice a day. The amount determined by the feline's size, breed and activity level. A tiger, for example, can eat 100 pounds (45 kg) in a single meal and drags off and buries the remains to hide it from other predators and scavenger, so it can eat more of it over the next few days. However, a feline will hunt and make several small kills when larger prey is not plentiful. Most can go days to two weeks without eating. Any longer than that, and the feline quickly suffers and slows down from starvation. Reduce speed by 30%, number of melee attacks by half (round down), and combat bonuses by half (round down).

In the wilds of Rifts Earth, big cats may attack people, but are more likely to go after their riding animal, livestock, and pets, before them. People become a target when the animal is starving and desperate, or when the person is sick, injured, or dying, i.e. an easy meal. As usual, if the animal's stomach is full, it will not attack people or animals. Predatory cats attack only when they are hungry or protecting themselves or their young. Most will also fight to protect the prey they just killed and have yet to eat. Some, like mountain lions and leopards/panthers, carry their entire kill or part of it up into a tree or the rocks to eat. Away from thieving, stronger, rival predators and where the animal can see trouble coming.

Horror Factor of Felines: Generally, a single small or medium feline predator has a Horror Factor of 9 or 10, while a medium-large feline has a Horror Factor of 12, and a large predatory feline

like a Tiger or African Lion has a Horror Factor of 14 for most people. Reduce Horror Factor by half if the character is clad in sealed, full environmental M.D.C. body armor, power armor, or is a full conversions cyborg. Increase by +2 if the person is afraid of felines.

P.P.E. of Felines: The average wild feline possesses 4D4 P.P.E. points, the largest 3D6+1; varies slightly from breed to breed.

Solitary Feline: There are a few exceptions, but generally, cats are solitary creatures that seldom gather in groups or packs. They are each independent individuals that hunt alone. When attacking a prey target that is part of a herd or group, the feline is likely to pick off a straggler, or the one that wanders away from the rest of the group, or an animal at the edge of the herd. This is usually a surprise attack from above, or from the shadows or tall grass.

Sensitivity to Supernatural Evil and Potential Psychic Energy (P.P.E.): Felines are among the most sensitive animals in the world when it comes to sensing the presence of immense magic energy and the supernatural, particularly supernatural *evil*. This psychic awareness also enables the animal to see certain invisible, supernatural beings, including Entities/ghosts/spirits, the energy essence of Alien Intelligences, and most demons and elemental beings, but that does not include spell magic-induced invisibility or other forms of invisibility.

When supernatural evil is present, the feline becomes nervous, jumpy, and agitated. The closer the source of evil or great magic, the more tense the animal becomes, inducing it to pace back and forth, whine and hiss in warning. When face to face with the supernatural evil, the feline, a natural predator, will defend itself, its home or its master by attacking the creature. After its initial attack, house cats flee and find a dark corner to hide. Large, wild, predator felines hold their position and lash out, biting and clawing, every time the source of supernatural evil comes within striking distance (10 feet/3 m or closer), fleeing only when an opponent proves to be too powerful for it. Should the supernatural evil engage in combat with the feline, it fights to the death. This is an instinctive response. Range of Sensitivity: 1,200 feet (366 m); 3,000 feet (914 m) when it comes to vampires.

The feline can also sense ley lines, nexus points, and places of power, as well as incredibly powerful creatures of magic (1,500 P.P.E. or more). Range of Sensitivity: 600 feet (183 m).

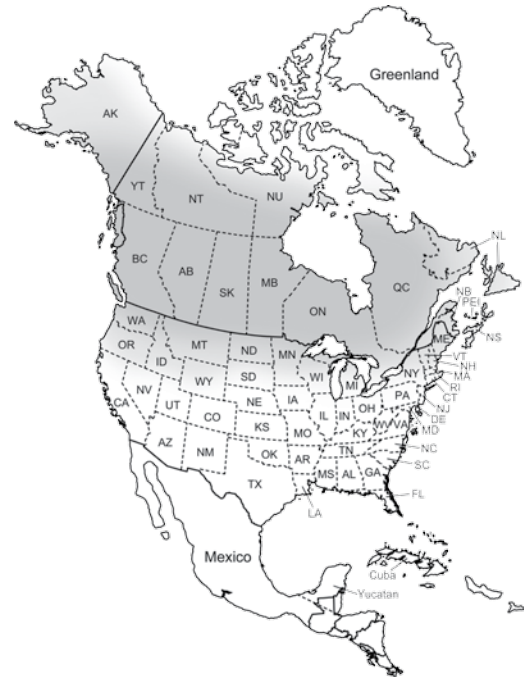
Taming Wild Felines is Not Possible: Even when taken as a cub and trained, like a circus animal, predatory felines cannot be domesticated. They can be acclimated toward people but remain wild animals driven by instinct to hunt and kill. When angry, provoked, hurt, or scared, the big cat fights tooth and claw. Even at play the big cat may accidentally maim or kill someone. Psi-Stalkers, Simvan, Psi-Druids, Shifters, and other beings with the power to soothe, and control animals are able to command such beasts with considerable effectiveness, but need to keep an eye on the beast to make sure it doesn't eat someone's pet or riding animal, or take a bite out of someone it doesn't like.

The Influence of Vampires on Felines: None.

The Influence of Feline Werebeasts on Felines: None, *per se*. Cats consider feline werebeasts to be kindred spirits and are not afraid of them. Nor do cats attack them unless the werebeasts threatens it first, and even then it is more likely to run away than fight. Such a conflict is not likely to happen, however, as feline werebeasts (found in Southern Mexico, Central America, and South America) consider all felines to be their little sisters, and respect and appreciate them.

On the other hand, Werebears, Werewolves and all canines are regarded as natural enemies and dangerous rivals to be avoided. Note that werewolves, Loup Garou, coyotes, wolves and large dogs see all felines as their natural enemy and prey. They are regularly hunted and killed by them as prey.

Vulnerabilities: All S.D.C. weapons inflict damage to felines. Mega-Damage weapons inflict grievous damage and may vaporize part of the animal.



Lynx & Bobcat, Predatory Carnivore

The Canadian Lynx and American Bobcat are two different but very similar species of medium-sized wild cats. They prefer cool to moderate forest and mountain climates and environments.

The Canadian Lynx is built to handle the cold and snow. It has very large paws compared to the rest of their body for walking through deep snow like snowshoes. Likewise, the hind legs are thickly muscled and larger than their front legs for leaping and tree climbing. In the winter the Canadian Lynx has a thick fur coat that is a light, pastel tan or grizzled light brownish gray color and creamy underbelly. In the summer, their fur is more of a tawny color, dotted with black spots, most notable on the legs, hindquarters and lower body. The lynx is distinguished from the Bobcat by their short "bobbed" tail (even shorter than the Bobcat's, which is also short) and very pointed, black tipped, tufted ears. The lynx and bobcat are very similar felines and both make sounds like those of domesticated cats, meowing, hissing and purring.

Both felines are solitary predators that generally hunt alone and excel in forest and snowy environments, but may also stalk in swamps, bogs, and rocky terrain. Its favorite tactic is to hide up in a tree, among rocks or other high point and leap down upon unsuspecting prey. Also lies in wait and stalks prey from tall grass and reeds of marshlands. While they tend to be nocturnal hunters that find a nice crevice, rock ledge, or fallen tree to sleep under during the day, the lynx and bobcat are opportunists that hunt whenever prey comes their way. They seldom attack people unless the animal is starving or the person is a young child, injured, weak or dying. As with any predator, the beasts attack when cornered, protecting their young, and when threatened. Native Americans call the Lynx, "Shadow of the Forest," because the cat is so stealthy

and often seems to appear from the shadows to snatch prey, and disappear just as quickly.

These cats avoid civilization. They even generally stay away from farms, though the allure of easy prey by way of chickens, ducks, geese, young animals and rodents may draw them to make periodic raids on a farm.

Canadian Lynx and Bobcat

Also Known As: Shadow of the Forest, Snow Cat and Northern Wild Cat.

Alignment: Considered Anarchist.

Attribute Note: Speed Running: 37, or 25 mph (40 km) for 20 minutes. 30 mph (48 km) in a short burst lasting 1D4 minutes. A comfortable trot is 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km) for up to two hours. Walking speed is 3-4 mph (4.8 to 6.4 km). Excellent at leaping and pouncing, described above.

Hit Points: 1D6+20

S.D.C.: 1D6+16

A.R.: Not applicable.

Size: A Canadian Lynx is 2.6 to 3 feet (0.8 to 0.9 m) long from snout to rump, plus a very short tail that is 1-3 inches (2.5 to 7.6 cm); double the tail length for a Bobcat. Both stand 20-24 inches (0.5 to 0.6 m) tall at the shoulders.

Weight: 20-30 pounds (9 to 13.5 kg).

Average Life Span: 8-12 years. Mate in early spring, March through May. The female gives birth two months later to 1D4+1 kittens. The male has done his duty after mating and is not involved in the rearing of the young. Kittens stay with their mother for one year before leaving her side. A mother teaching her young to hunt is the only time a lynx or bobcat is found hunting in a group. Juveniles are ages 11-24 months, reaching full size and sexual maturity at the age of two.

P.P.E.: 2D6

Disposition: Shy and reserved, the lynx and bobcat tend to stick to the shadows. Showing themselves when they are ready to pounce. They avoid coyotes and wolves, both of which hunt and eat the cats. Wary and shy toward people.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Acrobatics 90%, Climbing 90%/70% (+5% in trees and on rocks; love trees, rocks and mountain terrain), Land Navigation 90% (+8% to find magnetic North), Prowl 85%, and Swimming 80% and Tailing 60% (from a distance).

Natural Abilities: Can leap 6 feet (1.8 m) high and 15 feet (4.6 m) across from a standing still position, and like all felines, can perform a leaping pounce. Keen senses, particularly vision, hearing and smell, Nightvision 600 feet (183 m), track by smell 55% (+20% to track scent of blood or a female in heat), heals at a rate of 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Points per 24 hours. Can hunt day or night but favors hunting at night.

Sense Magnetic North (special): Like dolphins and some other animals, the lynx and bobcat can always tell where magnetic north is precisely located. This is an immense help in navigating the wild lands and finding prey.

Attacks per Melee: Three.

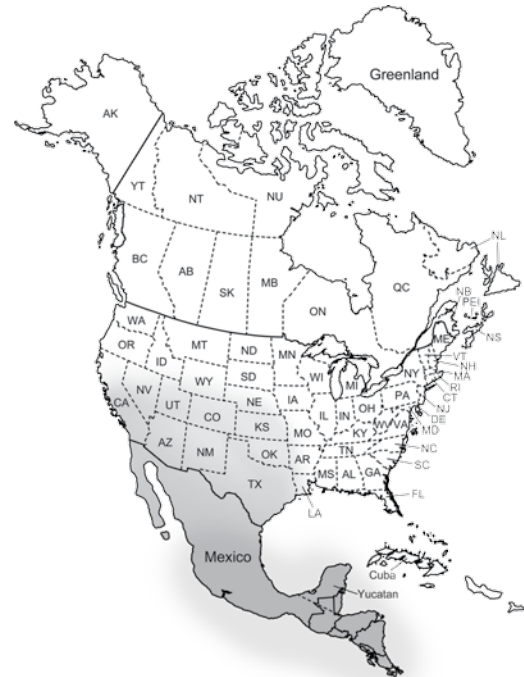
Damage: Bite does 2D4 S.D.C. damage. Claws 2D6 S.D.C.

Bonuses: +3 on Perception Rolls related to noticing prey and danger, +3 on initiative, +4 to strike, +3 to parry, +2 to dodge, and +3 to save vs Horror Factor.

Habitat: Lynx and Bobcats are found throughout the Old Canadian Empire, Alaska, and sometimes in the Northwestern United States, especially Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyo-

ming, North Dakota, and Northern Minnesota and Wisconsin, as well as Maine and Vermont. They seldom travel much further south due to the competition of larger and more dangerous predators that inhabit the American New West. They prefer forests (the denser the better), grassy tundra, grasslands, and mountain ranges.

Value: Fur Pelt: 50-100 credits. Not edible.



Jaguar, Predatory Carnivore

The Jaguar is the largest feline native to North America and can reach a length of six or seven feet (1.8 to 2.7 m) and weigh more than 200 pounds (90 kg). The Jaguar resembles a leopard, with a tawny hide dotted by irregular donut-shaped markings known as rosettes. It is a somewhat larger and stockier animal than a leopard, with larger rosettes that have a spot inside its donut-like markings. Its tail and legs are also shorter than the African Leopard, and has a rather large head, like the pit bull of felines. Black Jaguars are unusual, as are the rarer albino.

Most modern people don't think of the Jaguar as native to the United States because hunters, ranchers and settlers of the America West pushed the jaguar near the point of extinction in the United States. Prior to that, the big cat was found up and down the Rocky Mountains and across the Southwest to the Mississippi River and as far North as Colorado, Kansas, and Missouri. Since the Great Cataclysm, the Jaguar has repopulated and expanded its territory into these regions and throughout Mexico and into South America.

Jaguars are aggressive, fearless hunters that love water and are excellent swimmers. They are equally at home in grassy plains/savannas and scrub, but they favor warm rainforests, marshlands, swamps, and forests near marshlands, swamps, rivers and lakes. The Jaguar is an excellent climber and may hunt from the trees pouncing upon prey from above or from the ground, stealthily stalking prey in the tall grass and reeds. A solitary and opportunistic hunter, Jaguars prey upon whatever comes its way. Fish, amphibians, lizards, birds, rabbits, squirrels, groundhogs, and larger animals like capybara, tapirs, wild boar, deer, antelope, coyotes, foxes, dogs, sheep, goats, young cattle, pigs, livestock, and pets.

Jaguars are fairly large predatory felines that are not very afraid of people. However, it doesn't often attack people unless the animal is very hungry or the person is alone, injured, or dying. As with any predator, the beast attacks when cornered, protecting its young, and when threatened, but hunts only when hungry. Its favorite tactic is to hide up in a tree, among rocks, or other high point, and leap down upon unsuspecting prey. It hunts day or night, but prefers the twilight hours at dawn and dusk. Patient and powerful, a Jaguar may lie in wait in a tree or watch prey from the tall grass and scrub. When it strikes, it goes for the neck, head and haunches/legs. These cats tend to avoid large cities, and rather hunt animals than people, but it does happen. A Jaguar may be attracted to trading posts, ranches, farms, animal pens, traveling caravans that use or transport animals, and small towns and villages where livestock is kept.

Jaguar

Also Known As: El Jefe, Panther, Leopard, and the Dark Hunter.

Ancient Native Americans called it Yaguar, meaning "the killer which overcomes its prey in a single bound," and the ancient Mayans believed a Jaguar deity ruled the underworld.

Alignment: As a predator it is Anarchist, but some people who have lost loved ones and livestock to the beast may consider it Miscreant.

Attribute Note: Speed Running: 1D6+48, or 35 mph (56 km) for 30 minutes. 50 mph (80 km) in a short burst lasting 1D4+2 minutes. A comfortable trot is 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km) for up to two hours. Walking speed is 3-4 mph (4.8 to 6.4 km), the same for its swimming speed. Excellent at swimming, climbing, leaping and pouncing.

Hit Points: 1D6+30

S.D.C.: 1D6+28

A.R.: Not applicable.

Size: 5-6 feet (1.5 to 1.8 m) long from snout to rump, plus a long tail that is 2-3 feet (0.6 to 0.3 m). Stands 2.4 to 2.8 feet (0.7 to 0.85 m) tall at the shoulders.

Weight: 120-250 pounds (54 to 112.5 kg).

Average Life Span: 12-18 years. Jaguar can mate anytime of the year. The female gives birth three months later to 1D4+1 cubs. The male has done his duty after mating and is not involved in the rearing of the young. Cubs stay with their mother for two years before leaving her side. A mother teaching her young to hunt is the only time the solitary cat is found hunting in a group. Juveniles are ages 2-3, reaching full size and sexual maturity at the age of four.

P.P.E.: 2D6

Disposition: Patient, steady, and aggressive solitary hunters that use ambush and pouncing attacks to great effect. Wary but not too afraid of people.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Acrobatics 85%, Climbing 90%/70% (+5% in trees and rocks; love trees), Land Navigation 90%, Prowl 85%, Swimming 95%, and Tailing 60%.

Natural Abilities: Can leap 10 feet (3 m) high and 20 feet (6.1 m) across from a standing position, and like all felines, can perform a leaping pounce. Keen senses, particularly vision, hearing and smell, Nightvision 600 feet (183 m), track by sight or smell 60% (+20% to track scent of blood or a female in heat), heals at a rate of 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Points per 24 hours. Can hunt day or night but favor hunting at night.

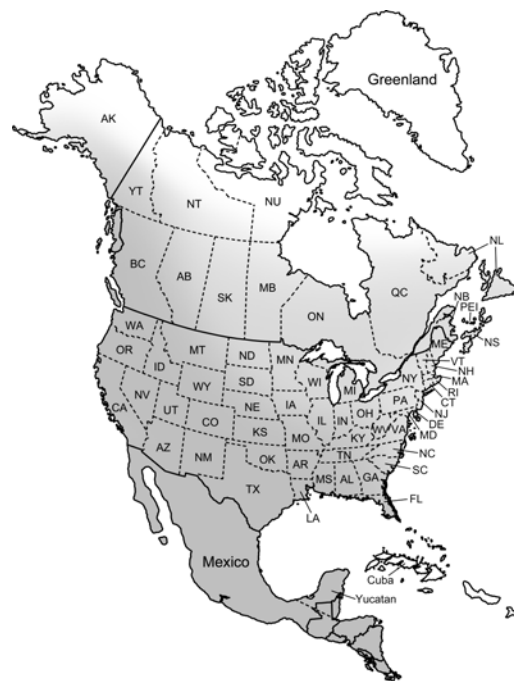
Attacks per Melee: Three.

Damage: Bite does 2D4+4 S.D.C. damage. Claws 1D6+4 S.D.C.

Bonuses: +3 on Perception Rolls related to noticing prey and danger, +4 on initiative, +4 to strike, +3 to parry, +4 to dodge, and +4 to save vs Horror Factor.

Habitat: The Jaguar once roamed all of Mexico, the American Southwest and parts of the lower Rocky Mountain range. Since the Great Cataclysm, the felines have reclaimed that range and are found stalking California, Arizona, New Mexico, Southern Utah and Colorado, Texas, and to a lesser degree, Oklahoma and Kansas. The Jaguar is found in much greater numbers in Mexico, the Yucatan, Central America, and South America as far south as Paraguay and northern Argentina.

Value: Fur Pelt: 150-400 credits. Not edible.



Mountain Lion, Predatory Carnivore

The Mountain Lion goes by many names, Cougar, Puma, and Panther, being the most common. It is indigenous to North America and loves mountain woodlands. It can be found at elevations of up to 10,000 feet (3048 m). That said, puma are quite adaptable and can be found in all terrains from marshlands and swamps to forests, grasslands, scrublands and stony deserts. The Mountain Lion has tawny fur and a cream underbelly and a long tail. It can reach a length of more than five feet (1.5 m) and weigh more than 200 pounds (90 kg).

Cougars are aggressive, fearless, solitary hunters that prey upon whatever comes its way: bugs, fish, lizards, birds, rabbits, squirrels, racoons, and especially larger animals like deer, caribou, elk, moose, wild boar, coyotes, foxes, dogs, bighorn sheep, goats, horses, cattle, livestock, and pets. Mountain Lions have little fear of people and sometimes stalk them as well, especially if sick or injured, and alone. As with any predator, the big cat attacks when cornered, protecting its young, and when threatened, but hunts only when hungry. Its favorite tactic is to hide up in a tree, among rocks, or other high point, and leap down upon unsuspecting prey, but it also stalk through ground vegetation. It tends to be hunt at night and is especially active in the early morning and early evening. When it strikes it goes for the throat, neck, and head. These cats tend to avoid large cities, but may hunt along its outskirts. A Cougar may be attracted to trading posts, slaughterhouses, ranch-

es, farms, animal pens, traveling caravans that use or transport animals, and small towns and villages where livestock is kept.

Mountain Lion

Also Known As: Cougar, Puma, Panther, Mountain Cat, Catamount, Ghost Cat, and 30 other names.

Alignment: As a predator it is Anarchist, but people who have lost loved ones and livestock to the beast may consider it Miscreant.

Attribute Note: Speed Running: 1D6+40, or 30 mph (48 km) for 20 minutes, but can run 45 mph (72 km) in a short burst lasting 1D4+1 minutes. A comfortable trot is 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km) for up to one hour. Walking speed is 4-5 mph (6.4 to 8 km), the same for its swimming speed. Excellent at climbing, leaping, and pouncing, and a decent swimmer.

Hit Points: 1D6+32

S.D.C.: 1D6+30

A.R.: Not applicable.

Size: 3.6 to 5.4 feet (1 to 1.6 m) long from snout to rump, plus a 2 foot (0.6 m) long tail. Stands 2-2.6 feet (0.6 to 0.8 m) tall at the shoulders.

Weight: Adult Male 155-300 pounds (70 to 135 kg). Female: 70-150 pounds (31.5 to 67.5 kg).

Average Life Span: 12-20 years. Mountain Lions can mate any-time of the year, but most often mate during the winter months, December through March.. The female gives birth three months later to 1D4+1 cubs. The male has done his duty after mating and is not involved in the rearing of the young. Cubs stay with their mother for two years before leaving her side. A mother teaching her young to hunt is the solitary cat is found hunting in a group. Juveniles are ages 2-3, reaching full size and sexual maturity at the age of four.

P.P.E.: 2D6+4

Disposition: Patient, steady, and aggressive solitary hunters that use ambush and pouncing attacks to great effect. Wary but not afraid of people.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Acrobatics 75%, Climbing 90%/60% (+5% in trees and rocks), Land Navigation 90%, Prowl 85%, Swimming 55%, and Tailing 50%.

Natural Abilities: Can leap 20 feet (6 m) high and 40 feet (12.2 m) across from a standing position or while running, and like all felines can perform a leaping pounce. Keen senses, particularly vision, hearing and smell, Nightvision 200 feet (61 m), track by sight or smell 65% (+15% to track scent of blood or a female in heat), heals at a rate of 3D6 S.D.C./Hit Points per 24 hours. Can hunt day or night but favor hunting in the morning and at night. Requires 8-15 pounds (3.6 to 6.7 kg) of meat per day.

Attacks per Melee: Three.

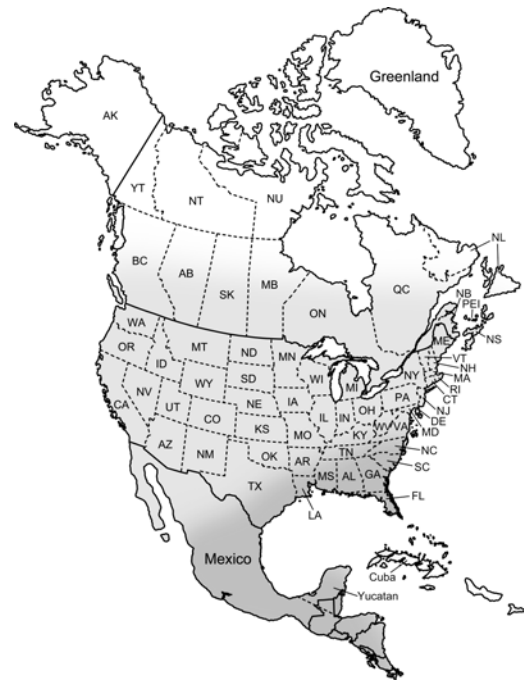
Damage: Bite does 2D4+3 S.D.C., Claws 2D6 S.D.C.

Bonuses: +3 on Perception Rolls related to noticing prey and danger, +3 on initiative, +6 to strike, +3 to parry, +4 to dodge, +2 to pull punch, +3 to roll with impact/fall, and +4 to save vs Horror Factor.

Enemies: Wolf Packs, other pack hunters, and people.

Habitat: All across the Old American, Canadian and Mexican Empires as far south at the Andes Mountains of Chile. They love mountains and rocky forests but can be found in the swamps and glades of Florida, the South, into the Southwest, into the New West and up into the frozen Yukon of Canada.

Value: Fur Pelt: 60-120 credits. Not edible.



Leopard, Predatory Carnivore

Like the African Lion and Tiger, the Leopard (other than its cousin, the Jaguar) is not indigenous to North America, but the animals that escaped from zoos, private owners, and safari parks, and have managed to adapt and spread across the continent after the Great Cataclysm. They have done better in some regions than others. Having to compete with other larger predators, from dinosaurs to any number of large creatures from the Rifts, has kept their numbers in check and from spreading across all of North America.

The Leopard is a medium-large feline native to Africa, Turkey, India, Asia and even Russia and the Himalayas (Snow Leopard). It has tawny fur dotted by irregular spots called rosettes (because they resemble the silhouette of a rose), and a creamy underbelly. Entirely black Leopards, or panthers, are most common in Southeast Asia, but a few exist in North America since the Coming of the Rifts.

Leopards are nocturnal, ambush predators that sneak up on prey and pounce to attack, targeting the throat, neck and head. Small and medium-sized birds are killed with a quick swat of its claws or a snapping bite. The Leopard often leaping and snatching the bird out of the air in mid-flight. This feline is the most adaptive of all the large cats and can be found in a vast range of environments. It is equally at home in tall grass and scrub, savanna/grasslands, rainforests, deserts, mountain habitats, and marshlands, but favor grassy forests most of all.

Leopards love trees and spend a lot of their time in them. During the day, they sleep hidden in their leafy embrace. They even drag prey up into trees to keep their kill away from other animals. Excellent climbers, the beast may pounce from a tree or from the ground where it stalks prey in the tall grass and scrub. A solitary and opportunistic hunter, leopards prey upon whatever comes its way. That includes bugs, fish, amphibians, lizards, snakes, birds, rodents, monkeys and larger animals like wild boar, deer, antelope, coyotes, foxes, dogs, sheep, goats, young cattle, pigs, livestock, and pets. It attacks people only when starving or to protect itself or its young. These cats avoid large cities, but may be attracted to trading posts, ranches, farms, animal pens, traveling caravans that use or transport animals, and small towns and villages where livestock is kept.

Leopard

Also Known As: Panther and Tree Lion.

Alignment: As a predator it is Anarchist, but some people who have lost loved ones and livestock to the beast may consider it Miscreant.

Attribute Note: Speed Running: 1D6+50, or 36 mph (57.6 km) for 15 minutes. 50 mph (80 km) in a short burst lasting 1D4+1 minutes. A comfortable trot is 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km) up to one hour. Walking speed is 3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km), the same for its swimming speed. Leopards hate water and avoid swimming. Excellent at climbing, leaping and pouncing.

Hit Points: 1D6+30

S.D.C.: 1D6+28

A.R.: Not applicable.

Size: 4-6 feet (1.2 to 1.8 m) long from snout to rump, plus a very long tail that is 2-3.4 feet (0.6 to 1 m) long. Stands 2 to 2.6 feet (0.6 to 0.8 m) tall at the shoulders.

Weight: 70-170 pounds (31.5 to 76.5 kg).

Average Life Span: 12-18 years. Leopards can mate anytime of the year. The female gives birth three months later to 2-3 cubs. The male has done his duty after mating and is not involved in the rearing of the young. Cubs stay with their mother for two or three years before leaving her side. A mother teaching her young to hunt is the only time the solitary cat is found hunting in a group. Juveniles are ages 2-4, reaching full size and sexual maturity at the age of five.

P.P.E.: 2D6+3

Disposition: Patient, steady, and aggressive solitary hunters that use ambush and pouncing attacks to great effect. Wary but not too afraid of people.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Acrobatics 90%, Climbing 90%/70% (+5% in trees and rocks; love trees), Land Navigation 90%, Prowl 85%, Swimming 50%, but leopards dislike water and getting wet, and Tailing 65%.

Natural Abilities: Can leap 12 feet (3.7 m) high, straight up, and 30 feet (9.1 m) across from a standing still position, and like all felines can perform a leaping pounce. Keen senses, particularly vision, hearing and smell, Nightvision 600 feet (183 m), track by smell 60% (+20% to track scent of blood or a female in heat), heals at a rate of 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Points per 24 hours. Can hunt day or night but favor hunting at night. Leopards do not need much water to drink as they get most of the moisture they need from the prey they devour. They communicate via soft, hoarse roars, a raspy cough, and purr when happy.

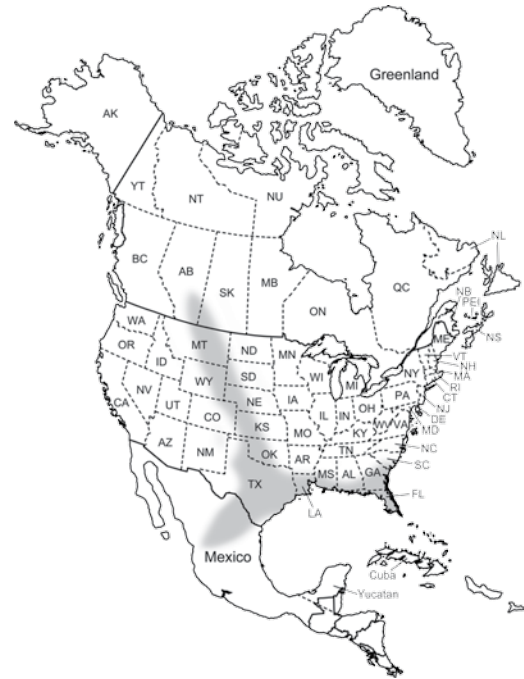
Attacks per Melee: Three.

Damage: Bite does 2D4+4 S.D.C. damage. Claws 1D6+4 S.D.C.

Bonuses: +3 on Perception Rolls related to noticing prey and danger, +4 on initiative, +4 to strike, +3 to parry, +4 to Automatic Dodge (the act of dodging does not use up a melee attack), +3 to roll with impact/fall, and +4 to save vs Horror Factor.

Habitat: Theoretically, the Leopard can be found anywhere across North America. However, they favor warm climates, forests and grassy plains with at least some clusters of trees. As a result they are found primarily in the southern portion of the Old American Empire, along mountain ranges and, to a lesser degree, throughout Mexico and Central America. Snow Leopards, a subspecies of Leopard, can be found further north and in mountain ranges in elevations as high as 18,000 feet (5,486 m). Leopards are a comparatively uncommon animal as it must compete with the Mountain Lion, Jaguar, and other predators.

Value: Fur Pelt: 150-400 credits. Not edible.



African Lion, Predatory Carnivore

Like the leopard, the African Lion is not indigenous to North America, but animals that escaped from zoos, private owners, and safari parks and have managed to adapt and spread across the continent. They have done better in some regions than others. Having to compete with other larger predators, from dinosaurs to any number of large creatures from the Rifts, has kept their numbers in check and from spreading across all of North America.

African Lions are big game hunters that, in North America, prey upon deer, elk, caribou, moose, buffalo, horses, sheep, goats, buffalo, bison, horses, wild boar, cattle, livestock, wolves, coyotes and dogs, as well as people. A wolf pack may hunt one or two of the big cats, especially juveniles and young, but never take on a pride of lions. Lions ultimately hunt whatever prey is available from lizards and birds to rabbits and rodents. A lion consumes 50 pounds (22.5 kg) in a single meal.

African Lions are savannah hunters that prefer the tall grass and scrub but can also live in light forests. The females do most of the hunting and work in pairs or as a group. African Lions are very social animals and live in groups known as prides. A typical pride has two adult males and 8-16 adult females and 6-12 young. The size of the pride depends on the availability of food and Mega-Damage predators that may hunt them. African Lions are ambush hunters that stalk their prey through the tall grass of the savanna and charge, exploding into action when they get within 50 to 100 feet (15.2 to 30.5 m), pouncing on their prey. One lioness usually goes for the throat or neck, while another pounces on the haunches to hold and prevent large animals from bucking and fleeing. They hunt when hungry, but mostly at night.

These cats tend to avoid civilization, but may be lured to towns, villages, farms, ranches and traveling caravans where they are able to find easy prey like chickens, livestock, cattle, and pets. Likewise, they may attack the horses and pack animals of adventuring groups, or snatch a member of the group and drag him off!

African Lion

Alignment: As a predator it is Anarchist, but some people who have lost loved ones and livestock to the beast may consider it Miscreant.

Attribute Note: Speed Running: 44, or 30 mph (48 km) for 15 minutes, but can reach 50 mph (80 km) in a short burst lasting 1D4+1 minutes. A comfortable trot is 8-12 mph (12.8 to 19 km) up to two hours. Walking speed is 4-6 mph (6.4 to 9.6 km), the same for its swimming speed. Excellent at leaping and pouncing.

Hit Points: 1D6+46

S.D.C.: 2D6+30

A.R.: Not applicable.

Size: The African Lion is the second largest Earth feline: 4.5-6.5 feet (1.4 to 2 m) long from snout to rump, plus a 2-3 foot (0.6 to 0.9 m) long tail. Stand 3-3.5 feet (0.6 to 1 m) tall at the shoulders.

Weight: Adult Male: 400-500 pounds (180 to 225 kg). Adult Female: 250-300 pounds (112.5 to 135 kg).

Average Life Span: 10-15 years. Mate as often as four times a year. The female gives birth four months later to 2 or 3 cubs. All females in the pride mate at the same time. Mother and other females in the pride keep an eye on young. Sisters live together for life, becoming part of the pride. At age two, males are driven from the pride or killed by the adult males. The male has done his duty after mating and is not involved in the rearing of the young, but does help protect the pride and sometimes assists in hunting large prey. Cubs stay with their mother for two years before leaving her side. Juvenile lions are ages 2-3 years, reaching full size and sexual maturity at the age of four.

P.P.E.: 3D6+1

Disposition: Lions are curious, gregarious and playful, especially when young and juvenile, but become more reserved and aggressive as adults, especially the males. They are patient, steady hunters that strike from their hiding place among tall grass or scrub. They are wary of people, but not very afraid of them. Lions are also quite lazy, sleeping 12-16 hours a day, usually during the heat of the day.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 40%/0%, Land Navigation 90%, Prowl 70% (+10% when hiding in tall grass and scrub or hunting at night), Track (animals and people, by sight) 70%, Swimming 60%, and Tailing 80%.

Natural Abilities: Can leap 12 feet (3.7 m) high and 35 feet (11 m) across, and like all felines, lions leap and pounce, possess keen senses, particularly vision, hearing and smell, Nightvision 200 feet (61 m), track by smell alone 70% (+20% to track scent of blood or a female in heat), heals at a rate of 3D6 S.D.C./Hit Points per 24 hours. Can hunt day or night but favors night hunting and the twilight hours at dawn and dusk. It is able to go without food for up to 10 days and without drinking water for up to five days, getting moisture from the prey they eat.

A lion's roar can be heard up to 5 miles (8 km) away. They also growl, groan, and huff.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

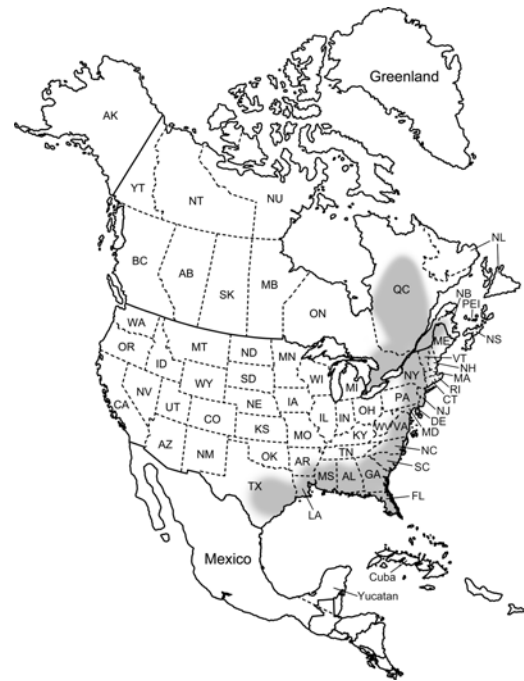
Damage: Bite does 2D4 S.D.C. damage. Claws 2D6 S.D.C.

Bonuses: +3 on Perception Rolls related to noticing prey and danger, +2 on initiative, +4 to strike, +3 to parry, +4 to dodge, +2 to pull punch, +2 to roll with impact, and +6 to save vs Horror Factor.

Habitat: Theoretically, an African Lion might be encountered almost anywhere in North America. However, they are currently found most often in the American Gulf States, parts of Texas, up into the New West from Oklahoma up through parts of Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, Wyoming, Montana and into the Great Plains of Saskatchewan and Alberta. They prefer grass

and scrublands, and warm to moderate climates. Most travel South during the Winter months. Lions are also found in Africa and Asia.

Value: Fur Pelt: 400-800 credits. Not edible.



Tiger, Predatory Carnivore

Like the African Lion, the Tiger is not indigenous to North America, but those that escaped from zoos, private owners, and safari parks, and have managed to adapt and spread across the continent. They have done better in some regions than others. Having to compete with other predators, from dinosaurs to any number of large creatures from the Rifts, has kept their numbers in check and from spreading across all of North America.

Tigers are big game hunters that prey upon deer, elk, caribou, moose, buffalo, wild boar, cattle and livestock, as well as people and predators smaller than they, such as coyotes and wolves. Likewise, wolf packs also hunt the big cats. However, like most predators, tigers hunt whatever prey is available from lizards and snakes to birds, rabbits, and rodents, even young alligators. A Tiger will drag large prey weighing as much as a ton, away to bury. Coming back to feed on the carcass over the next 3-5 days until it is finished with it. Burying the carcass of a fresh kill hides it from other predators and scavengers, helps cover its scent, and slows down its decay. This enables the big cat to conserve its energy and only have to hunt large prey every four or five days. A tiger consumes 80-100 pounds (36 to 45 kg) a day.

Tigers are ambush hunters that stalk their prey and lie in ambush before exploding into action to pounce on their prey. These cats tend to avoid civilization, but may be lured to towns, villages, farms, and ranches where they are able to find easy prey like chickens, livestock, cattle, pets, and people.

Tiger

Alignment: As a predator, the tiger has an Anarchist alignment, but people who have lost loved ones and livestock to the beast may consider a tiger to be Miscreant or Diabolic. On occasion, tigers have been known to develop a taste for people as easy prey and stalk humanoids as their favorite prey.

Attribute Note: Speed: 37, or 25 mph (40 km), but can reach 55 mph (88 km) in a short burst lasting 1D6 minutes. 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km) at a trot that can be maintained for up to two hours. Walking speed is 4-5 mph (6.4 to 8 km), the same for its swimming speed. Excellent at swimming and leaping and pouncing.

Hit Points: 1D6+50

S.D.C.: 2D6+34

A.R.: Not applicable.

Size: The Tiger is the largest of Earth's feline predators: 9-11 feet (2.7 to 3.4 m) long from snout to rump, plus 3 feet (0.9 m) for its very long tail. Stand 2-3 feet (0.6 to 0.9 m) tall at the shoulders.

Weight: 300-900 pounds (135 to 405 kg) depending on the species and the individual animal. The Siberian Tiger is the largest.

Average Life Span: 10-20 years. Tigers can mate any time, but usually do so in the cool months of early spring or the end of winter in North America. The female gives birth four months later to 2 or 3 cubs and keeps them in a den for the first 8 weeks. The male has done his duty after mating and is not involved in the rearing of the young. Cubs stay with their mother for two years before leaving her side. A mother teaching her young to hunt is the only time a tiger is found hunting in a group. Juveniles are ages 3-4 years, reaching full size and sexual maturity at the age of four and a half or five years old.

P.P.E.: 3D6

Disposition: Tigers can be curious, gregarious and playful, especially when young and juvenile, but become more reserved and aggressive as adults. They are patient, calm and steady hunters that strike from their hiding place among tall grass or scrub. Wary of people, but not afraid of them.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 50%/10%, Land Navigation 90%, Prowl 70% (+15% when hiding in tall grass and reeds), Track (animals and people) 60%, Swimming 85%, and Tailing 60%. Tigers love water, are strong swimmers and play and hunt in the water.

Natural Abilities: Can leap 15 feet (4.6 m) high and 30 feet (9.1 m) across, and is so graceful it can land without making a sound! Like all felines, tigers leap and pounce, possess keen senses, particularly vision, hearing and smell, Nightvision 600 feet (183 m), track by smell alone 60% (+20% to track scent of blood or a female in heat), heals at a rate of 3D6 S.D.C./Hit Points per 24 hours. Can hunt day or night but favors night hunting and the twilight hours at dawn and dusk. It is able to go without food for 14 days. Tigers love the water and are excellent swimmers able to swim up to 5 miles (8 m). They stalk prey in marshlands and cross rivers and small lakes to pursue prey, find a new hunting ground, or to escape danger, as well as to cool themselves off.

A tiger's roar can be heard two miles (3.2 km) away. They also growl, groan, hiss and chuff.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Damage: Bite does 2D4 S.D.C. damage. Claws 2D6 S.D.C.

Bonuses: +3 on Perception Rolls related to noticing prey and danger, +3 on initiative, +5 to strike, +3 to parry, +3 to dodge, +1 to pull punch, +1 to roll with impact, and +7 to save vs Horror Factor.

Habitat: Theoretically, a tiger can be encountered almost anywhere in North America, but they are quite uncommon. They are predominantly found in eastern Canada, Dinosaur Swamp and the American South. Tigers prefer forests, marshlands, grasslands and mountain lowlands. Most like hot to warm en-

vironments, but some tigers prefer moderate and cool climates such as the forests of the Old Canadian Empire. Tigers are also found in India, China, Indonesia, Russia, and Siberia.

Value: Fur Pelt: 600-1,200 credits. Not edible.

Field Reapers

By Charles Walton Jr. and Kevin Siembieda

"Many monsta huntin', powah armured know-it-alls, specially dose who cain't fly, been run down by dose nasty pack huntahs! These ain't yer ordinary livestock killahs. Oh no, sawh. Seen a whole Dead Boy platoon slaughtah'd by 'em just a month ago. Ye go in dose killin' fields, ye best know what ye be doin' or ye gonna die. Dat's why we call 'em Reapahs."

- Rancher & Crop Trader, Bobby-Earl McCooter

The Field Reaper looks like an elemental nightmare. The head and upper torso is that of a hellspawned slug with a mane of long, flowing leaves billowing in the wind. Its long arms and oversized hands and fingers look like gnarled tree limbs that end in serrated sickles for fingertips. Wicked scythes to eviscerate and dismember its victims. An extra set of four grasshopper or preying mantis-like arms protrude from the chest to stab and carve up prey. Its massive, demonic chicken legs again conjure the image of a chitinous insect. The monster's slobbering mouth more reminiscent of a venus flytrap than the maw of a mammal. In short, the Field Reaper is a walking nightmare that is clearly not of this Earth. To make matters worse, this fast and agile predator gathers and hunts in packs with fellow Reapers that enjoy running down their prey in tall grass and open fields. The mere suggestion that Field Reapers have been spotted in the region is enough to put seasoned Wilderness Scouts and warriors on edge.

Standing upright, fully erect, the monster towers 7-9 feet (2.1 to 2.7 m) tall, but they prefer a crouched, hunched over position most of the time, lowering themselves to a height of 5-6 feet (1.5 to 1.8 m). Somehow that makes them seem all the more menacing when they rise up like a bear on two legs. When slowly stalking quarry, the Field Reaper likes to prowl on all fours, reducing its profile further and enabling it to hide in the tall grass and weeds it inhabits. Slowly inching closer and closer like a tiger, barely moving the tall grass as it slinks through it, until the beast is within 20-50 feet (6.1 to 15.2 m) and pounces. Many a hungry Field Reaper cannot wait to get closer than 100 feet (30.5 m) before sprinting at full speed towards their prey.

An attacking Field Reaper either charges in and attacks in one on one combat, or, more likely, runs past its prey, swiping and cleaving into the prey with its scythe-like talons as it races past. Then turns around and repeats. This hit and run tactic is especially effective when utilized by a pack of Field Reapers, as one after another stabs and slashes as they race by hacking at the target prey like a group of bullfighters working in tandem to slay their adversary. After their initial onslaught, the Field Reapers continue to work as a team by surrounding their intended prey. The monsters' long arms and bladed fingers outstretched to corral their prey in a circle of death. Surrounded, they give their victim no easy avenue to bowl its way to freedom without paying the dire consequence. Then, one approaches the prey and strikes while another faces the prey and tries to keep its attention and prevent it from trying to dash through their line or to counter the attacker. Then another and another strikes. One from behind. Another from the side. Each



time the trapped prey turns to face its current attacker, a different Field Reaper strikes from another angle. All the while the pack slowly keeps advancing, closing in and tightening the circle of death until several, if not all, can pounce at once. It is a horrifying spectacle to watch. And more horrifying to be the prey inside the circle as the Reapers close in for the kill.

It is such methodical and effective battle tactics that make some people believe the Field Reaper is more than a flesh and blood predator: a death demon. The truth is, the vicious creature is just one more monstrous animal from an alien world unleashed by the Rifts. Psi-Stalkers and Dog Boys confirm the Field Reaper is mortal, not supernatural. A truth that brings no one comfort and does not make the monster any less terrifying.

Once a pack of Field Reapers makes a kill, each member of the pack gets to share in the feast. Attacking the remains with a ravenous fury that is horrifying to watch, and often feeding while the prey is still alive. When nearly finished, the pack always make sure to leave enough scraps behind for their flying avian partners, even if they, themselves are still hungry. A single Field Reaper needs to eat the equivalent of one human (150-200 pounds/67 to 90 kg of meat) a day to sate its hunger. Which is why the pack works together to bring down larger prey as well as attack small groups of people. Field Reapers, like so many large, Mega-Damage predators, have little or no fear of people and see humans and D-Bees as prey to be hunted.

When large prey is scarce, the monster hunts smaller prey like pheasants, waterfowl, rabbits, prairie dogs, groundhogs, foxes, coyotes, wolves, goats, etc., but is not happy about it. People and their livestock are already on the animals list of large prey, but when large, wild animal prey is scarce, mainly in the winter months, people and their livestock – from chickens and sheep to pigs, cattle and horses – rise up to the top of the hunted list.

Frighteningly intelligent animals, the Field Reaper is known to kidnap children and animal pets, such as cats and dogs, to lure the child's parents and would-be rescuers into their clutches. The malevolent predator is able to mimic a child crying and whimpering as well as crying out "maaah ma." It uses such sounds to draw people closer and to trick hunters and travelers to enter the fields where the pack waits. The fiend is also smart enough to poke or visually threaten the actual captive child to cry out in pain or in terror, and call out for help. Even if the child shouts out a warning to stay away, most parents and rescuers will not heed the warning, and it draws them closer, just as the Field Reaper desires. It's odd, but for some reason, the monster does not usually harm children. Not even when hungry. A Field Reaper may slaughter an entire family, but it leaves children under the age of 12, alive. Other times, the monster keeps kidnaped children as pets and playthings for itself, before eventually growing bored of it, and finally releasing the child 2D6 weeks later.

Field Reapers get their name due to their scythe-like claws and stalk the grassy fields of the Great Plains of the New West where they hunt deer, elk, wild horses, bison, bears, Aegis Buffalo, Rhino-Buffalo, dinosaurs and other large animals, as well as the cattle and livestock of people, not to mention people themselves. In fact, Field Reapers seem to find hunting people armed with their machines and weapons to be an inviting challenge. Fields of tall crops like corn and wheat are also inviting to the hideous predators. Native Americans and Simvan Monster Riders find the pack hunting monsters to be a serious threat to their people and their animals, and kill them wherever they are encountered.

The smell of death attracts Field Reapers like vultures, making battlefields after a combat exchange a hunting ground for them. The beast happily carries off the dead and dying, or eats right there. The creature may also pick off medical personnel searching for survivors and tending to the injured in the field. However, if the dead are plentiful, the pack keeps its focus on them. Why fight if there is plenty of dead to feast upon? Though the monster hates forests and are seldom found as far East as Minnesota, the carnage of the *War at Tolkeen* was so great, that several packs of the Field Reapers found their way to the fallen kingdom. Probably by following CS troops, and the trail of dead they left in their wake, when the CS pursued Tolkeen combatants and refugees who tried to flee into the West as their kingdom fell. Some of these packs of monsters have remained in and around the region once claimed by Tolkeen, where they stalk the ruins and hunt CS troops and other people.

Soldiers and adventurers in the wilds of the New West, need to remember that Field Reapers usually hunt in packs. So if you see *one*, there are probably 2-12 others lurking nearby, waiting in ambush or quietly circling to surround you and your companions.

Field Reaper – Carnivore Predator

Also Known As: The Prairie Stalker and Plains Demon.

Alignment: Considered to be Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+8 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+9, M.A. 1D6, P.S. 1D6+19 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+15, P.E. 1D6+19, P.B. 1D4, Spd 2D6+50 running, or 40 mph (48 km) for up to 30 minutes. 80 mph (128 km) in a brief burst that lasts for 1D4 minutes. 20 mph (48 km) at a steady trot for up to five hours before needing to rest. Walking speed is 3-5 mph (4.8 to 8 km). Usually runs on its two legs like an ostrich, but slowly Prowls on all fours, hugging the ground and hiding in the tall weeds as it works its way close to unsuspecting prey. Also capable of impressive leaps.

M.D.C. by Location (Armored):

Head (large) – 1D6x10+60

*Large Arms (2, large) – 1D6+75 each

*Small, Praying Mantis Arms (4, chest) – 1D6+33 each

Legs (2, large, armored) – 1D4x10+80 each

Main Body – 1D6x10+90

* A single asterisk means a small and/or difficult target to strike and requires a Called Shot to hit. Even then the attacker is -3 to strike. Destroying one leg reduces speed by 30% and requires the monster to run using its one leg and two large arms. Destroying both legs reduces speed by 50% and requires the hideous beast to walk and run using its praying mantis arms. Lost limbs regenerate! See Natural Abilities for details.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Field Reaper has a main body of 1D6x10+20 S.D.C., 1D4x10+60 Hit Points and a Natural A.R. of 14. All other locations are S.D.C. at the same number as M.D.C., above, i.e. 1D4x10+60 M.D.C. = 1D4x10+60 S.D.C./Hit Points. The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D., so a bite that does 3D6 M.D. on Rifts Earth does 3D6 S.D.C. damage on S.D.C. worlds.

Horror Factor: 11 when encountering just one, 13 when dealing with 2-8, and H.F. 15 when facing a pack of 9 or more.

Size: 7-9 feet (2.1 to 2.7 m) tall standing erect, but usually walks and runs in crouched position with the head and body bent forward, but prowls on all fours in a nearly prone position 3 to 3

feet, 6 inches (0.9 to 1.1 m) tall. The large, main arms have a 5-6 foot (1.5 to 1.8 m) reach. Females are only slightly smaller than males (5%), but their coloration is softer and a bit more pastel.

Weight: 500-700 pounds (225 to 315 kg).

Average Life Span: 2D6+18 years. Field Reapers mate during the hottest parts of the year. Females give birth to 1D6 live larval young after 12 months of pregnancy. When the female(s) is ready to give birth, the pack makes several piles of carcasses, rotten flesh, bones, and bloody gore, for her to bury her voracious wormy larvae into these piles of rotting flesh. Pack members frequent these pungent piles to regurgitate fresh kills and meat onto the piles, and all members of the pack protect the larvae from scavengers and intruders. They also protect young up to one year old.

Like tadpoles, the larva grow limbs and start to morph into their bipedal form. The larvae are voracious eaters and grow into miniature versions of their adult form in 2D6+48 days. At this point the babies are already the size of a fox or medium-size dog – roughly three feet (0.9) long/tall. The little monsters begin to go into the fields alongside their mother or with her and pack members, but do not begin to hunt for another 3-4 months. The adults of the pack continuing to regurgitate and bring the babies hunks of food. By six months old most babies are hunting small animals – toads, lizards, and birds, as well as feeding on carrion they find.

By one year old, the juvenile animals are half the size of their parents, capable of bringing down a deer or human, and participating in hunts. Between ages 1-3 years, juveniles are allowed to hunt with the pack and on their own. When off to hunt and explore on their own, the young animal goes out in pairs or small packs of 1D4+2 members, all juveniles, and travel as far as 8 miles (12.8 km) from the adults of the main pack. The older the animals get, the more often they go off on their own to hunt and explore. In time, these hunting parties may form into their own pack when the group becomes adults.

Field Reapers reach full size in three years, but not sexual maturity until five years. Juveniles stay with their parents' pack for the first three years of their lives. Whether they are allowed to stay in the pack depends on the size of the pack and the aggressiveness of large, young males who may challenge the established Alpha and Beta males who rule the pack. If the Alpha or Beta feel they may be threatened by one of the young in the future, they will drive it away or kill it while it is still young and not as powerful. Similarly, if the pack is already large with 30 or more members, only 1D4x10% of the juveniles are selected to stay and the rest are driven away. Such outcasts usually hunt in pairs of siblings or with their fellow juvenile hunting partners for 1D4 years before either finding a small pack to accept them or form their own pack of mostly juveniles and young adults ages 3-7 years old. When juveniles are driven out of the larger pack of experienced adults, their old juvenile hunting buddies may willingly go with them. Leaving their parents and originating pack behind for new adventures. Half to two-thirds of these young packs do not survive.

Babies under one year old are a third the size of adults and have one third of the M.D.C., two attacks per melee, one third the bonuses (round down) and half the speed of an adult.

Juveniles ages 1-2 years are half the size of an adult. Those 3-4 years old are 90% the size of an adult. Both possess half the M.D.C. and skill percentage for Equivalent Skills, and Bonuses

(round up) as adults, but have four attacks per melee round, and the same speed as adults.

Young adults are 5-8 years old and possess all the M.D.C., attacks and bonuses of an adult. However, their lack of experience tends to make them more aggressive and reckless, and prone to taking foolish chances and tackling prey beyond their capabilities. They are also probably members of a small pack.

Females can give birth as often as every two years.

P.P.E.: 4D6

Disposition: A highly intelligent predator that loves to stalk and hunt. Field Reapers seem to take pride in their ability to hunt and kill as a pack and as individuals. They enjoy cat and mouse games and like to play with prey when they are not especially hungry. They seem to particularly enjoy invoking terror when hunting people, and sometimes engage in acts of torture before making the kill. Some survivors insist they saw the monster smile and laugh as it tormented and toyed with humanoid prey. Though people are a favorite prey of the Field Reaper, the creature seldom intentionally kills children under the age of 12, but will defend themselves if attacked by a child. Which may result in the injury or death of the young attacker.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 75%/70%, Detect Ambush 50%, Herding Cattle 55%, Land Navigation 90%, Prowl 65% (+15% in tall grass, weeds, fields of flowers, reeds and vegetation and at night), Swimming 50% (fair swimmers), Tailing 80% (+15% using birds to see), and Tracking 75% (+10% to track people and herd animals).

Natural Abilities: Track by scent alone 80% (+15% to track blood scent), can leap 15 feet (4.6 m) high and 20 feet (6.1 m) across, double with a running start, excellent agility, thick leathery hide and armor plated legs, and suffer no penalties in darkness and feel vibrations in the ground on par with humans. Bio-Regenerates at a rate of 2D6+12 M.D.C. per 24 hours and can completely regrow lost hands and arms within 1D6+10 days, legs in 2D6+16 days and teeth in 1D6 days.

Bird's Eye Panoramic Vision. A unique psionic Remote Viewing via certain species of birds (special): Though most people don't realize it, Field Reapers are blind! They have no eyes. The animal hunts using their keen senses of hearing and smell plus psionic sensing abilities. More mysterious is the animal's ability to bond with a number of birds, control them and see through their eyes and hear through their ears!

The Field Reaper has no eyes with which to see, but in addition to the beast's other keen senses (is able to smell through receptors in its mouth), it has the bizarre ability to establish a psionic (some would say supernatural) connection with certain types of scavenging birds, including *blackbirds*, *ravens*, *crows*, *buzzards*, *vultures* and *seagulls*. Once the connection is made, the monster sees through their eyes! This is a sort of Remote Viewing by way of a symbiotic connection to other animals. Each Field Reaper has its own flock of avians to help it see, hunt, and elude danger during daylight hours. This is one reason the monster seems always able to elude those who hunt it.

Through the eyes of these birds, and only the birds it is linked with, the Field Reaper can see the surrounding area and anything that its bird scouts see and hear. Range of Control and Sensory Transmission: Five miles (8 km). Range of Bird's Vision: One mile (1.6 km) for blackbirds, ravens and crows, which are oriented to notice food and movement. Two miles (3.2 km) for buzzards and vultures which are oriented to notice food, carrion, injured and dying animals as well as movement.

Food for Field Reapers include, medium to large animals and humanoids. Number of Birds: Each Field Reaper is connected to 1D6+6 blackbirds or ravens or crows, or a combination of all three, AND 1D6+1 buzzards or vultures. Half that number of juveniles. None for babies.

These birds are always nearby (within a mile/1.6 km radius) at all times, and always seem to know what their monstrous master wants of them via some sort of empathic or telepathic link. These birds regard its specific Field Reaper to be, a) part of its flock, and b) a source of food. As a result, the birds stay near the creature and happily take wing whenever the monster desires them to keep watch, scout for danger or to find carrion or prey.

The main purpose of the birds is to function as the monster's eyes and as an extension of their ears. Everything the birds sees and hears, the Field Reaper sees and hears. The birds are under the Field Reaper's subtle mind control, making them a sort of extension of the monster's own sensory system. They are compelled to seek out, watch and tail the type of prey the monster hunts, including people and signs of people activity such as smoke, the sounds and sights of vehicles and machinery, etc., as well as packs and herds of animals, animals in distress, and so on. The birds also alert the monster to approaching danger, especially caravans and bands of people and predators.

When the Field Reaper is on the hunt, buzzards and vultures circle high up in the sky to keep an eye on a herd or other targeted prey, continually transmitting what they see. The smaller blackbirds, ravens and crows are sent in for a closer look around. Flying in to perch in trees, shrubs, on reeds, tall grass, plants and parked vehicles or even landing on the ground to watch the target prey and transmit everything they see and hear to their specific Field Reaper. And since they are "just birds," the birds can land just yards/meters away to monitor a target animal, herd or group of people's every move without the prey knowing it.

When the Field Reaper needs or wants to share what it sees via its birds with other members of its pack or hunting group, it does so via *Group Trance* as they slowly close in on their target. While in a Group Trance the pack members' speed, number of attacks and bonuses are half (round down), so the shared information is always turned off as they get close. Besides, each hunter has its own set of birds to be their eyes on the target prey.

All the birds do is fly and observe. They *never* attack. Moreover, when not needed, they are allowed to fly free, mate and eat on their own. The link between them and the Field Reaper is broken when the monster is slain or it releases its hold on them. **Note**: Ravens can fly as fast as 50 mph (80 km) and can travel as much as 500 miles (800 km) in a day. Birds sleep at night and have poor nightvision (a little worse than humans), so they are not available nor helpful at night. Wake with the rising sun and go to sleep when light of the sun completely vanishes about an hour after it sets.

Changing Body Colors and Temperature to Match Environment (special): The Field Reaper's upper body is shades of tan and light to medium green, its leafy mane, a darker green or dark brown. Its arms green at the shoulders but transitioning into tan and medium brown, with brown hands and dark brown sickle claws. The underbelly is a golden color on males and a pale green on females. The chitin of its legs are a grayish brown or a blend of tan and green. The colors of its body adjust and change with the seasons to match the predominant colors of

its grassy environment. Thus, in spring the beast may be more greens and medium browns, in the hot summers and dry autumn it changes to shades of gold, tan, brown and gray with little or no green. In the winter, body colors are more muted shades of tan, browns and grays.

Likewise, the animal's body temperature usually matches air temperature of the natural fields around them, so they do not show up on thermal imagers or infrared. They can be seen by passive nightvision scopes, and only register on motion detectors when they are upright, moving or running. When prowling on all fours, low to the ground, at a snail's pace, they are invisible to motion detectors. Blending into the fields around them, waiting to ambush prey.

Double-Jointed (special): In addition to double-jointed limbs, the Field Reaper possesses reversible spine morphology that enables the monster to face forward or twist its body 180 degrees to attack adversaries from the side and behind it, even as it moves. It can run forward while looking backward, and switch back and forth between opponents in front and behind it, splitting its attacks between them. Combined with the panoramic Remote Viewing capabilities of its bird vision, and the nightmare can see everything around it for up to a mile (1.6 km) when the birds are high in the sky. Forget about surprise attacks.

Giant Petal Maw (special): The monster's massive pseudo-head splits open to create a huge maw lined with sharp teeth the size of a man's thumb, reminiscent to shark teeth. Its massive maw seems to unzip and opens like flower petals to become large enough to bite off a man's arm up to the shoulder, a leg up to the hip, or engulf a man's head and entire upper torso! Can swallow wolf-sized animals whole and bite a deer in half!

Praying Mantis Arms (4; special): Two pairs of praying mantis-like arms are located on each side of the chest. The forearm section can stab and slash or be used to grab and hold prey. Barbs line the inside of the arm sections that hold prey, stabbing into their victims to hold them tight and making escape difficult. The arms are also used to torture and toy with prey and carve up the bodies of dead carcasses. Dead prey and body parts of large animals may be carried by these arms as well.

When the two massive legs are destroyed or damaged beyond use the monster chops or tears them from its lower torso, and the four mantis arms provide a means for the abomination to scurry away at half its normal speed. Lost legs regenerate within 2D6+16 days.

Waste (special): Field Reaper poop is a rich fertilizer that helps plants such as the tall grasses, weeds, crops and reeds of the Great Plains grow. Keeping the hunting grounds where they hunt lush and full. Which in turn, attracts grazing and all kinds of animals.

Also see Psionics, below.

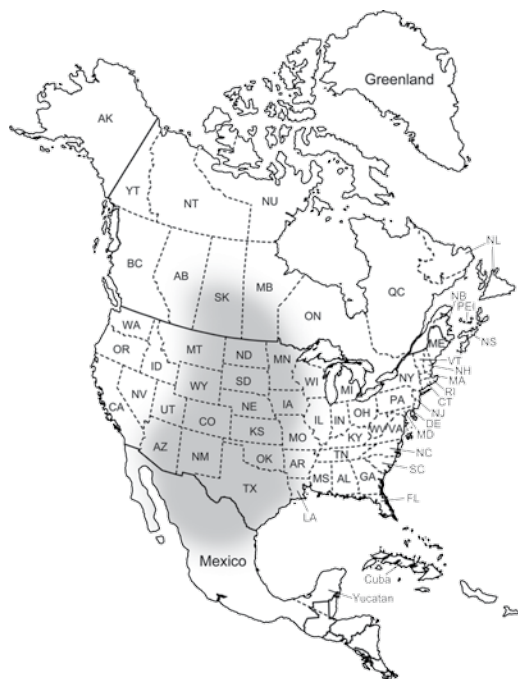
Attacks per Melee: Alpha Male (only): 6. Adult: 5 attacks. Juvenile: 4 attacks. Babies: 2 attacks.

Mega-Damage: Fights tooth and claw with its many arms and massive maw that unzips and opens like flower petals. It is large enough to bite off an arm up to the shoulder, a leg up to the hip, or engulf a man's entire upper body. Can swallow wolf-sized and smaller prey whole.

Nipping/Warning or Toying Bite – 1D4x10 S.D.C. or 1D4 M.D.

Bite, Full Strength – 3D6 M.D.

Large Arm, Punch or Elbow (Blunt) – 2D6 M.D.



Large Arm, Power Punch (Blunt) – 4D6 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks.

Large Arm, Claw Strike – 4D6 M.D.

Large Arm, Claw Strike Power Punch – 1D4x10+4 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks.

Small Arm, Stab/Slash – 2D6 M.D.

Small Arm, Praying Mantis Scissor Hold – 2D6+3 M.D. and requires a combined P.S. of 50 or Supernatural P.S. of 28 to pull free of the hold. Prey may push and squirm loose, but it takes a full melee round (15 seconds) and they suffer an additional 2D6+3 M.D. doing so. While held, the victim is pushed down by the beast and held away from its belly, making fighting difficult. Victims are -5 on Perception Rolls, have no initiative, cannot dodge, and are -5 on all other combat maneuvers (strike, parry, disarm, etc.). **Note:** The TWO small arms holding prey cannot be used in combat while it is holding prey in its grip. It must let go to continue to fight with it.

Head Butt/Swat, Restrained – 1D4 M.D.

Head Butt, Full Strength – 2D4 M.D.

Stomp (front legs) – 2D6 M.D., but effective only against prey four feet (1.2 m) tall and smaller.

Cannot Kick.

Pouncing Attack (special): Counts as two attacks. The monster can lunge out of the tall grass or run at prey and leap to pounce on top of it on all fours. It has a 75% likelihood of knocking down humanoid prey up to 10 feet (3 m) tall and weighing up to 1,200 pounds (540 kg), and landing on top of them. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and one melee attack as well as suffer 1D6 M.D. from the impact, and are vulnerable to subsequent biting and claw attacks. Even cyborgs take damage from a pounce attack and characters inside body armor or power armor suffer 1D6 S.D.C./Hit Point damage from the jolting impact, fall and weight on top of them.

Electric Blast (special): See Electro-Kinesis under Psionics.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): Cannot be blinded as the animal has no eyes and is already blind. Often hunts during the night because it has the advantage over most

prey in darkness. However, because of its birds-linked Remote Viewing, it can see from many vantage points and is just as deadly in the daylight. +2 on Perception Rolls regarding recognizing prey and approaching danger, +1 on initiative, +2 to strike and disarm, +4 to parry, +3 to dodge, resistant to mind control (+2 to save vs magic charms, mind control and illusions), and needs only a 10 or better to save vs psionic attacks, +4 to save vs Horror Factor.

Vulnerabilities: All M.D. weapons and attacks do damage. Dislikes fire and lightning even though it possesses Electro-Kinesis powers.

Dislikes water deeper than five feet (1.5 m) and avoids it whenever possible, but is a fair swimmer (50%).

Unafraid of people and likes to hunt them and other predators, which can get even a pack of Field Reapers into trouble when they take on more than they can handle or underestimate their opponent.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Considered to be a Master Psychic with innate psychic abilities and save vs psionics with a 10 or higher. **I.S.P.:** 1D6x10+88.

Possesses a wide range of psychic abilities: Bio-Regeneration (special, restores 1D6 M.D.C. for 20 I.S.P., double at ley lines), Deaden Senses (4), Detect Psionics (6), * Electro-Kinesis (varies), Empathy (4), Meditation (0), Mind Block (4), Group Trance (15), Presence Sense (4), Sense Dimensional Anomalies (4), Sense Magic (3), and Stop Bleeding (4). Plus Remote Viewing through birds as described under *Natural Abilities* at no I.S.P. cost.

* **A Note about Electro-Kinesis:** Electrical attacks by the Field Reaper can only be use unleashed by touch or a maximum distance of 15 feet (4.6 m).

Habitat: The grasslands of the Great Plains. The Field Reapers' favorite habitats are prairies and plains of tall grass, weeds, and flowers. They also like farmland with fields of crops, meadows and the tall reeds of marshlands, though they don't much care for water. Thus, Field Reapers stalk the plains of Northern Mexico, Texas, New Mexico, the American Southwest, and north into the plains states of Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado, Nebraska, Wyoming, Montana, the Dakotas and into lower Canada and the Great Plains of southern Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. They do not like forests, and the denser the forest the less they like it. Nor does the animal like extremely cold environments or arctic conditions.

Enemies: Large predators, animals that hunt in packs like the Grigleapers and Raptors, Leatherwings and people. Perhaps because they stalk the same grassy plains and are rival predators, *Eeracrech* and *Field Reapers* regard each other as natural enemies. If one thinks it has an advantage over the other, it will attack. Otherwise, the Field Reaper sees most life forms as prey to be hunted and devoured, including people. A few exceptions are giant worms, most large insects, Worm Wraiths and Fennodi. The monster is not an insectivore nor plant eater.

Field Reapers seem to have a particular disdain for *Simvan Monster Riders*, who cannot control this animal (nor can Psi-Stalkers or Psi-Druids), and the monster is relentless in hunting them. The Field Reaper also targets and attacks the Simvan's riding animals, sometimes eating them, other times killing them for the pleasure of it or to harass the Simvan. The monster treats *Native Americans* in a similar fashion, though the beast is less

fastidious and extreme about it. That probably has to do with the fact that Native Americans consider Field Reapers to be dangerous, evil spirits to be driven away or hunted down and destroyed. So the monsters' targeting of both may be instances of the Field Reaper considering them to be enemies or rivals and competitors as they all live in the same region, gather in large packs/tribes, and hunt many of the same animals. **Note:** Field Reapers cannot be tamed nor controlled by Simvan, Psi-Stalkers or Psi-Druids, and are resistant to mind control and psionics.

Allies: Their own species only. However, rival packs of Field Reapers sometimes fight and try to chase the other away, especially when prey is scarce or when one pack tries to steal some of the other pack's females.

Though not allies, Field Reapers generally ignore Worm Wraiths, Oborus-Slitherers, Devil Unicorns, Psi-Stalkers, Fennodi and other plant people, unless they are attacked by them. Shifters are often attracted to these horrid beasts as familiars. However, what most do not realize is that having one under his command is dangerous but manageable. It is when the Shifter tries to command two or more that the mage is pressing his luck. All Field Reapers controlled by a Shifter are +1 to save in the battle of wills for each Field Reaper kept by the Shifter; two Reapers means each is +2 to save, three means each beast is +3 to save, and so on. And the beasts get an extra attempt to break free of the Shifter's control every week!

Typical Size of Field Reaper Packs: Percentile numbers are presented for random determination of the pack size, or pick one.

01-20% Tiny Pack or Hunting Party: 1D4+2

21-50% Small Pack: 2D4+5

51-70% Medium Pack: 4D4+10

71-80% Large Pack: 3D6+20

81-90% Very Large Pack (rare): 1D4x10+30

91-100% Huge Pack with Young (rare): 5D6+20 adults, 1D6x10+20 juveniles, and 4D6+6 babies!

Note: Most Field Reaper packs are nomadic, following the prey. That said, many settle into one particular area for an entire spring, summer or winter, and when prey is plentiful enough, sometimes for a year to several years in the same general location. Tiny, small and medium packs claim a 30 mile (48 km) area as their hunting territory, 50 miles (80 km) for large packs, 100 miles (160 km) for a huge pack. However, if prey is plentiful, that territory can be reduced by half.

Hunting Party: A Field Reaper hunting party may range in size from 3-6 members to 8-12 members, and are often part of larger pack.

Value: None per se, though their hard, boney, serrated, finger blades and the chitinous, pointed mantis-like forelimbs are often used to make saws, hatchets, sickles, picks and hoes by wilderness folk. Such weapons sell for 4D6x10 credits. Many Necromancers are willing to pay 1D4x1,000 credits for the large hands and legs of the Field Reaper, and 1D6x1,000+500 credits for the head.

Note: This is a new creature appearing for the very first time. Inspired by the art and ideas of Charles "Chuck" Walton Jr.

Frilled Swamp Runner Dinosaur

By Todd Yoho and Kevin Siembieda

Frilled Swamp Runners are so ugly that they are sometimes mistaken for small undead dinosaurs or emaciated, baby Raptors. This confusion arises from the thin, bony appearance of the body, pronounced ribs and the skeletal look of its head and body. Swamp Runners are small, lean, and fast bipeds that thrive in Dinosaur Swamp.

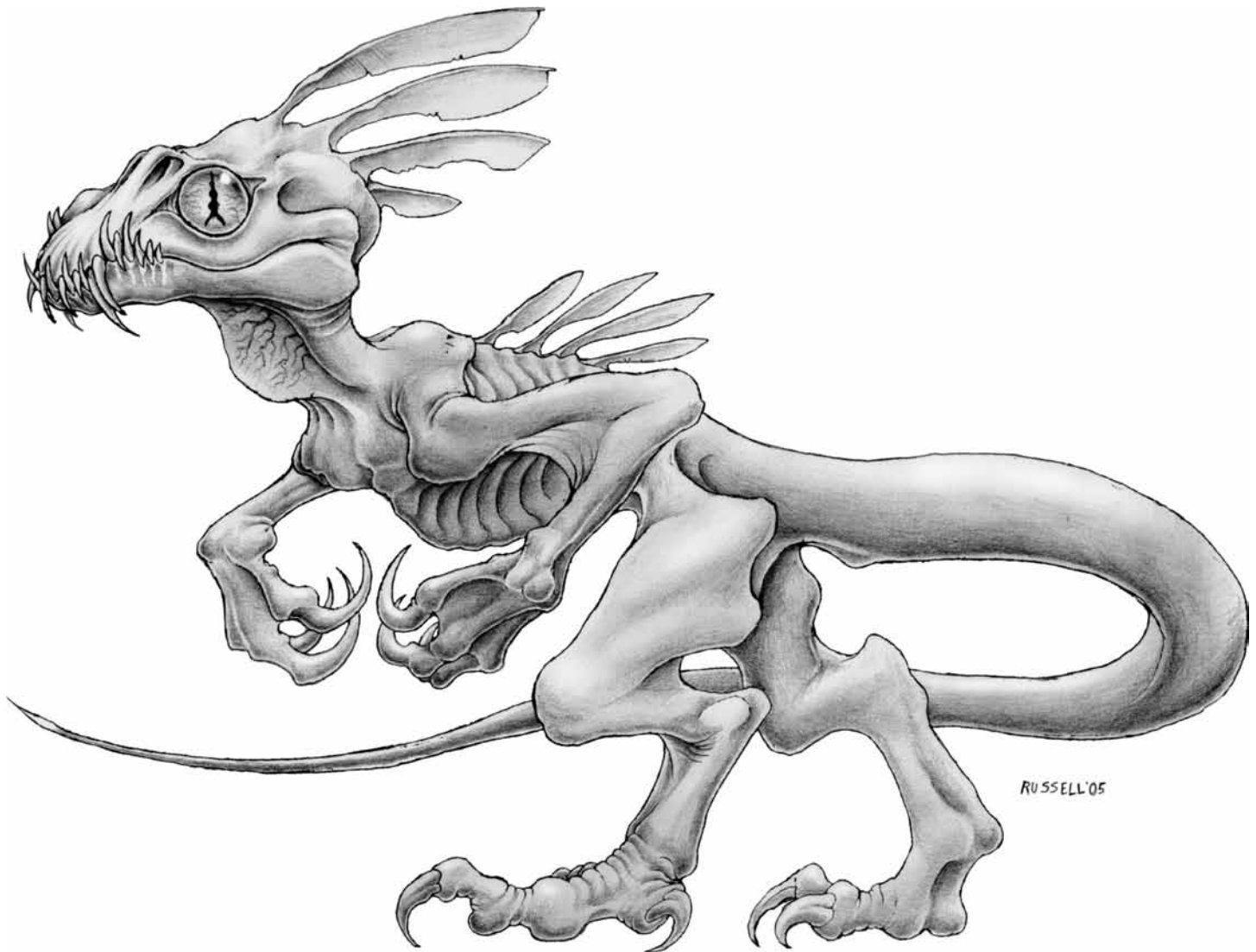
Omnivores, the little fellas can eat just about anything and have found garbage discarded by humans and D-Bees to be a gold mine of easy pickings. Consequently, they have become a pest at villages, towns and cities, like *Char*, where the Frilled Swamp Runner scurry thought the streets, alleys and back lots stealing scraps from garbage cans. This wouldn't be so bad, except they are messy and destructive creatures that tip over garbage cans, rip apart garbage bags and strewn rubbish all over. They have gotten so bold, the fast, agile animals sneak into backyards and porches and even go inside vehicles and homes in search of food. Leave a door or a window open and one or more Runners may enter to steal the dog's food and any food left out. They rip up boxes and packages, tear up pillows and blankets, or steal them for nests, and happily gobble up house pets from hamsters and birds to house cats and dogs.

In villages and farms the beasts happily raid chicken coops to steal the eggs and eat a couple of hens, gobbling up chicks, ducklings, and other baby animals or small pets, drink milk directly from the cow's udders, scatter grain and vegetables, defecate in grain bins, tear open boxes and throw around the contents looking for edibles, frighten and chase livestock for fun, and startle and scare cattle and people. They also eat pests like mice, rats and snakes, but their other antics and wild behavior negates this potential benefit.

The small dinosaurs are also the bane of fishermen and hunters, because they will sneak into camp and trying to steal part of their catch. In the case of larger game animals like deer, the Frilled Swamp Runners either sneak into the hunter's camp and quietly feed on the kill until seen and chased away, or a pack may charge in like wild hyenas or jackals, attacking the carcass and tearing hunks and pieces out of it, and vanishing back into the woods before the hunter or Wilderness Scout can stop them. Such a raid is especially frustrating if the huntsman had intended to skin and sell the animal's pelt, which is ruined by such frenzied hit and run attacks.

In the wild, they are known to sneak into camps to rifle through backpacks and supplies in search of food, and sometimes steal pocket mirrors, small knives and jewelry, as they like small shiny and sparkly objects. Other times a pack runs and hops through camp or through a line of travelers, snatching anything that looks edible right out of people's hands and mouths. Frilled Swamp Runners do not generally attack and kill people, but as noted, they are infamous for stealing food right out of a person's hand, snatch lunch pails, knock children over, or snatch a bag or backpack their keen sense of smell tells them contains food, particularly meat.

More confident and brazen in numbers, a pair or a small pack of 2D4+2 Frilled Swamp Runners typically strike using snatch and grab tactics. Suddenly racing out from the shadows to steal a sandwich or chicken leg right out of an adventurer's hand. That said, they also eat fresh carrion (less than 24 hours dead), including the



remains of people. An unsecured battlefield or scene of a murder may be compromised by a small pack of Frilled Swamp Runners who see an opportunity for an easy meal. Anyone bringing the remains of a dead comrade home to his family need to be vigilant of Swamp Runners who might try to feast upon the dead body. The beasts might also grab and run off with a severed limb, not good news if the victim had hope to see the limb reattached via magic or medical science.

Even a pack of Frilled Swamp Runners seldom attack humanoids, the only exception being when they feel cornered or one of their own has been captured. If they cannot immediately rescue a captured pack member, the group will either come back later or tail its captor and attempt to break their pack mate free. Failing such a rescue, the pack will lash out by destroying whatever they can and shrieking “free, free, free” and “give us (followed by a noise that doesn’t sound like a name or a word).” These acts of sabotage are likely to continue for 1D4+3 days minium, until their comrade is finally released, slain or the rest of the clan is slaughtered or finally gives up. However, a group of Frilled Swamp Runners may pursue a captor as far as 200 miles (320 km) before relenting.

Frighteningly intelligent, Frilled Swamp Runners are another dinosaur-like animal that can learn to understand and parrot human language. They speak in single words or short phrases and are masters of mimicry. Thus, they can be amusing by aping human

gestures and mimicking the walk or habits of the local farmer or constable, or add to the overall annoyance by seeming to insult the person they just robbed by aping his behavior or shouting “Thank you,” or “Mine. Mine. Mine.” In this regard, they are rather like chimpanzees, and like chimps, possess a great capacity for humor and playfulness. Only their idea of fun is at the expense of people and their property. Even Frilled Swamp Runners at play can be annoying or destructive, and the small M.D.C. creatures can be dangerous when threatened or hungry.

The normal language of the Frilled Swamp Runners is a squirrel-like chatter and chirps, so when they talk it is in a high pitched voice and words are often mixed in with clicks and chatter. Common words are “food,” “feed me,” “yummy,” “hungry,” “mine,” “give,” “play,” “run,” “friend,” “good,” “bad,” “look out,” “danger,” “safe,” and people’s names. Names are usually those of locals whom the creature hears often or a name or word that strikes the little monster’s fancy.

Frilled Swamp Runners who adopt a family, tribe or group of adventurers may be destructive and troublesome, but they also eat rats, mice, snakes and other vermin, screech or cry out to warn them of danger, may accost an intruder especially if the beasts thinks he’s after their food, and may even attack someone who threatens “their humans.” In fact, Swamp Runners are especially protective of children under the age of 10 and sometimes accept a family pet as part of their own pack. Still, none of this is worth

having one or more of the creatures around. And where there is one, there are likely to be 1D6 others. Frilled Swamp Runners tend to gather in small family clans of 2D4, and never more than 10. Whenever a group grows larger than 10 animals, a beta male or female breaks off with 1D4 other members to start their own small pack.

Frilled Swamp Runner – Omnivore Dinosaur

Alignment: Animal, generally considered Anarchist.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+8 (high animal intelligence and child-like playfulness), M.E. 1D6+10, M.A. 1D6+15, P.S. 1D6+10 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+14, P.E. 1D6+17 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6, Spd 1D6+54 running, or 40 mph (64 km) for up to 30 minutes. 50 mph (8 km) in a short burst that lasts one minute. 12-15 mph (19.2 to 24 km) at a steady trot for up to five hours. 5-6 mph (8 to 9.6 km) walking.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head – 50

*Frilled Knives (feathers; 6-10) – 3 each

*Forearms (2) – 15 each

*Clawed Hands (2) – 10 each

Legs (2) – 40 each

*Clawed Feet (2) – 15 each

*Tail – 30

Main Body – 1D6+46

* A single asterisk indicates a small and/or difficult target to strike. It may be protected by armor plating, boney ridges, or just located in an a place that is hard to target. The shooter or attacker must make a “Called Shot” to hit at a penalty of -5 to strike.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Frilled Swamp Runner has 3D6+20 S.D.C., 1D6+20 Hit Points, and a Natural A.R. of 9. The damage inflicted by the creature’s bite and other attacks does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D.

Horror Factor: 9, only because they are ugly.

Size: 3-3.6 feet (0.9 to 1 m) tall from head to toe. The prehensile tail is 4-6 feet (1.2 to 1.8 m) long.

Weight: 45-60 pounds (20 to 27 kg).

Average Life Span: 3D6+30 years, sometimes longer. A mated pair may stay together for years. The animal lays a clutch or 1D6+5 eggs every spring and care for the young like birds until they are two months old and can keep up with their parents. They reach full size within 12 months but do not reach sexual maturity until three years of age, and cannot cast magic until that age. Less than half the young reach full maturity. The majority falling victim to Carnosuchids, Deevil Eels, Dragon Fish, young Devil Kraken, Raptors and a wide range of predators as well as people who consider them to be dangerous pests and actively exterminate them.

P.P.E.: 4D6+19

Disposition: Though minor M.D.C. creatures, the rambunctious Frilled Swamp Runners are anxious and skittish animals easily startled and chased away by grandmother with a broom or a hollering Farmer Brown. When startled or when they know they face a larger, more dangerous foe, they run away. Otherwise, they are playful, feisty little thieves and hunters of rodents, birds, snakes, lizards, eggs of all kind, amphibians and fish. They also eat fresh carrion, ripe fruit, pies, processed food, and the occasional insect. The animal is affectionate and protective toward their mate, young, pack mates and adopted human-oid families.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climbing 20%/5%, Dowsing 90%, Herding Cattle 35%, Identify Plants & Fruit 90%, Land Navigation 95%, Prowl 45%, Tailing 60%, and Track Animal 50% by sight alone (see Natural abilities).

Natural Abilities: Swift and agile, Frilled Swamp Runners can maintain a top speed of 35 mph (56 km) for up to two hours without pause! They can also leap six feet (1.8 m) high and 10 feet (3 m) across. Swamp Runners cannot climb trees or swim even though their habitat is swamps and marshland, but they can use an innate magical ability to run across the surface of water! (See Magic for details.) Keen day vision, a good sense of hearing and a keen sense of smell when it comes to sniffing out food 65% (i.e., human processed food, meat, ripe fruit, pies and pastries, animal carcasses, prey animals, garbage and similar) up to 3,000 feet (914 m) away (four times that distance if carried on the wind). Bio-Regenerates lost M.D.C. at a rate of 1D6+1 per 24 hour period and can regenerate a lost tail, finger, or toe in a month. Small Frilled Knives regrow in a week, large in two weeks.

Also see magic abilities.

Speech (special): The Frilled Swamp Runner can learn to laugh and speak simple words and phrases much like a parrot, only with an understanding of what it is saying. The voice sounds shrill and squeaky. Only single words and short phrases are spoken. The creature does not recognize symbols or letters, though as mimics they may pretend to read (but really are relying on memory or their sense of smell).

Frilled Knife Quills (special): Just as a porcupine can release its quills, so can a Frilled Swamp Runner pluck one of its 1D4+6 feather-like quills; 3-5 on the head, and 3-5 on the back. The Frilled Knife Quill can be used as a tool to cut or pry, or a weapon to be thrown!

Attacks per Melee: Five. or two by magic spell. The casting of a magic spell counts as two attacks.

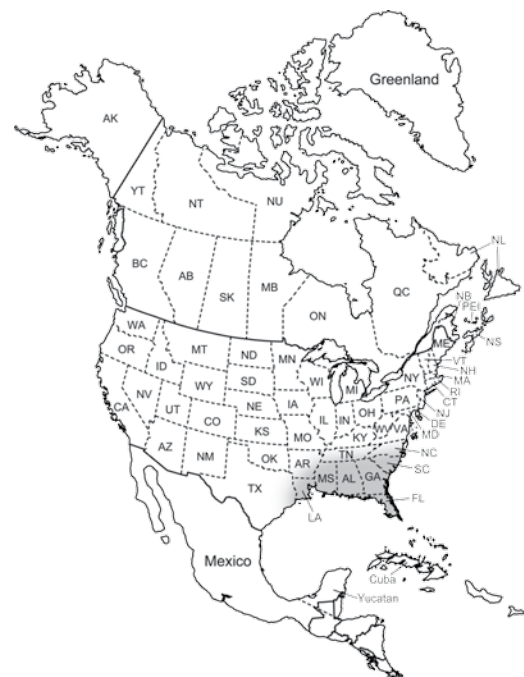
Mega-Damage: Fight tooth and claw or prehensile tail and magic.

Bite, Restrained – 5D6 S.D.C.

Bite, Full Strength – 1D8 M.D.

Punch/Slap/Tail Strike (Blunt), Restrained – 2D6 S.D.C.

Punch/Slap/Tail Strike (Blunt), Full Strength – 1D4 M.D.



Claw Strike, Hand – 1D6 M.D.

Claw Strike, Foot – 2D4+1 M.D.

Leap Kick (Blunt, without claws) – 4D6 S.D.C.

Leap Kick, Claws – 2D4+3 M.D., plus a 01-35% chance of knocking down human-sized targets. Victims of knockdown lose initiative and one attack.

Frilled Knife (thrown) – 1D4 M.D. if small (back) and 1D6 M.D. if large (head Quill) and are +2 to strike when thrown.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 to Perception Rolls, +2 on initiative, +3 to strike with bites, claws or tail, +4 to disarm (roll under disarm to snatch food out of a person's hand, mouth, or backpack, or cause them to drop it so it can grab the item with its next melee action), +1 to parry, +4 to dodge, +4 to pull punch, +3 to roll with impact, +2 to save vs Horror Factor, +3 to save vs poison, +1 to save vs magic and possession.

Vulnerabilities: Reckless raids and thievery of food can get the animal captured or killed.

Fears fire! Small fire like a handheld burning torch has a Horror Factor of 10. A bonfire an H.F. of 13. A larger fire, wall of fire, someone consumed in an aura of fire, has an H.F. of 16, and all should be sufficient to keep the monster at bay when waved in its face. Ordinary S.D.C. fire does no damage but the Frilled Swamp Runner is still afraid of it. M.D. fire inflicts normal damage.

Cannot swim and are easily drowned even in shallow water no deeper than a few feet (one meter); dies within 1D4+1 minutes when held underwater. Despite that, these bold and playful creatures live and hunt along marshlands and possess the magical ability to run across water. They are also poor climbers and cannot climb trees, but leap and scramble through foliage like nimble lizards.

Magic: Animals do not usually possess magic or spell casting abilities, but the Frilled Swamp Runner is a rare exception. Whether they actually cast spells or simply possess spell-like magical abilities is unclear. Abilities are limited, but it can perform any of the following by spending its reserve of P.P.E. (4D6+19 points). All spells are equal to a first level practitioner of magic.

P.P.E.: 4D6+19.

Cleanse (6), Climb (3), Concealment (6), Death Trance (1), Energy Bolt (5 P.P.E.; fired from the hand or eyes and inflicts 4D6 S.D.C. damage per blast), Light Healing (6), and Manipulate Objects (2+).

Run on Water (special, costs one P.P.E.): Frilled Swamp Runners possess the apparent magical ability to run, walk and stand on the surface of water, a feat they do as naturally as walking on dry ground. Due to their fear and dislike of water, they seldom stand on water for more than 1D4 seconds, before continuing to run, and typically run across it as fast as they can. A feat that help earn them their name. **Range:** Self only; carry young. **Duration:** A maximum of 30 minutes per spell casting. **P.P.E. Cost:** One point.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: The marshland and the meadows and forests around them, lakes and slow moving rivers throughout Dinosaur Swamp/Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

Enemies: People and other predators, particularly various species of Raptors. For reasons unknown, the animal does like and tends to avoid evil beings. The animal sometimes stows away on boats and ships. Most fishermen, Horune Pirates and Splurgorth Slavers hate these runts.

Allies: Namely other Frilled Swamp Runners. The animal may run and play with Scampers, monkeys (there are a lot of monkeys in Dinosaur Swamp), Faerie Folk, domesticated and wild dogs, and sometimes human and D-Bee children as well as kind adventurers who toss them scraps. Be warned, these pests quickly warm up to people who feed them. That spells trouble, because the creatures keep coming around begging for food and are likely to start stealing food and shiny objects. Frilled Swamp Runners may be used as Familiars by Shifters and other practitioners of magic, but seldom by Psi-Druids.

Value: None. Dinosaur Swamp Barbarians, Native Americans and Swamp Stompers have all tried to domesticate the ugly little buggers with varying results. Ultimately, Frilled Swamp Runners are too mischievous, playful, selfish, and destructive to make reliable pets or trained animals. There is not much meat on their bones to eat, and what is there is like shoe leather.

Note: Originally appeared in **Rifts® World Book 27: Adventures in Dinosaur Swamp™**, page 37.

Frost Panthera-Tereon

By Charles Walton Jr. and Kevin Siembieda

This big cat is a white-furred Panthera-Tereon that is larger and bulkier than the more common Panthera-Tereon in the South. This is due, in part, to its heavy muscle mass, mane and thick fur coat. The black-eyed Frost Panthera-Tereon is built more like a lynx with wide, furred paws and retractable black talons. They are social pack hunters that reside in prides like Earth African lions and blend in with the arctic snow and ice pack. This camouflage is due in part to the fur color, but these Snow Lions also have the added advantage of fur that shifts and changes color, like a chameleon or octopus, to completely blend in against a background of snow and ice.

Unlike their more common and solitary Panthera-Tereon cousin, Frost Panthera rely heavily on their pride to bring down large animals like caribou, elk, moose, buffalo, polar bears and megafauna like the Aegis Buffalo, mammoth elephants, dinosaurs and other large prey. The pride also protects the young and any member of the pride that is injured. Protecting and caring for the members of the pride keeps the group strong and improves the survival of them all.

Unlike most feline species, Frost Panthera-Tereon can be domesticated and trained, and make reliable and loyal war mounts, hunting animals, guard animals and companions. These alien felines serve as roaming guardians and riding animals for *Blucies*, *Mastadonoids*, *Inuit*, *Wild Psi-Stalkers* in the North, and other D-Bees. Though Sasquatch never ride Snow Lions, they sometimes use them as companions/pets. Frost Panthera-Tereons are also captured and pitted against other animals or combatants in gladiatorial combat in the arena on Atlantis and elsewhere, as well as by some northern Simvan clans.

Frost Panthera-Tereon – Carnivore Predator

Also Known As: Frost Lion, Snow Lion and Frost Panther.

Alignment: Considered to be Anarchist or Aberrant evil, but if caught as a cub and raised properly can be a loyal and scrupulous companion.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+7 (high animal intelligence and is a cunning pack hunting predator), M.E. 1D4+18, M.A. 1D6+12,

P.S. 2D4+22 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+18, P.E. 1D6+17, P.B. 1D6+16, Spd 1D6+29 running, or 22 mph (35 km). This speed can be maintained for an hour before needing to rest or slow down. 50 mph (80 km) in a short burst lasting 1D4+1 minutes. 8-12 mph at a steady trot for up to six hours. The Frost Panthera-Tereon suffers no penalties for running through snow or across ice.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Head – 1D4x10+80

*Tail – 15

*Legs (4) – 80 each

Main Body – 1D4x10+130

* A single asterisk indicates a small and/or difficult target to strike. The attacker must make a “Called Shot” to hit but still suffers a penalty of -3 to strike.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Frost Panthera-Tereon has a main body of 1D6x10+20 S.D.C., 1D6x10+40 Hit Points, and a Natural A.R. of 10. All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number listed above (80 M.D.C. = 80 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D. (i.e. 2D6 M.D. = 2D6 S.D.C.).

Horror Factor: 14

Size: 12-15 feet (3.7 to 4.6 m) long, plus a 7 foot (2.1 m) long tail. Stands 6-7 feet tall (1.8 to 2.1 m) at the shoulders.

Weight: Males: 2,000 to 2,200 pounds (900 to 990 kg), while females average 1,500-1,800 pounds (675 to 810 kg), and some exceptionally rare specimens have been alleged to be as large 3,000 pounds (1,350 kg). The lion’s thick, shaggy fur makes them look larger and heavier than they really are.

Average Life Span: 30-40 years; give birth to litters of 1D4, though typically only 1-2 cubs survive to adulthood due to the harsh climate, predators and fur traders. The highest cause of cub mortality (infanticide) are rival packs and new alphas that defeat and usurp the pride’s male and kill the cubs so that the new alpha passes on his own progeny. Young reach full size and maturity in four years.

P.P.E.: 1D6x10

Disposition: Inquisitive, playful, gentle, and protective of its mate, young and pride members. Enjoys hiding and games of hide and seek, cat and mouse, stalking, pouncing and wrestling. Domesticated Frost Lions show these same traits to their humanoid masters. These big cats like to stalk and hunt. They are aggressive and bold predators when hunting prey, which includes people, and are especially bold when hunting in pairs, small groups of 3-6, or the entire pride. Dislikes large, loud machines,



ever they are given the chance. The cats do not eat slain Xiticix, just kill them and leave their remains for the scavengers.

Frost Panthera-Tereon view their southern cousin, the *Panthera-Tereon*, as a competitive species. As a result, they will try to steal their kills and drive them away, or kill them whenever the black-maned beasts invade the North. The feeling is mutual and Panther-Tereon do the same to Snow Lions that may wander into their hunting ranges. Despite being similar in genetics, the two species cannot interbreed, but both share the same disdain towards Grigleapers and will kill them on sight.

Allies: Primarily their own species and pride members, but Mastadonoids, Nuhr Dwarves, Northern Simvan (Calgary tribes), True Sasquatch, Wild Psi-Stalkers, and Yeno have a healthy respect for the Frost Panthera-Tereon, and sometimes tame them as companion hunters, guardians and even war mounts. Most other people, however, view them as competitors for food and seek to drive them away from their hunting grounds. Some peo-

ple hunt them for their thick, lush white fur, and use their teeth and claws in jewelry. See **Rifts® World Book 30: D-Bees of North America** for additional information about the D-Bees mentioned above.

Value: Limited value, 2,000-8,000 for a tamed and trained Frost Panthera-Tereon suitable as a guard or hunting animal, pet or riding animal, but really only effective in cold climates. 1,000-4,000 for the hide as one Frost Panthera-Tereon can be turned into 6-10 fur coats that sell for 1,000-2,000 credits each and similar uses. Only 1D4 credits per each tooth or claw. 1D6x1,000 for wild Snow Lions as a combat monster in the gladiatorial arena. 200-800 for a cub that can be domesticated and trained. The big cats make surprisingly loyal and capable hunting animals, guardians/protectors and companions.

Note: This is a new creature appearing for the very first time. Inspired by the art and writing of Charles "Chuck" Walton Jr.

Frostweaver Spider

By Kevin Siembieda and Greg Diazcyk

Frostweavers are dog-sized spiders that have smooth, translucent, ghostly white exoskeletons, almost as if they are made of glass or ice. They inhabit the trees, caves, ruins and mountain ranges of northern portions of the old American Empire and all of the old Canadian Empire, as well as Alaska and Siberia.

People and animals living south of the Canadian border are at greatest risk during the winter months when Frostweavers migrate from the far north to hunt prey in the northern United States. The spiders are attracted to villages, ranches, towns and cities because they are filled with an abundance of prey from animal pests like mice, rats, and pigeons, to pets, livestock, and people. Urban environments and big cities like Calgary, Free Quebec, Iron Heart, Lazlo, Northern Gun, Manistique Imperium, and the Chi-Town 'Burbs, as well as the ruins of Tolkeen, Old Bones (Quebec), Old Chicago, Detroit, Windsor, Madhaven, and places like them are all very appealing to Frostweavers. Pre-Rifts underground compounds, tunnel systems, abandoned mines and caves are also cozy places for the spiders to live and lay eggs, but are not attractive places to hunt because they are usually away from humanoid communities or forests rich in fauna to hunt. Whereas cities, towns and even military camps thrive with prey of all kinds, small and large.

Though people are on the spiders' menu, Frostweavers tend to target smaller prey like house pets, cats, dogs, rodents, birds, and livestock such as chickens, ducks, geese, sheep, goats, piglets, and donkeys, as well as children and small D-Bees. Adult humans are mostly targeted when they are old, sick, injured, lame, drunk or sleeping. Larger animals like deer, horse, and sometimes cattle, may also be hunted, but the spiders mostly hunt animals smaller than a horse. That said, Frostweaver Spiders that inhabit bustling cities find plenty of places to hide and become unafraid of humanoids, with many turning into man-eaters who see people as their preferred prey. Moreover, Frostweavers are astute enough to learn that people in *hard shells* (armor) are more dangerous and too difficult to kill than those who are not, and learn to avoid armor-clad soldiers, cyborgs, power armor troops, etc., in favor of more vulnerable humanoid targets, pets and livestock.

Being impervious to cold and ice, Frostweaver Spiders cover their bodies in ice for camouflage and extra armor protection

(1D6x100 S.D.C./1D6 M.D.). Being covered in ice increases the spider's weight by 30% and reduces Speed by 10%, but does not impair its ability to cast its webbing, dig snow tunnels, or engage in combat. When suspended from the ceiling of a cave, tree branch, gutter or overhang, at a quick glance, the legs of the ice-covered spider looks like dangling icicles, its body just a lump of ice. Likewise, on the ground or on the side of a wall, the spider may look like little more than a chunk of ice. If clearly visible as a spider, it may be mistaken for an ice sculpture or a frozen and presumably dead and harmless dog-sized spider. Only it is not dead!

Frostweavers are ambush predators that like to burrow under snow and wait to ambush prey when it comes within striking distance (100 feet/30.5 m or closer). They also allow themselves to be covered by snow to further conceal themselves, and dig snow tunnels, lairs and snow traps in the snow and deep snowdrifts (details below). Snow tunnels and snow traps are especially common the wilderness where snow is not plowed and ice formations and snowdrifts are found across the frozen horizon. Ice formations along the windswept shores of lakes and rivers, especially throughout the Great Lakes region, Minnesota and Hudson Bay create a vast landscape of broken ice sheets and walls of ice shards taller than a man for Frostweavers to hide among. But any snow or ice-covered landscape is a perfect home and hunting ground for these tricky predators.

This ambush predator may strike high or low. As is the case with most arachnids, the Frostweaver is a cunning and opportunistic hunter that lies in wait and uses the element of surprise, dropping down from above or lunging out from a hiding place to attack its prey.

In urban settings where there are plenty of tall buildings, bridges, tunnels, sewers, and overhangs, Frostweaver Spiders have a vast array of hiding places and methods of attack. It may ambush prey by dropping down from a hiding place from a perch above, such as the rafters, a ledge, the side of a building, gutters, overhead sign or awning, an overhang, the ceiling, a lamppost, tree branch, or its own network of webbing difficult to differentiate from the snow. The spider may drop down on top of prey, its venomous bite so small and quick, like being struck by a dart, that the victim



doesn't know what hit him until it is too late. Or it may silently lower itself behind a potential target for a surprise attack from the ground. This versatile hunter has several avenues of attack, from those above, to its web traps, and attacks from snow tunnels and lairs. In towns and cities, a Frostweaver might dart out from under a vehicle or from under the stairs, from behind a pile of rubbish, the sewer, or a snow trap in the park. They love to stalk alleys and parking lots, and lurk in what appears to be an empty, snow-covered field.

Like most spiders, the Frostweaver spins webs to trap prey. This may be elaborate web carpets and labyrinths of webbing that fill tunnels, basements, and rooms to capture and hold its victims or ground traps outdoors. When the spider scurries over the webbing to where its victim(s) struggles to free itself, the monster incapacitates its victim with its ice-cold venom. Then, the horrid spider binds its still living, but immobilized victim, in a strong web cocoon, and carries or drags them back to its lair. Inside the lair, victims or hung from the ceiling to be eaten alive at its leisure over the next few days. If there is good news in this, it is that captured prey may have as long as 96 hours (4 days) to be found and rescued. However, most prey are consumed after the first two and a half days (60 hours), and finding the right spider's nest is tricky and

treacherous work. (See *Natural Abilities* for details about the many uses of its webbing, and *Mega-Damage* for information about the numbing power of its venom.)

The more hiding places and prey available, the more Frostweaver Spiders will live and hunt in the same area. One abandoned warehouse or mine shaft could hold dozens of them scattered throughout it. Lurking from the ceilings, behind machinery, along the walls and rafters, and in dark corners of the floor and ceiling. Fortunately, these spiders are solitary hunters. However, they sometimes gather in small hunting packs of 1D6+1 spiders. They hunt together to take down large prey like cattle, humans and D-Bees. They may also live together in the same lair or snow tunnel. They only eat "live" food, not carrion or meat scraps, so slaughter houses and butcher shops have no appeal to these menacing arachnids. Animal pens, stables, farms, and ranches, on the other hand, have plenty to fear.

It surprises most people, but the Frostweaver Spider can be domesticated and trained to function like a well-behaved and obedient hunting dog or guard animal. The spider has proven to be very loyal to its master/owners, i.e. the person or people who feed and cares for it. A few tribes of *Native Americans*, *Inuit* and *Wild Psi-Stalkers* use the Frostweaver Spiders to guard their huts and camp-

sites in the winter, and hunt with them like trained dogs or wolves, year round. *Shifters* have also been known to use the spider as familiars, and the *Sunaj Assassins* sometimes keep one or more as pets and attack animals. *Splugorth Slavers* and their henchmen active in the north may also use Frostweaver Spiders as hunting animals to trap and capture people and animals. Frostweavers have proven especially effective at capturing Faeries along the coast of the northeastern Atlantic. Of course, the trick is to keep the arachnid well fed and well treated. To do otherwise it may cause it go hunting to feed upon pets, livestock and people in the area, and perhaps even its own master! Mistreated domesticated Frostweavers either run away or turn on the person mistreating it.

Frostweaver Spider – Carnivore Predator

Also Known As: Ice Spider, Snow Trap Spider and Tunnel Spider.

Alignment: Since humans are repulsed by spiders, most people consider them to be Miscreant or Diabolic monsters that prey upon children and livestock. Domesticated animals usually reflect the alignment of their owner and are loyal and obedient to them.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+6 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+7, M.A. 1D6+8, P.S. 1D6+15 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+13, P.E. 1D6+14, P.B. 1D4+5, Spd 1D6+20 running, or 15 mph (24 km). This speed can be maintained for an hour, and is the same when the arachnid is running along walls, ceilings, trees, webbing, or ice. 25 mph (40 km) in a very short burst lasting 15 seconds (one melee round). 8-10 mph (12.8 to 16 km) at a steady trot that can be maintained for up to five hours straight. The Frostweaver is able to navigate ice and ice covered surfaces without difficulty or having to slow down. Walking speed is 3-4 mph (4.8 to 6.4).

Hit Points: 1D4x10+60

M.D.C./S.D.C. by Location: As a minor Mega-Damage creature (or heavy S.D.C. creature), the creature is subject to damage from both M.D.C. and S.D.C. weapons.

*Legs (8) – 1D4x10+60 S.D.C.

*Head – 1D6x10+50 S.D.C.

*Ice Armor – 1D6x100 S.D.C. (1-6 M.D.), when applicable.

Main Body – 1D6x10+80 S.D.C. equal to three M.D.C. points when Hit Points and other considerations are taken; 4-9 M.D.C. when wearing ice armor. However, Frostweaver Spiders and their ice armor are still damaged by S.D.C. weapons, it just takes a lot of damage to kill one.

* A single asterisk means a small and/or difficult target to strike and requires a Called Shot to hit. Even then the attacker is -3 to strike. Reducing the M.D.C. of one leg to zero reduces speed by 10%. Destroying two legs reduces speed by 20%, three by 30%, four legs by 40%, five legs by 60%. Lost limbs regenerate.

Note: On *S.D.C. worlds*, the Frostweaver Spider has 1D6x10+60 S.D.C., 1D6x10+60 Hit Points, and a Natural A.R. 11 (A.R. 15 when Ice Armor is in place). This is an S.D.C. creature. The damage inflicted by the creature is S.D.C./Hit Points rather than M.D.

Horror Factor: 13 for a single or pair of Frostweaver Spiders, 15 when there are three more present and hunting together.

Size: About the size of a medium-sized dog, 2-3 feet (0.6 to 0.9 m) tall and 4-5 feet (1.2 to 1.5 m) in diameter with the legs spread out.

Weight: 60-85 lbs (27 to 38 kg).

Average Life Span: 1D6+10 years. The fertile female lays 1D4x10 eggs every autumn either inside her lair, hidden among the webbing, or in a secluded place usually in a cave, tunnel, mine shaft, ravine, basement or other cool, dark place underground and away from people. Young reach full size within 10 months but do not reach sexual maturity until two years old.

P.P.E.: 3D6

Disposition: A patient, focused and determined ambush predator and industrious web trap builder. The spider may wait days for prey to fall into their trap, but respond quickly to secure their prey. If hungry, they kill quickly and immediately. If not, they secure prey in a strong web cocoon and save their captive for up to 96 hours before killing it and eating it. Frostweavers spend most of their down time building or retooling their spider web traps and lairs as the snowy environment changes. If prey is scarce, the spider moves on in search of a better location for its traps and its lair. This predator does not just sit around waiting for prey, it goes out looking for prey, but rather than simply pounce from the shadows – which it can do when there is opportunity – it sets up a web trap or climbs up high to drop down upon passing prey or to strike from behind.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Acrobatics 85%, Camouflage 50% (+40% in snow and ice environments), Climbing 98%/98%, Excavation 60%, Land Navigation 80% (+10% to find its lair/nest/hiding place), Prowl 55% (+20% on its web and in snow and ice environments), and Swimming 20% (a poor swimmer and easily drowned).

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 1,000 feet (305 m), excellent hearing, a good sense of smell, can leap 10 feet (3 m) high and 20 feet (6.1 m) across. Impervious to cold, including magic and M.D. cold, but M.D. heat and fire inflicts double damage and melts and burns away its webbing in an instant. This extreme cold weather spider from another world loves the snow and freezing temperatures as low as 300 degrees Fahrenheit below zero (-184 Celsius), can breathe underneath snow for 2D6 hours, can walk, run, climb on most surfaces including ice and icy surfaces, with startling speed and agility, walking on webbing, on ceilings upside down, the sides of walls, trees and cliffs, etc., but has difficulty climbing on glass (-30% penalty). Bio-Regenerates at a rate of 2D6x10 S.D.C. per 24 hours.

Sensitive to vibration, especially on webbing, Frostweaver Spiders are able to feel the approach of one or more heavy vehicles, giant robots, or large, heavy animals up to 3,000 feet (910 m) away, and one or a few heavy man-sized targets, like a combat cyborg or heavy power armor, 300 feet (91.4 m) away, despite the muffling and insulating effects of snow on the ground.

Burrow through Snow (special): The Frostweaver Spider likes to dig tunnels and ice cave-like lairs, and snow traps. It can also travel through newly fallen snow like a mole, scurrying under the new snow when it is deep enough. All a potential victim sees is this low mound of snow coming toward him. The Frostweaver is impervious to cold and can find enough air to breathe under the snow through the pores of its exoskeleton body to last several (2D6) hours before needing to surface for air. It sometimes pulls victims, even cyborgs, under the snow where the victim is likely to feel panicked and may be smothered by the snow within 1D4+2 minutes; not effective against people with an independent oxygen supply or prey that can hold its breath for a long time. They are also clever enough to lure heavy prey out onto thin ice and narrow, treacherous mountain paths.

Ice Armor (special): The Frostweaver Spider, like most insects with an exoskeleton, breathes through their skin. In this cases, that enables the spider to release a cooling agent in the form of a nearly invisible mist that collects and freezes moisture to cover its body and limbs in a surprisingly thick coat of ice. This ice armor provides camouflage and additional protection (1D6x100 S.D.C. equal to 1D6 M.D., Natural A.R. of 15). Moreover, the spider often lets itself be covered with water to freeze and snow for additional camouflage. The ice does not impair movement, and the Frostweaver prefers to have the armor in place throughout winter and when outdoors in a snow and ice environment. **Note: Ice Floats.** Ice armor enables the spider to float in water and provides a +25% bonus to the Swimming skill. Still it is vulnerable to drowning, especially in strong currents.

Play Dead (special): Frostweavers like to play dead and because their bodies are cold, they do not register as a warm body or as alive on most sensors. However, psychics can sense the spider has a presence and see its aura, and therefore know it is alive even if it is pretending to be dead.

Web-Spinning Capabilities (special): The Frostweaver Spider can spin a durable, cold resistant webbing which it uses to build all of its webs and traps, as well as to lower itself from heights, climb and ensnare prey. The spider can spin a web line at a rate of 200 feet (61 m) per melee round (15 seconds). The web is tough, like a light M.D.C. rope, and has 1 M.D.C. per strand. The silk of a Frostweaver is especially susceptible to extreme heat and fire, and burns quite easily even from S.D.C. fire. *M.D. fire* does double damage to the spider itself, and burns away its webbing like cotton candy exposed to flame. *S.D.C. fire* does normal damage and melts away webbing almost as easily.

Similar to many of Earth's much smaller spiders, the classic spider web is used inside the Frostweaver Spider's subterranean or snow tunnel lair as well as web traps between trees or near the ground between trees. However, it favors laying a carpet-like web trap webbing 6 inches to two feet (0.15 to 0.6 m) atop the snow where it is almost invisible, especially after a light snowfall. The webbing stays flexible even in sub-zero temperatures, and as frost and snow collects on it, the webbing blends in with its outdoors surroundings all the more.

Below are the most notable uses of webbing:

1. Snow Trap/Ground Cover Web Carpet Trap (special):

This is a very fine web netting that is more like a web blanket or carpet rather than a widely spaced latticework of rope lines. The webbing is suspended six inches to two feet (0.15 to 0.6 m) above the ground or snow, but blends in with its surroundings. Web traps laid out over snow seems to blend in with the snow in such a way that it is nearly invisible. (Travelers must be walking slowly and looking for traps or danger to avoid it. *Perception Roll bonuses* should apply when this is the case, but not when moving quickly or casually, not paying attention.) When an animal or person steps onto the web, they stick. In addition there is a 01-50% chance of stumbling into the web with the other foot (or feet for animals), or even falling into the silky netting (G.M. discretion). The chance of stumbling or falling into the web increases to a 80% likelihood if the person or animal was running at a speed of 12 or faster and/or not paying attention.

Even one foot stuck in the taut web carpet causes tension, tugs and pulls. Creating vibrations across the entire web and

signaling to the spider elsewhere on the webbing (typically in the center) that prey is within easy striking distance! The more completely the prey is caught in the web, the more time and effort it requires to pull free and the greater the vibrational signals to the spider. Most animals and people that get stuck in webbing immediately begin to panic (Horror Factor 12) and the more frantic they become trying to pull free of the web, the more covered and stuck they may become. Worse, their struggle tells the spider that prey is tangled and vulnerable to a quick attack. Like getting caught in quicksand, it is best to try to remain as calm and still as possible, and signal for help. Crying out also alerts the spider to prey being nearby or trapped in its web.

Pulling Free From a Web Trap: Insufficient P.S. means the victim is stuck and cannot pull free of the web via his own physical strength. Instead, he must try to cut or burn his way free or requires assistance from others, e.g. a *combined P.S.* However, even a quick, successful extraction of one or more limbs from the web alerts the spider to the presence of intruders and potential prey, which is likely to invite an attack.

- Pulling ONE foot/limb out of webbing requires is a P.S. of 12 and uses up one melee action/attack.
- Pulling two limbs free of webbing requires a *combined P.S. of 16* and three melee actions.
- Pulling three or more limbs free of webbing, for animals and multi-limbed aliens, or two feet and a hand/arm for humans, requires a *combined P.S. of 20* and 1D4+2 melee rounds (45-90 seconds).
- If the animal or person has fallen into the webbing the victim is in serious trouble. The more he struggles the more entangled and covered in webs he becomes. The spider knows this victim is not getting free anytime soon, if it all, so it can focus its attack on other potential prey, such as a concerned animal mate or young at the edge of the web, or teammates trying to help pull their comrade free. This animal or person requires a *combined P.S. of 30* and 1D4+4 melee rounds to be pulled free.
- A web cocoon wraps prey up tight like a mummy, usually after a venomous bite has immobilized them. The web cocoon prevents its captive from using its limbs to fight back or flee. There is a 60% chance the cocoon covers the head and mouth to muffle the captive's cries. Which also prevents practitioners of magic from casting spells and at least partially impairs the captive's vision! Victims of cocooning can NOT pull themselves free and require outside help and a *combined P.S. of 50* and 1D6 minutes time to cut or rip the victim out of the tight web wrapping.

Combined P.S. means if the prey caught in the webbing and does not possess sufficient strength to pull himself free on his own, he needs additional help from teammates or rescuer to pull him free (which makes them all potential victims of an attack by the Frostweaver), or the person needs one hand free and a suitable weapon to **cut, burn** or **blast his way free** of the webbing before the spider comes to paralyze or cocoon him.

Mega-Damage blade weapons such as a Vibro-Blade, laser scalpel, and magic weapons cut through webbing at the same speed as pulling the victim free. Trying to cut through webbing with *S.D.C. blades* is difficult because the weapon keeps getting stuck in the web and takes twice the time.

Burning webbing is the fastest, most effective way to cut through webbing like burning through nylon or melting away

cotton candy. Even a cigarette lighter, let alone a laser or fusion torch, will do the job. A flamethrower disintegrates wide swaths for the entire length of the flame and a flaming torch burns away any webbing it comes within a few inches of.

Shooting through the webbing with projectile weapons is pointless as all the rounds simply poke a small hole in the web netting or carpet. Only a shotgun or explosives do enough damage to shred a portion of the webbing. The same is true of energy weapons only the hole is large enough to put a fist through. That means several dozen well placed blasts *might* weaken the web netting enough to eventually tear free, but takes 10 times longer, and it is best to keep a payload handy to use against the spider when it comes.

Note: P.S. requirements are half when the victim or helper has Robot P.S. and one third for Supernatural P.S.

2. Web Tunnel/Lair Webbing/Web Wall (special): Inside caves, tunnels, sewers, hallways, stairwells, snow tunnels and lairs/nests, there is usually a web carpet, as described above, as well as intervals of web lines and sheets of webbing strung across from one wall to the other, from floor to ceiling in a zig-zag pattern. This creates a series of silky walls reminiscent of the nest of tent caterpillars in trees, that must be pushed through in order to pass. Such lair and tunnel webs usually fill a length of tunnel that is 1D4x10 feet (3 to 12.2 m) long.

A web tunnel can be spun between a 1D4x10 foot (3-12.2 m) patch or corridor of trees in a similar way as well as a small section or length of cave, crevice, or narrow ravine or canyon (less than 200 feet/61 m wide). Of course, such a network of web sheets are much more obvious than those laid over the ground or snow. Unless the animal or person is moving very fast and/or not paying attention, it is likely to be noticed a hundred yards (meters) before stepping into it. However, if the webs fill an area you must go through, they become a very real obstacle and a threat to life.

Penalties are the same as described above, under Web Carpet Trap, for people and animals on foot, except that running into such a web wall is likely to immediately result in multiple limbs or entire body entanglement. **Note:** When a web-filled tunnel is encountered, it is time to pull out that flamethrower if you have one. 1D4 well-placed blasts from an S.D.C. or M.D. flamethrower should burn away 90% of the webbing for 100 feet (30.5 m) to create a clear path. But use fire with care or else the flamethrower's blasts may set combustibles on fire – including dry grass and leaves, trees, or if indoors, carpeting, drapes, furniture, clothing, paper products, open canisters containing fuel, drywall and wood frame walls. A handheld burning torch is much more controlled and does the same job, but takes more time to burn a path through the web lair; 1D4+2 melee rounds (a minute to a minute and a half/60-90 seconds) per 10 foot (3 m) length of web.

Cyborgs, man-sized robots, and power armor can, for a time, push and rip through tunnel webbing, tearing it down as they go. However, the webbing clings and drops down on them, accumulating the farther they go. Rather quickly, these webs cover them and become constrictive sticky sheets and strands that impair movement. Tearing through the first 10 feet (3 m) has the following *penalties*: Reduce speed 10%, -1 melee attack, and reduces combat bonuses by half. Penalties are cumulative for every 10 feet (3 m) traveled. Thus, reduce speed by a total of 20%, -2 melee attacks, and reduce combat bonuses by half again (round up) after 20 feet (6.1 m) of travel through a

web tunnel, and so on. Penalties last for as long as the webbing covers the armored character, so at some point, it will be necessary to burn or wash away the webbing (see below for details).

Pilots of hovercycles, Sky Cycles, Rocket Bikes, motorcycles and other open vehicles have a similar problem and the same penalties as cyborgs, above. Barreling through at high speed has its own *additional problems*.

1) -30% skill penalty to maintain control of the vehicle.

2) An 80% likelihood of the pilot getting pulled off the bike and hung up in the web. If the pilot is yanked off the vehicle, it careens forward for a short while without him, until it crashes. He is left suspended in a tangle of web (same as Entire Body Entanglement).

In the alternative, the pilot of the open-air vehicle and the vehicle becomes so covered in webs that the pilot can't move, glued to his hovercycle under sheet after sheet of webbing. He must be cut, torn or burned out of the thick web blanket and peeled away from his vehicle (or the webs melted away with heat or fire). Until he can be removed via help from others (needs a combined P.S. of 70!), the web covered pilot is held down on his vehicle and unable to dismount or move his limbs. He can still pilot the vehicle, but cannot perform skills or even turn his head, and is only able to continue to operate the vehicle to which he is adhered, at a -30% skill penalties and is -2 to strike using the vehicle's built-in weapon systems (if any), -3 to dodge, and cannot use handheld weapons or devices.

Pilots and people inside enclosed vehicles, giant robots and combat vehicles are at much less of an immediate disadvantage. They are able to drive or walk through the webbing, tearing it down as they go through. Upon exiting a tunnel or expanse of webbing, the vehicle is covered in it, including 1D6x10+40% of the windows, view ports, cameras, and sensor arrays, all of which require someone going outside to remove them; ideally with fire for the quickest results. HOWEVER, top-mounted hatches can only open an inch or two, and side doors only open halfway. Moreover, those who squeeze through the narrow opening must push through webbing and may get stuck or entangled in it, unless it is cut or burned away first. In addition, turrets are held in place, the doors to rocket launchers cannot open to release their payload (rockets do not launch as a safeguard if the door/hatch won't open), and windows and camera lenses are covered and blinded until the web is removed. There is also a 01-50% chance that antennas, window wipers and anything strapped to the outside of the vehicle was torn off and is back inside the tunnel area where the web lair was located.

Web can be removed by several means. Cutting, scraping and peeling it away is one. The use of solvents such as turpentine, kerosene, bestine, nail polish remover (five gallons/18.9 liters of it), gasoline, and even ordinary soap and very hot water will do the trick; all of which takes 1D4 hours to clean the vehicle, double if it is very large like a semi-truck and trailer. Of course, hot water freezes within minutes in freezing temperatures, unless the work is being done inside a heated garage.

In the alternative, webs can be burned/melted off a vehicle in a matter of 2D6+5 minutes without leaving a residue via *S.D.C. fire or intense, blast furnace-like heat*. A controlled fire and/or intense heat should not damage M.D.C. vehicles in the least, and only inflict a bit of cosmetic damage to S.D.C. vehicles (i.e. scorch marks, bubbled paint, spotty discoloration, etc.). **Note:** Clearing away webbing is more dangerous than it may sound. There is a 40% chance that 1D4 angry Frostweaver Spiders are

are uncomfortable and irritable in temperatures greater than 60 degrees Fahrenheit (15.5 Celsius), and are -1 on all bonuses. In temperatures greater than 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32 C), reduce its number of attacks and speed by half (round down), and -2 on all combat maneuvers.

The Frostweaver's skin remains white all year long, but loses its glassy appearance and looks more leathery in warm seasons. The white color makes it much easier to see against a landscape of green grass and forest, but the arachnid seems to know this. As a result, it hides in the shadows, among foliage, behind and under boulders and fallen trees, or concealed in its webbing and up high in the trees. In hot weather, this predator is more active at night when it is cooler and when daytime people and animals are at a disadvantage in the dark.

Frostweaver Spiders are poor swimmers and are easily drowned, especially in strong currents and deep water. Dies within 1D4+2 minutes when held underwater.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Habitat: The northern portions of the Old American Empire and all of the Old Canadian Empire, as well as Alaska and Siberia. The arachnid travels further south in cold winter months, but seldom below Colorado, Michigan, and Pennsylvania.

Enemies: As apex predators they have few natural enemies. Feared and destroyed by most people whenever they or their nests are discovered, and hunted by the few creatures that stalk arachnids and insects.

Allies: None, per se, other than fellow Frostweaver Spiders, which sometimes hunt in small packs (1D6+2) or may share a lair. However, Frostweavers tend to be lone hunters.

Sometimes used as a familiar by Shifters and other practitioners of magic. Some Native Americans, Inuit, Wild Psi-Stalkers, Simvan and Splugorth minions, like Slavers, have been known to domesticate the animal and use it like a trained hunting and guard dog. That said, most humans and D-Bees find spiders to be too creepy to keep as pets or hunting animals. Ick. And training must start a short time after being hatched. A full-grown Frostweaver cannot be domesticated.

Value: A domesticated, adult Frostweaver Spiders trained to hunt or guard and obey commands like a dog, easily sells for 1D4x1,000 credits, sometimes double. Eggs or recently hatched young sell for 1D6 credits each. Hatchlings must be quickly contained and separated. If not, they either immediately scatter and disperse into their surroundings, or start to fight and devour each other.

The meat in the adult Frostweaver's upper leg is edible and tasty raw or used to make a stew; tastes like crab meat. Spider silk is too sticky, difficult to handle, and deteriorates after a number of days to be used for any purpose. (The spiders are constantly tending to and repairing their webs).

Frostweaver Elixir: The Inuit have developed a watered-down version of spider's venom, which is often milked from domesticated Frostweaver Spiders which can be used to create an elixir of cold resistance. When drunk, the elixir causes the body to tingle but prevents frostbite and delays the onset of hypothermia. Such elixirs provide resistance to below freezing temperatures for 1D6+8 hours and can be traded or sold to non-tribe members for 2D6x10 credits per dose or the equivalent in trade.

Note: This is a new creature appearing for the very first time. Inspired by the ideas and writing of Greg Diaczyk.

Fury Beetle

By Kevin Siembieda

The Fury Beetle is the stuff of legends. It is one of the first "monsters from the Rifts" to appear in large numbers after the Great Cataclysm, and one of the few to successfully adapt and survive the Two Hundred Years Dark Age to present day.

This huge beast is oblong, heavily armored, and the size of a box car. Its overall appearance vaguely resemble Earth's own small pill millipede or Armadillidiidae (also known as "roly poly bug" or "pill bug"), a type of woodlice crustacean common through North America and Europe. Like these two minuscule creatures, the Fury Beetles has a rounded body covered in smooth armored plates. Unlike these tiny creatures, the Fury Beetle is gigantic, its armor-covered body dotted with spikes on top, and it cannot curl into a ball. Common throughout much of North America, it receives the "Fury" part of its name for its bursts of incredible speed and seemingly erratic and furious movement. The "Beetle" part is the result of its monstrous, armored, appearance reminiscent of a beetle or some sort of heavily armored insect with 34 boney, bug-like legs providing the locomotion. It's two large arms in front, near the head, are suspended forward above the ground when it runs, and are used primarily to rip apart the remains of large, fallen prey, pluck fruit and to shovel food into its gaping maw. The head itself is protected by a heavy M.D.C. skull and protective boney ridge that makes access to its neck impossible.

What many people don't realize is the so-called Fury Beetle is neither an insect nor a crustacean, but rather some sort of massive alien animal transplanted to Earth from god only knows where. It has adopted the forests of Canada, particularly eastern and south-eastern Canada, as well as the northern and northeastern United States from Maine through Oregon, its primary range, but can be found in some of the southern forests in small numbers. Over the last few decades, Simvan Monster Riders have transplanted the Fury Beetle to the New West and Saskatchewan where they use the beast as a tank-like riding animal for raids against other people and defense against other large monsters. Fury Beetles have even found their way to Northern Mexico; probably escaped or abandoned Furies lost in Simvan raids against the Pecos Empire or taken to Mexico by adventures who, themselves, met with a grim fate. The vast majority of Fury Beetles in the New West remain under the control of Simvan Monster Riders, or other people, and do not run wild. The majority are found in forest areas, but sometimes the plains as well. Fury Beetles dislike desert and hot arid lands, preferring lush, green temperate woodlands over all others.

When on the move, the Fury Beetle runs in varying bursts of speed, from slow to fast to medium, to fast and back to medium, then a leisurely strolling pace, repeat. When it runs, it often does so in a zigzag pattern. As they go, the gigantic creature topples young trees and flattens underbrush, creating wide, winding paths through the forest that others can follow. The creatures often use such paths over and over again rather than create new ones every time they visit the area. Some scientist wonder if Fury Beetles might not lay down a chemical trail that it and others of its kind can follow or recognize as safe.

When challenged or cornered, a Fury Beetle scampers back and forth or side to side, while emitting a terrible wailing that is intended to be a warning to frighten away threatening intruders and predators, and to warn other Fury Beetles in the area of danger. Once engaged in combat, the creature fights until either it or its at-



Juvenile Fury Beetle

tacker is slain. Actually, the beast is quite satisfied with assailants turning tail and fleeing from its sight.

Left alone in the wild, Fury Beetles are solitary creatures that travel alone or in mated pairs. They are not particularly aggressive or intentionally destructive, but are extremely anxious and easily startled. When frightened or angered, a Fury Beetle either runs, stampeding across the countryside knocking down trees, flattening crops, smashing through fences and crashing into buildings, or it charges right at the source of danger to side swipe it with its body, usually knocking it over. A cornered, mother Fury Beetle carrying eggs, hatchlings or guarding her young (under the age of five years old), or protecting an injured mate, fights to the death. To complicate matters, Fury Beetles are easily startled and instinctively charge whatever startled them. Slamming into the source of their surprise as the creatures' first attack, or butting it as the beast run past to get away. In wide open spaces, the truck-sized behemoth would rather run away from trouble if it can. Fury Beetles that engage in life or death combat do so with damaging bites, head butts, claw strikes, more body slams and trampling.

Since a Fury Beetle only wants the threat to end, opponents who *play dead* and lay still, even when pawed or nudged by the beast, can bring a quick end to combat. The creature is not likely to try to eat those it thinks it has killed in sudden combat, and is 90% will move on, unless hungry. Even then, if the beast was not on the hunt when it was attacked first, it is likely to wander off leaving the freshly "killed" body where it lies. Fury Beetles like to pick their prey and after an unexpected attack are usually

too skitterish to linger in the area to eat whatever attacked it and leaves it for dead.

Fury Beetles are omnivores who hunt and eat fish, deer, caribou, moose, young Aegis Buffalo and the young of other large animals such as the Xiticix, even rival, sometimes even young Fury Beetles while they are still comparatively small. Adult bulls often chase young males away or kill them and devour them before age five, presumably to reduce the competition for females during mating season. The massive creatures seem to tolerate and ignore humans and most D-Bees unless the beast feels threatened or annoyed by them or their loud machines. They also eat a wide variety of plants including grass, hay, fallen trees, rotting leaves, and farm crops, as well as carrion and their own waste. Fury Beetles are happy to scavenge and eat the rotting flesh and bones of carrion, human food scraps and garbage, regardless of how old and dry it may be. Fury Beetles love eating human garbage, compost heaps, rotting fruit, vegetables, and the dead. They are attracted to meat lockers, slaughter houses and battlefields where they may devour the remains of the dead, bones and all. They are also known to eat clothing, upholstery, carpets, and other fabrics.

For generations Fury Beetles were feared and shunned as nothing more than ferocious monsters. Leviathans sometimes hunted for food and their M.D.C. armor plates. The meat tasty and enough to feed an entire village. Their armor plates cut down and used to make M.D.C. body armor, tools and weapons (spearheads, arrowheads, daggers, tomahawk blades, etc.). It has only been within the

last 40 years that Fury Beetles were discovered to be suitable for domestication.

Domesticated Fury Beetles are frequently used as work and riding animals by Wild Psi-Stalkers, Simvan Monster Riders, and Psi-Druids. Due to their psychic affinity with animals, all three have absolute and total control over their Fury Beetles. However, *anyone* with the know-how and patience can domestic and train a Fury Beetle. Training must begin when the animal is a very young, less than four months old. Any older and the animal is too stubborn and incorrigible to train. As a result, trained Fury Beetles are used as exotic riding animals by some mercenary companies, Native Americans, Noli Bushmen, Groot Hunters, Mastadonoids, Psi-Druids, and even Cowboys and Wilderness Scouts; and on occasion, a practitioner of magic, usually a Shifter or Battle Magus.

Fury Beetles are incredibly powerful. Like a runaway freight train or a tornado, a single Fury Beetle has been known to level an half a wilderness town made of S.D.C. or light M.D.C. materials. Even tamed Fury Beetles may accidentally damage property – plowing through a fence or home, knock down part of a wall, or eating something (seldom someone) it should not have. When startled it might lurch so suddenly and run so fast, that its rider is not ready for the sharp, jarring movement and is thrown from the animal. However, a properly tamed and trained Fury Beetle can make an excellent war mount, especially for traveling adventurers, mercenary companies, warriors, Wilderness Scouts/hunters/trappers, merchant caravans, traveling shows and circuses, or anybody hauling a lot of equipment and supplies out in the wilderness. Its many legs and low profile provides excellent stability and surprising speed, making the animal something of an *all-terrain vehicle*. It is able to climb over rocks and boulders, towering snow drifts and ice formations, across uneven land, over fallen trees and fields strewn with debris, over human vehicles, up and down hills and low mountains, as well as travel through shallow bodies of water, or swim across the surface of slow moving rivers and calm lakes, but at only 25 mph (40 km). Half that speed if swimming against the current or battling tall waves and rough waters.

Seeing a few Fury Beetles being used as work and/or riding animals is a common sight at wilderness trading posts, rural towns, farms and villages, and even among Dimensional Raiders, mercenary companies, traveling merchants and tribal people, especially Simvan Monster Riders and Wild Psi-stalkers. Not surprising when you consider the beast is heavily armored, as strong as any giant robot, can take a beating, and is very fast. The size of a 20 foot (6.1 m) long cargo truck, its armored hide is lined with spikes that are perfect for securing packages, bails of hay, sacks of grain, lumber, and equipment. The typical adult Fury Beetle can function unimpeded with as much as 20 tons strapped to its sturdy back, not slowing the beast down in the least. In addition to cargo on its back, the monstrosity can pull as much as 40 tons behind it. Pulling cargo reduces the monster's speed by 30% and -1 to dodge. The creature is also suitable for pulling tree stumps out by their roots (and eating the stump!), clearing fields, towing broken down vehicles and giant robots, and moderate construction work. As a rule, the number of Fury Beetles found in any community is low, mainly due to their massive size and the amount of food they consume.

Fury Beetles actually eat less than one might think, about the equivalent of a couple of cows or eight bails of hay, a day, and eat a wide range of food including rotting leaves, fallen trees, roots, branches, vines, garbage, and their own waste (poop). Moreover, a Fury Beetle can go without eating for as long as three months and still work at near full capacity before keeling over dead from starvation.

Some people use juvenile Fury Beetles for several years, then slaughter it when it reaches full maturity to either consume or sell off the meat and armored plates, and use that money to get another smaller, domesticated young animal or two to take over the work chores.

A few adventurous souls, like the *Cartiers of the Fury Ranch*, in Ontario (see **Rifts® World Book 20: Canada**) are pioneering the domestication of Fury Beetles as riding animals, work animals and edible livestock. Young ones under the age of six are lean and quite delicious. The meat tastes like the best pork, and a single animal can feed a town of 2,000 and still have leftovers! Older animals are edible but their meat is tougher and less tasty. The Fury Ranch is the largest and most successful of these daring, frontier entrepreneurs. It should be noted that *Xiticix* never use Fury Beetles for any purpose and the two creatures seemed to share a mutual dislike for each other.

Fury Beetle – Omnivore Alien Life Form (not a bug)

Also Known As: The Fury or Furies. This animal has been around for so long, most people know the creature by the same name, the *Fury Beetle*.

Alignment: Considered Anarchist. Those who lose livestock, loved ones or property to the monster may hate and fear Fury Beetles as destructive and Miscreant monsters.

Domesticated Furies are much more relaxed and calm around people, livestock and machines than their wild counterparts, having gotten use to people and their noisy machines and vehicles. A trained animal is loyal, dependable and obedient to its owner/master(s) and tends to reflect that person's alignment. That said, while trained Fury Beetles are obedient, they tend to wander off and may accidentally knock down fences and porches, damage vehicles and property, or unwittingly eat crops or livestock that its owner will be expected to pay for. As a result, most people consider even the most well-trained, well-behaved Fury Beetle to be Unprincipled at best.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+3 (medium animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+6, M.A. 1D6+4, P.S. 2D6+32 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+14, P.E. 1D6+20 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6+2, Spd as follows, below. Varies with terrain.

110 mph (112 km) as a full tilt burst that can be maintained for an impressive 1D6+10 minutes, but needs wide open space to do so. Not possible in forests.

60 mph (80 km) at a fast, but manageable, running speed. This speed can be maintained for six hours without pushing the animal beyond its limits.

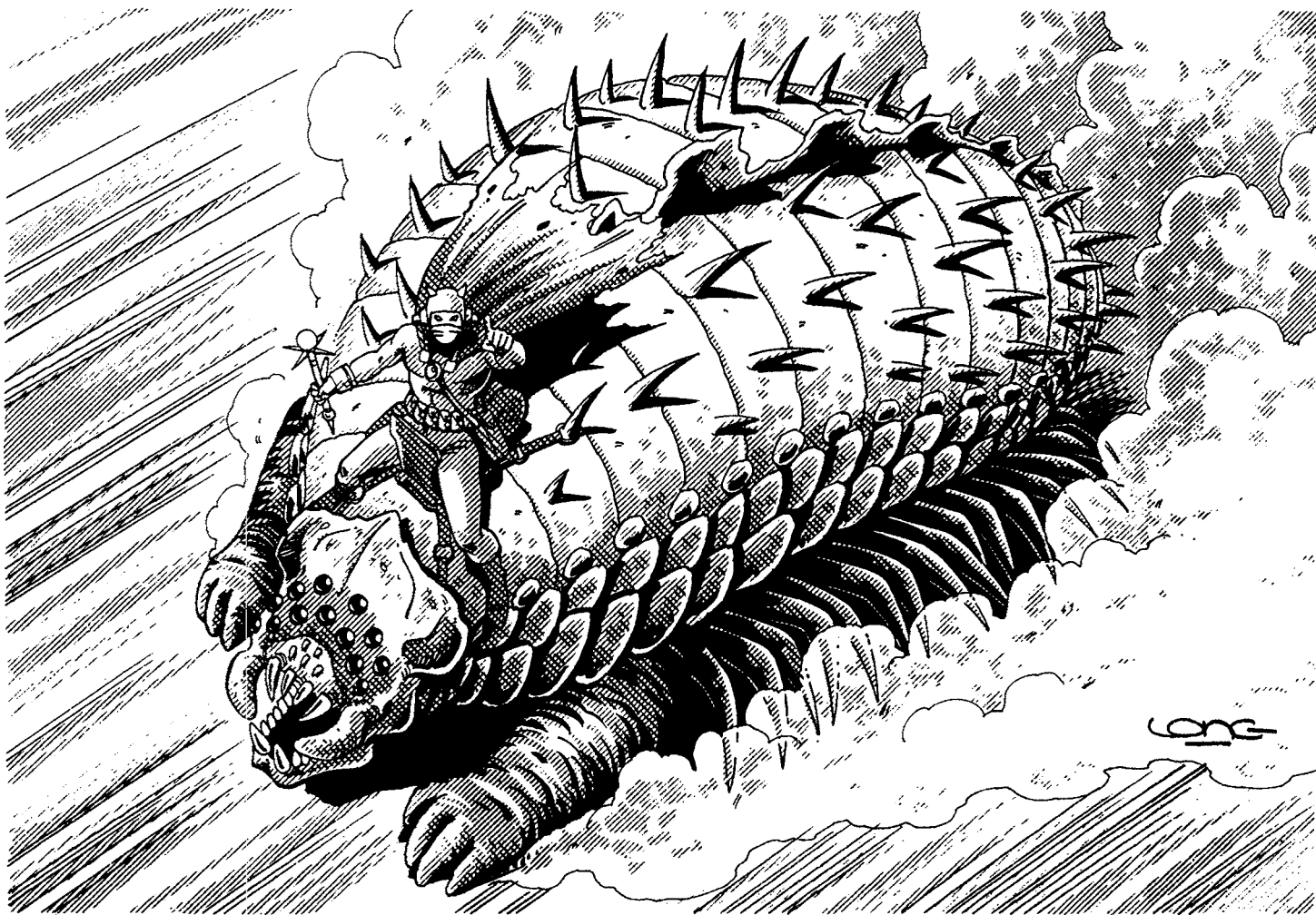
25 mph (40 km) at a steady pace that can be maintained for 24 hours with minimal fatigue, but needs to rest for 1D4+1 hours after such a long haul before being able to continue on at any speed greater than walking speed.

3-8 mph (4.8 to 12.8 km) walking. Much slower when grazing.

Swimming Speed is 25 mph (40 km or 21.5 knots) in a burst of speed lasting 1D4+6 minutes. 15 mph (24 km or 13 knots) at a steady swimming speed that can be maintained for up to 24 hours.

Cannot leap, scale walls, run on ceilings, or stand erect.

Like a horse, the Fury Beetle switches speed from a fast running to a slower, steady pace, to a walking, and back, to allow the animal to pace itself and avoid damaging exhaustion and physical stress. Seldom runs at maximum full tilt, except when startled or evading a predator, or at the prodding of its rider. A



Adult Fury Beetle

Fury Beetle easily travel 200 miles (320 km) over a 9-10 hour trek across open plains, tundra, and desert; 120 miles (192 km) when traveling over rough, uneven terrain; and a distance of 80 miles (128 km) when traveling over marshland or very rugged, rocky, debris-filled terrain. Dense forest is the greatest obstacle to the Fury Beetle. It cannot run through a dense forest of trees any faster than 10-20 mph (16-32 km), probably slower, and may need to take detours around dense regions of woodlands, or travel down a river. 10-15 mph (16 to 19.2 km) in mountainous terrain, or slower, if at all.

M.D.C. by Location of the Armored Body:

Large Front Legs/Arms (2) – 100 each

*Small Legs (34) – 50 each

*Eyes (16) – 10 each

Armor Plated Head – 5D6x10+100 (250 on average).

Main Body – 2D4x100 (500 M.D.C. on average for an adult; half for young, 10% more for males).

Vulnerable under-belly is 2D4x10+130 M.D.C., but almost impossible to access unless the creature rears up which almost never happens, or the attacker is run over by the Beetle and somehow still able to attack or set off an explosive device.

* The eyes are comparatively tiny targets and difficult to strike, so an attacker must make a *Called Shot* and even then is -5 to strike. Targeting the small legs is done at a penalty of -4.

Note: On S.D.C. worlds, the Fury Beetle has 5D6x10 S.D.C., 4D6x10+60 Hit Points, and a Natural A.R. of 18! All other body locations have S.D.C. equal to the M.D.C. number

listed above (50 M.D.C. = 50 S.D.C.). The damage inflicted by the creature does an equivalent amount of S.D.C. points rather than M.D. +12 to damage.

Horror Factor: 6 for a baby, 10 for a young that is one third half the full adult size, H.F. 14 when facing 1-3 adults, H.F. 16 when there are five or more.

Size: 8-10 feet (2.4 to 3 m) tall (spines add another foot/0.3 m to overall height) and 17-20 feet (5.1 to 6.1 m) long, and covered in spike that measure 6-18 inches tall. 6-8 feet (1.8 to 2.4 m) wide.

Females are slightly smaller than males by 10%.

Really old Fury Beetles (110-140 years old) may be 10-20% larger, +20% more M.D.C. and +6 to Supernatural P.S.

Young 1-2 years old are half the size of an adult. Juvenile Furies that are 3-5 year olds are 20-30% smaller and the armor plates and spikes of those under the age of six are shorter, not as round and sharp, nor is their armor plating smooth as adults; they have a rough hewn texture. Making it easy to tell the difference between young and adults.

Weight: 12-16 tons for adults, with the lighter amount being the smaller females. 6-8 tons for juveniles.

Average Life Span: 60-120 years, provided the animal lives to become an adult; 70% perish before reaching full maturity. Females tote their eggs with them inside a pouch located in their underbelly behind overlapping armored plates. Every Spring, 1D6x10 young hatch, but they remain inside the pouch for 1D4 weeks before they are allowed to start venturing out into the world. Baby Fury Beetles are the size of a squirrel but grow

rapidly, nearly doubling in size every week for the first eight weeks. When the young reach the size of a Volkswagen Beetle (no pun intended), growth slows down with it taking a full six years for it to reach full adult size and physical maturity. However, juveniles usually leave their parent's side after two years.

Juvenile Fury Beetles (3-5 year olds) are easy to distinguish from adults. In addition to being 20-30% smaller, they bodies are not as smooth and round, and their spikes are shorter and wider. The Juvenile's armored plates have a rough appearance and texture that resembles rock or tree bark, while adults have smooth, armor with longer smooth spikes. Depending on the juvenile's age it has 1D6x10% less M.D.C., is 20% slower, and does 20% less damage than adults.

P.P.E.: 1D6x10

Disposition: Anxious creatures, a wild Fury Beetle is easily startled and is quick to charge at the slightest threat, or source of sudden movement or loud noise. However, they can be tamed and even wild Fury Beetles will come to accept human contact as long as the person moves slowly and quietly, and takes care not to startle or threaten the beast. Protective, gentle and loving toward its mate and young.

Tame riding animals learn to tolerant noise and movement and remain calm even during combat and when brought into a busy and noisy town or city, but will be a bit anxious, especially if there are sudden loud noises like explosions, a lot of gunfire, or people or vehicles bumping into it repeatedly. It is best to keep a trusted handler/rider close by at all times to keep the mammoth beast calm and under control.

Equivalent Skill Abilities: Climb 80%/20% but cannot handle steep angles or sheer cliff walls at more than a 45 degree angle; Dowsing 85%, Land Navigation 80%, Track animals 60% (+20% to sniff out garbage, rotting food, and carrion), Tailing 50%, Track humanoid 30%, Swim 75%, and understands spoken languages and commands on par with a horse or dog.

Natural Abilities: Excellent, hawk-like vision and can also see into the infrared and ultraviolet spectrum of color, has polarized vision, thermal imaging (sees heat 400 feet/122 m), Nightvision 1,000 feet (305 m), and can see the invisible. It possesses Supernatural Strength and Endurance and is able to carry 20 tons and pull 40 tons at the same time; is impervious to disease, impervious to normal cold as low as -200 degrees Fahrenheit (-129 Celsius), but magical and M.D. ice and cold attacks do half damage, resistant to fire and heat (half damage), and Bio-Regenerates damage at the rate of 4D6 M.D.C. per 24 hours and regrows damaged or lost small legs within 1D6 weeks and regenerates a lost spike or an eye in 1D6+12 weeks, but cannot regrow the large arms and hands/claws. **Note:** Cannot leap or scale the sides of walls or cliffs.

Attacks per Melee: Four (+1 for ancient Fury Beetles 118 year old and older).

Mega-Damage: Its main mode of attack is its ramming and biting

Bite, Restrained – 1D4x10 S.D.C.

Bite, Full Strength – 4D6+6 M.D.

Claw Swipe, Restrained – 2D6 M.D.

Claw Swipe, Full Strength – 5D6 M.D.; cannot perform a power punch.

Bump or Butt – 3D6 M.D.

Running Sideswipe, Slow – 3D6+3 M.D.

Running Body Block/Ram or Sideswipe under 40 mph (64 km) – 1D6x10 M.D. but counts as one attack. The body ramming attack of Fury Beetles at any speed easily knocks a hover

cycle, rocket bike or a low flying power armored threat careening off course and crashing (-30% to piloting skill upon being struck). Most animals as large or larger than the Fury Beetle, such as a dinosaur, Frost Panthera-Thereon, or Aegis Buffalo, is likely to be knocked off its feet (75% chance), lose initiative and one melee attack. Such an attack should also give the attacker or intruder second thoughts about continuing its attack. Smaller animals and humanoids are likely to be knocked off their feet and sent flying several yards/meters (1D4x10 feet/3-12.2 m), and lose initiative and two melee attacks).

Running Body Block/Ram between 50-80 mph (80-128 km) – 2D4x10 M.D. but counts as two attacks. 85% likelihood of knockdown, same as above.

Running Body Block/Ram (Maximum Damage) at 90 mph (144 km) or greater – 2D4x10+30 M.D. but counts as three attacks. 95% likelihood of knockdown, same as above.

Trample – 3D6 M.D. (2D6 from young). Being trampled is terrifying, but damage is less than most expect. The Fury Beetle's weight is evenly distributed by its many legs and this not so much a directed attack intended to inflict damage as it is an unfortunate occurrence.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 on initiative, +3 to strike, +1 to parry and dodge, +4 to automatic dodge when running at 60 mph (96 km) or faster, and +4 to save vs poison. Also see Natural Abilities for bonuses against cold, heat and fire.

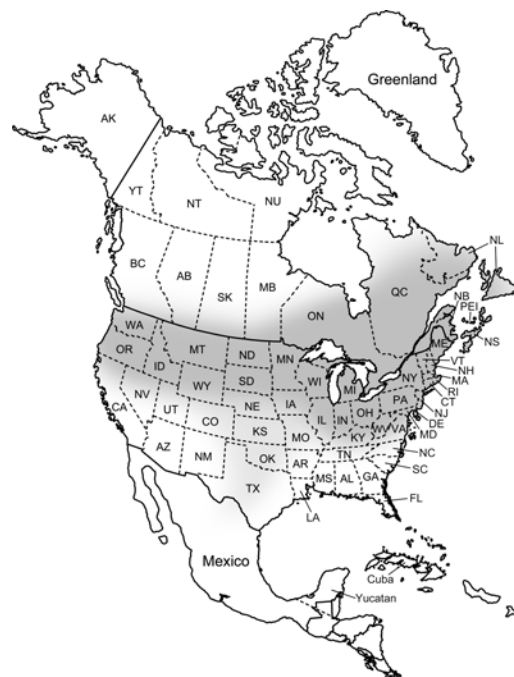
Vulnerabilities: Takes damage from all forms of M.D. weapons and attacks and has a soft underbelly if one can get to it. A dull-witted beast, it can sometimes be tricked, scared, chased away, and herded via the use of magic and explosives. Easily startled.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Can sense and locate water within a four mile (6.4 km) area (an automatic ability that costs no I.S.P.), plus Sense Evil, Sense Magic, Mind Block. **I.S.P.:** 1D6x10.

Habitat: The gigantic creatures are common to the forests of Ontario, Quebec, Newfoundland, Eastern Canada and the eastern United States, but tend to stay away from cities and large towns. Over one million are thought to live in this range.

Enemies: Humans and large predators like the Rhino-Buffalo.



Allies: None per se, other than their own kind. Fury Beetles are most likely to be encountered as lone individuals, pairs and small groups of 2D4+1. Small herds of 1D4x10 are mainly found in the northeast of the Old American Empire as far west as Wisconsin and northeastern and southeastern Canada. Fury Beetles are a favorite riding and work animal of the Simvan Monster Riders, some Native American and sometimes even Wilderness Scouts, Psi-Druids and other wilderness people. Perhaps because the Simvan favor the animal, most Wild Psi-Stalkers do not. Fury Beetles can be domesticated when captured and at a very young of four months or younger, and half of those will wash out.

Value: 2,000-4,000 credits for the meat which tastes like pork, 4,000-5,000 for its armored plates as a raw material.

A full plate suit of non-environmental, body armor made from an adult Fury Beetle provides 6D6+70 M.D.C., weighs 35 pounds (16 kg) and costs 10,000 to 20,000 credits.

A half suit provides 3D6+36 M.D.C., A.R. 14 and weighs 17 pounds (8 kg).

Wild Psi-Stalkers, Simvan, and some Native Americans also use its many spikes to make spearheads (1D6 S.D.C. damage), war hatchets/Tomahawks (1D6+1 damage), hand picks (1D6 S.D.C. damage), large picks for digging (2D6 S.D.C.), and hoes. All inflict S.D.C. damage but are as hard as tempered steel or M.D.C. ceramics.

A domesticated, trained riding Fury Beetle can cost anywhere from 10,000-60,000 credits, sometimes 15-30% more for the fastest, strongest and most heavily armored (highest M.D.C.). **Note:** A Fury Beetle's training must be started while the animal is very young to make it a suitable riding or work animal to haul cargo, pull stumps, plow fields, and only about 55% of them are successfully trained. Adults cannot be broken/tamed and domesticated. Only the Simvan are able to ride a wild-born adult.

Note: The Fury Beetle's first appearance was in the original **Rifts® RPG**, page 255, and later in **World Book 20: Rifts® Canada**, page 152.

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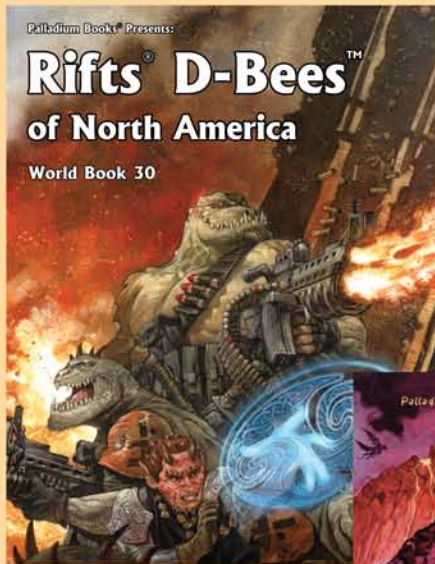
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