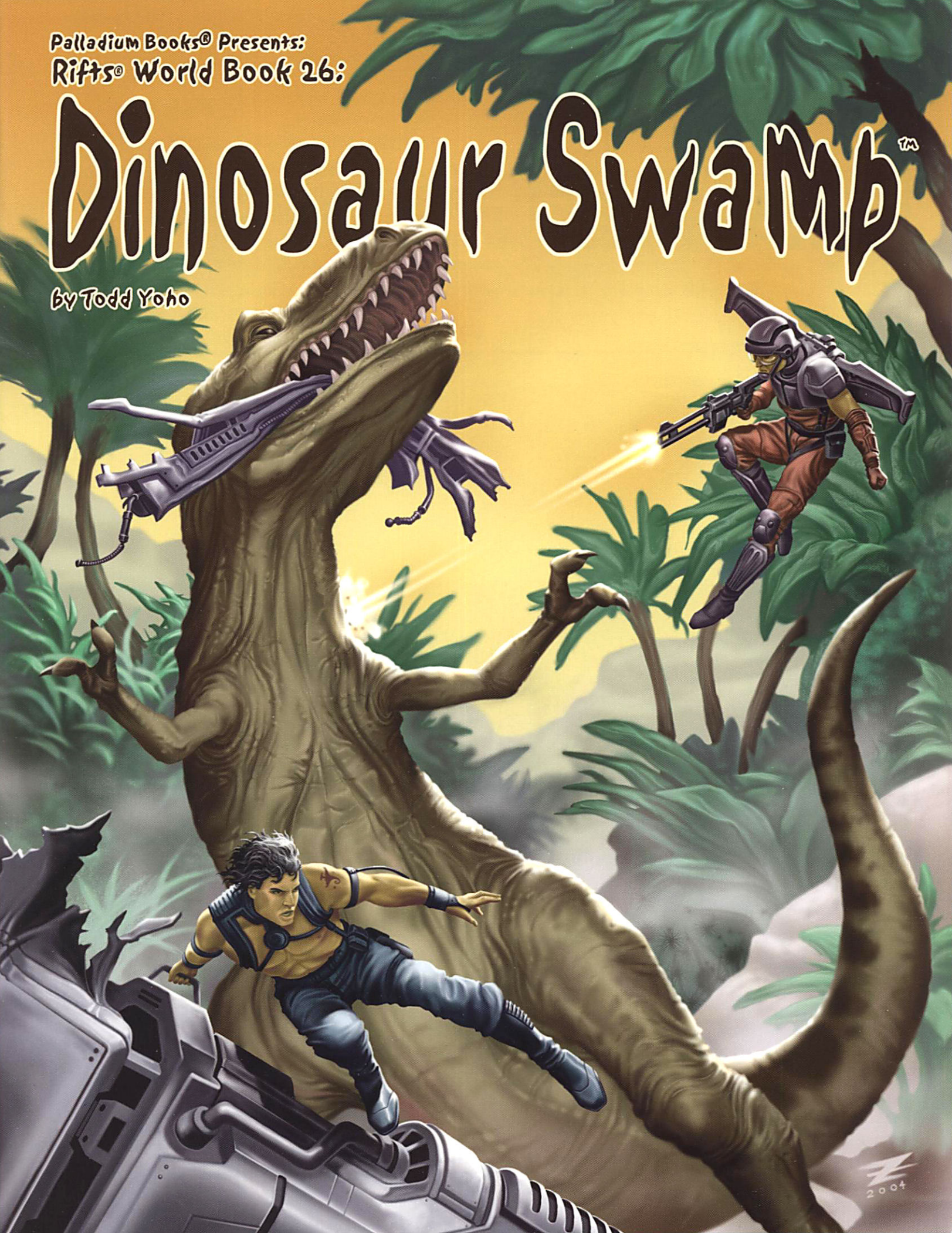
Palladium Books® Presents:

Rifts® World Book 26:

Dinosaur Swamp™

by Todd Yoho



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Dedications

To my wife **Jill** who has been my greatest patron. She has suffered for years as a gaming widow and made the transition to writing widow with infinite grace and patience.

To my parents, **Steve and Sharon**, who always supported my desire to tell stories with a living room full of friends and brightly colored dice all those years ago. Thanks for also giving me a swift kick in the rear when I needed it, and even when I didn't.

To **Carl Gleba** and **Ed Webley** who proofread this manuscript in all of its many forms: Carl, especially for "unclumsifying" some names, and Ed, who's off the cuff comments opened up several new doors. Thanks guys.

To, in no particular order, **Ed, Clauser, Rob, Wayne, Donnie, Briony, H, Ford, "Dogg," Carlton, Drew, Ray, Bill, Alan, Cory, Jon, J.**, and others too numerous to mention, for Saturdays, Sundays, All-Nighters, Spring Breaks, lazy Gaming Guild afternoons and everything in between. We should all do it again sometime.

And, of course, to **Kevin Siembieda**, for years of creating wonderful worlds to play in and for now letting me add my own little corner of the world to the mix.

– Todd Yoho, 2004

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– Kevin Siembieda, 2004

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Introduction by the Author

As someone who has lived most of my life in the southeast, and who has a certain interest in paleontology, the setting of **Rifts® Dinosaur Swamp** has always fascinated me. Up until now, it has been a conspicuous hole in the North American continent of Rifts Earth. The question of "What lies east beyond the Appalachian Mountains?" has been begging to be asked for quite some time. Well, now a small portion of that question has been answered. If the Midwest and interior of North America is the new Domain of Man, then Dinosaur Swamp, and the rest of the southeast, is the *Domain of Nature.*

In an effort to effect some parallel history following the Great Cataclysm, **Dinosaur Swamp** and the southeast is a region that has returned to the pristine wilderness that faced the first European explorers and American Colonials in their push westward from the Atlantic Ocean. This time, however, the expansion will be coming from the west in the form of the Coalition States and other powers from the Domain of Man. The Appalachian Mountains are once again a great barrier between east and west, and the region is a great wilderness where the Wilderness Scout is at home and civilization is almost non-existent.

The terrain of Dinosaur Swamp is beautiful, but unstable and treacherous to say the least. It is the new frontier waiting for adventurers, both novice and experienced alike, to brave the depths of its swamps and forests. It is a place where the very environment is a hazard with the exotic waiting around every corner, and surviving every new day is a victory. Ultimately, it's a place to have some exciting Rifts adventures and create some tales and legends of your own. Enjoy.

– Todd S. Yoho, 2004

DINOSAUR SWAMP

Pre-Rifts Southeast

Before the Coming of the Rifts, the American southeast was a patchwork quilt of agriculture, technology, education and recreation. It was a favorite travel destination for visitors from around the world, especially the amusement parks on the Florida peninsula. Not just a tourist magnet, Florida was also home to large divisions of NASA and several other aerospace installations. Among these installations are the very launch pads from which the first rockets that carried man to the moon were launched, which eventually led to the establishment of not only the orbital space stations, but colonies on the moon, Mars, and other exploratory space missions.

During the Golden Age, the southeast experienced a steady shift away from the dominant agricultural foundation it was built upon in favor of technological pursuits. Research universities, technological innovation, and extensive recreational centers dominated the landscape. Inclusive of Florida, Georgia and the Carolinas, the largely undeveloped land was gobbled up in the late 20th and early 21st centuries by corporations interested in constructing new, state of the art research facilities and entertainment compounds that were practically small cities in and of themselves. With an eye on the future, universities invested in local partnerships with leading technological industries and the government. When the orbital community was in the infancy of private exploitation, both the *KLS Corporation* and the *Cyberworks Aerospace Network* built extensive facilities in northern Florida, and soon lead the way in near-space exploration and, of course, exploitation. The southeast had become a world leader in technological research with breakthrough after breakthrough, helping to bring about the wonders of the Golden Age. It not only served as an example of what humankind could accomplish when it tried, but as a symbol of the vast potential waiting to be tapped.

In the time of the Rifts, however, all of that is a forgotten memory. It now serves as a reminder of what humanity lost in the wake of the Great Cataclysm. Likewise, the Meccas of science, the sprawling entertainment compounds, and cities of towering steel and glass are all gone. Florida and its neighboring States of the old American Empire have been reclaimed by Mother Nature and are now known as *Dinosaur Swamp*, a monster-filled wilderness where barbarians live and civilized people should avoid.

The Great Cataclysm

The Coming of the Rifts brought such a rain of destruction down on the southeast that it is a wonder that anything survived at all. The devastation raged for years, shaping the landscape into something truly alien, yet still strangely familiar. Being a coastal region, the southeast was inundated by tsunamis on a biblical scale. Florida, with its low proximity to sea level, was ravaged beyond all imagination. The barrier islands of North Carolina were wiped clean, and vanished in one fell swoop. The port cities of *Wilmington, Charleston* and *Savannah* were smashed and swept away like a child's building blocks. To anyone unfortunate enough to witness their destruction, the first wave would have looked as though the ocean drained away from the shore, then returned in a wall of water stretching from horizon to horizon and touching the sky. There would have been no person or thing left to witness the second and successive waves.

Hurricanes, on a scale beyond the known limits of a category 5, routinely swept out of the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico to scour the region for months after the initial devastation. Sometimes they were solitary, other times they would line up like hellish boxcars and pummel their way inland, dumping massive rains propelled by winds of explosive intensity. Even after passing over, oftentimes they would regain their strength if the con-

ditions were right and sweep back and unload on the continent again.

It wasn't only the ocean and wind that rained down destruction. While relatively stable for millions of years, the southeast had decades of extremely rare recorded occurrences of minor earthquakes along minor fault lines. However, these long quiet fault lines awakened by the tectonic stresses placed on the crust as a result of the Coming of the Rifts came back to life. Vast stretches of land rose and fell, pulled and stretched, deformed and broke under the massive energy unleashed by the Great Cataclysm. The displacement of the landscape wreaked havoc, and upon finally settling, half of Florida was gone, submerged, and the eastern seaboard now hundreds of miles inland from where it once was. I-95, once an important interstate highway, had become a rough marker of the new eastern shoreline.

In the wake of the devastation, older, more conventional structures collapsed in a heartbeat. Houses, apartments and other residential buildings that survived the hammering walls of water were torn apart by the winds and rain. Skyscrapers, and other more sturdily engineered and constructed buildings over 40 years old, were also leveled. The destruction was measured in minutes, not hours or days. Only the newer structures built with revolutionary, lightweight and super strong Mega-Damage materials resisted the first waves of destruction.

Most of the larger inland cities escaped the almost instantaneous destruction that fell upon the coastline. The cities of *Atlanta* and *Macon*, in the old State of Georgia, account for the highest percentage of urban survivors in the region. *Columbia*, South Carolina was also spared the worst of the ocean's wrath, but was reduced to rubble by a series of hurricanes. The burgeoning megalopolis of *Duraleigh* in North Carolina, a noted research center, was flattened by a series of earthquakes, and was then flooded due to a severe drop in local elevation as a result of the tectonic activity. The city of *Charlotte*, near the border with South Carolina, looked like a bombed out shell, but by comparison, was spared the complete obliteration visited on the coastal cities, and would become a place for survivors to rebuild. Today, it is now known as **Char**, and is what passes for civilization in the southeast.

It is in this landscape of death and ruin that unexplainable things would emerge to transform the region beyond the veil of destruction, and turn it into a vista from Earth's past.

The Survivors

There were no areas left unscathed in the entire southeast, and survival estimates ranged from a meager 5% to an optimistic 20%. Florida, with its low elevation compared to sea level, was hit the hardest with a survival rate of 2% – considered high by any standard. Those living in and near the Appalachian Mountains accounted for most of the survivors in the Carolinas and Georgia simply because they were spared the fury of the ocean. The tsunamis and tidal fluctuations did not reach that far inland, and by the time the hurricanes hit the mountains, they had already expended most of their destructive energies. They were still fierce storms, but nothing like the raging forces of nature that ravaged the coast.

Although safe from the ocean's fury, the mountains presented their own particular dangers, and were not safe havens by any stretch of the imagination. The storms brought massive amounts of rain, producing flash floods that raged through the river valleys. The sheer amount of water, combined with the earthquakes, burst mountain dams, flooding and submerging entire towns. The rending earth also caused the mountains to heave – birth pangs of a new era.

Those who survived the initial onslaught of the Great Cataclysm found themselves effectively trapped in the southeast. The Appalachian Mountains reshaped, with new rivers cutting through them and new mountain passes waiting to be discovered. The old routes of pre-Rifts days destroyed and replaced. Thus, while old maps of the region are highly prized, they are mostly inaccurate.

The major cities of Virginia and Maryland were reduced to ruin and quickly reclaimed by vegetation and alien life forms.

To the east and the south lay the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico, both nearly impassable to any save those experienced at open ocean travel, and even they had new problems to contend with, including dragons and creatures that defied imagination. The Bermuda triangle glowed and pulsated with eerie blue energy. Lightning crackled through the sky without thunder to proclaim its passing. Demon ships and strange monsters emerged from rolling mists that appeared out of nowhere. The sky would be quiet and clear one minute and purple, green or black the next. Violent storms and squalls would erupt without warning and disgorge monstrosities instead of rain or hail. Holes in the sky opened and closed as if dimensional windows, and the sky would pulse with white or blue light all hours of the day and night. Aside from the natural dangers of the open sea, there were now the added elements of sea monsters, dimensional storms, raging ley lines, and Rifts that cut through the sky to unleash all manner of men and monsters. The oceans were once again a mysterious and forbidding impasse that would claim thousands over the next two hundred years.

Over time, the land began to heal and what man once claimed, the earth reclaimed. Cities and highways turned into wilderness stretching north to south, thick and lush with plants both native and alien. The human survivors who built new lives in this wilderness were forced to adapt, move on, or perish. With the collapse of civilization, most of the survivors reverted to a much more primitive lifestyle, living at the mercy of dinosaurs and the whim of nature. Many were reduced to barbarism, preying on beasts and man alike. Communities like Char are the exception, not the rule, and barbarians and barbarism is the norm in Dinosaur Swamp. The laws of survival have became the way of life – kill or be killed and survival of the fittest. Outdoor skills are a necessity, and while the "Wilderness Scout" may or may not have had originated in the southeast, they abound there in remarkably high numbers.

In the aftermath of the Cataclysm, survivors like NEMA struggled to maintain a tenuous hold on the last few pockets of civilization. How long they may have held back the tempest of the Dark Age is lost to history. Despite their best efforts, NEMA was like a fire department whose own station house was ablaze. Even with roaming bands of noble heroes attempting to keep some semblance of order, the institution of civilization crumbled and died. There was no such thing as infrastructure, economy, law, or comfort. Civilization fragmented and vanished. There was only survival and barbarism. In the ruins of the cities, peo-

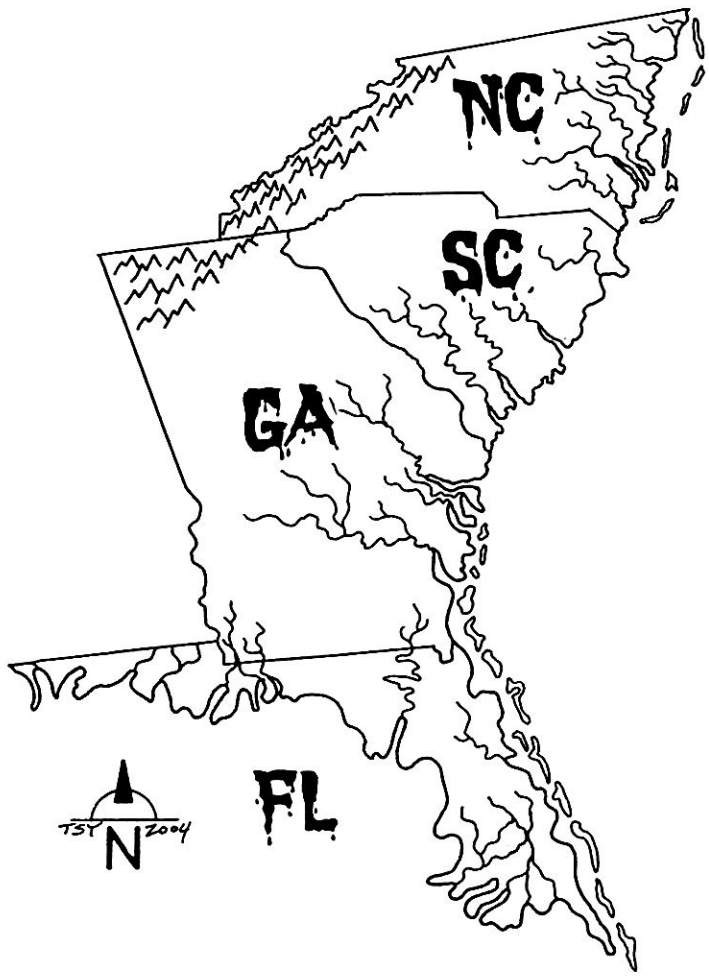
ple tried to eke out a life as close to normal as they could. For awhile, some, like NEMA, managed to delude themselves that tomorrow help would come . . . only it never did, and each tomorrow became worse than the one before it. The advent of the new Dark Age truly heralded an age of darkness. Civilization faded in the shadows, monsters emerged from the Rifts, and humankind teetered on the brink of extinction. Try as they could, the last vestiges of humanity became the targets of bandits, monsters, witch-hunts, and even each other.

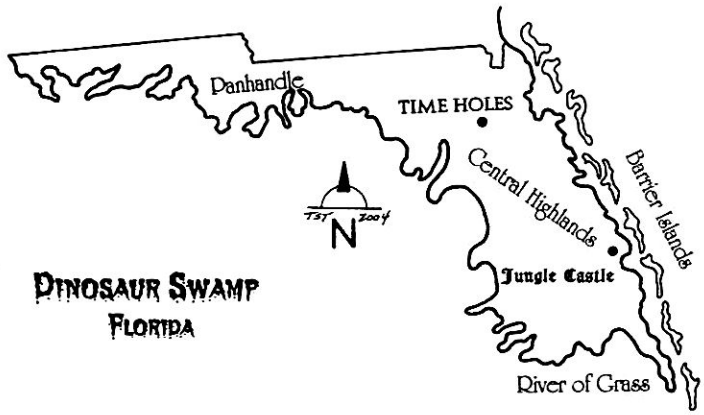
In this scenario, living in the wilderness was not the bleakest of fates. Many people chose to take their chances in the wild away from the demon plagues, organized gangs, raiders and would-be conquerors. Alone in places such as Dinosaur Swamp, individuals and small bands might escape the notice of greater beings and marauding armies. With nothing of apparent value, and infested by behemoths from Earth's past, the Swamp actually became a haven for those who could learn to adapt and appreciate what the region had to offer. Though life in Dinosaur Swamp was a challenge and each day of survival a small victory, it offered a new way of life for those willing to take it. Though their life may seem hard and unappealing to city folk, the Wilderness Scout, Huntsman and others who learned to live with nature in Dinosaur Swamp thrived and forged their own brand of happiness. These hardworking, god fearing, country folk have become the backbone of a loose-knit, grassroots community of good, strong, resourceful and heroic people in their own way. Wilderness folk who are quick to lend a helping hand to a neighbor or take in a stranger.

In much of the southwest, however, ruthlessness, savagery and brutality rule the day. Barbarism has swept the land, though even the barbarians have learned to live with nature, not apart from it. One of the early lessons of the Dark Age was that food equaled power. Those who had the food could win the loyalty of others and rule over them with impunity. Thus, dinosaur hunting became a viable occupation and the strong soon dominated the weak, using hunting and food as their leverage. To this day, many a tribe or community relies on a clan of hunters to protect and feed them. Though the Dinosaur Hunter has been glamorized in the West, he is part Wilderness Scout, part hunter, part opportunist and part extortionist with delusions of grandeur and a hunger for power. Many would be king, and think nothing of using the threat of starvation or marauding dinosaurs to blackmail a community into giving them what they want. That having been said, other Dinosaur Hunters and Swamp Stompers have proven to be water-soaked heroes and champions of the downtrodden. Such is the diversity and duality of human beings and survival in the swamplands of the southeast.

In recent years, there has been a movement by cultured people who choose to live in the wilds of Dinosaur Swamp in a quest to be free of civilization and to get closer to nature. These individuals seek a simpler life and revel in nature, isolation and, for some, even barbarism. Others see the wilderness as a business opportunity. A place to exploit the nature that seems to grow back as quickly as it is used up. These individuals search for new herbs and medicines, or hunt exotic animals for food, pets, attractions and other commodities, and may even prey upon the barbarians and gentler wilderness folk, selling or trading them goods for unique items or secrets of the Swamp. For now, Dinosaur Swamp seems to be a renewable resource waiting to be tapped by those bold enough to try to harness it. Medicines, food, material for clothing and building, exotic beasts, and strange plants can all be harvested from the wilderness and sold for a good profit back west. And for the boldest of adventurers, many are the tales of lost cities, ancient military stockpiles, buried technology and alien magic waiting to be discovered and claimed by those cunning or strong enough to win them.

Dinosaur Swamp





Hazards of Dinosaur Swamp

Despite the evocative name of *Dinosaur Swamp,* the region is home to more than dinosaurs. From the *River of Grass* north to the *Carolinas*, the fauna and flora are a mosaic of native and alien species. In the old state of **Florida**, for example, the central highlands are home to the native bobcat and puma, as well as the Panthera-Tereon and dinosaurs. Wild dogs prowl the swamps too, descended from domestic dogs, but other packs consist of wolves, coyotes and even jackals, many descended from zoo animals that survived the Great Cataclysm. Alligators and crocodiles, inhabitants of the Everglades for millennia, now live side by side with their distant cousins the Mega-Crocodile and Sarcosuchus that reach 40 feet (12.2 m) in length and can swallow a man whole. Massive flocks of birds fill the trees and sky, and include blackbirds, herons, moorhens, the proto-avian looking anhingas, cranes and majestic ospreys, as well as new, alien species like the metallic blue Azhures. However, it is the dinosaurs that have ascended to prominence, overshadowing their smaller cousins as the dominant life forms. Here, in the swamplands named after them, the dinosaurs are the uncontested masters of the region.

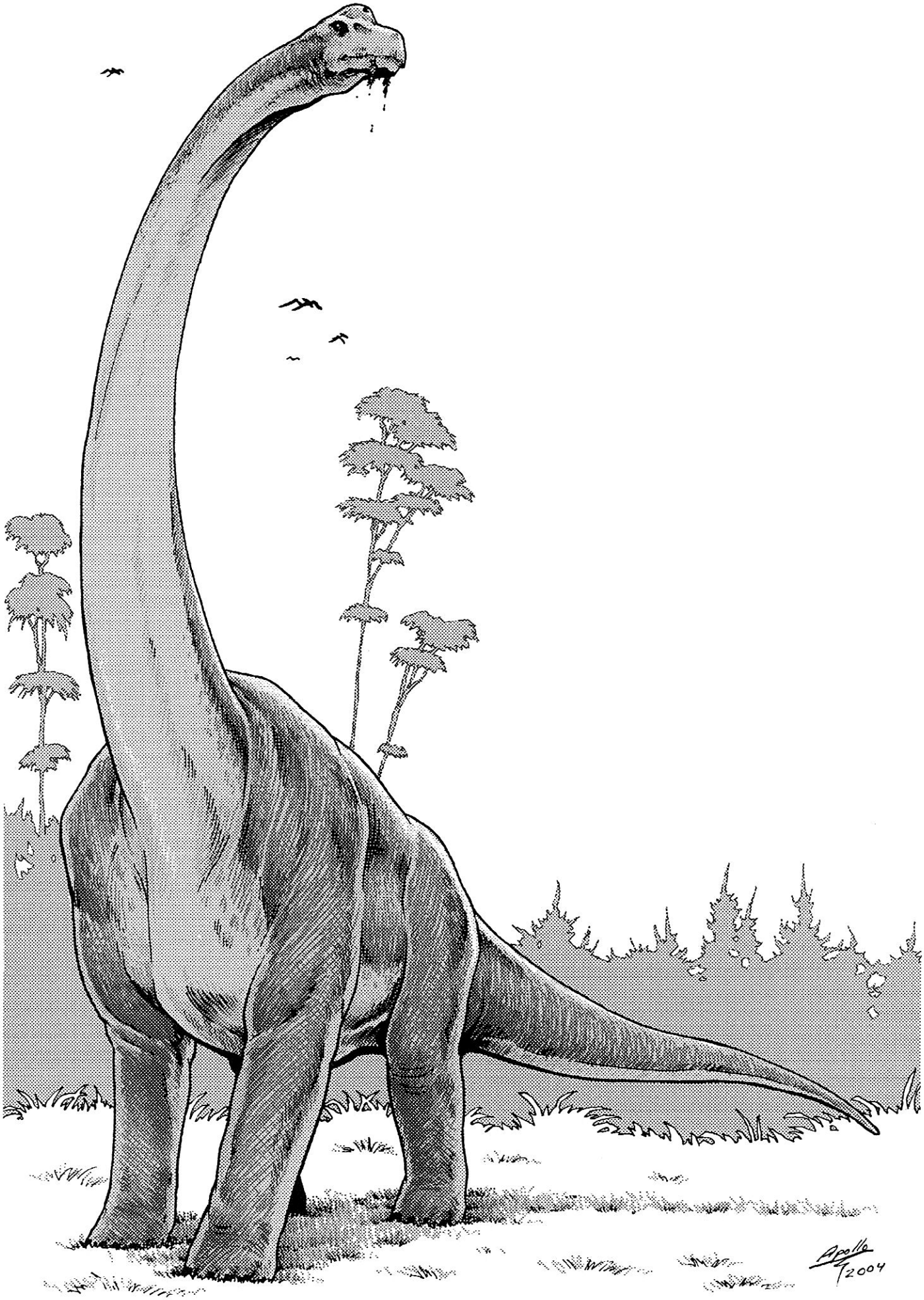
Ranging from the mighty *Tyrannosaurus Rex* to the diminutive *Scampers*, an estimated 80% of all dinosaur species found on Rifts Earth make the region their home. The dense plant life of the peninsula and the temperate forests inland afford ample food for the herbivores, and the vast numbers of herbivores provide an ample food supply for the bloodthirsty carnivores. However, the food pyramid doesn't rely simply on dinosaurs preying on other dinosaurs. The large number of insects contribute to the huge populations of the smaller dinosaur carnivores found in the wetland regions where they prey on insects, fish, snakes, small mammals and injured, sick and unsuspecting humans. In the swampy marsh, the largest herbivores and carnivores are at a disadvantage, but the small dinosaurs, 'gators and other aquatic monstrosities thrive.

Many animals prefer the dry comfort of the central forests, while others are at home in the River of Grass where insects, rabbits and deer are plentiful. Both areas are home to dinosaurs, humans and animals indigenous to Earth living side by side. (**Note:** Specific regional population information is found with each individual animal description.)

While the region takes its name from the many species of dinosaurs that inhabit the area, one can argue that the plant life is what really rules here. Vast forests of native trees such as the cypress, coastal mangroves, elderberry, elm, water locust, oak, longleaf and loblolly pines populate the drier areas of the region. There is also notable alien vegetation, such as the droopy vine *Uzain Plant* and the long limbed *Darach Tree*, both noted for their healing properties. **The River of Grass** is home to the aptly named native saw grass, with tiny serrations running the length of the blade, and the even more dangerous *Blacktooth*, with serrations so sharp and fine that they can scratch even Mega-Damage material. The Blacktooth gets its name because it harbors a highly infectious bacteria in the teeth of its serrations, and turns the limbs of those infected black in a matter of hours. Blacktooth infections are nasty, do not respond to most forms of antibiotics and often require magical or psychic healing. There are, however, even more vicious plants to be found in Dinosaur Swamp – *man-eaters*. Various species of insect devouring plants have been found the world over. Though they were interesting novelties and fascinating botanical specimens, they posed no threat to anyone but insects and the occasional slug. The Coming of the Rifts, however, has unleashed all manner of strange new plants from alien worlds and dimensions. Among them, plants that require the nutrients found in living tissues; i.e., they eat birds, mammals and people! They are not mobile hunters like dinosaurs or cats, nor are they demons, or intelligent, but they can be just as lethal. Because they are plants, they can't be frightened, distracted, or bribed, and simply kill and feed on living beings as a matter of their biological nature. Anything that comes within their reach is potential prey, making them a class of horror all their own.

Hunting Dinosaurs & Other Creatures

There's no doubt about it, dinosaurs are dynamic, fascinating creatures whether they are small, large or gigantic. They were enormously successful during their span on Earth in the past, and the Rifts have ripped them out of the pages of history back into the present of Rifts Earth – at least in parts of North America. The magic energies of Rifts Earth and the very nature of dinosaurs makes dinosaurs Mega-Damage creatures with hides as tough as M.D.C. metal, and with a varying array of impressive, natural weapons ranging from serrated teeth, dagger-like claws, and bony skullcaps to whip-like tails, spikes, horns and other features. This makes dinosaurs a match for modern adventurers clad in power armor or piloting a giant robot or armored vehicle. Ordinary people and S.D.C. animals have little hope of surviving a dinosaur attack except to run, hide and/or find a place where their monstrous attacker cannot reach them. A large predator like the T-Rex is nothing short of a fearless monster that has been known to charge large groups of explorers, tangle with giant robots and tear at large vehicles. Humans on foot are a favorite and easy prey of the Tyrannosaurus. The creature will typically charge the group, and before they can scatter, snap up 1-3 in its massive maw and try to swallow them after only a few bites. Power armor, force fields and magic are the best defense against such attacks, causing the T-Rex to spit out anything it can't crunch up and swallow easily. However, falling or being tossed from the beast's jaws can inflict damage (1D4 M.D.) all by itself, and even armor clad individuals may be momentarily stunned (01-60% chance; 1D6 melee rounds), get knocked unconscious (01-12% chance; 1D6 minutes) or break a bone (01-06% chance; apply the appropriate penalties). Large, aggressive predators like the T-Rex, Allosaurus and giant alligators may also attack and damage or wreck vehicles, huts and even large buildings before trotting back into the forest. Predatory dinosaurs, large and small, have little to no fear of humans, and are smart enough to learn to run when heavy or numerous Mega-Damage weapons are turned on them. This means they see human camps, villages and towns as food centers to watch and poach, rather than fortified places to be avoided. Cunning



hunters, most dinosaur predators will watch from a distance and stalk people along the edge of town, or who wander away from the herd (town/tribe) and at night when most of the townspeople (herd) are asleep. Hit and run tactics, ambushes, and surprise attacks are all part of the carnivorous dinosaurs' instinctive bag of tricks. The smart predatory dinosaurs, like Raptors, may stake out watering holes and even lay traps using children or an injured person as bait. If no one comes to rescue the "bait" after a few hours, the predator gives up, devours the bait, and goes off in search of other prey. Livestock, especially penned animals, are also targeted by carnivores on the prowl, and kept animals in Dinosaur Swamp are an open invitation – a call to dinner – for dinosaur predators.

Sauropods and other large herbivores also represent danger to humans. They are known to innocently crush vehicles, trample an entire campsite or wreck a village as they meander through an area, browsing for vegetation to eat. They may also feed on farm crops, stored grain, and fruit stands. Likewise, a spooked herd may stampede and crush everything in their path. On the other hand, many make good eating, and a single animal can feed a village of 500 for a month, provided there is a way to store and preserve the meat.

In terms of straight statistics, it would take a few characters in power armor armed with Mega-Damage rail guns or energy weapons to stand toe to toe with a T-Rex or take down a giant sauropod. Rail Guns, explosives and heavy weapons are effective in killing dinosaurs and for target shooting, but not for hunting because such weapons don't leave much of the creature left to eat. True "hunters" track and kill dinosaurs for food, eating their meat and using their hides, bones, teeth, and claws as tools, weapons, jewelry, fabric and trade goods. Even barbarians and other primitive people hunt dinosaurs. How do they manage it? They organize.

Early humans were successful in hunting large, potentially dangerous animals such as the Woolly Mammoth tens of thousands of years before the advent of firearms, by working as a team and outthinking their prey. In fact, humans were so successful at hunting that they probably helped drive many prehistoric giant mammals into extinction. That's probably not likely to happen on Rifts Earth, but it's important to point out that humans have an established history of hunting large, powerful animals. They do so by developing the necessary skills, tactics, tools and weapons.

The Eastern Barbarian tribes have had several centuries to develop dinosaur hunting into a finely crafted art. They have learned to use the environment to their advantage and live by scavenging as much as hunting. Why go through all of the danger involved in hunting a live Duckbilled Honker when you can pick over the fresh corpse of one, six, or even a dozen that have drowned trying to cross a swollen springtime river? Furthermore, they've developed strategies and tactics to trick and herd them into the river, creating a panic in the animals, and letting the river and fear do the rest. Hunters can also do the same by running the dinosaurs off a cliff into a ravine or a marsh, as well as pit traps and dead end ruins. Barbarian hunters and Wilderness Scouts also make extensive use of traps, such as pit falls, snares, trip wires and other simple, but effective hunting devices. By doing so, they use the animal's own weight against it, if not bringing it down, at least inflicting an injury to a limb, slowing it down and making it easier to kill. Instead of being at the mercy of the giant animals, the barbarians are the masters of their environment, using it to their own advantage.

High-tech hunting methods and techniques include the use of advanced optics, sensors and tracking devices to locate and follow herds, and the use of precision M.D. weapons to make a kill without destroying the body. Hunting isn't about blasting away at your target, hoping a few rounds land where you want them. Hunting is about precision placement of a single killing, or at least disabling, shot. (**Note:** The use of rail guns rips the body to shreds and leaves thousands of flechette rounds in the meat. Plasma burns and chars the flesh, making as much as half inedible, particle beams and heavy energy weapons vaporize large portions, and explosives have an obvious disadvantage unless carefully used to cripple the monster and then kill it with a precision shot to the head.)

Despite the dinosaurs' obvious physical advantages over the mortal hunter, human ingenuity and the proper tools and tactics allow as few as half a dozen hunters to win the day. And the best Dinosaur Hunter may be able to take down a great beast on his own, though such a bold move is extremely risky. Dinosaurs on Rifts Earth may be tough and have armor-like Mega-Damage hides, but they still have all of the vulnerabilities inherent to all living creatures. A well-placed head shot will kill just about anything, and if the weapon at hand won't pierce the hide or skull, or do much damage, the eye is a perfectly viable target. Even if it doesn't pierce the brain cavity, the animal is blinded and panicked, giving the edge to the hunter and making the beast vulnerable to additional debilitating attacks. It is only a matter of time until it can be safely brought down.

Head shots, especially to the eye, are extremely difficult targets to hit, to say the least. Even with a lifetime of experience, some hunters never achieve a consistent level of accuracy. On the target range, sure, that level of accuracy is possible. I (Todd Yoho) have seen nickel, and even dime sized targets hit from 100+ yards out with a rifle hunting scope, but it's a stationary target on a shooting range. It isn't moving or breathing, or attacking the shooter, and there's not the stress of knowing a successful shot may mean the difference between eating or not eating that evening. Other, vital shots include the legs, especially the knee and ankle joints, the base of the spine where the tail intersects with the main body, or anywhere along the neck are excellent places to wound a dinosaur in order to slow it down for a second or third kill shot. Taking out a knee or ankle joint almost ensures that the animal isn't going far, and wherever they are going, they aren't moving very fast. Shooting the tail junction produces a bloody wound that may kill the animal via blood loss and leaves an easy to follow trail, and, if lucky, might even sever the spinal cord, paralyzing the tail and one or both of its rear legs (reduce speed by 70%).

From a game mechanics point of view, each of these attacks would be considered Critical Strikes, and could possibly do as much as triple damage, but require a called shot, and the creature's movement and ground cover may add additional penalties to strike. A successful shot would slow the animal down, reduce its maneuverability, and make it much less of a threat than trying to do the infamous "stand and shoot" strategy. All of these tactics can be achieved with almost any long-range weapon available on Rifts Earth, and even the measured delivery of ex-

plosives, like those on specialty arrows, will do the trick. Granted, the meat and tissue around the wound site will most likely be ruined, but where giant dinosaurs are concerned, there is most definitely more to go around.

Of course, modern weapons and ancient tactics aren't the only way to hunt dinosaurs; there's always the application of *magic*. With centuries of hunting experience (it's a necessary way of life among the barbarians), it should come as no surprise that some people use magic and magical weapons for hunting. Spells like *Magic Net, Carpet of Adhesion,* and *Wisps of Confusion* can capture and hold, or disorient, a dinosaur. Wall of Wind can direct and herd them, Luck Curse, Life Drain and Agony can disable them completely, and there are a host of other spells that can be used with equal or greater effect. Note, however, that powerful spells like *Fire Ball* and *Call Lightning* will ruin 15% of the meat with each blast. Magic weapons like *Sickness Spears* and *Minor Curse Arrows* are commonly used to inflict prey with temporary, debilitating conditions, weakening them for easy combat. A sauropod brought down by any means enables an entire tribe to eat for weeks, as well as supplies them with other raw materials (bones and teeth for making needles, utensils, and jewelry, hide for clothing and light armor, etc). Defending the corpse from a curious and hungry dinosaur predator or scavenger is another story altogether, but even if the hunters can't fend it (or them) off, at least they succeeded in bringing the sauropod down and should have gotten something worthwhile out of it before they lose their kill to another marauding beast or pack of wild animals.

Dinosaur Descriptions

With the Coming of the Rifts, dinosaurs once again populate the Earth. All breeds of dinosaur, from the smallest to the gargantuan, make their homes in what was once Florida, Georgia and the Carolinas. Not just dinosaur-like creatures such as the *Desert Sleepers* and *Mammoth Brontodons*, but identifiable dinosaurs from Earth's past, like the *Tyrannosaurus Rex* and *Stegosaurus* among others. The biological relationship, if any, between dinosaur-like animals and the so-called "True Dinosaurs" is as yet uncovered, but it is clear that dinosaurs have leapt from the fossil record out of extinction and into the world of humans.

Despite all outward appearances, there are some unusual attributes found among many of the animals that fall into the category of True Dinosaurs. Some exhibit almost *magical abilities* alien to any animal on Earth prior to the Great Cataclysm. While most people have more pressing concerns, others, such as Wilderness Scouts, Rogue Scientists and Scholars, have taken up the task to answer whether these minor mysteries were present in the dinosaurs of Earth's past, or if they are mutations or new adaptations to the magical world of Rifts Earth. If native to the animals, then it adds credibility to the idea that the Earth has cycles of high and low P.P.E., and that dinosaurs most probably existed in one of the high periods of magic. If their abilities are an adaptation to life on Rifts Earth, it might prove that the dinosaurs are not just successful life forms, but successful in adapting beyond the wildest beliefs. Their genetic code could be the ultimate blueprint for natural malleability, surpassing the scientific creations perpetuated at Lone Star. Or is it possible that the *Gene-Splicers* are connected somehow, either in the past or the present? The latter seems unlikely, but is possible. All are good questions that look for answers.

Presented below are dinosaurs common to **Dinosaur Swamp** and notes on dinosaurs and dinosaur-like creatures that appear in **Rifts® World Book 14: New West**. These listings are far from exhaustive, as there are many *more* creatures lurking in Dinosaur Swamp waiting to be discovered. However, those described in the pages that follow are the most common or notable in the region. (**Note:** Game Masters, this leaves you the flexibility to introduce any additional dinosaurs you might desire, though they are likely to be less common and numerous than those listed here. Also, because the dimensional Rifts have torn dinosaurs from Earth's past, creatures that used to live in completely different eras now coexist in the same time and habitat. Explore the possibilities.)

New West™ Dinosaurs

Duckbilled Honkers

The Duckbills have found an ideal home in Dinosaur Swamp. Large herds of them are known to migrate in the shadow of the Appalachian Mountains and the lowlands of Florida. They have thrived in an environment rich in the vegetation they find edible. Though always on the move, once a year for 3 weeks, a herd will stop and congregate 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 for their entire lives (or at least the same general area), and with them come the predators who take advantage of the Duckbill's nature. See **Rifts® New West,** page 141, for complete details on this dinosaur.

Leatherwing

The Leatherwings populate the skies over Dinosaur Swamp and are even known to fly along the Atlantic coast, traveling as far as 50 miles (80 km) out to sea where they snatch large fish out of the ocean and sailors from the decks of ships. While not nearly as numerous as out west, they have begun to take root in the Appalachian Mountains. Their coloring allows them to blend in with the sky remarkably well, but they are vulnerable while on the ground as their blue and tan hides contrast with the lush greenery that covers the land of the southeast. See **Rifts® New West,** page 148, for complete details.

Similar Winged Dinosaurs to the Leatherwing or pterodactyl typically have similar builds to the Leatherwing, but are not as big or tough. Take the stats of the Leatherwing and reduce the attributes, M.D.C. and damage rates by 1D4x10+30%. As for flying speed, roll percentile dice and modify as follows: 01-40% are slower flyers (reduce flying Spd by 1D4x10%), and 41-00% are smaller and faster (increase flying Spd by 1D4x10% and +1 to strike and dodge while in flight).

Tiger Claw Raptor

Roaming packs of these carnivores are the terrors of Florida. The Raptor's build is representative of other man-sized theropods. Where their western counterparts are reddish brown in color, the eastern variety is a dark green accented with black stripes. Mostly concentrated in Florida, they are not often found north of Georgia. Thankfully, only a few isolated bands of Tiger Claw Raptors roam the coast of North Carolina, though the occasional, small band of 1D4+2 may hunt as far north as Pennsylvania and Southern Michigan and as far west as the Magic Zone (Ohio), but *only* during the hottest part of summer (typically a 3-5 week span from the middle of July to mid-August unless unseasonably warm), and always return to the southeast with the first chill in the air. See **Rifts® New West,** page 162, for complete details.

Note: To create other, similar sickle-clawed dinosaurs, take the stats of the Tiger Claw Raptor, remove the poison spit ability and reduce attributes, size, M.D.C., and damage by 10%. To create a *true Velociraptor*, simply eliminate the poison spit ability and add the magical ability to use Chameleon (equal to a third level spell caster) at will when on a ley line.

Tri-Tops

Large, plains grazing animals, few Tri-Tops or other ceratopsians are found in the deep south of Dinosaur Swamp. They are mostly found in the wooded regions of Georgia and North Carolina with an occasional isolated herd venturing south into the more marshy regions. The swamps offer a vast source of food, but the animal is not well suited to live in the swampy regions. They are typical of horn frilled dinosaurs, and their attributes, stats and abilities are representative of true ceratopsians like *Triceratops* and *Chasmosaurus*. See **Rifts® New West,** page 164, for complete details.

Tyrannosaurus Rex

The so called "king of the dinosaurs," while fierce, suffers from stiff competition in Dinosaur Swamp. Direct competition from other large predators has generalized Tyrannosaurs, leveling the top of the food chain. Found throughout Dinosaur Swamp, the T-Rex will hunt wherever prey can be found. They are also aggressive scavengers who are known to chase away smaller predators (and humans) from their own kills and claim the carcass for themselves. The Tyrannosaurus is typically a solitary hunter, so encountering more than one, even a mated pair, is a rarity. The Tyrannosaur is a favorite "monster" in the arenas in Atlantis, consequently their numbers are not only held in check by natural conditions like available food and competition, but they are also actively hunted by Splugorth Raiders as well as trophy hunters who see the T-Rex as the ultimate prize in big game hunting. See **Rifts® New West,** page 166, for complete details.

Dinosaur-Like Creatures of the New West

These are creatures that are not believed to have ever before existed on Earth. Thus, they are not part of Earth's history, but alien dinosaurs or dinosaur-like beings from alien worlds or dimensions.

Mammoth Brontodon

Originally thought to live only in the western half of North America, Mammoth Brontodons have been found thriving in the forests of Dinosaur Swamp and small herds are also found, here and there, throughout the southern States of the old American Empire. In the southeast, they are most frequently encountered in the forests of Georgia, but there is strong evidence of individuals living in the SteelTree Forest. They are one of the few animals other than the Iron-Hoof herds capable of actually eating and digesting the leaves and roots of the SteelTree trees. See **Rifts® New West,** page 149, for complete details.

Moss-Back Scuttler

While not exactly common, Moss-Back Scuttlers are *sometimes* found in the low hills of Georgia, but a few have been reported in the panhandle region of Florida and into the Dark Woods of Alabama. Barbarians and Wilderness Scouts are usually content to leave the Moss-Backs alone, noting that as long as one remains in the area, food supplies should continue to last. When a known Scuttler moves from its chosen spot, that's a sure sign that something in the environment has changed, usually for the worse. See **Rifts® New West,** page 151, for complete details.

Ostrosaurus

Mostly lost among the other medium-sized dinosaurs are the Ostrosaurus packs. While extremely common in the west, they have failed to populate in significant numbers in the wilds of Dinosaur Swamp. With a large abundance of predators already populating the top of the food chain by the time the first Ostrosaurus crossed the Appalachians, they simply don't have any advantage that might allow them to supplant the Allosaurs, or even the Raptor packs. Their extremely fast running speeds are much more suited to hunting buffalo on the open plains of the west than the relatively confined forests and swamps of the east and southeast. See **Rifts® New West,** page 153, for complete details.

Panthera-Tereon

A master hunter, the Panthera-Tereon has found an excellent home in the forests of the southeast, particularly the forests in the shadows of the Appalachian Mountains. They are also known to prowl the SteelTree forest in great numbers, preying on the Iron-Hoof families, and are commonly sighted on the outskirts of the *city of Char*. There is also a related, if dog-like, species, that is a smaller, leaner version of the animal called *Panthera-Thrinax* detailed in the section of new creatures that follows. See **Rifts® New West,** page 155, for complete details on the Panthera-Tereon.

Rhino-Buffalo

A massive predator, bigger than the American Buffalo, their numbers are modest in Dinosaur Swamp because of the massive amount of competition from dinosaurs, and the fact that they don't do well in swamps and marshlands (they prefer light forests and open plains). They are mostly found in the *Piedmont* regions of the Carolinas and Georgia, with an isolated male sometimes migrating as far south as Florida. Much like the Ostrosaurus, their incredible running speed is wasted in thick forests and stalled in the soft mud and marsh of the swamps. Despite being as large as a T-Rex, they have much thinner hides than most dinosaurs, and are preyed upon by the top tier carnivores of Dinosaur Swamp. See **Rifts® New West,** page 158, for complete details.

Silonar

No large populations of Silonars are known to exist in Dinosaur Swamp because they are not particularly suited for living in the region. The gold coloration of the males is especially poor camouflage in the forest, but the females with their green and gray primary coloration might fare better. The climate of the southeast, with its particularly frigid and extended winter cold snaps, usually kills off whatever numbers of Silonars might migrate to the region during the summer. See **Rifts® New West,** page 160, for complete details. Rumor has it that the Silonar originates from the Palladium World.

New Dinosaurs

Allosaurus

At first glance, many adventurers confuse Allosaurs with juvenile Tyrannosaurs – when a tooth-filled maw is racing toward you, the finer points of dinosaur anatomy are largely unimportant. While there are carnivorous theropods of similar build, adult Allosaurs are smaller, about half the size of Tyrannosaurs, and have horns, fins and bony ridges decorating their skulls. They also have extremely dexterous grasping forearms, enabling them to grab hold of prey and finish them off with their serrated teeth. They are usually found with intricate camouflage patterns in colors of greens, browns and dark reds. There are unconfirmed reports of a breed of Allosaurus that can turn invisible at will, but these have been dismissed as folklore based on their excellent camouflage patterning and stealth.

Allosaurs are typically solitary hunters and scavengers, though they have been known to congregate in *family packs* to raise their young. Lone males are notoriously single-minded and will pursue prey to the exclusion of all else.

Alignment: Animal Predator, considered Miscreant or Diabolic.

Attributes: Animal attributes are very consistent and offer a smaller range of attribute aptitude. I.Q. 1D4+3; medium animal intelligence. M.E. 4+1D6, M.A. 6+1D6, P.S. 30+1D6, P.P. 15+2D6, P.E. 19+1D6, P.B. 4+2D6, Spd. 28+2D6; a minimum speed of 30 (23 mph/36.8 km), most have a speed of 34 (26 mph/41.6 km). Supernatural P.S. and P.E.

Mega-Damage by Location:

Head – 100

Forelimbs (2) – 40 each

Hind Limbs (2) – 150 each

Tail – 90

Main Body – 1D4x100

Horror Factor: 15

Size: 20 feet (6.1 m) long from snout to tip of tail, 8-10 feet (2.4 to 3 m) tall.

Weight: 4000 lbs (1800 kg).

Average Life Span: 20-26 years.

P.P.E.: 3D6

O.C.C.: None; animal.

Natural Abilities: Swift runner for its size, they can maintain their top speed for 25 minutes. Have an excellent sense of smell and can track by smell 70%. Their camouflage coloring enables them to blend in with their surroundings and ambush prey with the equivalent of the Camouflage skill at 65% and Prowl at 55%. Some individuals have coloring that is so rich with detail and texture that they can blend with their surroundings with the equivalent of the Camouflage skill at 80% and Prowl at 65%. Land Navigation 90%. Cannot Swim or Climb.

Are there invisible Allosaurs? I leave it up to individual Game Masters to answer that question for their own games. If they do exist, they can probably turn invisible at will and maintain invisibility for an hour at a time as a hiding and stalking technique where the monster waits for prey. However, as soon as it attacks or begins to move quickly, the invisibility is gone and the beast is again visible.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Damage: Head Butt 1D6+6 M.D., bite 1D4x10 M.D., claw with forelimbs 3D6 M.D., kick 5D6 M.D. with a 30% chance of tripping human-sized targets, claw with hind limbs 6D6 M.D., slash with tail 1D4x10 M.D. with a 01-60% chance of knocking down human-sized targets.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, +2 to dodge, +1 to roll with impact, and +9 to save vs Horror Factor.

Magic: Heals at a rate of 6D6 M.D. per hour when on a ley line!

Psionics: None.

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

Allies: None, except for members of their own packs when they form them.

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

Habitat: Forests and marshy lowlands, though tends to stay on the fringes. Found predominantly in the forests of North and South Carolina.

Ankylosaurus

Walking tanks, Ankylosaurs are extremely heavily armored, four-legged plant eaters protected by a series of spikes lining the body and a devastating bone-club tail. Slow moving with incredibly small brains, Ankylosaurs are ground level browsers that usually travel in small family groups. They are normally oblivious to anything going on around them, but react with brutal swiftness if they feel threatened. Usually, it takes something quite significant to threaten these armored behemoths. They have been known to shrug off repeated rail gun bursts, not even feeling the impact under their dense, bony plates.

Their large, bulbous bodies and immense weight make them unsuited for life in the wetlands. The constant threat of being caught in the marsh or even in the mud of a riverbank makes them keep to the northern and western regions, though the adults don't particularly care for the forests either. Their bulk makes it difficult to maneuver between the trees when they don't just plow them over. Young Ankylosaurs typically take to the forest until they reach adulthood, when they rely on their fully developed armor to protect them.

One peculiar fact that has been discovered is that Ankylosaurs are incredibly resistant to pain and virtually immune to toxins. They have been known to devour some of the most poisonous plants found in Dinosaur Swamp, in quantities that would kill a full grown sauropod, and suffer no ill effect. How they accomplish this is, as of yet, quite unknown. Ankylosaurs are notoriously fond of eating the dangerous *Qink* plant. They are the only known animals able to resist the lashing tendrils and poisonous spines and get to the fleshy center of the plant.

Alignment: Animal, considered Anarchist.

Attributes: Animal attributes are very consistent and offer a smaller range of attribute aptitude. I.Q. 1D4; extremely low animal intelligence. M.E. 1D6, M.A. 1D6+2, P.S. 36+2D6, P.P. 4+2D6, P.E. 24+1D6, P.B. 2D6, Spd. 15+1D6; a minimum speed of 16 (12 mph/19.2 km), most have a speed of 18 (14 mph/22.4 km). Supernatural P.S. and P.E.

Mega-Damage by Location:

*Head – 150

*Body Spikes (typically 20) – 25 each

Forelimbs (2) – 190 each

Hind Limbs (2) – 225 each

Tail – 200

*Bone-club tail tip – 300

Underbelly – 200

Main Body – 600+1D6x100

* A single asterisk indicates a small or difficult target to hit and requires a "called shot" at -3 to strike.

Horror Factor: None, though an angry family of them might warrant a temporary application of a Horror Factor of 10.

Size: 35 feet (10.6 m) long, 4 feet (1.2 m) tall at the hips.

Weight: 8000 pounds (3600 kg).

Average Life Span: 50-70 years.

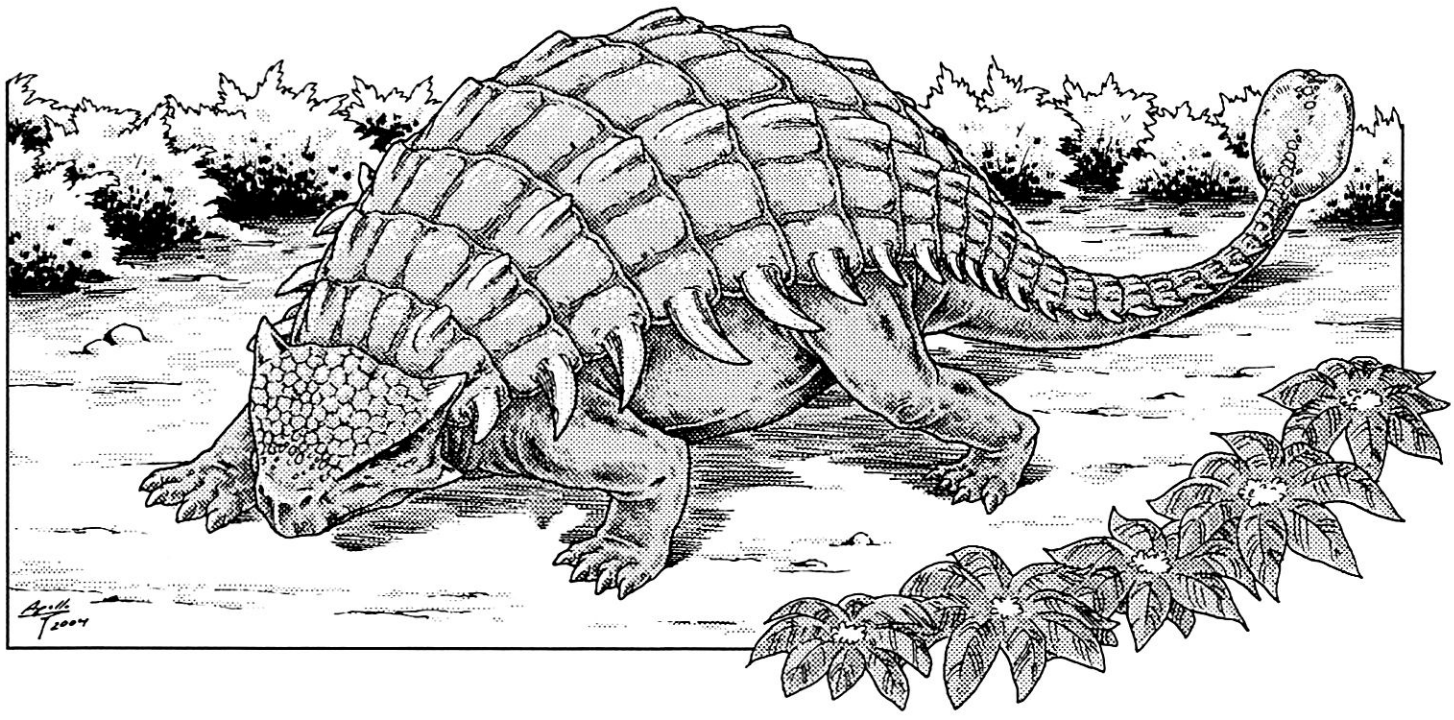
P.P.E.: 3D6

O.C.C.: None; animal.

Natural Abilities: Extraordinary endurance. Can travel for days without rest and can endure great pain without effect. Toxin immunity of 95% and any toxins that might affect the animal are at only one third damage and duration. Average sense of smell, but can detect the scent of a Qink plant from up to 5 miles (8 km) away.

Attacks per Melee: 3

Damage: Bite 1D6 M.D., head butt 2D6 M.D., body block with spikes 4D6 M.D., light tail swipe 4D6 M.D. with a 01-75% chance of knocking down a human sized target, full strength tail swipe 1D6x10 M.D. with a 01-90% chance of knocking down an opponent up to 10 feet (3 m) tall; half that up to 20 feet (6.1 m).



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

Magic: Impervious to all poison, 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.

Enemies: Few large predators threaten an adult Ankylosaur, though packs of smaller, swifter dinosaurs pose a threat.

Allies: None.

Value: Their bony plates would make for fantastic armor if it wasn't for the weight. Even as vehicle armor it is much heavier than comparable composite, man-made materials and will reduce the speed of 'bots and vehicles by 1D4x10% +20%. Unsuitable for use by humans, even Juicers and other augmented beings (reduce speed and physical skills by half).

Habitat: Rarely found south and east of the Appalachian Mountains, Ankylosaurs are typically found in the midland regions of North Carolina, South Carolina and the northern part of Georgia. They are becoming increasingly common in the New West and southern Canada.

Dilophosaurus

Another theropod predator, the Dilophosaurs rely more on their claws to catch and kill prey than they do on their relatively small teeth and jaws. Excellent runners, they have long legs and stiffened tails for balance. Their skulls are topped with paired 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 gladiatorial circles for beefed-up "cockfights."

Intelligent, skittish and typically solitary, they can be found hunting for smaller game animals in the forests or probing streams and lakes for fish. Their coloration varies widely among individuals, ranging from deep black to the occasional gray or even white albino. Brightly colored Dilophosaurs can fetch a high dollar depending on the buyer.

One important note about them is that they have unusually high levels of P.P.E for not being creatures 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 cockfighting, high levels of P.P.E. and inherent solitary nature make them more likely to flee from humanoids or larger threats than confront them. However, when cornered, scared or angry, they fight like demons.

Alignment: Animal Predator, considered Miscreant or Diabolic.

Attributes: Animal attributes are very consistent and offer a smaller range of attribute aptitude. I.Q. 1D4+3; medium animal intelligence. M.E. 3+1D6, M.A. 1D6, P.S. 14+2D6, P.P. 12+2D6, P.E. 16+1D6, P.B. 14+1D6, Spd. 36+3D6; a minimum speed of 40 (30 mph/48 km), most have a speed of 48 (36 mph/57.6 km). Supernatural P.S.

Mega-Damage by Location:

Head – 55

Tail – 50

Neck – 60

Hind Limbs (2) – 100 each

Forelimbs (2) – 45 each

Main Body – 4D6x10

Horror Factor: 12

Size: 20 feet (6.1 m) long from snout to tip of tail, 5 feet (1.5 m) tall.

Weight: 1000 pounds (450 kg).

Average Life Span: 30-35 years.

P.P.E.: 1D6x10 +10.

O.C.C.: None; animal.

Natural Abilities: Excellent vision, can track by sight 55%, and can leap 12 feet (3.6 m) high and across from a standing position, twice that with a running start.

Attacks per Melee: 4

Damage: Bite 2D6 M.D., claw with forelimbs 3D6 M.D., kick 3D6 M.D., claw with hind limbs 4D6 M.D., slash with tail 3D6 M.D. with a 01-20% chance of knocking down a human sized target.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 to strike with their forelimb claws, +2 to parry, +2 to dodge, and +2 to save vs magic and possession.

Magic: Can perform the equivalent of a Chameleon spell, at will, 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 and will completely regenerate lost limbs overnight.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Other predators and humanoids.

Allies: None.

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.

Habitat: Frequently found in the marshes and forests, they also hunt near streams and lakes. Typically found in Georgia and Florida with thinning numbers in territories further north and west.

Pachycephalosaurus

Pachycephalosaurus (pak-i-SEF-a-lo-SAWR-us) is definitely a mouthful, but they are more commonly known as "Skull Crackers." The Pachycephalosaurs are two-legged plant eaters known for their extremely hard, dome-like skulls that they use as battering rams. Usually found in herds, they are fiercely territorial and will attack even large groups of travelers at the slightest provocation. Far from gentle, they lived in a constant struggle for dominance between themselves, manifested in ritualistic combat of head ramming. The impact from some of these clashes can be heard for miles around. Their skulls are so strong that they have been known to leave huge dents in M.D.C. armor plating and to even blow a sealed hatch off of its hinges. Armored adventurers who have taken a solid blow to the torso and live to tell the experience rarely again put themselves in the path of even a juvenile Skull Cracker.

Found throughout Dinosaur Swamp, the Pachycephalosaurs have begun to spread out of the swamp and into the surrounding dry forests of North America, but staying mostly to the south and southwest, venturing north only in the warmth of summer.

Typically grayish green in color, their domed skulls are rimmed and ornamented with small crowns of horns and display vibrant patterns of color. These patterns are shades of red, orange and pink in males and blue, green and yellow in females.

Their natural aggressive attitude makes them easy favorites for gladiatorial arenas, but this nature also makes them some of the most dangerous creatures in the wild. A startled Skull Cracker's instinctive response is to attack. If frightened, it attacks. If it feels challenged, threatened or cornered, it attacks. If angry, it attacks. Combat is the Pachycephalosaurs' response to most everything. Thankfully, since the beast is an herbivore, it leaves its victim where they lay, so "playing possum" is an excellent ploy to trick the Skull Cracker into leaving one alone.

Pachycephalosaurs travel in herds of 6D6+6, so if one member charges, it is likely that 2D4 others will follow its lead to protect the herd. It's bad enough to have one of these cranky things bearing down on you, skull poised like a battering ram. It's another thing entirely to have three or more charging at you at once.

Alignment: Animal, considered Anarchist, aggressive and high strung.

Attributes: Animal attributes are very consistent and offer a smaller range of attribute aptitude. I.Q. 1D4+2; low animal intelligence. M.E. 9+1D6, M.A. 3D6, P.S. 21+1D6, P.P. 15+1D6, P.E. 20+1D6, P.B. 12+1D6, Spd. 42+2D6; a minimum speed of 44 (33 mph/52.8 km), most have a speed of 50 (38 mph/60.8 km).

Mega-Damage by Location:

Head – 300

Forelimbs (2) – 35 each

Hind Limbs (2) – 100 each

Tail – 120

Main Body – 5D6x10

Horror Factor: 12 when charging, 16 when charging in groups of 3 or more.

Size: 15 feet (4.6 m) long, 3 feet (0.9 m) tall at the hips and when charging; 5-7 feet (1.5 to 2.1 m) standing erect.

Weight: 950 pounds (427.5 kg).

Average Life Span: 25-30 years.

P.P.E.: 2D6

O.C.C.: None; animal.

Natural Abilities: Swift runners with excellent vision, they are also natural swimmers at 75%. They have a reinforced skeleton that protects their bodies from jarring impacts that result from using their skulls as battering rams.

Vulnerabilities: After delivering a full strength, running head butt they are incapacitated by the shock for several seconds (one melee action).

Attacks per Melee: 4

Damage: Bite 1D4 M.D. (seldom used unless pinned or being wrestled down), head butt 4D6 M.D., running head butt 1D6x10 M.D., full speed running head butt 2D6x10+10 M.D. (takes 3 actions and is then incapacitated for one action following).

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 to strike, +2 to dodge, +4 to dodge while running at 16 mph (25.7 km) or slower, +6 to dodge while running at 17 mph (27.3 km) or faster, +6 to roll with impact, +4 to save vs Horror Factor.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Predators, humanoids, and rivals within the herd.

Allies: Other members of the herd.

Value: A healthy adult will bring 13,000 credits while a juvenile will bring 16,000 credits to a gladiatorial arena. The young are more docile and easier to control than the adults. Their skulls go for an average of 3000 credits for use in making shields or other armor purposes.

Habitat: Found throughout Dinosaur Swamp, they are found in greatest numbers in Georgia and moving west, ranging to Louisiana. Isolated herds have been seen as far north as the Dakotas. A typical herd ranges from 12-42 in number, with the largest groups reaching as many as 80.

Sarcosuchus

The Giant Crocodile

With an adult skull measuring 6 feet (1.8 m) in length, and an overall body length of 40 feet (12.2 m) from snout to tail, there are few living creatures in Dinosaur Swamp that the Sarcosuchus doesn't consider fair game. The reptilian predator will attack anything that comes within the grasp of its powerful jaws, including Tyrannosaurus Rex, young Sauropods, and humanoids, even characters in power armor and robot vehicles. While the Sarcosuchus will usually let loose their grip on robots and power armor, some have learned that there is a soft and meaty morsel waiting inside the suit, and will try to tear open armor to get at the pilot (and passengers) inside. Characters clad in *body armor* may be swallowed whole or dragged underwater where the giant crocodile will gnaw on them like a bone, until the armor's seams pop, drowning the person inside and allowing the croc to peel them like a crab. Sarcosuchus inhabit the rivers and lakes of the southeast, the largest of them living in the Florida everglades and the shallow bays and inlets around the barrier islands. They are also found along the shoreline of the gulf of Mexico.

Like their smaller alligator and crocodile cousins, the Sarcosuchus are ambush predators who lurk underwater or among the weeds close to shore, waiting for unsuspecting prey. The giant crocodile lunges from the water to grab prey that has

come down to the edge for a drink or swim, or may have wandered a little too close just to take a look. The creature's enormous size means it has a much greater threat distance, and they can actually gallop over short distances, running down prey with short endurance or slow speed. It might be an amusing sight to watch a crocodile gallop, as they look almost rabbit-like when their legs move, but if it's coming in your direction, it's no laughing matter. Not only can they sprint, but they also have an amazing ability to leap; able to propel themselves out of the water, from a flat resting position, nearly three-quarters of their entire body length. Combined with their ability to ambush prey, moving at a whopping 12 meters (39.4 feet!) per second, if it misses on the first bite, the second one will usually land home.

Sarcosuchus are in a constant battle with Spinosaurs for territory, as they both occupy the same aquatic ecological niche, creating an ever-present struggle for dominance between the two species. However, the Sarcosuchus has a distinct advantage in the water, while the Spinosaur has a distinct advantage on land, creating a balance between them. One thing is certain, however; that they both have an extremely hostile reaction to sharks invading their aquatic domain.

Alignment: Animal, considered Anarchist or Miscreant.

Attributes: Animal attributes are very consistent and offer a smaller range of attribute aptitude. I.Q. 1D4+1; low animal intelligence. M.E. 22+1D6, M.A. 4+1D4, P.S. 38+2D6, P.P. 17+2D6, P.E. 20+1D6, P.B. 6+1D4, Spd. 8+1D4; with an average of 10 (8 mph/12.8 km). Supernatural P.S. and P.E.

Mega-Damage by Location:

Head – 225

Tail – 200

Limbs (4) – 150 each

Main Body – 1D4x100 +200

Horror Factor: 16

Size: 40 feet (12.2 m) long.

Weight: 17,500 pounds (7875 kg).

Average Life Span: 100-130 years.

P.P.E.: 3D6

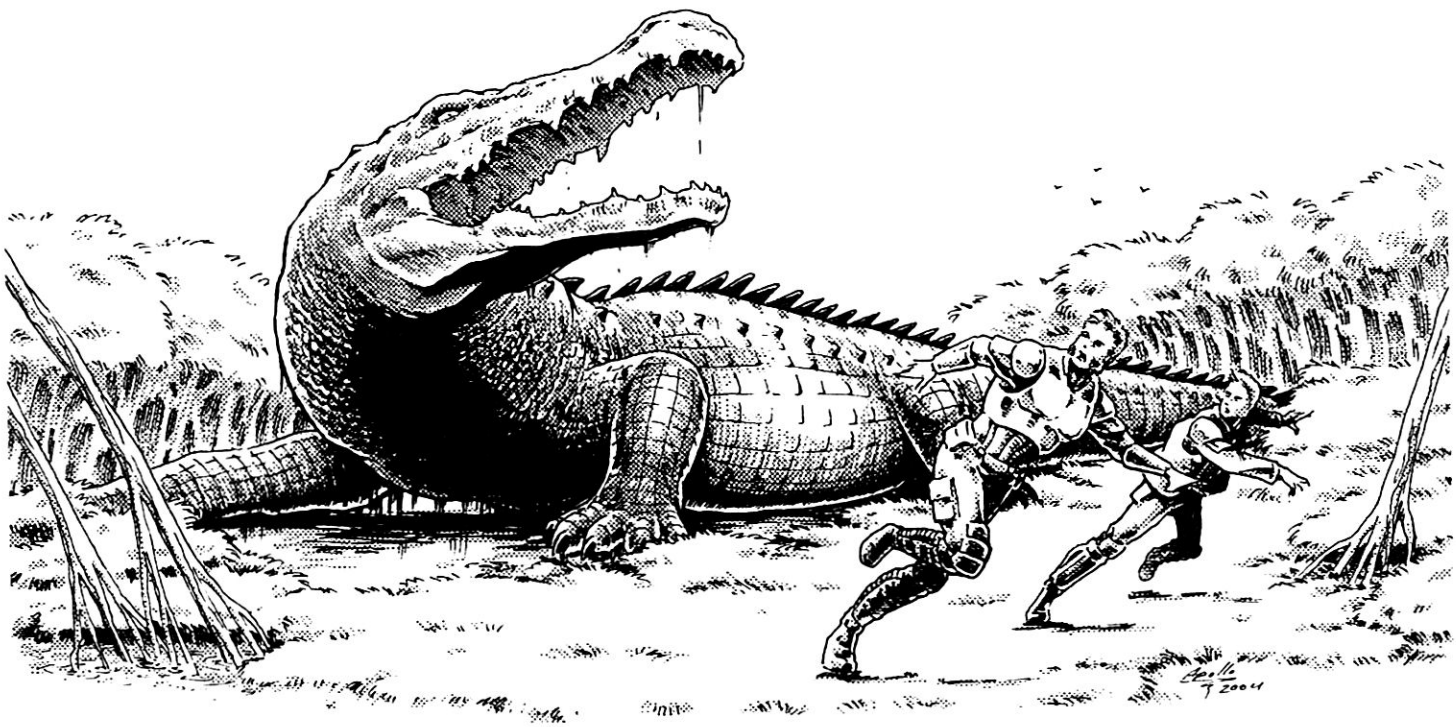
O.C.C.: None; animal.

Natural Abilities: At home in the water and on dry land much like the modern crocodile or alligator. Sarcosuchus have a natural Swimming ability aided by their powerful tail at 90%, and can hold their breath underwater for one hour. While submerged, they have a natural Prowl ability at 65%. They have good vision and sense of smell, using both to Track prey at 65% proficiency (+20% to follow blood scent in the water), and have the equivalent skills of Blend (in and underwater) 65%, Camouflage (self) 60% and Detect Ambush 50%.

Attacks per Melee: 4

Damage: Bite 2D4x10 M.D., slash with tail 3D6 M.D. with a 01-45% chance of knocking down a human-sized target (loses initiative and one melee action/attack).

Special Lunge Attack: (See also the Spinosaurus for a less powerful attack.) Moving at a speed of 26 mph (41.6 km) in a matter of one-quarter of a second, this attack is near instantaneous. Upon a successful ambush, the Sarcosuchus will lunge at its prey, locking its powerful jaws down on a limb, the torso, or even the head, and then pull it underwater. This is a dynamic strike that not only does physical damage, but also inflicts a certain amount of shock on the prey, forcing a saving throw vs Horror Factor. This special attack is always the first in the melee round, but only after the Sarcosuchus has made a successful Prowl. If the Prowl is successful, the attack has a +8 to strike, and can only be *dodged* by prey who have the Automatic Dodge ability. A failed Prowl gives any prey a chance to dodge at +2 to do so. Damage is 2D4x10 M.D., the prey is held, and must make a saving throw vs Hor-



ror Factor at a 14 or higher. The struggle then becomes trying to break free before it drowns, or is shaken to death by the Sarcosuchus as the monster flails about and rolls around underwater. Damage from being shaken and rolled is 4D6 M.D. per melee attack, and characters in M.D.C. body armor take 1D6 points of S.D.C. damage for every 5 M.D. points inflicted.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): On land: +3 to strike, -3 to dodge. In water: +3 on initiative, +4 to strike, +5 to dodge, +1 to save vs poison and disease, and +2 to save vs Horror Factor.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Spinosaurs, sharks and other aquatic predators, as well as humanoids.

Allies: None.

Value: Their hide is often used to make armor, or even as wall sheathing for huts and cabins. Their teeth are used in decoration and in making weapons, especially the fearsome tooth clubs and the magical Horror Maces. Their skin can fetch up to 10,000 credits whole, and their teeth are worth 100 credits each (1D4x10+18 teeth per creature).

Habitat: Found living throughout Dinosaur Swamp, the Atlantic coast and the Gulf of Mexico region. They are particularly common in the Florida peninsula and the barrier islands.

Sauropod

Sauropods are literally the giants of the terrestrial realm. They are the largest native animals to have ever walked the Earth, weighing in at over 40 tons in some species. These are the Brontosaurs, Brachosaurs, and other famous giants of the dinosaurs. Their bodies are huge, bulbous and barrel shaped, supported by four massive, column-like legs. Their feet are packed with a special fatty tissue that not only cushions the impact of their gargantuan feet, but allows them to detect low frequency vibrations through the ground, alerting them to approaching danger (including ground vehicles and troop or tribe movement). Their necks are extremely long, ending in a minuscule head filled with flat, peg-like teeth, and having nostrils on the top of the skull. Their adult lives are spent in a migratory quest for food, never staying in one spot for too long. Because they are so large, they have no natural predator that can seriously threaten them once they reach full adulthood. Even a T-Rex and many supernatural predators are wary about confronting an adult sauropod. However, that does not mean that they are not hunted, even after reaching adulthood.

Sauropods are often the targets of humanoid hunting parties looking to feed an entire village or tribe, as well as large packs of Raptors. The carcass of a single late juvenile or early adult sauropod has enough meat, bone, hide and other necessities to supply an entire tribe or town with food and resources for a month. With careful planning, even an adult can be brought down by a barbarian hunting party.

One thing that sauropods are known for besides their tremendous size, is their rather low intelligence. They are perhaps the least intelligent of the dinosaurs, with even the Ankylosaurs showing more intelligence. Of course, once they reach full size, they don't really need to pay attention to much aside from the next morsel of food in front of their face.

Unlike the other heavy dinosaurs, sauropods show little reluctance to traveling deep into the waterlogged swamps and marshes. Their immense size and strength means they are rarely hampered by the mud and other hazards that would trap smaller dinosaurs. However, like the other large herbivores, they are most comfortable in the lightly forested regions where they have more range of movement without having to plow over trees every time they turn around.

Alignment: Animal, considered Anarchist.

Attributes: Animal attributes are very consistent and offer a smaller range of attribute aptitude. I.Q. 1D4; painfully low animal intelligence. M.E. 2D6+2, M.A. 2D6+2, P.S. 80+2D6, P.P. 2D6+1, P.E. 26+1D6, P.B. 2D6, Spd. 15+1D6; a minimum speed of 16 (12 mph/19.2 km), most have a speed of 18 (14 mph/22.4 km). Supernatural P.S. and P.E.

Mega-Damage by Location:

*Head – 100

Neck – 300

Legs (4) – 400 each

Tail – 250

Main Body – 1D6x100+800

*A single asterisk indicates a small or difficult target to hit and requires a "called shot" at -3 to strike.

Horror Factor: 10 from a distance. 17 if directly below, or in danger of being stepped on.

Size: 80 feet (24.4 m) long from head to tail, 15 feet (4.57 m) tall at the hips.

Weight: 75,000 lbs (33,750 kg).

Average Life Span: 120 years.

P.P.E.: 1D4x10; simply because they are so large they have a large amount of P.P.E.

O.C.C.: None; animal.

Natural Abilities: Gigantic in stature, superior endurance and pain resistance, virtually unstoppable. Average eyesight and hearing, good sense of smell, extraordinarily good sense of taste. Can detect low frequency vibrations through their feet that may indicate the movement of large animals, explosions, earthquakes, mining and lumber operations, large or numerous ground vehicles, large numbers of people (two dozen or more), rushing water (rivers, underground streams, water-

falls) and thunder up to two miles (3.2 km) away. Skill equivalents: Dowsing 55%, Land Navigation 75%, Identify (edible for it) Plants and Fruits 98%.

Vulnerabilities: Slow moving and ponderous, extremely low animal intelligence, constantly on the move browsing for vegetation.

Attacks per Melee: 3

Damage: Stomp attack 3D6x10 M.D., kick attack 1D6x10 M.D., body block/ram 4D4x10 M.D., slashing tail 1D6x10 M.D., and head butt/neck lashing 3D6 M.D.

Bonuses & Penalties (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): -4 on initiative, but +15 to save vs Horror Factor, +10 to roll with impact, but -10 to dodge and cannot parry.

Magic: Can *Negate Magic* and *Dispel Magic Barriers* (equal to a fifth level practitioner of magic for adults, second level for adolescents; not possible for the very young) once per 24 hours per animal.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Few large predators threaten an adult sauropod, and not even packs of the smaller, swifter dinosaurs pose much of a threat.

Allies: None.

Value: Their meat will sell for anywhere from 3 to 5 credits per pound (0.45 kg), but they generally have no other value on the open market and the meat is unwanted in the "civilized" communities of the Coalition States (but has a good market in the 'Burbs). They are impossible to raise or domesticate as livestock, and they don't do well in gladiatorial arenas, even if one could get them in one. Even Simvan have little use for these docile herbivores except as meat.

Habitat: They prefer to live on the edge of the forests, but venture into the deepest of the marshlands looking for food. They are known to roam the entire span of Dinosaur Swamp, and some of the younger ones will migrate west, with small herds of adults having been seen roaming the Midwest.

Scampers

Small, bipedal pack omnivores, Scampers are devilishly clever little creatures. They are extremely dark green in color with dark blue, almost black stripes running up and down their legs and underbelly. They are incredibly swift runners that often prey on fish, small mammals, insects and just about anything smaller than they are, tackling larger prey only if it appears to be sick, injured, or old and unable to defend itself. They are also fond of certain varieties of flowers and grasses, making them something of an oddity among dinosaurs as very few of them are known to be true omnivores.

Incredibly skittish, they will scatter at the slightest noise, relying on speed to keep them safe from predators and other dangers. They rarely attack anything larger than themselves, but have been known to swarm injured animals (and people) and abandoned carcasses. Scampers are a staple of the barbarian diet, being both hunted and trapped in equal measure. Aside from the meat they provide, their skin is remarkably soft and supple for that of a dinosaur, making them minor M.D.C. creatures. The hide is typically used for making belts, pouches, gloves, moccasins, vests and children's clothing. Many barbarian children are taught the foundation of their wilderness skills by being taken on regular Scamper hunts.

Scampers are known for their extremely high level of intelligence, coming close to the level of dogs if not exceeding them. When isolated and trained individually, they can learn to respond to voice commands, and some have exhibited the ability to communicate through various animal vocalizations. While not known to be sentient, or intelligent by human standards, Scampers fall into a blurred gray area. Collectively, they are smart animals; individually they can show signs of remarkable intelligence, making them excellent pets, watch animals and familiars. (They also make for excellent NPC companions.) **Note:** Despite their high intelligence, they are not *intended* to be player characters, and are more animal than human, but Game Masters and players interested in experimenting with them as such are not discouraged from doing so.

Alignment: Animal, considered Anarchist, but tends to reflect the alignment of its master when it is a pet or familiar.

Attributes: Animal attributes are very consistent and offer a smaller range of attribute aptitude. I.Q. 1D6+6 Extremely high animal intelligence. M.E. 2D6, M.A. 4+2D6, P.S. 4+1D6, P.P. 15+1D6, P.E. 9+1D6, P.B. 7+1D6, Spd. 24+1D6; a minimum speed of 25 (19 mph/30.4 km), most have a speed of 28 (21 mph/33.6 km).

M.D.C.: 3D4+3 (only 4D6 S.D.C. with an A.R. 9 and P.E. number for Hit Points in S.D.C. environments). **Note:** There is some innate magical aspect to Scampers that makes them minor Mega-Damage creatures, and as such Scampers are subject to damage from both M.D.C. and S.D.C. weapons (has the equivalent of 600-1500 S.D.C. on Rifts Earth).

Horror Factor: None, although a swarm of 20 or more could warrant an 8 or 9 – 13 only if an individual is injured and vulnerable to the little fellas.

Size: 2-3 feet (0.6 to 0.9 m) long, 1 to 1 ½ feet high (0.3 to 0.4 m).

Weight: 12-20 lbs (5.4 to 9 kg).

Average Life Span: 18-20 years.

P.P.E.: 4D6

O.C.C. Equivalent Skills: Wilderness Survival 90%, Land Navigation 75%, Blend (or Camouflage) 60% (+10% for a lone individual or pair), Prowl 45% (+10% for a lone individual), Detect Ambush 65%, Detect Concealment 45%, Climb 60%, Swim 70%, Palming 50%, Detect Ambush 40%, Escape Artist 45%, Tracking (by sight) 40%.

Natural Abilities: Excellent color vision, good hearing, nightvision (15 feet/4.6 m), Track by smell 40% (+15% to follow blood, rotting meat or other strong scent), and can leap 8 feet (2.4 m) high and 12 feet (3.6 m) long, 50% farther with a full out run.

Vulnerabilities: They are small and weak compared to other dinosaurs, and on just about everyone's menu as prey.

Attacks per Melee: 5

Damage: Bite 2D6 S.D.C., claw with feet or forelimbs 1D6+2 S.D.C.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +4 on initiative, +2 to strike, and +6 to dodge, but -3 to save vs Horror Factor.

Magic: A Scamper can perform any of the following, at will, without expending its own P.P.E., once per day (equal to a first level practitioner of magic): Death Trance, Chameleon, Cleanse, Mystic Fulcrum, and Armor of Ithan.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Predators, barbarians, other packs of Scampers.

Allies: None, other than their family pack (or owner/family if a pet or familiar).

Value: A whole carcass will sell for 20-40 credits, while a whole, undamaged skin can fetch for up to 100 credits, and a baby to be raised as a pet (or familiar) can command 200 credits.

Habitat: Scampers are found throughout the eastern seaboard, living just about everywhere in the entire southeast, as far west as Lone Star and as far north as New England. However, they are not very common in or beyond Michigan or the Magic Zone.

Spinosaurus

Spinosaurs look like a dinosaur with a crocodile head and a fan-like sail running down its back. Thought to be the product of magical experiments or an extra-dimensional demon by many of the primitive natives and barbarians of the region, Spinosaurs were actually native to Earth during the Mesozoic Era. Comfortable both in water and on land, the creatures are found predominantly on the eastern coast of Dinosaur Swamp where they have access to both the ocean and the numerous river deltas that empty into the Atlantic. They eat just about anything that moves, but are vicious marine predators and often strike from ambush in the water much like a crocodile or alligator. Unlike a 'gator, however, if prey escapes from the water's edge, the Spinosaurus will bolt from the water to give chase.

The large sail on the animal's back serves as a temperature regulation device. To cool off, they will fill the sail with blood and it acts like a radiator, dissipating a large amount of body heat in a short period of time. Conversely, they can draw blood away from it and into the body to conserve body heat in colder weather. It also serves as an intimidation display for rivals and anything that might see the Spinosaur as prey.

Extremely long lived compared to other dinosaurs, they are often targeted by Alchemists from the Federation of Magic and from Atlantis for use in life extending magicks and healing potions. The creature is brutish but cunning, with extraordinary patience. Some have allowed themselves to be taken captive only to escape from their captors, turn the tables and devour them (or attempt to).

Alignment: Animal, considered Miscreant or Diabolic.

Attributes: Animal attributes are very consistent and offer a smaller range of attribute aptitude. I.Q. 1D6+3; medium animal intelligence. M.E. 1D6+5, M.A. 1D6+6, P.S. 1D6+40, P.P. 12+2D4, P.E. 21+1D6, P.B. 2D6, Spd. 25+1D6; a minimum speed of 26 (20 mph/32 km) running and swimming; most have a speed of 30 (23 mph/36.8 km). Supernatural P.S. and P.E.

Mega-Damage by Location:

Head – 175

Tail – 120

Forelimbs (2) – 65 each

Hind Limbs (2) – 135 each

Main Body – 1D6x100 +50

Dorsal Sail – 150

Horror Factor: 16

Size: 50 feet (15.2 m) long, 15 feet (4.6 m) tall, 21 feet (6.4 m) with the dorsal sail.

Weight: 8000 pounds (3600 kg).

Average Life Span: 90-120 years. Spinosaurs are notoriously long-lived animals. Some magicians and Alchemists use Spinosaur organs and blood as ingredients in youth and healing potions.

P.P.E.: 4D6

O.C.C.: None; animal.

Natural Abilities: Comfortable in the water, Spinosaurs have a natural swimming ability aided by their powerful tail at 80%, and can hold their breath for 3 hours! While submerged, they have a natural Prowl ability at 50%. They have good vision and sense of smell, using both to Track prey at 55% proficiency (+20% to follow blood scent in the water).

Vulnerabilities: Spinosaurs have poor hearing on land, and their dorsal sail makes for an easy target. Hits to the sail have an increased chance to produce incredibly bloody wounds causing 3 M.D. per wound every minute (4 melee rounds), before the wounds stop seeping 1D6+3 minutes later. See **Rifts® G.M. Guide**, page 36, for more details on blood loss.

Attacks per Melee: 4

Damage: Bite 1D4x10+10 M.D., claw with forelimbs 3D6 M.D., kick 4D6 M.D., slash with tail 4D6 M.D. plus a tail strike has a 01-45% chance of knocking down a human-sized target.

Special Lunge Attack: (See also the *Sarcosaurus* for a more powerful version of this attack.) Moving at a speed of 26 mph (41.6 km) in a matter of one-quarter of a second, this attack is near instantaneous. Upon a successful ambush, the Spinosaurus will lunge at its prey, locking its powerful jaws down on a limb, the torso, or even the head, and then pull it under water. This is a dynamic strike that not only does physical damage, but also inflicts a certain amount of shock on the prey, forcing a saving throw vs Horror Factor. This special attack is always the *first* in the melee round, but only after the Spinosaurus has made a successful Prowl check. If the Prowl is successful, the attack has a +6 to strike, and opponents are at -3 to dodge. Damage is 1D4x10 M.D., the prey is held, and must make a saving throw vs Horror Factor at a 14 or higher. The struggle then becomes trying to break free before the prey either drowns, or is shaken to death by the Spinosaurus as it flails about and rolls around underwater. Damage from being shaken and spun about is 3D6 M.D. per melee attack, and characters in M.D.C. body armor will take 1D6 points of S.D.C. damage for every 5 M.D. points inflicted.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): On land: +1 on initiative, +3 to strike, +2 to dodge, +4 to roll with impact. In water: +4 on initiative, +5 to strike, and +3 to dodge.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Other predators, humanoids, and wielders of magic.

Allies: None; typically a solitary hunter.

Value: An uninjured adult will bring 25,000 credits while a juvenile will bring half that. Individual organs fetch anywhere between 300 and 1000 credits each, and up to 5,000 for the heart.

Habitat: Typically found near the ocean and the river deltas, some have migrated into the heartland of Dinosaur Swamp and are slowly making their way into the interior of the continent. Some have been found as far west as to be skirting the coast of Texas and are making their way up the Mississippi River. Spinosaurs are rarely found away from a large source of water.

Stegosaurus

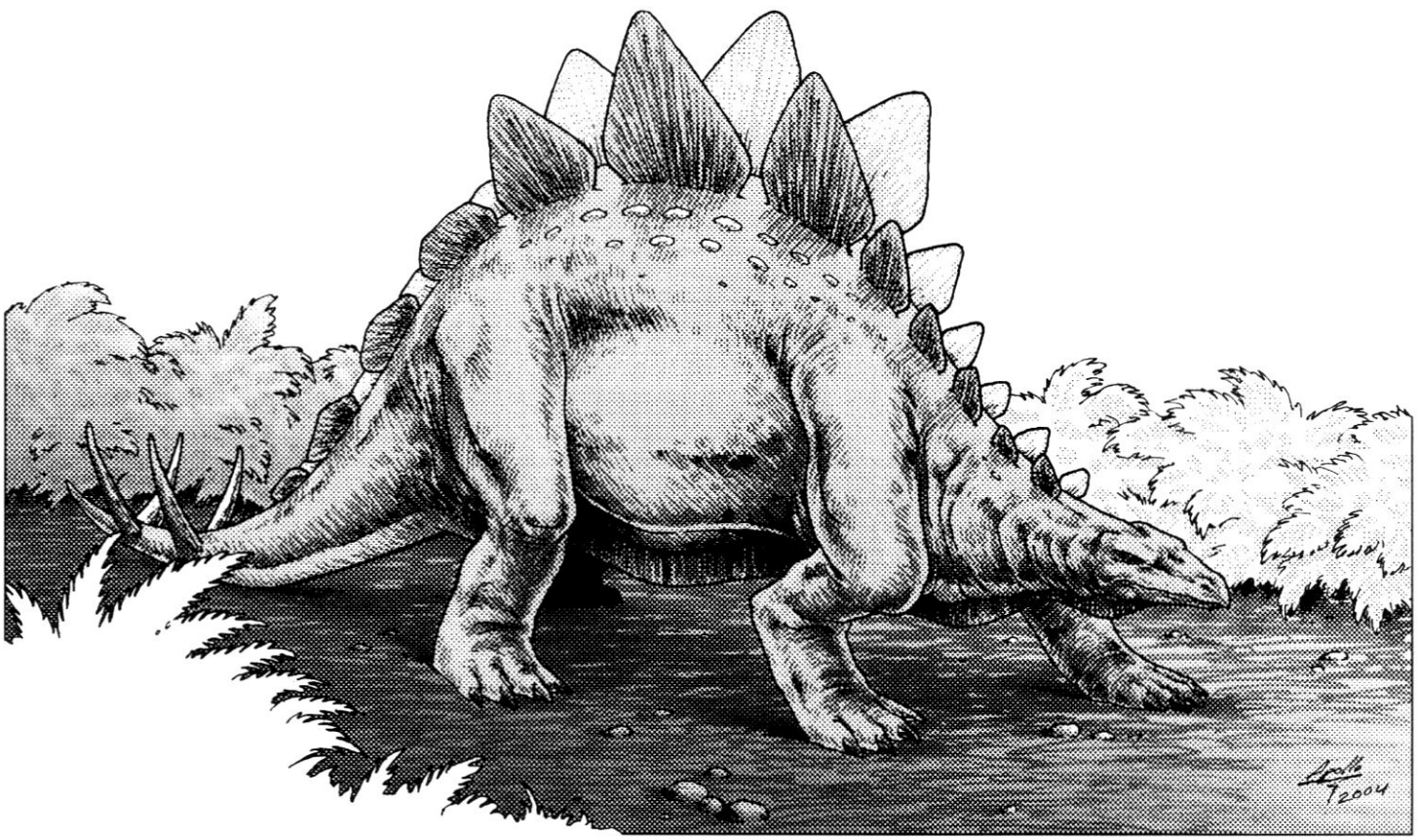
Easily one of the most recognizable dinosaurs, Stegosaurus is another large, quadruped herbivore frequently found browsing the midland regions in the company of Ankylosaurs, with whom they share a similar body structure. Stegosaur forelimbs are shorter than their hind limbs, giving them a noted, stooped over posture, which makes them incredibly slow moving as well. This is ideal for browsing along the ground looking for vegetables, mushrooms and other edibles, but even with this similarity to their Ankylosaur cousins, Stegosaurs are distinguished immediately by the large, bony dorsal plates running down their backs, and the huge, bony spikes at the end of their tails.

These dorsal plates, known as *osteoderms*, are filled with a series of tube-like tunnels for blood to flow through, acting very much like a radiator, helping to regulate body temperature. When filled with blood, they make for an impressive display, used not only for attracting a mate, but also for intimidating rivals and potential predators. The general mood of a Stegosaur is easy to determine by the amount of color present in the osteoderms. Various species of Stegosaurs had different numbers of spikes on their tail, ranging from four to eight, but the most common number found among the populations in Dinosaur Swamp is *six*. No matter the number, they are still impressive forms of natural weaponry.

Like most herbivores, they are social animals traveling in familial herds, but they have been known to adopt other species of herbivores into their family units. As a result, it is not unusual to see a family of Stegosaurs traveling with individual Ankylosaurus, juvenile sauropods, and even the occasional ill-tempered Pachycephalosaurus. Exactly why they are so willing to adopt members of other species into their families is unknown, but they are the only herding herbivore that does so on a consistent basis.

Alignment: Animal, considered Anarchist or Unprincipled.

Attributes: Animal attributes are very consistent and offer a smaller range of attribute aptitude. I.Q. 1D4+2; very low animal intelligence. M.E. 12+1D6, M.A. 11+2D6, P.S. 34+1D6, P.P. 7+1D6, P.E. 21+1D6, P.B. 3+2D6, Spd. 15+1D6; a minimum speed of 16 (12 mph/19.2 km), most have a speed of 18 (14 mph/22.4 km). Supernatural P.S. and P.E.



Mega-Damage by Location:

*Head – 150

*Osteoderms/Back Plates (typically 18 plates) – 50 each

Forelimbs (2) – 110 each

Hind Limbs (2) – 150 each

Tail – 200

*Spiked Tail Tip/End – 130

Underbelly – 160

Main Body – 1D4x100 +160

* A single asterisk indicates a small or difficult target to hit and requires a "called shot" at -3 to strike.

Horror Factor: None, though an angry family of them might warrant a temporary application of a Horror Factor of 10-13 depending on the number.

Size: 30 feet (9.1 m) long, 9 feet (2.7 m) tall at the hips.

Weight: 6,800 pounds (3060 kg).

Average Life Span: 50-60 years.

P.P.E.: 4D6+3

O.C.C.: None; animal.

Natural Abilities: Poor long-range vision (is nearsighted), but has good hearing and an excellent sense of smell and can sniff out the fruits, vegetables and plants it likes to eat, including those buried in the ground (potatoes, carrots, various roots, etc.) with a proficiency of 80%. Can also sniff out water (roughly equal to Dowsing) 55%, Land Navigation 70%, and Swim 35%, as well as possesses the armor defense of its plate fins and flexible spiked tail.

Vulnerabilities: Relatively soft underbelly, very low intelligence and speed for an animal, and their osteoderms make for brilliant targets, especially when flushed. Hits to the osteoderms have an increased chance to produce incredibly bloody wounds causing 3 points of damage per wound every minute (4 melees). See **Rifts® G.M. Guide**, page 36, for more details on blood loss.

Attacks per Melee: 3

Damage: Bite 1D4 M.D., head butt 1D6 M.D., body block 2D6 M.D., light tail swipe 5D6 M.D. with a 01-45% chance of knocking down an opponent up to 12 feet (3.6 m) tall, and full strength tail swipe 1D6x10 M.D. with a 01-90% chance of knocking down an opponent.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 to strike with tail, +1 to parry, +2 to disarm, +4 to pull punch, +4 to roll with impact and +4 to save vs Horror Factor.

Magic: +1 to save vs mind control and +2 to save vs possession, and can magically Sense Evil (2) and See the Invisible (4), each use requiring the expenditure of P.P.E. as usual.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Few large predators threaten an adult Stegosaur, although packs of smaller, swifter dinosaurs may pose a threat, instinctively snapping at the soft underbelly. Barbarian hunters can take a massive toll on a herd of Stegosaurs by targeting the osteoderms and trying to get at the underbelly.

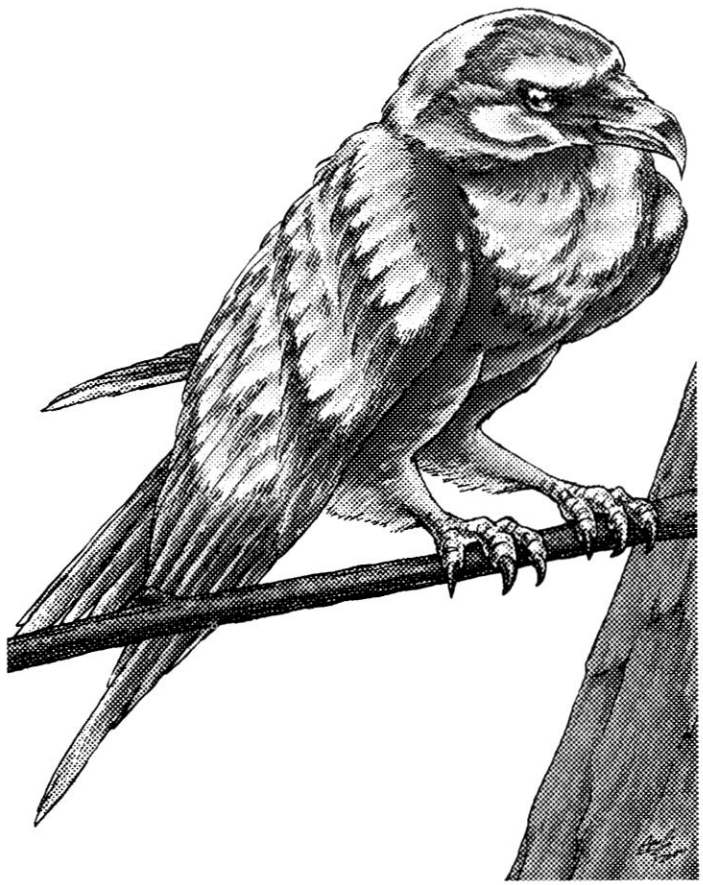
Allies: None per se; associates with other herbivores.

Value: Their osteoderms are sometimes used to mark trails and paths throughout certain territories, and are often used as flooring in important tribal buildings. Their meat sells well.

Habitat: Rarely found south and east of the Appalachian Mountains, Stegosaurs are typically found in the midland regions of North Carolina, South Carolina and the northern part of Georgia. They are increasingly becoming common in the New West, Pennsylvania and southern Canada, more so than the Ankylosaurs.

Alien Dinosaurs & Beings

The following creatures are NOT indigenous to Earth, past or present, but have adapted to Rifts Earth after emerging from a Rift at some point in the past.



Azhures

Sometimes lost among the larger, spectacular dinosaurs is the majestic beauty of the Azhures. An alien species of bird, the Azhures have adapted well to life in Dinosaur Swamp, and have come to be as synonymous with the SteelTree forest as the Iron-Hoof. Azhures are birds of prey similar to the hawk. They 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 very minor Mega-Damage creatures. The Azhures' link to the

SteelTree trees suggests they probably come from the same world as the trees, though no one knows this for certain.

The Azhures are striking metallic blue in color, 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, 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 being a delicious treat. Early adventurers mistakenly thought the birds to be robot spies or some kind of cyborg, and those not familiar with the fauna of the region continue to make that mistake. However, Azhures have been proven to be living animals. Still, rumors sometimes crop up throughout North America of colonies of robotic birds living in the forests of the southeast. **(Note:** ARCHIE Three has taken advantage of this confusion by creating robot copies of the Azhures to spy on the region unnoticed. About one in a hundred is actually an ARCHIE robot.)

Azhures are much sought after by barbarians for their brilliant plumage used in decorative jewelry and clothing, but also as fletching for arrows, particularly ones created by the *Eco-Wizards*. The birds are not edible. The meat is like trying to bite through rawhide, tastes of iron, and can lead to a toxic build-up that causes insanity, physical side effects, and even death. While the Azhures aren't suitable for consumption, they do make excellent familiars and hunting companions. In fact, Wilderness Scouts and the occasional barbarian have been known to train them like falcons to hunt game birds (duck, geese, pheasant, pigeon, doves, etc.) and even rabbit. The metallic birds dominate the sky, looking like sparkling blue shooting stars when they are on the hunt in the twilight.

Alignment: Animal, considered Anarchist or Unprincipled.

Attributes: Animal attributes are very consistent and offer a smaller range of attribute aptitude. I.Q. 1D4+4; medium to high animal intelligence. M.E. 6+1D4, M.A. 8+1D4, P.S. 4+1D4, P.P. 14+1D6, P.E. 13+1D6, P.B. 20+1D6, Spd. 5+1D4 on the ground, 48+2D6 flying; an average walking speed of 7 (5 mph/8 km) and an average flying speed of 54 (41 mph/65.6 km).

M.D.C.: 1D6+6 (the equivalent of 700-1200 S.D.C.); as a very minor Mega-Damage creature, they are subject to damage from both M.D.C. and S.D.C. weapons. **(Note:** The birds have only 3D6 S.D.C. and the P.E. attribute number for Hit Points, but an A.R. of 13 in S.D.C. environments.)

Horror Factor: None.

Size: 18-20 inches (0.45-0.50 m) long, with a wingspan of 48 inches (1.2 m).

Weight: 12 pounds (5.4 kg). They are very heavy for their size due to the metallic content of their bodies.

Average Life Span: 18-24 years.

P.P.E.: 1D6

O.C.C.: None; animal.

Natural Abilities: Excellent flyer, superb vision (can spot a rabbit from 3 miles/4.8 km) away.

Attacks per Melee: 4

Damage: 2D6 S.D.C. talon/claw attack or 1D6 S.D.C. from bite/beak.

Special "Dive Bomb" Attack: By swooping down on prey, they can effect a "dive bomb" strike with their talons. This is a devastating attack on other small mammals and birds that stuns the prey (victims are reduced to one melee action and have no combat bonuses for 1D6 melee rounds), making it easy to carry off small prey and kill them in the safety of a tree. This attack can also be used to tear a large, meaty chunk out of larger opponents.

Azhures are +3 on initiative, +4 to strike and do 4D6 S.D.C. damage when performing this attack, but it must be the first attack/action of the melee round and counts as three attacks/actions. The rest of the melee is spent flying to safety, or dodging and maneuvering.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 on initiative, +2 to strike, +1 to parry, +8 to automatic dodge when in flight, +2 to disarm, +3 to pull punch, and charm/impress 80% (they are quite stunning and impressive, and they often make onlookers stop and pause to admire them).

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: None.

Allies: None.

Value: Their feathers usually sell for as much as 50 credits each, but depending on the season, can sell for twice that amount.

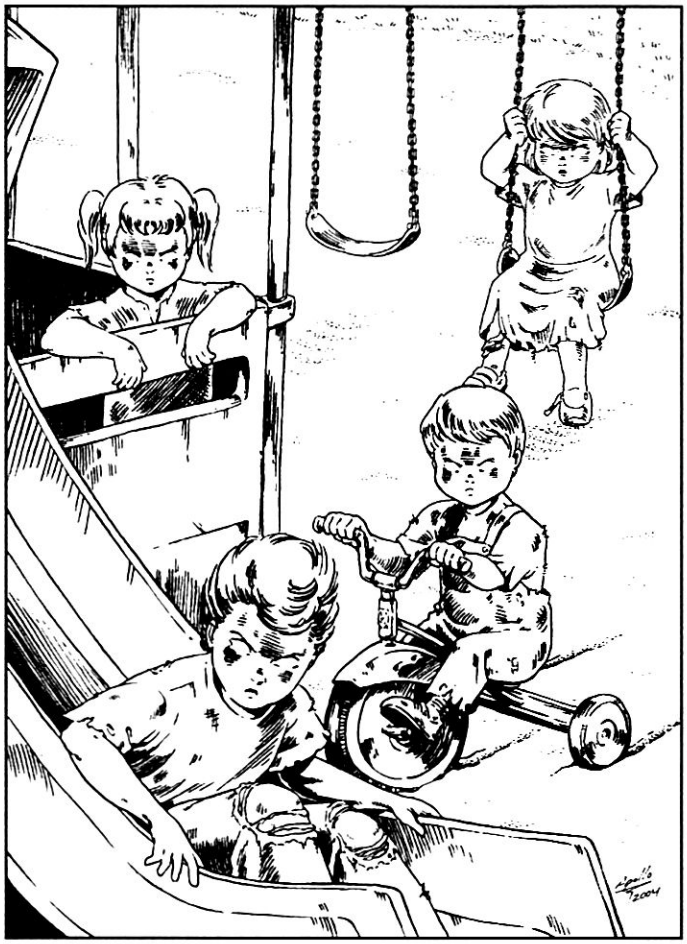
Habitat: While not specifically tied to the SteelTree forest like the Iron-Hoof, they typically do not migrate away from it. They are capable of living just about anywhere on the North American continent, but Azhure chicks not raised on a diet of SteelTree seeds will not benefit from the metallic content. They will not be minor Mega-Damage creatures, and their coloration will be variations of black, making them look like very large crows.

Haunting Child

By Todd Yoho & Kevin Siembieda

The Haunting Child is often categorized as a Haunting Entity, but truth be told, nobody seems to know what it is, other than a force of evil. Most true Entities are P.P.E. vampires: extra-dimensional beings that are drawn to Earth by the vast amount of available P.P.E. and/or powerful emotions on which to feed. The Haunting Child does not feed on P.P.E., but rather on raw life energy – draining Hit Points from their victims. Nor is the Haunting Child's natural form that of a glowing ball of energy, but rather the manifested form of a human child, usually between the ages of three and ten. The child usually appears in tattered clothing in a style from before the Great Cataclysm. They are always found in or around ruins of ancient cities, suburbs, schools, playgrounds and shopping plazas where one would expect families once lived or children frequented with their parents.

The Haunting Child is usually encountered in groups of four to as many as 20 depending on the exact location. According to legends from the Dark Age, ruins of schools and daycare centers could harbor as many as 100, although no one living today is known to have ever encountered such large numbers of these



malevolent spirits. It is interesting that many Haunting Children show no interest in trespassers unless the intruders cause a significant disturbance or start tearing down the ruins. As in Neenok's famous encounter with a group of Haunting Children at a ruined playground, the living were only attacked when they began to excavate and remove artifacts from the playground. Before the spirits attacked, they began to sing old nursery rhymes that seemed somehow menacing and unnerving to the flesh and blood adventurers. When the attack came, it was merciless. The explorers were pelted by rocks and energy bolts hurled at them by the ghostly children, ending only when the explorers ran from the ancient playground. To make matters worse, even some of the hardest, most battle-tested adventurers have trouble fighting children – even frightening spirit children.

There is still some question as to the exact origin of the Haunting Children. If they are a type of Entity who assume the form of human children, drawing on the powerful emotional resonance left over from the Great Cataclysm (which fits the pattern of other Entities), they are effectively ghosts of children killed in the Great Cataclysm centuries ago. Like most Entities, when the creature assumes the identity of the child, it loses its own alien identity and re-enacts the life of the deceased child. The more superstitious believe Haunting Children are actually the ghosts of youngsters slain in the Great Cataclysm, the essences of these children somehow trapped in places where they had strong emotional ties, and after centuries have become twisted into the horrific spirits they are now. Still others believe they are malevolent, demonic spirits who assume the form of deceased children as a mockery of human life.

Whatever the case, Haunting Children are strange beings who inhabit and hold for themselves places where children once lived or played in large numbers. Though they seldom attack adventurers unless their habitat or ghostly games are disturbed, Haunting Children are known to lure live children to them and hold them captive until the child dies and becomes one of them! Whatever the spectral beings are, they do not have a true understanding or regard for the living. Thus, they don't care or feed their captive playmates, and slowly drain the living child's life essence away. Too powerful and fast for the average mortal child, the youngster slowly wastes away from being drained by the monster(s) as well as suffering from starvation. All the while suffering the verbal and physical torment of the ghostly demon children. Furthermore, after 48 hours, the live, captive child lacks the strength of will to resist the Haunting Child and will not attempt to escape. Consequently, the real child (or children) must be rescued by a teenager or adult. Of course, the evil Haunting Child (or Children) will not want to give up his playmate and fights rescuers with everything it (or they) can unleash. A Haunting Child will also drain the life from intruders who happen upon them or who fall prey to injury or illness and happen to stumble upon a haunted playground.

Alignment: Diabolic or Miscreant.

Attributes: A ghostly manifestation of one or more children. I.Q. 1D6+6, M.E. 1D6, M.A. 1D6 (20 to children under the age of 12), P.S. 1D6+1, P.P. 1D6+1, P.E. Not applicable. P.B. 1D6+6 (20 to children under the age of 12), and Spd. 44 (33 mph/52.8 km).

M.D.C.: 6D6+6; but vulnerable only to energy weapons, psionics and magic, and depleting the creature's M.D.C. only causes it to vanish for 48 hours. It returns to "its playground" unless slain by a magical demon slaying weapon, psionic attack (Psi-Swords are very effective) or the Dessicate the Supernatural spell.

Horror Factor: 13

Size: That of a young child, from 2 feet (0.6 m) to 4 feet (1.2 m) tall.

Weight: Not applicable.

Average Life Span: Unknown, presumably eternal.

P.P.E.: 4D6

Appearance: A ghostly, semi-opaque, version of a child in tattered, dirty clothing – a creature of mist and color. Their eyes glow with a strange luminescence and the voice has an eerie hollowness and echo-like quality to it (actually Telepathic communication; they speak without moving their mouths, though they can scream, sing and moan).

Natural Abilities: In addition to psionic powers described below, a Haunting Child can run at 33 mph (52.8 km) and leap 15 feet (4.6 m) high or across (actually hovers and runs a few inches above the ground). Haunting Children can also pass though solid objects, and energy weapons do half their normal damage.

Vulnerabilities: Magic and psychic attacks. Can only be slain via magic or psionics. Their only methods of attack is via psionics.

Attacks per Melee: 4

Damage: By psionics.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 to strike, +1 to dodge, and impervious to bullets, arrows, explosives, punches and other kinetic attacks, energy weapons do half damage, impervious to normal fire, cold, poison and disease; magic and psionics do full damage.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Considered Master Psionics. Base I.S.P. is 1D6x10+44.

Limited Psionic Powers: Unlimited Telepathy (costs no I.S.P.), Empathy (4), Empathic Transmission: Fear only (6), Mind Block (4), Presence Sense (4; detects mortals and children only), See Aura (6), See the Invisible (4), Sixth Sense (2), Telekinesis (varies), and Telekinetic Push (4). All are performed equal to 5th level of experience.

Special: Mind-Bending Rhymes: The Haunted Child begins to recite, both Telepathically and in a vocal manifestation, common children's nursery rhymes that instill a sense of deep sorrow to impair victims or deep trust, luring the victim into submission. Either way, it allows the evil spirit to get close enough to feed. Everyone who can hear the rhyme must roll to save vs psionic attack. The rhymes can inflict either one of the following reactions, as decided by the evil spirits.

Maudlin Despair (10 I.S.P.): The victim(s) feel an immense amount of pity for the spirit child and seeks only to comfort him. Overtaken by a deep sense of loss, the victims are willing to give anything to make the child feel safe and protected again. Meanwhile, the living also feel a sense of loss and emptiness that makes them feel like giving up. Victims are -2 on all combat bonuses, lose one attack per melee, and are -3 to save vs psionic attacks. Duration: The effects last for as long as the singing of the nursery rhymes continues. At least half of all Haunting Children must participate in the singing and cannot use any other form of attack while so engaged.

Trust & Maternal Madness (10 I.S.P.): Live characters who fail to make a save vs psionic attack regard the Haunting Children as delightful kids who must be protected at all costs, even from their own teammates. Victims are enveloped by this overriding maternal sense of responsibility and act and react as a surrogate parent, using every weapon and/or power at their disposal to protect the sweet darlings from anyone who attempts to harm or come between them and the Haunting Child/Children (including any youngsters being held captive by the creatures). Duration: The effects last for 2D6x10 minutes after the Mind Bending Rhymes end. Note: This power has a different effect on children under the age of 12, making them completely trust the ghosts as if they were their true siblings and cling to them for protection. The duration on children is 1D6+6 hours and it is reinforced with 10 minutes of additional Mind-Bending Rhymes every seven hours.

Special: Steal Life Energy (10 I.S.P): Typically after bringing someone under their hypnotic control, one or more Haunting Children will begin to feed on their victim by touch. However, this ability can be used on anyone (sick, sleeping, etc.), not just those enthralled by the little monster(s). This is a psionic attack and the standard saving throw is applicable. Each successful save means no damage is delivered, however, a failed roll means the victim loses 1D6 points of damage directly from the character's Hit Points. In the case of Mega-Damage creatures that do not have Hit Points, the Haunting Child spirit instead feeds off of their P.E. attribute, draining off one point per successful attack. If P.E. is reduced to zero, the character lapses into a coma as if all his M.D.C./life points were gone. Hit Points siphoned off in this manner will recover as normal provided the character can be rescued before being killed, and P.E. attribute points will recover at the rate of one per every 12 hours.

Enemies: Regard humans and all mortals as food/prey, and practitioners of magic and psychics as their natural enemies.

Allies: None, other than fellow Haunting Children, though they tolerate all manner of Entities and will share their playground with them.

Value: None.

Habitat: One would expect they can exist anywhere, but this horrid creature is known to exist only in the ruins of Dinosaur Swamp, particularly the Horror Forest of Georgia, and the east coast of New York and Maryland (the latter two in much smaller numbers than in the Swamp).

Iron-Hoof

These strange, knuckle-walking beasts look like an amalgam of a gorilla, a horse, and a panda bear with the large, wickedly curving claws on their forelimbs that give them their name. They are called the Iron-Hoof because when the barbarians first encountered them centuries ago, they only saw them from a distance, and thought those wicked claws were actually hooves. They are strictly herbivores, preferring to eat the dense, tough leaves of the SteelTrees. Because these trees form the vast majority of their diet, it is speculated that the Iron-Hoof and the SteelTrees both originate from the same home dimension.

The creature's head is vaguely horse shaped, with powerful jaw muscles anchored to a crescent shaped bony ridge on the top of the skull, and filled with several batteries of small, leaf shaped serrated teeth for shredding vegetation. Their forelimbs are much longer than their hind limbs, giving them a distinct gorilla-like posture. Their front claws are so large and curved, they are forced to walk on their knuckles with a shuffling gait like that of a gorilla. Their hind limbs are extremely short, but packed with thick muscles that must support most of the animal's weight. When eating, they will usually set on their hind ends and pull branches down to them, stripping whole branches completely bare.

Iron-Hoof are remarkably gentle creatures that live in mated pairs, but will not hesitate to use their huge claws to defend themselves from perceived threats. The mere sight of Panthera-Tereon, humanoids, and predatory dinosaurs is enough to set these creatures into a frenzied panic where they will kill anything not of their own species. Barbarians rarely hunt these creatures, and exceptions to that rule are usually for very specific reasons like a test of bravery or loyalty. The Iron-Hoof are not territorial with one another, and it's not uncommon to see several families of them intermingling among the trees, sharing food with one another. Since they primarily eat the leaves and gnaw on the bark of the SteelTrees, they are natural Mega-Damage creatures, and their claws are incredibly sharp and dense, capable of cleaving open even the fiercest of M.D.C. predators.

Alignment: Animal, considered Anarchist or Unprincipled.

Attributes: Animal attributes are very consistent and offer a smaller range of attribute aptitude. I.Q. 4+1D4; medium animal intelligence. M.E. 4+1D6, M.A. 10+1D6, P.S. 30+2D6, P.P. 14+1D6, P.E. 19+1D6, P.B. 10+1D6, Spd. 20+1D6; an average speed of 23 (17 mph/27.2 km). Supernatural P.S. and P.E.

Mega-Damage by Location:

*Head – 30

Forelimbs (2) – 60 each

Hind Limbs (2) – 50 each

Main Body – 75

*A single asterisk indicates a small or difficult target to hit and requires a "called shot" at -3 to strike.

Horror Factor: 10, but only when the beast is enraged.

Size: 14 feet (4.2 m) tall.

Weight: 1200 lbs (540 kg).

Average Life Span: 45-60 years.

P.P.E.: 4D6

O.C.C.: None; animal.

Natural Abilities: Excellent color vision, superior sense of hearing (can detect the sound of a human breathing 100 feet/30.5 m away). The creature's hide closely matches the coloration of the SteelTrees, providing them with the ability to blend into the forest equal to the Camouflage skill at 50%. They have extremely powerful claws for a non-predatory animal and fall into an unreasoning violent rage at the sight of their known predators, the Panthera-Tereon, humanoids, and predatory dinosaurs. Once they enter this rage, the Iron-Hoof fights until the threat has been chased off, or every living thing within sight is dead except for other Iron-Hoof.

Vulnerabilities: Very specialized diet, and slow moving.

Attacks per Melee: Normally two, but 5 when enraged.

Damage: Bite 1D4 M.D., body block 1D6 M.D., claw swipe 4D6 M.D., full strength claw slash 1D4x10 M.D., double claw slash 2D4x10 M.D., but counts as two attacks.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): When enraged +6 on initiative (thanks to their superior hearing, they are almost impossible to sneak up on), +3 to strike, +5 to parry, +4 to roll with impact; half (round down) under nonthreatening conditions.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Panthera-Tereon, humanoids, and predatory dinosaurs.

Allies: Other Iron-Hoof.

Value: Their claws sell for 200-400 credits each, and their hide is prized for making armor. A vest of Iron-Hoof armor will provide 18+1D6 M.D.C. protection and sell for 8,000 credits (non-environmental).

Habitat: They are unique to the SteelTree forest. If taken from the forest, they can survive by eating other plants, but only for a limited amount of time. If their diet is not supplemented by fresh SteelTree leaves, the animal dies from malnutrition in 3 to 4 months.

Panthera-Thrinax

Most Wilderness Scouts, Scholars and Psi-Stalkers believe the Panthera Thrinax is related to the larger, meaner *Panthera-Tereon* of the New West (also occasionally found in Dinosaur Swamp). The *Panthera-Thrinax* is a smaller, leaner predator that more resembles a canine than a cat. Their snouts are blunted, but retain the large, curved saber-like canine teeth. Rather than rely on their claws as their main weapon, the Thrinax use their powerful jaws to bring down prey. The general shape of the skull has more fullness to it, with more developed musculature and larger, round eyes. The prominent mane of the Panthera-Tereon is present on the Thrinax but isn't as full or bushy, though it runs further down the ridge of the back, giving the animal much more of a hyena-like appearance. The body is better adapted for running on wet, marshy ground, and the feet have well-developed webbing between the toes to aid in swimming. Whereas the Tereon can swim, but prefers not to, the Thrinax loves to swim and excels at it.

Further distinguishing the species is the fact that the Thrinax can be domesticated if they are captured as pups, and make excellent hunting and watchdogs. The Yellow Stinger barbarian tribe, before they were driven into extinction by rampant genetic mutation, were master Thrinax breeders. Not only did they use the animal in hunting, but children and small adults would use the Thrinax as a riding mount and for scouting. For now, most Panthera-Thrinax have returned to the wild, with the occasional Wilderness Scout, Psi-Stalker, Simvan or barbarian turning up with one as a pet and traveling companion.

Alignment: Animal; considered Anarchist or Unprincipled.

Attributes: Animal attributes are very consistent and offer a smaller range of attribute aptitude. I.Q. 1D4+5; high animal intelligence. M.E. 14+1D6, M.A. 10+1D6, P.S. 18+1D4, P.P. 16+1D6, P.E. 17+1D4, P.B. 15+1D6, Spd. 22+3D6; a minimum speed of 25 (19 mph/30.4 km) with an average speed of 31 (23 mph/36.8 km). Supernatural P.S. and P.E.

Mega-Damage by Location:

*Head –17+1D4

Forelimbs (2) – 20 each

Hind Limbs (2) – 24+1D4 each

Main Body – 50+1D6

*A single asterisk indicates a small or difficult target to hit and requires a "called shot" at -3 to strike.

Horror Factor: 10

Size: 9 feet (2.7 m) long, 3 feet (0.9 m) tall at the hips, with a 4 foot (1.2 m) long tail

Weight: 550 lbs (247.5 kg).

Average Life Span: 25 years.

P.P.E.: 1D4x10

O.C.C.: None; animal.

Natural Abilities: Excellent running speed, superb swimmer 90%, Prowl 65%, Track by smell 80% (+5% to follow a blood scent), pack hunters, typically 3D6 in any one group.

Attacks per Melee: 5

Damage: Nipping bite 1D6 M.D., full strength bite 3D6 M.D.,

claw strike 2D6 M.D., power claw strike 4D6 M.D. Special Leaping Throat Attack: 4D6 M.D. plus a 01-75% likelihood of prey being knocked down and held by the throat, losing the initiative and two melee attacks. After a successful throat attack, the Thrinax will continue to savage its prey's neck, doing an additional 4D6 M.D. per melee attack until the hold can be broken or the prey is incapacitated.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 on initiative, +2 to strike, +4 to strike with jaws, +2 to dodge, +3 to roll with impact, +4 to save vs Horror Factor, and +1 to save vs poisons and disease.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Competing predators.

Allies: None, other than fellow members of a pack or, if domesticated, its owner(s).

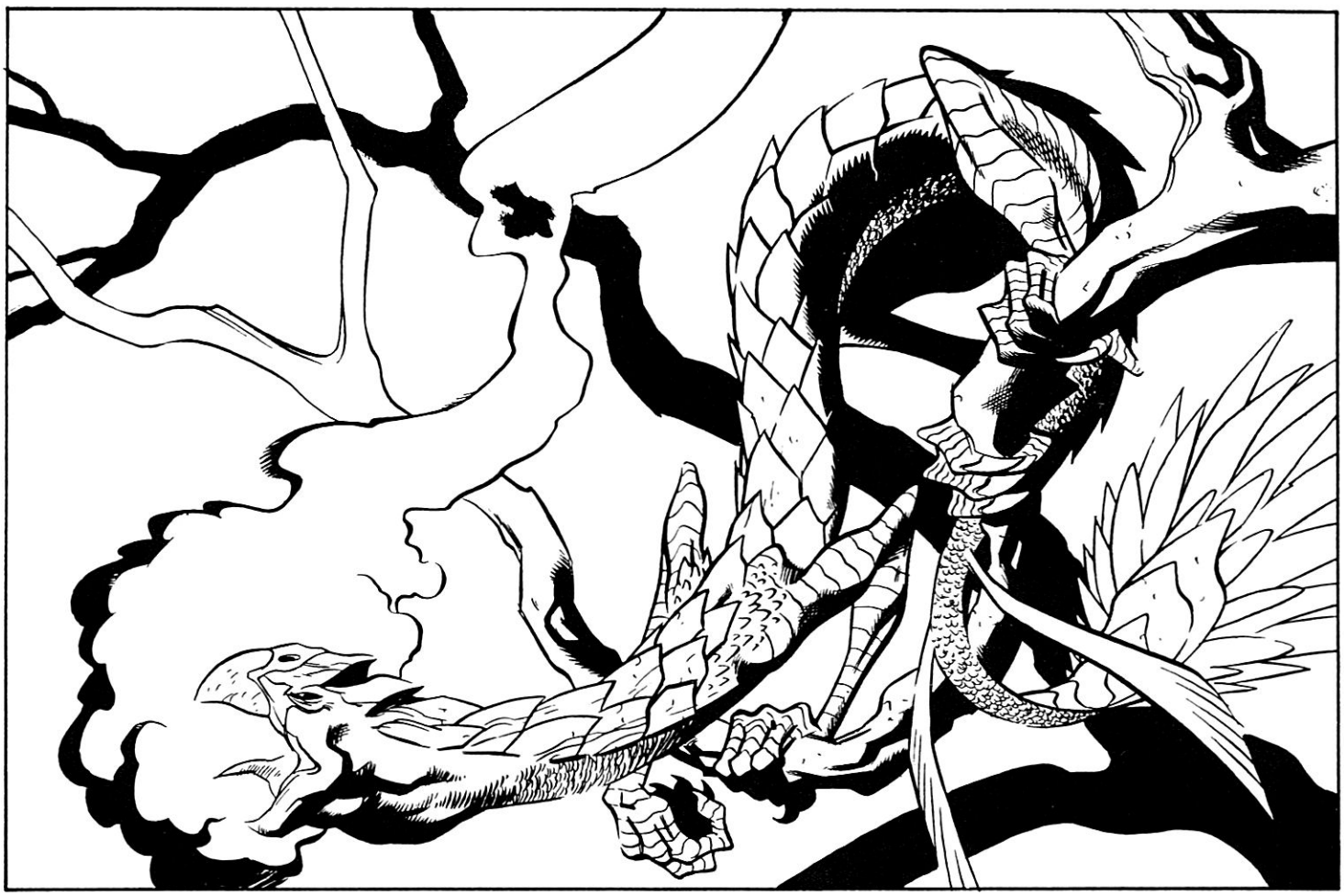
Value: Young Thrinax, up to 3 months old, can sell for up to 1000 credits each. After that, they become much too independent minded to be domesticated and trained.

Habitat: Found roaming throughout Dinosaur Swamp as a lone hunter, mated pairs, family groups (1D4+2), small packs (2D6+3), and medium-sized packs (4D6+6). Some of the largest packs (15-30) are found in the forests of the Carolinas, and individual hunters and small packs are sometimes found as far north as Virginia and as far west as Arkansas (usually following a herd of animals or other food source).

Spitfire Leaper

The Spitfire Leaper is a unique example of an arboreal dinosaur or dinosaur-like creature that, as the name implies, can indeed spit fire. Primarily living in the depths of the Florida marshy forests, the Spitfire also makes its home along the wetlands of the Atlantic coast, having been seen as far north as the old Georgia/South Carolina border. It has a long, scale-covered body atop two thin, muscular legs and a long, broad tail that ends in a wide fan shape. The scales are usually a bright, metallic green color with very dark red scales running along the spine and top of the head. The feet are very bird-like, enabling the animal to tightly grasp branches. Interestingly, the arms are extremely long with three fingered hands that end in 4 inch (10.16 cm) long, curved claws similar to those of tree sloths. The head is small and round, and instead of a snout has a short, stubby toothless beak with a series of razor sharp serrations along the edges. It primarily preys on birds, lizards, snakes, small mammals and whatever occasionally happens by. They don't usually attack large groups of humanoids, but have been known to attack individuals and groups of four or less.

Adding to their arsenal of natural weapons is the ability to spit a ball of fire. The M.D. blast literally manifests itself as a ball of fire about the size of a baseball, erupting from the open mouth of the animal, that it "coughs" at an opponent. This attack is typically used against large prey or threatening opponents, and never at animals smaller than itself. Exactly when and where they developed the ability to breathe fire is unknown, but



the Spitfire Leapers have had it since they were first encountered in the wilderness of Dinosaur Swamp. This creature could possibly have been an actual dinosaur native to Earth during the Mesozoic, but were never discovered in the fossil record. Their fire breathing capability could be a mutation or adaptation to the magic of Rifts Earth, or they could be an exotic species native to another world.

Spitfire Leapers primarily live in trees, leaping down to ambush prey on the ground with their sharp beaks or to blast them with bolts of flame. The creature is a natural acrobat and jumper, capable of leaping from one tree to another, steering themselves in midair with their fan-tipped tails in a crude form of gliding. They can grasp tree limbs with their feet, and are capable of *brachiating* (swinging from limb to limb) with their clawed forelimbs like a monkey. They live in small packs (flocks?) of 2-8, and make their nests among the thickest branches of trees. The Spitfire Leaper is truly one of the more unique and interesting animals living in Dinosaur Swamp.

Alignment: Predatory animal, considered to be Anarchist or Miscreant.

Attributes: Animal attributes are very consistent and offer a smaller range of attribute aptitude. I.Q. 1D6+5; high animal intelligence. M.E. 12+1D6, M.A. 12+1D6, P.S. 20+1D6, P.P. 21+1D6, P.E. 18+1D6, P.B. 16+1D4, Spd. 30+2D6 running, 20+1D4 leaping from tree to tree, 10+1D4 brachiating; an average of 36 (27 mph/43.2 km), 22 (17 mph/27.2 km), and 12 (9 mph/14.4 km), respectively.

Mega-Damage by Location:

*Head – 25	Hind Limbs (2) – 50 each
*Beak – 18	Tail – 30
Forelimbs (2) – 40 each	Main Body – 80

*A single asterisk indicates a small or difficult target to hit and requires a "called shot" at -3 to strike.

Horror Factor: 11

Size: 4 feet, 6 inches (1.37 m) long.

Weight: 100 pounds (45 kg).

Average Life Span: 25 years.

P.P.E.: 4D6

O.C.C.: None; animal.

Natural Abilities: Superb, hawk-like vision, prehensile clawed feet and hands, can jump 25 feet (7.6 m) high or long, twice that with a running start, pack orientation, heat and fire resistance, and fire breathing. Has the equivalent of the skills Acrobatics at 86%, Climbing 96%, Swim 60%, and Land Navigation 75%.

Vulnerabilities: Living in trees means a constant danger of falling, though the Leapers are very agile acrobats; limited conditions for raising young.

Attacks per Melee: 4

Damage: Bite 1D6+6 M.D., forelimb claws 1D6+3 M.D., hind limb talons 1D8 M.D.

Special Fire Ball Attack: 4D6 M.D.; range 30 feet (9.1 m). Each fire ball counts as one melee attack/action, but only to fire balls can be coughed up per round.

Special Pounce Attack: 2D8 M.D. plus a 01-45% likelihood of prey being knocked down, losing the initiative and one melee attack. After a successful pounce attack, the Spitfire Leaper can claw with all four limbs, doing 5D6 M.D., or claw with all four limbs and bite with the serrated beak, doing a massive 1D6x10 M.D.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +4 on initiative, +2 to strike, parry, and dodge, +6 to a leaping dodge, +4 roll with impact, +3 to save vs Horror Factor. bonuses.

Magic: In addition to being able to spit fire, the creature takes half damage from heat and flame based attacks.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Humanoids and other predators.

Allies: Other Spitfire Leapers.

Value: Their scaly, metallic hide is very attractive and often used in crafting decorative armor for important figures. 1000-2000 credits for a whole skin.

Habitat: Spitfires are most common among the swampy forests of the old state of Florida, but are found in lesser numbers north, along the Atlantic coast.

Switchback

An incredibly bizarre creature, the Switchback is a wickedly armored omnivore that lives in the foothills of the ever D-Shifting mountains of North Carolina and Tennessee. An opportunist, Switchbacks will try to eat anything they come across that is smaller and slower than they are. They thrive in the foothills of the mountains because the dimensional instability is always bringing something out of a Rift, providing them with a limitless buffet with almost infinite variety. Switchbacks are extremely territorial, staking out their domain with an overpoweringly strong musk that they spray on their boundary with other Switchbacks. They only mingle with their own kind for one short week every three years to mate, after which the male usually departs as fast as possible so as not to become dinner himself.

Switchbacks have long, lean bodies, including a skinny, tapering tail, covered with thin, segmented scaly plates. They have six lithe, but powerful, legs that end in three-fingered dinosaur-like feet. Their foot claws are wide and wedge shaped, enabling them to both dig with them to get at roots and burrowing prey, but also giving them amazing traction while running. Their heads are broad and flat, with a sharp, triangular beak good for shearing off chunks of meat or stripping branches. The mouth is filled with wide, flat teeth good for grinding up plant matter, but also good for crushing bone. They get their name for the defensive adaptation that runs along the spine of their back. Sticking out from under their segmented torso plates are rows of retractable needle-like quills. Normally, only the very tips of these quills are noticeable, but when the animal is angered or frightened, these quills spring from their sheaths under the animal's skin, providing for a nasty surprise for a would-be predator. The quills are extremely sharp, and are completely replaceable, sticking in the flesh of anything that comes into contact with them, very similar to the quills of a porcupine. When these quills are extended, the creature uses its tail like a vicious, nail-studded club, and won't hesitate to charge into a predator, im-

paling them with the quills on their shoulders and body. Sometimes, a predator that tries to eat them end up on the Switchback's menu instead.

Alignment: Animal, considered Anarchist or Miscreant.

Attributes: Animal attributes are very consistent and offer a smaller range of attribute aptitude. I.Q. 1D4+3; average animal intelligence. M.E. 10+1D6, M.A. 2D6, P.S. 20+1D6, P.P. 22+1D6, P.E. 17+1D4, P.B. 8+1D6, Spd. 40+1D6; an average speed of 43 (32 mph/51.2 km). Supernatural P.S. and P.E.

Mega-Damage by Location:

*Head – 25

Legs (6) – 75 each

Tail – 65

Underbelly – 45

Main Body – 112

*A single asterisk indicates a small or difficult target to hit and requires a "called shot" at -3 to strike.

Horror Factor: 11, 13 when it has its quills extended.

Size: 8 feet (2.4 m) long, 3 feet (0.9 m) tall at the hips.

Weight: 450 pounds (202.5 kg).

Average Life Span: 40 years.

P.P.E.: 3D6

O.C.C.: None; animal.

Natural Abilities: Excellent running speed, track by scent 65%, extremely powerful digestive system; can eat just about anything organic and digest it without harm.

Vulnerabilities: Poor hearing, lightly armored underbelly, and aggressive territoriality sometimes overrides natural sense of preservation.

Attacks per Melee: 4

Damage: Bite 1D6 M.D., body block with quills 6D6 M.D., light tail swipe with quills 3D6 M.D. with a 01-15% chance of knocking down a human-sized opponent, full strength tail swipe 1D4x10 M.D. with a 01-40% chance of knocking down a human-sized target.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, parry, dodge, +4 to save vs Horror Factor, +8 to save vs poison/toxins and disease. These are in addition to any possible attribute bonuses.

Magic: Completely impervious to poison and rotten food when it is eaten on a ley line.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Humanoids, other Switchbacks, predators, and just about anything.

Allies: None.

Value: Their quills and armor make for excellent raw materials, being used for making body armor, and weapons, and the quills are especially good as roofing material when lashed together.

Habitat: They live almost exclusively in the foothills of North Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, and Kentucky, and extending as far north as West Virginia.

Trysia Faerie
Optional Player Character

The Trysia are small, butterfly-like Faerie Folk that live in a symbiotic relationship with the *Lankton's Knot* plant. The Trysia can safely touch and ingest the plant's adhesive enzyme, suggesting both Faerie and plant originated from the same world. In fact, the plant's adhesive secretion is a sweet tasting drug to the Faeries, and the more the plant feeds, the sweeter the taste, so the Trysia ensure that the plant has plenty to eat. They have little care about what, or who, the plant eats, so long as it feeds. Consequently, any animal or humanoid may fall victim to plant and Faerie. Though beautiful to behold, Trysia Faeries are not fun loving, mischievous creatures, but actually rather cruel and vindictive. The Trysia take a certain sadistic pleasure in luring animals and people into the deadly embrace of the Lankton's Knot, and will often hang around to taunt them after they get stuck. They are also known to play other cruel, meanspirited pranks on big people and snatch interesting looking items belonging to victims before they are dissolved by the plant. Here again, the Faeries' cruel streak may show, enticing the little brutes to take perverse joy in using Object Read on the item so they may taunt the victim with what they see from the psychic reading. On the other hand, they are also known to use their magical and psionic abilities to lessen the pain and fear that a victim feels as the plant slowly digests them, but only after extracting prolonged begging and pleading.

Ironically, it is the addictive adhesive the Trysia eat like candy that makes them so vile and mean. Those who manage to kick the habit are less aggressive and vengeful, and may even grow to be kind and considerate. However, one taste of the sticky enzyme renews the addiction and brings back their cruelty. Those who forsake the Lankton's Knot are regarded as outcasts and their compassion for others a weakness. Yet even those Trysia Faeries who kick the Lankton habit remain spiteful and cruel when angry, and vicious when it comes to revenge. They also keep their sweet tooth, substituting honey, candy and chocolate for Lankton's plant enzyme. They care little for exploration, adventure, or any noble cause, though they are full of curiosity and may take a liking to someone and accompany them on their travels, at least for a while. However, as with all people, the Faeries' friends and personal experiences may shape them into something better or worse as time goes by.

Alignment: Any, but typically Anarchist (40%) or Miscreant (35%). Player characters can be of any alignment. NPCs addicted to Lankton's Knot are always Anarchist (50%) or evil (50%, any).

Attributes: I.Q. 2D6+2, M.E. 2D6+1, M.A. 2D6+5, P.S. 1D6+2, P.P. 2D6+8, P.E. 2D6+2, P.B. 16+1D6, Spd. 4D6 running, 2D6x10 flying.

M.D.C.: 2D6 +P.E. attribute number.

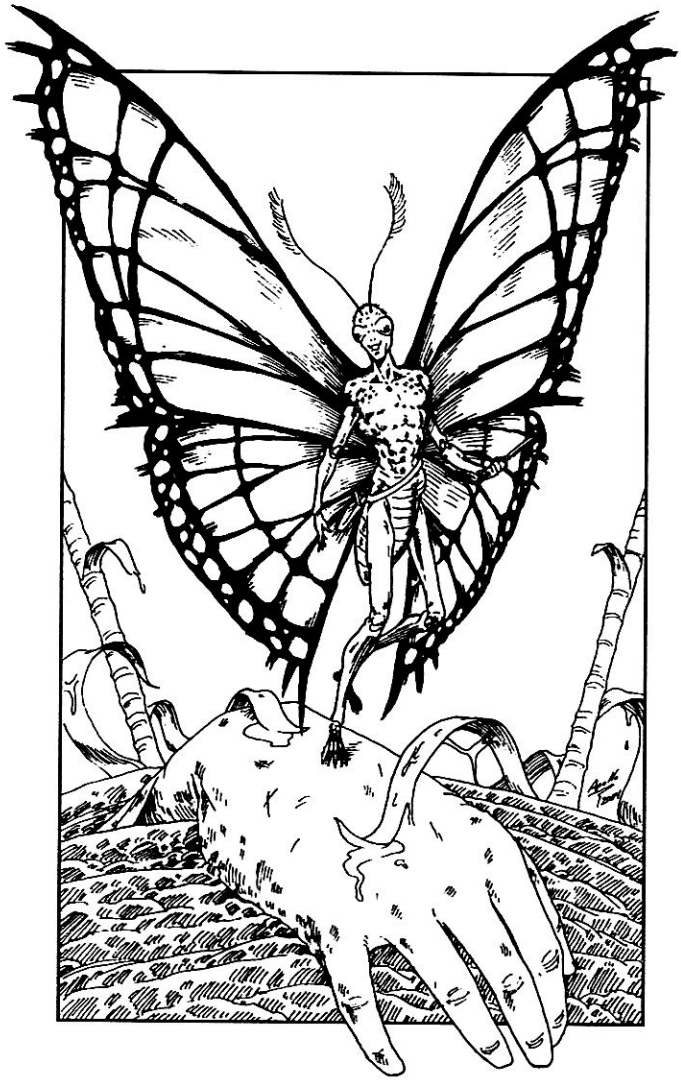
Horror Factor: 8

Size: 6-12 inches tall (0.15 to 0.3 m).

Weight: 8-16 ounces (0.22 to 0.45 kg).

Average Life Span: Unknown, possibly immortal.

P.P.E.: 1D6x10 +P.E. attribute number, but can draw on P.P.E. from ley lines and other places of power like a practitioner of magic.



R.C.C.: Creature of magic, free spirit.

R.C.C. Skills: Speaks Faerie/Gobblely 98%, plus one additional Language (+10%), Land Navigation (+10%), Wilderness Survival (+15%), Faerie Lore (+30%), Dance (+15%), Prowl (+20%), Sing (+30%), W.P. Knife, plus two additional skills taken with Game Master approval. Use the experience points table for the Mystic O.C.C.

Average Level of Experience: 1D6

Natural Abilities: Fly, see the invisible, excellent sense of smell, especially for sweet/sugary substances, immune to the effects of Lankton's Knot enzyme and acid, as well as Faerie Magic.

Vulnerabilities: Addicted to sugar and sweet treats; acts like a narcotic/hallucinogenic.

Attacks per Melee: 3 +1 for every three levels of experience.

Damage: By spells, psionics or weapon only.

R.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 to dodge while flying, +2 to Spell Strength, +3 to save vs magic, +2 to save vs psionics. Those NOT addicted to the plant are also +1 on initiative, +1 to strike and parry, +2 to dodge (standing or flying) and +2 to roll with impact.

Magic Spell Knowledge: Blinding Flash, Befuddle, Blind, Charismatic Aura, Charm, Cleanse, Fools Gold, Heavy Breathing, and Paralysis: Lesser. **Note:** The usual rules concerning Faerie Magic apply.

Psionics: Minor Psionics: I.S.P.: 2D6 +M.E. attribute number. Deaden Pain (4), Induce Sleep (4), Suppress Fear (8), and Object Read (6) only.

Enemies: None per se, though they have little regard for humans and most life forms other than their own kind.

Allies: Their fellow Trysia Faeries and, depending on the circumstances, other Faerie Folk, particularly the cruel ones. The Lankton's Knot plant does not even know the Trysia exist, so it is not counted as an ally. The Trysia of their own volution and drug induced needs send people to the plant.

Value: None.

Habitat: Found living near rivers, lakes and streams where the Lankton's Knot is known to grow. Trysia are found only in the Southeast.

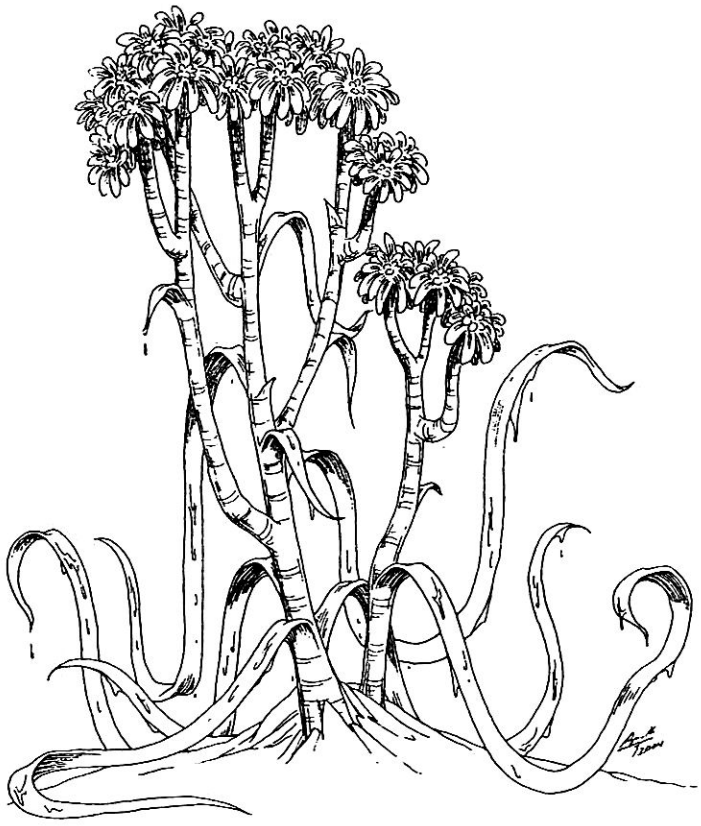
Man-Eating Plants

Carnivorous plants aren't animals. They aren't even like animals. Game Masters should keep that foremost in their minds when designing encounters that utilize these weird plants, for they are a horror unto themselves. Remember, as plants, they don't have emotions or desires, nor do they feel pity or intend malice. They don't feel pleasure and they don't feel pain. They are a part of nature and feed on wildlife and people as a matter of survival instinct. It's what they do. In the weird and chaotic world of Rifts Earth, some people have wondered if these man-killers might not be more than what they appear, a supernatural demon perhaps, or plants possessed and animated by nature spirits. However, research has revealed no signs of intelligence, emotions, desire or ability to communicate. They are nothing more than alien flora brought to Earth via the Rifts. Though alien life forms, these carnivorous plants do not possess any level of psychic awareness nor do they respond to telepathy, empathy, or other such psychic measures. They *are* plants. A form of life all of their own. They simply are, and they seem to be always hungry.

There are several notable species of man-eating plants found in the wetlands and up the deltas of the east coast. The most common are the *Seep Ferns*, plants that secrete the blood of previous kills from their leaves to attract carnivores and scavengers to prey upon. The blood from their leaves is mixed with a potent toxin that overcomes most animals that taste it, or inhale it from a very close range, bringing them down in a matter of seconds. The unconscious animal is then drained of its blood by the alien plant's roots. Seep Ferns are typically found in scattered clusters or colonies ranging from two or three to several dozen.

Another variety of carnivorous plant is the *Qink*, found throughout the southeast. A large, central, fleshy flower of radiant reds, pinks, blues and oranges belies the danger of this particular plant. It relies on a strong, sweet scent to attract animals and lashes out with poison-thorn vines as if they were tentacles. The vines are as strong as steel cables and capable of peeling a man from Mega-Damage body armor and tearing a dinosaur to pieces, bringing the chunks of flesh torn from its prey into the central flower where it is digested.

A third carnivorous plant is *Lankton's Knot*. This man-eater grows as a cluster of sticky reeds and vines found near lakes and streams. Lankton's Knots live in symbiosis with a butterfly-like Faerie Folk called the *Trysia*. The Trysia lure curious animals and humanoid explorers to the water's edge and into the reeds of the Knot, where a powerful adhesive traps the unwary victim. The adhesive is a powerful digestive enzyme that, over time, literally dissolves the victim into fertilizer for the plant. The Trysia are immune to the adhesive, leading some to believe that they are from the same alien world. According to local Wilderness Scouts and barbarians, the Trysia Faeries eat the sticky enzyme and actually find it to be a sweet tasting treat.



Lankton's Knot

Named for Marcus Sheridan Lankton, an early Wilderness Scout who dared to explore the region, the Lankton's Knot is one of the more insidious threats found in Dinosaur Swamp. Consisting of a wild patch of reeds, vines and small, white lace-like flowers, it is usually encountered along the banks of meandering streams and lakeshores in the south. The plant has a dewy, glistening look to it, which may be out of place in the hot afternoon hours, but is often indistinguishable in the early morning. The glistening comes from the enzymatic adhesive that the plant secretes to trap and digest its prey. It is a simple, weedy plant that grows in large, colonial batches. When animals wander into the plant, they get stuck to the adhesive that also begins a relatively swift process of dissolving them, while still alive, into component fertilizer for the plant. The ground around the plant is very thick, with a dark, rich color of soil thoroughly enriched with nutrients. It would make for excellent farming soil, provided the Lankton's Knot could be removed.

Unlike other carnivorous plants, the Knot doesn't rely on scent or visual attractants, but has rather formed an interesting symbiotic bond with a small insect-like Faerie Folk called the *Trysia*. To them, the acid secreted by the plant is a sweet tasting drug, and they find that the richer the soil is, the sweeter the enzyme actually tastes. The malevolent Faeries deliberately lure animals and humanoids into the clutches of the plant to feed it and further enrich the soil in a vicious cycle of life, death and addiction.

Alignment: Plant; not applicable.

Attributes: Not applicable.

M.D.C.: Typically 3 points per square meter of plant.

Horror Factor: 5, raises to 12 when a trapped victim realizes what's happening and that he faces death.

Size: Varies, but each individual stalk is about 3 feet (0.9 m) tall.

Weight: Varies with each plant cluster; typically 3-10 pounds (1.35 to 4.5 kg).

Average Life Span: Unknown; guessed to be 50-80 years.

P.P.E.: None.

O.C.C.: None; plant.

Natural Abilities: Lack of a centralized nervous system means that the plant does not feel pain or emotions, and is immune to Critical Strikes and Death Blow. Nor are they susceptible to psychic attacks or other attacks on the mind or emotions.

Vulnerabilities: Cannot dodge or flee, making it vulnerable to ranged-attacks, fire and area effect attacks. The plant is truly at the mercy of the environment.

Attacks per Melee: Effectively 3, if only to calculate damage from the acid.

Damage: None, however the adhesive that the plant secretes is quite a powerful acid.

Acidic Adhesive: Creatures that walk into a patch of Lankton's Knot must make a passive dodge vs an attack value of 16 to avoid being trapped by the sticky honey-like substance. The acid affects both S.D.C. and M.D.C. creatures and structures alike, doing 4D6 points of damage per each *melee attack*, or approximately every five seconds.

The acid is adhesive, sticking to anything and everything. A trapped victim is held as per the Holding Rules on page 29 of the **Rifts® Game Master Guide**, and must beat a target number of 23 to break free. Alternatively, a victim can be rescued by blasting a path to freedom by his companions, or some other method of rescue. While these actions may free the victim, the individual is still covered with the acidic adhesive, and must find some way to remove it. Since it has the texture and consistency of honey, it is almost impossible to brush off, and it is extremely difficult to wash away. In fact, attempting to brush or wash the acid off usually results in spreading the compound over a larger surface area. The acid remains active for 1D4 melee rounds after an individual breaks free of the plant.

Bonuses: None.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: None.

Allies: The Trysia Faeries protect and feed the plant to keep the sweet supply of nectar coming.

Value: The adhesive enzyme produced by the plant is a highly desired area effect weapon. The cost varies wildly depending on its availability.

Habitat: Found throughout the delta regions of the east coast, they are particularly common along the south Georgia coast.

Qink

(Pronounced "kink") The Qink is arguably the most active, and attractive, of all of the carnivorous plants. The Qink plant consists of a large, central fleshy flower with petals ranging in color from radiant reds to pinks, oranges and even shades of blue. It has six long vines that spread out from the central flower that are each tipped with two rigid, poison injecting thorns. It gives off a very strong, sweet smelling scent that lures animals in for a closer look. The bright colors also play a role in attracting birds, certain herbivores with color vision, and the occasional curious explorer. Inside the flower is a membrane that leads down into the digestive pocket within the root ball. When an animal comes within range of the plant, a complex series of events takes place within the flower.

The Qink's root structure consists of a central mass of roots intertwined to form a pocket where prey is digested. Stretching out away from the root ball are pressure sensitive tendrils almost as long as the six poison tipped vines that stretch from the flower head. When an animal walks over these roots, a complex biological reaction of chemicals, pressure and water tension causes the surface vines to flail about wildly, thrashing anything in their reach and raking them with their thorns. Again, reliant on the pressure of the victim's weight being registered on the roots underground, the vines are directed to the victim and will latch onto it, dragging it to the central flower and down into the digestive pocket.

Inside the pocket, organic material is reduced to nutrients that the plant needs, and the soup is absorbed directly into the root structure. Any inorganic material is typically expelled by the plant in a convulsive action brought on by lengthy pressure exerted on the roots. Just as the root tendrils can detect pressure around the plant, the root ball itself is sensitive to pressure, and after a certain amount of time, usually several days, it will regurgitate any inorganic material present. It's not uncommon to see a partially digested suit of armor, or ruined piece of bionic hardware in the vicinity of a Qink. It serves as a warning sign to those in the know, but most adventurers in Dinosaur Swamp are usually more concerned with the threat of dinosaurs than of exotic plant life.

Alignment: Plant; not applicable.

Attributes: Not applicable.

Mega-Damage by Location:

Fleshy Flower Center – 35

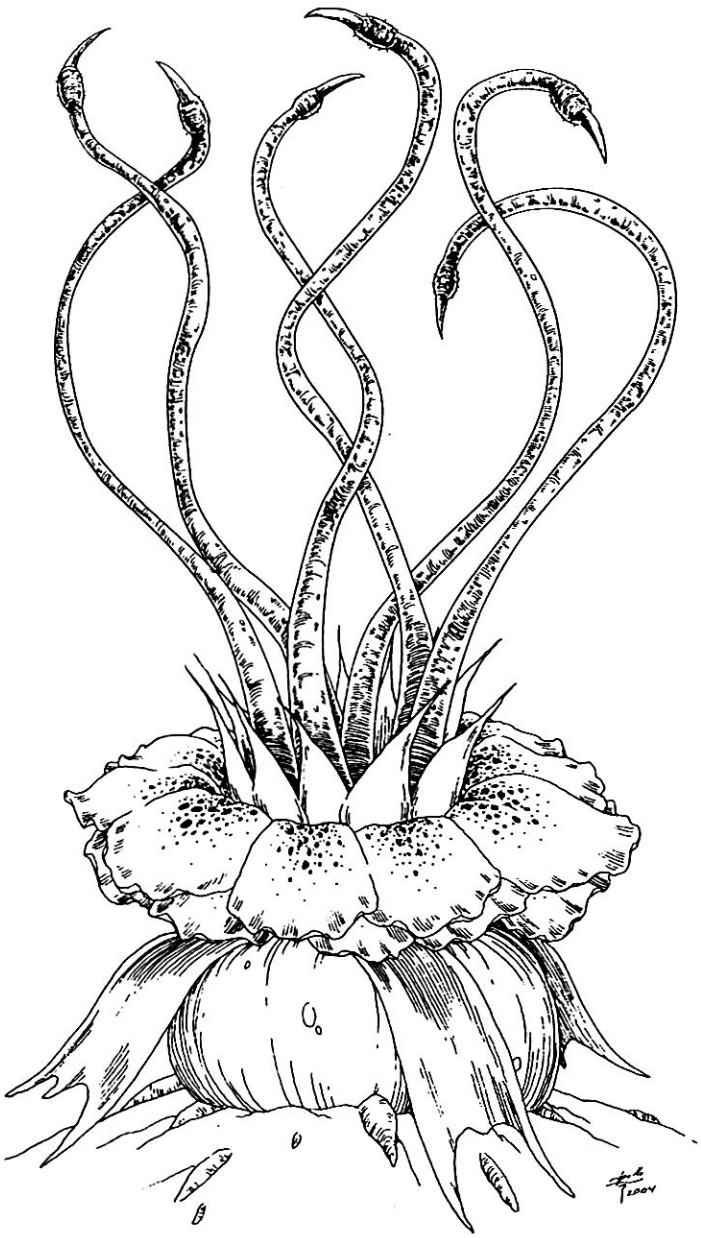
Digestive Root Pocket – 80

Protective Leaves (4) – 50 each

Vines (6) – 15 each

Thorn Tips (12) – 3 each

Horror Factor: 12



Size: The flower center is usually about 8 feet (2.4 m) wide, with the vines being about 14 feet (4.3 m) long. The digestive root structure can extend for 20 feet (6.1 m) beneath the surface.

Weight: 600 pounds (270 kg).

Average Life Span: Unknown, but suspected of living 15-30 years.

P.P.E.: None.

O.C.C.: None; plant.

Natural Abilities: Lack of a centralized nervous system means the plant does not feel pain, is immune to Critical Strikes and Death Blow, and is imperious to psychic attacks or other attacks on the mind or emotions.

Vulnerabilities: Cannot dodge, nor flee from fire or other area effect conditions. They are truly at the mercy of the environment.

Attacks per Melee: 2

Damage: Vine lashing 2D6 M.D.

Poison Effects: A successful strike by a toxic thorn on an unprotected part of the body requires a saving throw versus Poison at 14 or higher (defender wins ties). Failure to do so means that the victim loses all feeling in the area of the body that has been struck. The toxin paralyzes the victim for 1D4 hours, after which they can recover normally, provided they haven't been consumed by the plant! All effects are cumulative with repeated lashings by the vines. Consult the following chart for further effects on individual body locations:

Head: The victim loses all feeling in the face, paralyzing even the eye muscles, resulting in blindness. The victim is -10 to strike, parry and dodge, all skills requiring sight are performed at -80%, and the victim loses the capacity for speaking. He can continue to thrash around, inviting the vines to home in on his position and drag him into the center of the plant.

Arms: The victim loses all feeling in the limb that has been struck and the P.P. and P.S. are reduced by one quarter, along with all combat bonuses. The character feels extremely off balance, and his Spd is reduced by 4. These effects are doubled if both arms are incapacitated.

Legs: The victim loses all feeling in the leg that has been struck. The character has his P.P. and P.S. reduced by one quarter, along with all combat bonuses. He feels extremely off balance, and his Spd is reduced by 50%. These effects are doubled if both legs are incapacitated.

Torso: The victim begins to suffer from cardiac and respiratory failure. His heart and lungs begin to slow, shortening the victim's ability to breathe. The experience is not only physically debilitating, but also quite frightening. Reduce all combat bonuses by half, P.S., P.P. and P.E. attributes are reduced by one third, and the character is only able to communicate in short, raspy sentences.

Digestive Root Effects: Over the course of several days, a victim that has been dragged into the digestive root structure is slowly digested alive. The digestive juice continues to act as a paralytic, so thankfully the victim is numb before death claims him. The digestive juices inflict 4D6 M.D. per 6 hours of exposure, completely dissolving organic tissue and weakening inorganic materials. Typically, anything with under 20 M.D.C. is dissolved, while anything with more than 20 M.D.C. is pitted and marred, taking 20 M.D., but will eventually be expelled back out of the plant.

Bonuses: +2 to strike with lashing vines.

Magic: None.

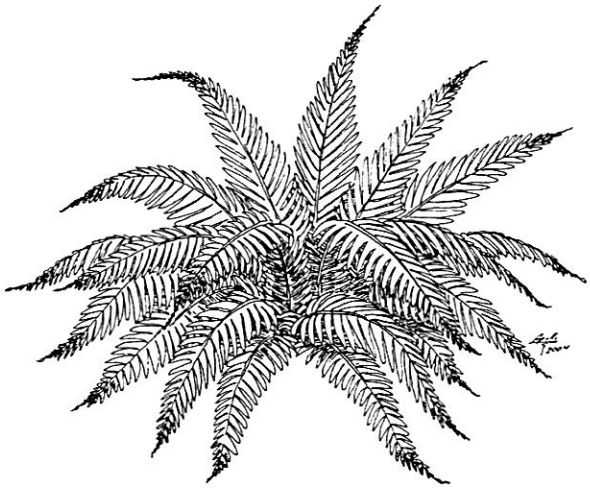
Psionics: None.

Enemies: None.

Allies: None.

Value: The toxin from the plant's spines is a highly desired tranquilizer, costing roughly 8,000 credits per dose (though retailers and Alchemists seldom pay more than 10% of that amount when buying for resale).

Habitat: Found through out the delta regions of the east coast, and the Qink are particularly common along the high magic region of the south Georgia coast.



Seep Fern

While not a true spore bearing fern, the bushy appearance of this plant is very fern-like, and the leaves appear to secrete a syrupy substance with very much the smell and consistency of blood, thus giving it its name. Seep Ferns are typically found in small colonial growths mixed in with regular fern plants, making them something of a wolf in sheep's clothing. From a distance, the blood-like secretion looks as though a wounded animal may have brushed aside the fern, leaving a smear of blood on the leaves and on the ground around it. This entices predators or scavengers to come closer to investigate or lap the blood up, or in an effort to pick up the wounded animal's scent. However, upon breathing the secretion deeply, the animal falls unconscious, as it is actually a powerful aromatic sedative. Then, mirroring the process used by the Qink plant, the weight of the unconscious victim activates the subsurface roots that sprout through the ground and stab into the victim to begin draining its blood. The Seep Fern may be simple, but it is highly effective in its methods.

Alignment: Plant; not applicable.

Attributes: Not applicable.

S.D.C.: 3D6 per square meter.

Horror Factor: 7

Size: Varies, but each individual plant is about 2 feet (0.6 m) tall.

Weight: Insignificant.

Average Life Span: Unknown.

P.P.E.: None.

O.C.C.: None; plant.

Natural Abilities: Lack of a centralized nervous system means that the plant does not feel pain, is immune to Critical Strikes and Death Blows, and impervious to psychic attacks and other attacks on the mind or emotions.

Vulnerabilities: Cannot dodge, flee from fire or avoid other area effect attacks and conditions. The plant is truly at the mercy of the environment.

Attacks per Melee: Effectively zero.

Damage: None per se, but the plant does secrete a toxin and does have blood drinking roots.

Seep Fern Blood: Because it has the smell of freshly spilt blood, the toxin draws many predators and scavengers right up to the base of the plant. Either inhaling the scent from within 3 feet (0.9 m), or by actually licking the substance, the animal falls victim to the toxin and must make a saving throw versus Poison at 16 or higher. Failure to save results in the victim falling into unconsciousness for 1D4 hours. Of course, once unconscious, the roots of the plant take over, draining the victim of its blood.

Seep Fern Roots: The shallow roots of the Seep Fern rise up from the soil and begin the invasive process of draining the blood from the unconscious victim. They enter the body through the first available orifice they find and tap into the circulatory system from there. The roots secrete the same toxin as is found on the leaves, keeping the victim sedated throughout the procedure. The victim suffers 3D6 points of damage due to blood loss per hour of exposure, until either the plant is satiated, or the victim dies. Typically, the plant can hold a reservoir of 1D6x10 points worth of blood every 24 hours, meaning that the initial experience isn't always lethal. However, most animals never recover from the effects of being knocked out and weakened by blood loss at the base of the plant, especially if the plant feeds on them every day. Even if the victim should survive, the elements or, ironically, a predatory or scavenging animal may finish him off before he can recover.

Bonuses: None.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: None.

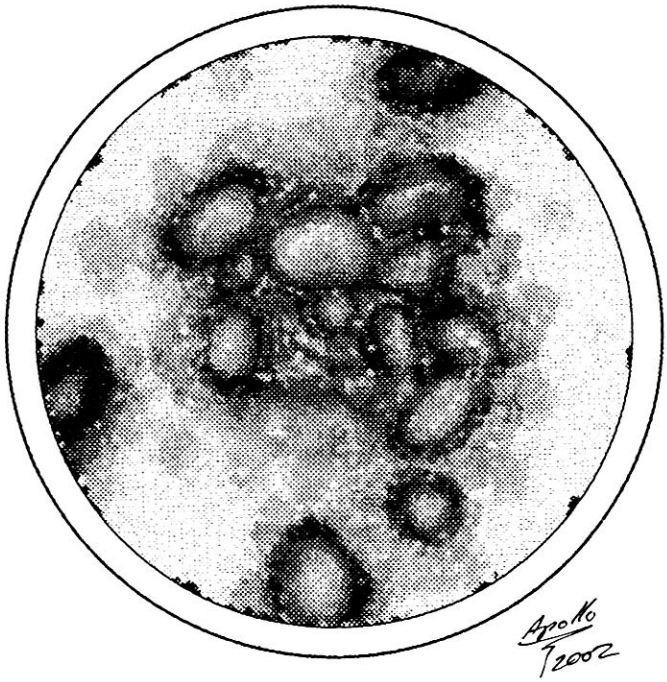
Allies: None.

Value: The toxin secreted by the Seep Fern is a much desired poison used by barbarians and Wilderness Scouts alike for both hunting and other activities. The toxin is plentiful where it can be gathered, selling for 100 credits per single dose vial, or 900 credits for ten vials. Potency fades to nothing, however, within 12 days.

Habitat: Found throughout the delta regions of the east coast, they are particularly common along the south Georgia coast.

Diseases, Toxins & Medicines of Dinosaur Swamp

Author's Note: Diseases and medications bring a level of realism to role-playing games that some players and Game Masters might not feel appropriate. They have debilitating effects, and can bring even the mightiest character down on the say-so of a couple of dice rolls. If you prefer *not* to play with this added level of complexity and realism, then don't. It's your game, do not include these optional rules if you don't want to use them. If you do wish to include them, be fair and give player characters a fair chance at surviving. P.E. bonuses to save should always apply when dealing with disease as well as poison.



Disease (Optional)

While the plants and animals of Dinosaur Swamp are the most visible threat to adventurers, it is disease that often claims more lives than claws and teeth. Names like Malaria, Cholera, and Bubonic Plague are just as terrifying to those who know them as are the names of the giant predators that stalk the forests and marshes. The hot, moist environment of the marshlands is a perfect breeding ground for microbial organisms and alien creatures Rifted in from across the Megaverse. All types of viruses, bacteria, fungi and parasites make their homes in the animals and environment of Dinosaur Swamp, all waiting for just the right host in which to multiply.

While it is easy to contract a disease in the marshes and forests, it is quite another thing to cure them. Many of these diseases were curable with the advanced medicines of the so-called Golden Age of Science before the Great Cataclysm, but medicines that were commonplace in that period are unheard of in the wilderness of Dinosaur Swamp. These diseases went unchecked for thousands of years of human history, and it was only for two or three short centuries that humans were safe from them. Treatment of explorers in the Swamp is going to be limited to what they bring with them in the way of magic, prepared medicines, and what they might be lucky enough to find in the environment. Even then, there are no guarantees.

Wound Infection

Outside of specific diseases, the danger of general bacterial infection runs extremely high. Even the slightest cut, scratch or bite, if not properly cleaned, is an open invitation for disaster. Without proper medical treatment, such as simple antibiotics or magical healing, even a mundane mosquito bite can become fatal. For those unprepared, infection on top of disease can kill even the most powerful adventurer.

Characters that are wounded, and who do not receive proper, and successful, medical treatment within the first 12 hours, are required to make a saving throw versus disease at 14 or higher. A failed save means the onset of an infection.

Infected characters will see their P.E. reduced by half, P.S. and P.P. reduced by 25%, and actions per melee round, combat bonuses and Spd reduced by 40%. Infected characters will also fatigue at twice their normal rate for the first 12 hours, and will then be subject to fatiguing at three times their normal rate for the remainder of the infection. Every 12 hours after onset of infection, the character must make another saving throw versus disease at 14 or higher or suffer 2D6 damage direct to Hit Points. A successful save will negate the toxins, and the character can *recover* normally from that point, regaining full ability scores and combat bonuses within 36 hours. Damage suffered from the infection is healed normally. As if general infection wasn't enough, there are many specific diseases that await adventurers.

Malaria

The most common disease of Dinosaur Swamp is Malaria. So common in fact, there are even alien varieties of the very same disease. Found throughout the peninsula, it is also a hazard in the marshes of the east coast, spreading as far north as the Carolinas. Spread by mosquito bites, the onset of symptoms occurs about 12 days after the infected bite occurs, although this does vary from strain to strain, and onset can occur in as little as two to three days. Symptoms include fever, headache, vomiting, fatigue and other flu-like symptoms. If left untreated, it can be lethal as it will kill red blood cells, and can clog capillaries that feed blood to the brain and other organs.

Characters infected must make a saving throw vs disease at a 14 or higher, or suffer from the initial onset of the disease. This manifests itself as, and is often mistaken for, fatigue represented by -2 Spd., -2 on initiative, -1 to parry and dodge and -2 to damage. These effects linger for the first 8 hours of the disease, and then a second saving throw is required vs disease at a 15 or higher. Characters who fail are stricken with a -20% on all skills, fatigue at twice their normal rate and find their actions per melee, combat bonuses, Spd., P.S., P.P., and P.E. reduced by 20%.

Every eight hours the character will be required to make a saving throw vs disease at a 15 or higher or suffer 2D6+3 points of damage directly to Hit Points. Once a saving throw is made, the character will have made a partial recovery, and will only suffer from the original fatigue symptoms of the disease onset. A second, consecutive successful saving throw is necessary to fully recover from the disease. A second, failed saving throw continues the progression of the disease.

Treatment for Malaria is a matter of preparation. Prevention is the number one key, with efforts taken by prepared adventurers to ward off insects through chemical and/or magical means. Medications, while they exist, are often effective on a limited number of strains of the disease, and are only available through modern manufacture. Unless the characters were prepared when they entered the Swamp, such resources are going to be limited. Holistic Medicine can be used to manufacture medicines to ease the symptoms (reduce penalties and damage by half), but they will *not* cure the disease. It will be up to the infected character's immune system to do that.

Trypanosomiasis, "Sleeping Sickness"

Originally found in Africa, and delivered by the tsetse fly, "sleeping sickness," as it is known, is a parasitic malady now commonly found in Dinosaur Swamp. It is a fatal, two-stage illness that can leave lasting neurological damage even when successfully treated. The onset of symptoms for the first stage of the disease usually occurs within days of infection, with the second stage following in the days after.

Infected characters must make a saving throw versus disease at a 14 or higher, or suffer the onset of the first stage of the disease. The symptoms of stage one are bouts of fever, headache, wracking joint pain and itching skin irritation. The infected character suffers a -30% penalty to skills, attributes and combat bonuses, and sees his number of actions per melee round reduced to two. Furthermore, the afflicted are unable to wear anything more than loose cloth clothing.

After 1D4 days, the character must make another saving throw vs disease at a 12 or higher, or suffer the onset of stage two. A successful saving throw means recovery from stage one with no onset of stage two. However, the parasite can remain dormant in the host body for up to 12 years, so future treatment *might* be required even if the initial onset is fought off.

Stage two is a devastating assault on the character's neurological system as the infection has jumped from the bloodstream and begun infecting the brain cells. Even if treated, damage sustained at this stage can be permanent. Symptoms include a severe disruption of the normal sleep pattern, confusion, sensory disruption and disturbances and a lack of total coordination. The infected character will have only one attack per melee round, no combat bonuses, a further penalty of -60% is applied to all skills, and all attribute scores are reduced to half. Furthermore, 3D6 points of damage is inflicted directly to Hit Points. The character is barely cognitive, having trouble recognizing familiar faces and voices, and may suffer from hallucinations.

After suffering from the effects of stage two for 1D6 days, the character must make another saving throw vs disease at a 14 or higher. *A failed saving throw* means that the character lapses into a coma, and will die within 12 hours unless adequate medical treatment is administered. Even with proper medical treatment the character has a 01-45% chance of sustaining *permanent brain damage.*

A successful saving throw means that the character has succeeded in staving off the effects of stage two, but has a 01-15% chance of permanent brain damage. A second saving throw vs disease at a 12 or higher is still required to fight off the effects of stage one. If damage inflicted is permanent, the character will suffer from a loss of mental capability, and a reduction in coordination that will *never* quite recover. Permanent damage manifests as a penalty of -10% on all skills, a -1 to I.Q., and a -2 to P.P. or -4 to Spd (pick one).

Treatment consists of medications that specifically target the individual stages of the disease, but there is not one single drug that can target both phases. The first stage is easier to treat as it is an illness in the blood, where the second stage is extremely hard to treat as it has infected the brain cells. These drugs are expensive, and difficult to manufacture provided that one even has the materials necessary. Often, as with most diseases in the Rifts world, it is up to magical or psychic healing, extensive preparation, or the body's own immune system to fight them off.

River Blindness

Caused by the microscopic larvae of a worm, contraction of River Blindness, while itself not fatal, can have debilitating permanent side effects. Spread through the bites of black flies commonly found near rivers and streams, the larvae are introduced into the bloodstream, and migrate throughout the body, nesting in the eyes, the lymph nodes, the groin and other uncomfortable regions. The larvae can live in the body for years before symptoms manifest themselves, striking as much as a decade after the initial exposure.

Characters infected by River Blindness must make a saving throw versus disease at a 14 or higher. A successful saving throw indicates that the character is unaffected by the disease and is okay.

A failed saving throw means that the character has been infected, but that doesn't necessarily means he exhibits any symptoms. The frightening aspect, even if no symptoms are present, is that a character who has failed the saving throw can be a carrier of these larvae, and the disease can spread to others through further blood transmission. Not just blood transfusions, but even a single drop of blood that happens to get into the mouth, eye, nose (mucus membranes), or an open wound of another individual may infect him.

Treatment for River Blindness consists of a series of injections of medication directed at killing the larvae, though such injections are rare to come by. There are no known natural cures, though magical healing is, of course, extremely effective. If a character is infected, roll percentile dice on the following table.

01-15% Immediate Bloom: The character is beset by symptoms in the next 12 hours.

16-24% Early Blooming: The character is beset by symptoms in the next month.

25-80% Annual Bloom: The character is beset by symptoms in the next 12 months.

81-95% Late Bloom: The character is beset by symptoms in the next 10 years.

96-00% Dormant: The character will not exhibit symptoms until after 10 years from infection.

For symptoms and effects of River Blindness, roll only once on the following table: Multiple symptoms can appear over an extended period of time rather than all at once.

01-20% A series of irritating lesions, rashes, intense itching and loss of pigmentation of the skin. The infected character has skill performance and combat bonuses reduced by 10%, is -1 action per melee round, and suffers a -3 to P.B.

21-40% Elephantiasis of the lower limbs and the groin. The character walks with extreme pain, cannot wear shoes, normal pants or armor below the waist, and suffers from a penalty of -4 to strike, -6 to parry and dodge, -6 to P.B., and the character's Spd. score is reduced by half.

41-60% Blindness. The character's eyes have been infested with the larvae and no longer function. Everything is a blur to the character, and the eyes constantly itch; -8 to strike, parry and dodge, all skills requiring vision are performed at -80%, and reduce the number of actions per melee by half.

61-90% Any combination of two of the above. G.M.'s choice.

91-00% All three afflictions plague the character.

Yellow Fever

Rather than bacteria or a parasite, Yellow Fever is a two-stage disease caused by a virus introduced into the bloodstream by mosquito bites, or through animal to animal contact. This can be through being bitten, or by eating the flesh of an infected animal. The mosquito can also pass the virus on to its offspring through infected eggs. Even dormant, the virus can be spread the following rainy season when the mosquito larvae hatch from their eggs. The disease can remain dormant in a host body for up to three to six days, after which it comes out of the incubation period, and attacks the host.

Infected characters must make a saving throw vs disease at a 14 or higher or otherwise be affected by the symptoms. Interestingly enough, even if infected, some people do not exhibit any symptoms, and will carry the virus with no ill effect. This is true of a variety of D-Bees and mutants, including the Psi-Stalker and Simvan. Characters who fail the saving throw by two points or less are not subject to the symptoms of the disease, but are still carriers of it. Characters who fail the saving throw by three or more points are subject to the normal effects of at least the first stage of the illness.

Stage one symptoms of Yellow Fever are high fever, aches and pains, especially in the lower back and head, as well as loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Because of the wide range of symptoms, Yellow Fever is often misdiagnosed as any number of other illnesses ranging from influenza to typhoid. Except for characters with Psychic Diagnosis, physicians attempting to diagnose Yellow Fever are at -20% to do so.

Characters who contract Yellow Fever suffer a penalty of -20% to all skills, -2 to all combat bonuses, and reduce P.S., P.P., and Spd. by one third. After 1D6 days of the illness, infected characters will need to make another saving throw vs disease of 12 or higher. Those who are successful begin to improve, and the symptoms disappear with no other ill effect. Those who fail the saving throw will seem to improve, but then will exhibit symptoms of the much worse stage two variety.

For characters in stage two, the signs of improvement are only temporary as the fever reappears, and they will rapidly become jaundiced with severe stomach pains and vomiting. They also begin to bleed from the mouth, eyes and nose, followed by blood in the urine and stool. At this point, kidney failure begins and the infected individual enters into the "toxic phase" of the disease. Characters suffering from stage two suffer a penalty of -70% to all skills, all of their combat bonuses are reduced to zero, actions per melee round are reduced to one, and all attributes are reduced by half. Every *12 hours* the character must make a saving throw vs disease at a 16 or higher, or suffer 2D6 damage direct to Hit Points. Stage two of the illness lasts for 2D6 days, after which, if the character is still alive, they must make a saving throw vs disease at a 14 or higher. Failure means that the character has suffered kidney failure, and lapses into a coma. Immediate medical attention is necessary, with artificial/cybernetic kidney implantation or magical healing being the only method to save the character's life. If the character succeeds on the saving throw, no further damage is caused and the character begins to recover normally, having outlasted the virus.

Natural Toxins (optional)

Of the plant and animal life found throughout Dinosaur Swamp, the carnivorous plants not only are some of the most feared life forms, but also produce some of the most feared natural toxins. It is because they are so feared that their own natural offensive capabilities have become so respected as weapons. A blade coated with *Qink poison,* for example, will numb a limb, while a rag of *Seep Fern Blood* pressed against the nose and mouth can incapacitate even the strongest warrior. However, despite their reputation for injury, these toxins also have medicinal purposes, provided one is brave enough to try them. After enough experimentation and careful use, perhaps they will become less known for their fearsome purposes than for their healing properties.

Seep Fern Blood

A powerful poison, Seep Fern Blood is sometimes used to coat the arrowheads and weapons of natives, Wilderness Scouts, and others living in and traveling through Dinosaur Swamp. It is often used for taking prisoners or hunting game. While not actually blood, it does look, smell and feel like blood. Collecting the toxin is relatively easy; simply brushing something across the leaves of the plant that secretes the blood-like oil (enough of the fluid for a single dose). It has no medical use aside from having the possible use as an anesthetic for surgery. Delivery into the body can be achieved through inhalation, ingestion and injection, but the effects are all the same.

Effects: Being dosed with Seep Fern Blood requires a saving throw vs non-lethal poison at 16 or higher. Failure to save knocks the individual unconsciousness and unfeeling for 1D4 hours. Upon waking, the character will be stiff and sore, but otherwise unharmed.

Cost: Plentiful, with a two dose vial of secretion selling for 1000 credits each.

Qink Toxin

Extremely difficult to acquire, Qink toxin is a much sought after tranquilizer. Found in the thorns of the Qink plant's flailing vines, it paralyzes while leaving the victim conscious. It makes for a powerful local anesthetic and tool for torture and interrogation. It works best when injected. It is not often used for hunting animals, as the effects can linger in the body of the animal and affect those who eat it. Used in tiny quantities and mixed with other substances, it has found medicinal application as an anti-muscle spasm treatment and localized painkiller. Qink toxin is also used as a torture device, useful for numbing limbs and then injuring, or even severing them, with the victim aware of the entire process but unable to do anything about it. The worst of the torture comes as the toxin wears off and the victim slowly warms to the sensation of the pain inflicted earlier.

Effects: Being dosed with Qink toxin requires a saving throw vs poison at 14 or higher. Failure to save means that the victim loses all feeling in the limb or area of the body that has been struck. Consult the chart under the description of the Qink plant for further effects on specific body locations. In the case of ingestion, it has no debilitating effects aside from numbing the mouth, throat, esophagus and stomach, producing an unsettling

feeling in the character and resulting in a penalty of -1 on initiative, and -1 to strike, parry and dodge for 2D6x10 minutes.

Cost: Extremely difficult to harvest, with a single dose vial costing up to 8000 credits.

Lankton's Knot Acid

Devastatingly powerful, the digestive compound of the Lankton's Knot is unmatched in its power to dissolve organic material. There are few materials that can safely contain the sticky substance, making it extremely hard to collect, transport and use. The most common material immune to the effects of the acid is glass, which is often used to scrape the toxin off of the leaves. The acid eats away at everything else, though its corrosive effect on metal and inorganic M.D.C. materials is minimal unless exposed for long periods (does 3D6 M.D. per 24 hours of soaking/exposure), making it a brutal area effect weapon when packed into glass jars or bottles and propelled by a slingshot or hurled against an opponent. It has no known medicinal effect.

Effects: Affects both S.D.C. and M.D.C. creatures and organic flesh/material (i.e., skin, hair, leather, wood, plants, dragon scales, demon flesh, etc.).

Damage is 1D6, 2D6, or 4D6 points every five seconds for 1D4 melee rounds depending on the amount of the gooey acid unleashed. Damage is S.D.C. or M.D. depending on the surface exposed to it (i.e., S.D.C. to humans, M.D. to dragons and demons); one third damage to inorganic material. Game Masters should use their best judgment, but a good rule of thumb about coverage is a glass container the size of an egg or golf ball does 1D6 points of damage, a baseball or orange sized sphere does 2D6 points of damage, and a softball or grapefruit sized bottle will do 4D6 points of damage every five seconds (damage x3 per melee round). **Note:** The acid is adhesive, and has the texture and consistency of honey, making it impossible to brush off (scraping works but will do an additional 1D6 damage as it takes off a few layers of skin with it). In fact, attempting to brush or wash the acid off usually results in spreading the compound over a larger surface area, increasing the damage. Unknown to most people, citrus acid (orange, lemon or lime juice) removes the acid with comparative ease. The acid is typically active for 1D4 melee rounds no matter the amount of coverage.

Cost: Difficult to harvest, package and transport, the cost varies from 6000-10,000 credits for egg-sized containers, 15,000-20,000 credits for an orange-sized container and 35,000-40,000 for a grapefruit sized container.

Natural Medicines (optional)

Despite the bleak picture of disease prevalence in Dinosaur Swamp, there are also medicinal substances for those who know where to look for them. The vast floral catalogue of the region can provide aid to those suffering from disease, though outright cures are the stuff of magic. Since most diseases of the forest and marshes have two stages, if the first stage cannot be prevented, once diagnosed, medicines can be applied to alleviate the symptoms and help prevent the occurrence of the second stage and speed recovery. Several noted medicinal plants are detailed below, but there are bound to be others waiting to be discovered (or already known to secretive cults, tribal clans and healers).

The Uzain Plant

Found primarily in wetlands, the Uzain is a pale green, corn-like plant with long droopy vines known for the natural broad spectrum antibiotics and immune system boosting chemicals found in its reddish-orange seed cones. Named for a member of Neenok's original expedition, Uzain seeds can be eaten for their antibiotic properties, or mashed into a paste for topical uses as salves and ointments.

Seed Effects When Eaten/Digested: Each plant typically has enough seed cones for 6 doses of internally taken antibiotics or two applications as an ointment/paste for a wound the size of a knife gash. Depending on the actual size of the wound, however, the number of topical applications can vary. Each internal dose is good for 8 hours and provides a bonus of +2 vs disease, a +2 to save vs poison and heals 2D6 points of damage sustained by illness.

Paste Effects: For the topical paste, each dose applied directly to the open wounds will provide a +4 vs disease. The direct contact with the wound boosts the antibiotic effects in an isolated region, but does not provide any holistic protection against poisons to the entire body. Further, the +4 vs disease is not per wound applied, but rather provides that enough paste was used to treat *all* the wounds of an injured character. However, a character who takes an internal dose of the medicine, and applies the paste to all external wounds, receives a maximum of +6 vs disease, a +4 to save vs poison, and heals 2D6+3 points of damage sustained by illness.

Overdosing: Taking more than one dose internally at a time does not provide for any additional bonus, but does produce stomach cramps and diarrhea, negating the damage healed by the first dose and inflicting 1D6 points of S.D.C. damage. Smearing double doses of the external paste has no additional effect and only wastes the ointment.

The Darach Tree

The Darach is a scrubby tree with a short trunk and long fan-like limbs found growing on barrier islands and in the sandy soil where the piedmont meets the marshes. Its bark is notable for its properties as a painkiller and fever reducer. Directly chewing on a twig or piece of bark releases a powerful sedative that is strong enough to kill an adult human, but when diluted makes for a superior fever reducer and painkiller.

The manufacture of each dose requires a successful roll on Holistic Medicine or M.D. skill (or Forensic or Chemistry skills as the G.M. may allow) to be correctly mixed and properly administered. A failed roll indicates that the mixture is either, 01-50%: too weak, meaning that it doesn't work, or 51-00: is too strong, meaning that the patient must make a saving throw vs poison at a 13 or higher or lapse into unconsciousness for 4D6 hours and suffer 4D6 points of damage direct to Hit Points. G.M.s may use discretion as to which effect occurs, rather than rolling percentile.

Effects: A properly mixed dose will provide the following bonuses for 12 hours time against pain and fever. Skill penalties

are reduced by half, so if an affliction induces a -20% to all skills, the effect is only a -10%. The patient also regains one melee attack/action taken away by the illness (if any), while attribute penalties and combat bonuses are only reduced by half of the amount inflicted by the illness. It has no effect on hallucinations, (in fact, a high enough dose will induce them) or Hit Point damage, only pain and fever.

Overdosing: Taking more than one dose at a time has poisonous effects. See below.

Poison: If the Darach extract is intentionally used as a poison, it has the following effects. A poisoned character must make a saving throw vs Lethal Poison at a 14 or higher for each dose the character is afflicted with. One dose-worth of prepared toxin will coat four arrowheads, or a small knife blade. *A successful saving throw* means the affected character only loses one melee action, and suffers a penalty of -1 to strike, parry and dodge for 1D4 melee rounds. *A failed saving throw* means that the character has a 01-30% chance of falling unconscious, takes 2D6 points of damage direct to Hit Points, is reduced to two actions per melee round, and has all combat bonuses halved for each dose of poison with which the character is hit. Repeated doses will continue to whittle away at combat bonuses, halving them each time, and inflicting more physical damage, but the character will still have only two actions per melee round. These effects last for 1D6 melee rounds per dose, while the unconsciousness will last for 2D6+10 minutes.

Synthetic Medicines

Prepared groups of adventurers will know better than to enter into Dinosaur Swamp, or anywhere else for that matter, without a well-stocked medical kit. While Dinosaur Swamp may be infested with insects and disease, an infected wound is just as lethal anywhere else in the world. In addition to magical and psionic healing methods and over the counter medical kits, there are a few synthetic medicines that should be standard issue if they can be acquired and afforded. These include broad and narrow spectrum antibiotics, painkillers, and re-hydrating salts, all necessary to help combat any afflictions that a character may pick up. Most of the antibiotics and their effects are going to be *unknown* to characters with only rudimentary medical training like First Aid. Characters with Paramedic, Medical Doctor and/or Pathology skills will be familiar with, and know how to effectively administer, these medications. Synthesis of these medications will require an extensive chemical laboratory and the Analytical Chemistry skill. Generally, taking more than the recommended dosage of medicines can actually be extremely harmful to characters. Overdosing of antibiotics can kill off necessary bacteria found in the digestive system, while overdosing on painkillers can produce permanent organ damage. Typically, overdosing does not provide any additional benefits except in rare cases, and the side effects often don't make such actions worthwhile.

Broad Spectrum Antibiotics

Used in treating a wide range of bacteria, broad-spectrum antibiotics are usually given in low to medium dosages to combat disease. Adventurers are usually going to carry them in an oral dosage form on their person, though intravenous solutions are not uncommon in well stocked expeditions with dedicated medical facilities at a base camp. For patients that cannot keep food and liquids down, IV administration is often the only way to introduce medicine into the body. Single dosages of injections for a Compu-Drug Dispenser can be purchased for the same price as a bottle of pills. See pg. 184 of the **Rifts® Game Master Guide** for more information on the dispenser. Specific names, effects, availability and costs are as follows.

Penicillin: An old favorite that is by far the most common and widely used antibiotic. The most generic, and most abundant, penicillin is readily available where most first aid kits are sold.

Effects: One pill equals one dose of penicillin, and provides a +1 vs disease for a duration of 12 hours, and also heals 1D4 points of damage sustained by illness. One IV bag equals one dose that provides a +2 vs disease for 24 hours, and heals 1D6+1 points of damage sustained by illness, but only as long as the solution is allowed to fully drip into the character's system.

Overdosing: Taking one extra dose within the effective time frame will result in slight nausea, but taking two or more will inflict stomach cramps and diarrhea. Extra doses do NOT provide added bonuses or healing, and, in fact, *negate* any damage that would have been healed by the correct first dose, and inflict 1D6 points of damage directly to the character's Hit Points.

Cost: Common availability, 100 credits for a bottle of pills with 20 doses, 250 credits for an intravenous solution. Prices can be as much as ten times higher in places far removed from regular trade.

Pandisporin: A moderate level antibiotic rediscovered from the Golden Age that is gaining word of mouth acceptance among Body-Fixers.

Effects: One pill equals one dose, provides a +2 vs disease for 12 hours, and heals 1D6+2 points of damage sustained by illness. One IV bag equals one dose, provides a +3 vs disease for 30 hours, and heals 1D6+4 points of damage sustained by illness, but only as long as the solution is allowed to fully drip into the character's system.

Overdosing: Taking more than one dose within the effective time frame will result in severe stomach cramps and diarrhea. Extra doses do NOT provide added bonuses or healing, and actually weaken the character's ability to fight off infection by imposing a -1 vs disease for 6 hours, negate any damage healed by the first dose, and deal out 1D6+3 points of damage direct to the character's Hit Points.

Cost: Good availability, 200 credits for a bottle of pills with 12 doses, 600 credits for an intravenous solution. Prices can be as much as ten times higher, or more, in places far removed from regular trade.

Necromycin: An extremely potent antibiotic, it is only administered when the patient does not respond to other broad-spectrum antibiotic treatments. It is used against highly resistant strains of bacteria, but does inflict trauma on the patient's digestive system. For this reason, it is usually used as a last resort.

Effects: One pill equals one dose and provides a +5 vs disease for 8 hours, but inflicts 2D6 points of damage to S.D.C. (or

1D6 to Hit Points if there are no S.D.C.) *and* 1D6 damage direct to the patient's Hit Points. One IV bag equals one dose, provides a +7 vs disease for 12 hours, but inflicts 2D6+3 points of damage direct to the patient's Hit Points.

Overdosing: Overdosing, whether intentional, or by improper administration of the medicine, is usually fatal to the patient. Already weakened by disease, the effects of the antibiotic can push a patient over the edge. It provides no added bonuses, negates any and all previous bonuses vs disease, and imposes a penalty of -4 vs disease for 12 hours. It also inflicts 4D6 points of damage direct to Hit Points.

Cost: Rare; 5000 credits for a bottle of pills with six doses, 9000 credits for an intravenous solution. Prices can be as much as twenty times higher, or more, in places far removed from regular trade.

Narrow Spectrum Antibiotics

Used in treating very specific infections that do not respond to broad-spectrum antibiotics. Narrow spectrum antibiotics are extremely potent against a small variety of diseases, but have no effect on illnesses they are not targeted to treat. They are often more expensive with less demand than broad-spectrum antibiotics, and are consequently harder to come by. They are also administered in pill or intravenous forms. Common medicines, their effect, availability and costs are as follows.

Cadaniricin: Used in treating infections brought on by fungi, Cadaniricin is common, though it is very specialized. It is available in pill form and also as both a salve and a spray for topical treatments, especially for use on the feet. It is often found in the medical kits of adventurers who know they are going into humid environments. Though it does find widespread use in the barracks of Coalition grunts, and other large scale military units with communal showers.

Effects: One pill, or other application, equals one dose, and provides a +2 vs disease specifically brought on by a *fungus*.

Overdosing: Overdosing typically isn't a problem as the medication does not affect the necessary bacteria in the digestive system, but further doses do not provide any additional benefit.

Cost: Common, especially around areas with Coalition Military units and mercenaries. Cost is 50 credits for a bottle of pills with 30 doses, 100 credits for a spray or a salve with 50 single dose applications. Prices can be as much as five times higher in places far removed from regular trade.

Dentiricin: Specifically used to treat infections caused by Blacktooth cuts, Dentiricin is an extremely rare medication, and has no known use outside of Dinosaur Swamp. Despite its rarity and expense, it is usually well worth it as the slightest scratch from a blade of Blacktooth grass can be extremely debilitating, and it does not respond to other medications. The antibiotic is currently available as a salve applied directly to the wound.

Effects: One dose applied directly to the wound provides for a +4 vs disease specifically brought on by the Blacktooth. It is so effective in combating the bacteria, the salve also provides comfort from the infection by reducing all of the penalties of infection by half three hours after being applied to the wound. The effects last for six hours, after which another application is required.

Overdosing: Overdosing typically isn't a problem as the medicine specifically targets the bacteria present in the serrations of the Blacktooth leaf, and has no effect on other forms of bacteria.

Cost: Extremely rare, a tube of salve with five doses of medicine costs 6000 credits. Prices can be as much as ten times higher in places far removed from regular trade.

Painkillers

Invaluable in treating patients for pain, analgesics are part of every basic first aid kit. What follows here are specific high dose painkillers used for treating extreme levels of pain that may afflict adventurers in the field brought on by injury or illness. Typically available in pill and intravenous form, other, more generic and lower strength painkillers are also available as topical applications.

Tributomol: A moderate strength painkiller, Tributomol found widespread use with the Coalition Military, and has become a staple for treating pain in the injured. Available in pill and IV form, it is a hot commodity on the Black Market, and often a target of bandits and smugglers who steal it from the CS.

Effects: One pill or IV bag equals one dose that provides the following effects. Skill penalties are reduced by 25%, so if an affliction induces a -20% penalty to all skills, the effect is only a -15%. Attribute penalties and combat bonuses are also improved (half that of the normal penalty inflicted by pain). The effects last for 12 hours per dose, 24 hours in the IV form.

Overdosing: Taking more than one dose within the effective time frame can result in damage to the patient. Doubling the dosage will double the effects of the drug, but also inflicts 1D6+3 points of damage direct to the patient's Hit Points. Tripling the dose will triple the effects, but does 2D6+4 points of damage direct to Hit Points, and has a 25% chance of permanent organ damage (i.e., a permanent reduction of Hit Points lost from overdosing).

Cost: Excellent availability, one bottle of pills with 20 doses costs 60 credits while an intravenous solution costs 90 credits. Prices can be as much as three times higher in places far removed from regular trade.

Penthydrocodine: An extremely powerful painkiller, 5-Cod as it is known, is a recent addition to the field of synthetic medicines. Originally developed by the Coalition States, the formula was introduced into the hands of underground doctors by citizens sympathetic to those suffering in the 'Burbs. Unmatched in pain relief, 5-Cod has made its way into many recent Juicer drug dispenser harnesses. Low on lingering side effects, the drug causes a heavy, dream-filled sleep that is addictive to a small percentage of patients. Best used in moderation, 5-Cod is a field surgeon's dream.

Effects: One pill or IV bag reduces *all* effects brought on due to pain by 75% and doubles recovery effects when the medicine is taken routinely, as directed. This affects skill performance penalties, combat penalties and any attribute penalty modifications, reducing the usual penalty to a fraction. The effect lasts for 8 hours per pill, and for 12 hours per IV bag. However, the drug does cause the patient to fall into a heavily drugged sleep for 1D4 hours after taking the pill or IV (1D4x10 minutes for Juicers). However, 15% of all patients find that the drugged

feeling is addictive and must make a saving throw vs non-lethal poison (16 or higher), or find themselves addicted to the medicine. See **Rifts® RPG**, page 21-22, for rules governing the effects of drug addiction.

Overdosing: Taking more than the recommended dosage within the effective time frame can result in serious damage to the patient. Characters who overdose on the medication will find themselves suffering from twice the normal side effects (sleep 2D4 hours), and have a 01-60% chance of reducing their Hit Points to zero and falling into a coma without ever noticing how close they are to death. (Juicers using this drug can fight till 30 points below zero before falling into a coma.)

Cost: Poor availability, one bottle of pills with 10 doses costs 5000 credits, while an intravenous bag costs 7000 credits. Prices can be as much as 10 times higher in areas far removed from regular trade, or in situations where demand is affected by an addicted population or medical crisis (victims of earthquake, war, etc.).

Hydrating Salts

Dehydration, whether from exertion or disease, plays a large part in whether a character will recover from illness or not. Specially packaged salts and sugars are available to be mixed with purified water to make hydrating drinks to replace lost fluids, and are also combined with other medications that can help prevent further dehydration. Simple, effective and cheap, these mixtures can mean the difference between life and death as often as a powerful antibiotic.

Effects: One dose of salts mixed with water heals 1D6 Hit Points of damage incurred by the effects of dehydration. A maximum of two doses can be taken in one 24-hour time period for a total benefit of 2D6 healed points of Hit Point damage.

Overdosing: While not necessarily damaging, drinking more than the recommended dosage is uncomfortable to the patient, and results in a bloated sensation and a penalty of -1 on initiative and to dodge.

Cost: Fairly common, one package equaling one dose costs five credits. They are usually sold in crates of 10 packages costing 50 credits. Prices can vary, but usually do not exceed more than twice the usual costs except in instances of unscrupulous suppliers and unusually high demand.

New O.C.C.s

Swamp Stomper (a.k.a. Frontiersman)
Naturalist
Pathfinder
Legacy Scout
Dinosaur Hunter (a.k.a. Big Game Hunter)
Wild Knives Barbarian Warrior
Eco-Wizard Barbarian Sorcerer
Mutant Barbarian R.C.C.

Embracing the Wilderness

Most of the new O.C.C.s presented in this section are variations on the *Wilderness Scout*. Men and women who find peace and fulfilment living under the stars and working in concert with nature. If there are any common threads between them, it's that all Wilderness Scouts share a love for nature, exploration and the unknown. Each O.C.C. is grounded in exploring the wild, but with its own particular set of beliefs, practices, goals, and eccentricities.

Most Wilderness Scouts share an inherent disdain for confinement, rules and laws which makes them feel trapped like a caged animal in civilized settings. The noise, the concrete, the gasoline fumes, and all the people of the city are too disruptive for the Wilderness Scout. Cities and towns make good places to trade goods, resupply, see technological marvels, and party for a while, but beyond that, they offer little to appeal to the nature-loving Scout. The freedom and challenge of the wilderness calls to them and tugs at their bones. It's not that they don't like people, it's just that they like the solitude and splendor of the wilderness more. Despite the dangers and loneliness that often come with a life in the wild, they prefer to shed the shackles of civilization and live independent and free amidst the wonders of nature. This attitude does not make wilderness folk Anarchists or sponsors of chaos for its own sake. In fact, many live by a hardline code of ethics and appreciate the sanctity of life more than most. Rather it reflects a fiercely independent spirit, a deep rooted curiosity or wanderlust, and an abiding love for the outdoors. These self-reliant men and women prefer to go where few others have tread before them, reveling in the splendor and power of nature, and savoring the freedom that comes with having the sky for a roof and Mother Earth for a bed.

It is that self-awareness, appreciation of life, and their independence that makes them known to be true to their word. When a Wilderness Scout makes a promise, he means to keep it. This isn't because of some code of chivalry or some universal law such as the one held by "Cyber-Knights," but, as one grizzled Swamp Stomper once put it, "because out there in the wild, all a man has that's worth anything is his word and self-respect. Lose that, and you lose your identity." They know full well that all too often their word may spell the difference between life and death, safety or helplessness, health or sickness, prosperity or

defeat. Another common folk saying is, "A liar an' a cheat ain't got no friends, an' in the wilderness a man with no friends is a dead man walkin' only he don't know it yet." And yet another is, "Friendship an' survival in the wild is built on trust, sincerity an' loyalty. If a man don't have that, he ain't no man but a polecat hidin' alone in the dark, an' nobody has any use for a polecat." Trust in one's self and trust in those around you are crucial for survival in a wilderness like the east and southeast. This doesn't mean that they can't and don't lie, cheat or steal, it means that when a Wilderness Scout gives his word of honor, it's a bond of trust that's not casually broken. Liars and cheats who use and abuse others are sure to find the shoe on the other foot someday, with no helping hand offered to save their bacon. Cheating and stealing in a place like Dinosaur Swamp is a sure way to get oneself killed.

Wilderness People and Alignments. As a result, the most common alignments among the various woodland scouts are typically *Principled (5%), Scrupulous (25%), Unprincipled (40%),* and even an evil character is likely to be *Aberrant (12%)*. The rest take their chances and don't usually fare well for themselves or last long in the wild. The inherent freedom and general sense of self-reliance of the Unprincipled alignment fits well with the lifestyle of most Wilderness Scouts. While not out to harm anyone, they know that their own personal survival is of paramount importance. Making friends tends be a slow and deliberate process, but once a friend is made, they are friends for life.

Anarchist and evil scouts are likely to be bitter loners who are only interested in the best deal they can get away with. They have likely been scarred deeply by contact with civilization in the past, and use the wilds as a place to escape where they are beholden to no one and have to deal with as few people as possible. Miscreant and Diabolic characters are usually extremely predatory in their behavior. Taking their example from nature, they see themselves as the top of the natural order, or a force of nature, and use their skills to take what they want from those weaker than they. They impose their own will upon their fellow man and nature to achieve their goals. A Miscreant or Diabolic woodsman has little regard for any life other than his own, and would set a fire to burn out an enemy, trusting that "the undergrowth was getting thick anyway." Their ruthlessness and their knowledge make them a terrifying force to be reckoned with.

A scout is a scout. Regardless of the alignment, most Wilderness Scouts are rough and tumble men and women who make their home in the wilderness. They live their lives to the fullest, as they recognize that each day is a struggle. They are no strangers to harsh conditions and they are ever the tougher for it. They thrive on challenge and while not as refined as some, they are by no means primitive or backwards, whatever that might mean. They are one with nature and live by a code of honor.

During the Dark Ages that followed the Great Cataclysm, several breeds of Wilderness Scout emerged in the Chaos. All of them are at home in the wilderness, but each specializes in a particular direction that makes them a breed apart from one another. What differentiates the various scouts is their particular focus. They are the *Swamp Stomper/Frontiersman, the Legacy Scout, the Pathfinder, the Naturalist* and the *Dinosaur Hunter/ Big Game Hunter*. And all are denizens of Dinosaur Swamp.

Swamp Stomper O.C.C.

Also known as the Frontiersman

The Swamp Stomper is effectively a type of Wilderness Scout who specializes in Dinosaur Swamp and navigating swampland. He knows Dinosaur Swamp like the back of his hand and how to deal with its many hazards and monsters. The character is a true master of his domain (the swamps) and knows about diseases, local remedies, dinosaurs, barbarian tribes, trading posts, and, most of all, the easiest, fastest and safest ways to traverse the swamps and everglades (including wilderness trails and methods of travel). Like other scouts and outdoorsmen, the Swamp Stomper is also a hunter and trapper who feels more at home in the wilderness than in a city.

As a *Frontiersman*, part of the Swamp Stomper's job is to lead adventurers, travelers and settlers safely through the swamps to their appointed goal or destination. The character is also the person townsfolk are likely to turn to when someone gets lost or carried off into the swamp by raiders or a dinosaur, or when a rare herb or component is needed. Pay for these invaluable services is low, because the people who live in the region are poor. Payments may come in the form of credits, precious metals (gold, silver, etc.), gems, pre-Rifts artifacts, or tradeable goods, supplies or special services. The latter three may include new clothes, new gear, weapons, machine parts, furs, food, grain, booze, repair service, healing, and so on. Since the Swamp Stomper also associates with adventurers, mercenaries and other Wilderness Scouts, he can trade equipment with them that local communities may have little or no interest in, such as magic items, weapons, armor, artifacts and exotic creatures.

Earthy, independent, self-reliant and cunning are words most often used to describe these men and women of the southern swamplands. They are weathered and strong people uncomfortable with civilization, but are no strangers to technology and modern equipment. They may be born and raised in the outdoors, or may have left the trappings of civilization for the independence of living off of the land, but all are skilled professionals. Their lifestyle is romanticized by people in the Coalition States and out west, but make no mistake, the Swamp Stomper's life is not an easy one, and those who get cocky or careless get swallowed up by the wilderness they admire. It takes a special breed to be a Swamp Stomper, and truly, only those who are physically and mentally strong survive their chosen occupation.

Alignment: Any, but tend to be Scrupulous and Unprincipled.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 9, P.E. 12, and M.E. 11 or higher. A high P.S. and P.P. are helpful, but not required.

O.C.C. Bonuses: Add 3D6+10 to the character's base physical S.D.C., +1D4 to the P.E. attribute, +2 to saving throws vs poisons and disease, and +1 to save vs Horror Factor at levels 2, 6, 9, 12, and 15.

O.C.C. Skills:

Athletics (General)
Climbing (+10%)
Fishing (+15%)
Identify Plants & Fruits (+20%)

Language (choice of one, +15%) plus Speak Native Language (American) at 90%.

Land Navigation (+24%)

Lore: Cattle & Animals (+10%)

Lore: Dinosaurs (+20%; see Special O.C.C. skill)

Lore: Swamps & Everglades (+30%; see Special O.C.C. skill)

Pilot: Kayak/Canoeing (+10%)

Pilot: Motorboats & Hydrofoils (including flat bottom and fan boats)

Prowl (+15%)

Swimming (+15%)

Track Animals (+15% animals; +20% to track Dinosaurs)

Trail Blazing (+20%; see Special O.C.C. skill)

Wilderness Survival (+20%)

W.P. Energy Rifle

W.P.: Two of choice (typically includes W.P. Knife).

Hand to Hand: Basic, but can be changed to Hand to Hand: Expert at the cost of one O.C.C. Related Skill, or Martial Arts (or Assassin if an evil alignment) for the cost of two.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select *seven* other skills, but at least two must be selected from the Physical category and two from the Wilderness category. Plus, select one additional skill at levels 3, 6, 8, 10 and 13. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any.

Cowboy: None.

Domestic: Any (+10%).

Electrical: Basic Electronics only.

Espionage: Any (+5%), except Disguise, Forgery, Interrogation Techniques and Pick Locks.

Horsemanship: General and Exotic Animals only (+5%) but counts as two skill selections.

Mechanical: Basic Mechanics, Automotive Mechanics, and Field Armorer only.

Medical: First Aid, Brewing, Animal Husbandry (+10%), and Holistic Medicine (+20%, but the latter counts as two skill selections).

Military: Camouflage, Field Armorer, Trap Construction and Trap Detection (all +10%) only.

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics and Gymnastics (+10% where applicable).

Pilot: Any, except Military, Robots, Power Armor and Spacecraft.

Pilot Related: Navigation and Read (& Operate) Sensory Equipment only.

Rogue: Any, except Computer Hacking.

Science: Basic Mathematics, Anthropology, Astronomy, Biology and Botany only (+5%).

Technical: Any, except Cyberjacking (+15% applies to Lore and Language skills only).

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any (+15%).

Secondary Skills: The character also selects *five* Secondary Skills from the O.C.C. Related list and these are limited (Any, Only and None) as previously indicated. These skills are additional knowledge that the character has picked up but they do not benefit from the bonuses listed in parentheses. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill proficiency.

Special O.C.C. Skills: See O.C.C. Skill list, above, for bonuses.

1. Lore: Dinosaurs. A specialized skill uncommon in the rest of the country. It provides in-depth knowledge about *living* dinosaurs, in general, and the dinosaurs and other exotic creatures that inhabit Dinosaur Swamp, specifically. Range of knowledge includes the animals' habits, species, what they

eat, where they are typically found, means of defense, the value of their meat, hide, teeth, claws, bones, etc., strengths and vulnerabilities, recognizing them by their tracks and dung, and so on. Base Skill: 20% +5% per level of experience. Only the Dinosaur Hunter is more expert about living dinosaurs than the Swamp Stomper.

2. Lore: Swamps & Everglades. Another skill unique to the region of Dinosaur Swamp. It provides a deep understanding of the swamplands, their ecology, nature, hazards, wildlife and waterways, including the best methods of traveling the swamps and paths through them. Base Skill: 30% +5% per level of experience.

3. Trail Blazing. Not only can the Swamp Stomper navigate the swamps and forests, but he can cut and mark trails through the wilderness for others to follow. Only the Pathfinder is more skilled at this. Base Skill: 20% +5% per level of experience.

4. Track Dinosaurs. For the Swamp Stomper tracking dinosaurs is part of the character's *Track Animals* skill, and includes dinosaurs because they are a vital part of the local ecology. The bonus for tracking dinosaurs (+20%) is higher than the Swamp Stomper's ability to track other types of animals because the character specializes in dinosaurs. This ability may be used for *avoiding* dinosaurs as much as it is to track them down. Base Skill: 20% +5% per level of experience (same as Track Animals).

Standard Equipment: A set of wilderness clothing: Varies from scout to scout but can be anything from buckskin to camouflage fatigues to the latest in high-tech wilderness wear. Also has two other changes of clothes, another set of wilderness clothes (typically patched but in good repair) and one set of casual dress clothing (for church, town meetings, etc.). A suit of light or medium Mega-Damage armor (light armor is the norm for the silence and minimal movement restriction, but medium armor offers better protection and an experienced Swamp Stomper may have one of each). Two pairs of boots, one pair made of lightweight leather, the other pair made of thick, heavy leather and several extra sets of laces for each. Two pairs of gloves, one pair thin work gloves, the other pair are heavy and insulated. A hat and/or helmet, sunglasses or tinted visor, air filter or gas mask, first-aid kit, backpack, utility belt, 2D4 sacks made of heavy cloth, 1D4 waterproof sacks, spool of wire (20 feet/6.1 m), a ball of string (20 feet/6.1 m), 100 feet (30.5 m) of lightweight rope, four wooden spikes, two iron spikes, a claw hammer and a wooden mallet, a hatchet, a folding utility knife, a fish gutting knife, a hooked skinning knife, a folding saw, small mirror, 100 feet (30.5 m) of high-tensile fishing line plus a collection of hooks, 1D4+1 fishing poles, 1D4+1 animal snares, 6 signal flares, a dozen pencil-sized chemical lights, cigarette lighter, flint, canteen, compass, infrared distancing binoculars, telescopic gun scope, and a choice of passive nightvision goggles or a passive nightvision gun scope.

Weapons: One weapon for each W.P. plus 1D4 E-Clips for each (as applicable). A Swamp Stomper may own anything from a bow and arrows to a laser rifle depending on the Weapon Proficiencies chosen. They are likely to have one or two preferred weapons, typically handed down either through their family or from their mentor. These weapons might be old, but are extremely well cared for and in good working order (may be a minor magic item at the G.M.'s discretion).

Vehicles: Canoe or kayak (seats two) and a flat bottom boat that can use paddles and a long pole to navigate the swamps. Swamp Stompers who are third level or higher are also likely to own an air-foil everglades boat with the big fan jet in the back and a motorcycle, jeep or hovercycle. Additional vehicles and riding animals can be purchased by the character at any time. The number of vehicles and the amount of equipment will vary depending on the personality, success and desires of the individual character. Most Swamp Stompers tend to travel light and don't own a great number of possessions, just what they consider the essentials for life in the swamp.

Money: Most Swamp Stompers carry little in the way of hard currency on them, though they may have a nest egg stashed away with a friend, at a bank or someplace safe. Additionally, most communities in Dinosaur Swamp tend to *trade* goods and services rather than use credits or coins. The character starts with 4D6x100 in credits and 2D4x1000 credits worth of trade items, usually in the form of pelts, herbs and other trade goods.

Cybernetics: Swamp Stompers, like all Wilderness Scouts, are naturalists, and consequently are believers in the purity of the body. While they are no strangers to using modern technology, they will usually avoid "unnatural" implants and augmentation unless absolutely necessary as a prosthetic. Even then, they will seek to replace the prosthetic through such means as magic or cybernetic Bio-Systems.

The Naturalist O.C.C.

The Naturalists are the living catalogues of nature. Part scientist or scholar and part Wilderness Scout, they focus on discovering, identifying and cataloguing as many new species of plants and animals as possible and passing that knowledge on to other people, particularly other Wilderness Scouts. While all Wilderness Scouts recognize new and alien species of wildlife, the Naturalist spends time studying them up close and offering theories and speculation as to the life form's origins, nature, habits and impact on the ecosystem.

It is the Naturalist who is often the first to discover a new species, make first contact with a new D-Bee or uncover some new insight or secret about some particular creature, plant or disease. Sometimes this is not a peaceful encounter, and the Naturalists are no strangers to violence and combat. Still, they are more likely to be found in the company of Rogue Scientists interested in the life sciences than mercenaries or adventurers. What the scientists have only read about in books, the Naturalists have experienced firsthand. They can, however, walk a fine line between knowledge for its own sake and true cutting edge science, and their obsession with knowledge makes them susceptible to easy exploitation. Their firsthand knowledge and willingness to take chances to learn more, make them highly desired in the scientific circles of independent kingdoms, the Black Market and even the Coalition States. Those working for the CS are highly paid, some on the books and some not. Naturalists have been known to travel with Coalition Rangers in deep insertion operations and participate in secret missions in the

field. They have unofficially helped to update the Coalition's catalogue of alien species (including D-Bees and supernatural beings) and have helped both the CS and Lazlo evaluate the Xiticix crisis. To their regret, Naturalists who have sold information to the Coalition sometimes learn that their information was instrumental in a new biological weapon, or resulted in the extermination of an alien life form or an entire species – sometimes an entire race of people.

Alignment: Any, but tends to be Scrupulous, Unprincipled or Anarchist.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 12, P.E. 10, and M.E. 10 or higher.

Special Bonus: Add a bonus of 1D6+8 to the character's physical S.D.C., a +3 to saving throws vs poisons and disease, and a +1 to save vs Horror Factor at levels 3, 6, 9, 12, and 15.

O.C.C. Skills:

Animal Husbandry (+25%)

Biology (+15%)

Botany (+15%)

Cooking (+5%)

Climbing (+5%)

Holistic Medicine (+15%)

Identify Plants & Fruits (+25%)

Land Navigation (+10%)

Language (choice of two, +20%) plus Speak Native Language (typically American) at 98%.

Literacy Native Language (+20%; typically American)

Lore: Cattle & Animals (+20%)

Lore: D-Bee or Demons & Monsters (+15%)

Lore: Dinosaurs or Swamp & Everglades (+20%)

Photography or Writing (+15%)

Pilot: Kayak/Canoeing (+15%)

Research or Computer Operation (+15%)

Track Animals (+15%)

Wilderness Survival (+20%)

W.P. Knife

W.P.: Two of choice.

Hand to Hand: Basic, but can be changed to Hand to Hand: Expert at the cost of two O.C.C. Related Skill, or Martial Arts (or Assassin if an evil alignment) for the cost of three O.C.C. Related Skills.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select *six* other skills, but at least one must be selected from the Physical category and two from the Wilderness category. Plus, select three additional skills at level three, one at level five, one at level six, one at level nine and one at level twelve. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+5%).

Cowboy: Any.

Domestic: Any (+10%).

Electrical: Basic Electronics only.

Espionage: Detect Ambush, Detect Concealment and Tracking only (+5%).

Horsemanship: General (+10%) and Exotic Animals (+5%) only, but the latter counts as two skill selections.

Mechanical: Basic Mechanics only.

Medical: Brewing, First Aid, Pathology, Sea Holistic Medicine only (+10%).

Military: Camouflage (+5%), Trap Construction and Trap Detection only (+5%).

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics, Gymnastics and Boxing.

Pilot: Any (+10% to Kayaking/Canoeing and Bicycling), excluding Robots, Power Armor and Military vehicles.

Pilot Related: Navigation and Read (and Operate) Sensory Equipment only (+5%).

Rogue: None.

Science: Any (+10%).

Technical: Any, except Cyberjacking (+10%; +15% applies to Art, Breed Dogs, Falconry, Lore and Language skills only).

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any (+10%).

Secondary Skills: The character also selects *five* Secondary Skills from the O.C.C. Related list and these are limited (Any, Only and None) as previously indicated. These skills are additional knowledge that the character has picked up but they do not benefit from the bonuses listed in parentheses. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill proficiency.

Standard Equipment: One extra set of traveling clothes, set of dress clothes, two pairs of boots, a pair of leather gloves, a box of 100 plastic surgical gloves, six small specimen containers, four medium and two large containers, box of 100 zippered (gallon size) plastic bags, 1D6+4 pens or markers and pencil kits, pocket notebook, sketchbook, tent, sleeping bag, shoulder satchel, backpack, utility belt, 2D4 sacks made of heavy cloth, 1D4 waterproof sacks, spool of wire (20 feet/6.1 m), 100 feet (30.5 m) of lightweight rope, a claw hammer and a wooden mallet, a hatchet, a folding utility knife, a hooked skinning knife, a folding saw, animal snares, 6 signal flares, a dozen pencil-sized chemical lights, cigarette lighter, canteen, small mirror, magnifiying glass, infrared distancing binoculars, telescopic gun scope, passive nightvision goggles and a portable scan dihilator or portable laboratory. Those with a Computer skill will also have a portable or pocket-sized computer, and those with Photography will have a digital camera with memory cards/disks for as many as 360 photos.

Weapons: One for each W.P. plus a Naturalist is going to have at least one non-lethal weapon in their arsenal, typically a Stun Blaster (See **Rifts® Game Master Guide**, page 129), Neural Mace or similar type weapon.

Vehicles: Naturalists more often than not travel by foot or with a pack animal of some sort. Vehicles are often noisy, attract attention, and disturb the peace of the wilds, something most Naturalists prefer to avoid. There are always exceptions to this rule; Game Masters should use their best judgment.

Money: Start with 1D4x1000 credits stored on a Universal Credit Card, and 2D6x1000 credits in trade goods which may take the form of rare and exotic plant and animal specimens, descriptions and sketches and/or photographs, and even gems or artifacts found while exploring.

Cybernetics: Naturalist characters will be vehemently opposed to "unnatural" implants and augmentation unless absolutely necessary as a prosthetic. Even then, they will actively seek to replace the prosthetic with a Bio-System. Some are strict purists and will just not replace a lost limb if the only available alternative is an artificial mechanism.

The Pathfinder O.C.C.

Pathfinders are a type of Wilderness Scout who blazes new trails through the wilderness and knows one or more regions with astonishing familiarity. A Pathfinder is often the only means of communication for wilderness people and out of the way villages because the character is willing to carry messages (spoken), warnings of danger (raiders, Splugorth, monsters, strangers, war, infection, famine, etc.), and deliver letters, packages, medicine, and so on, from village to village or person to person. Most are also willing to share news, rumors, and recent events as well as being good at storytelling, making them a welcome visitor to Swamp Stompers, Trappers and other Wilderness Scouts who have been isolated in the wild for weeks or months without company.

Many Pathfinders stick to one particular region, though that range may span hundreds and hundreds of miles. Others are constantly on the move, roaming from one territory to the next, often just to see what is over the next ridge or around the next river bend. Highly skilled cartographers, their services are desperately sought after by communities and individuals in need of regional maps. Pathfinders regularly lead groups, individuals and settlers from village to village, and take adventurers and explorers through woods and swamp that might otherwise seem virtually impossible to navigate. The ability to take people safely through the swamps to their appointed goal or destination is a rare one, making the Pathfinders (and the Swamp Stompers) important people in Dinosaur Swamp. Payments for a Pathfinder's service may come in the form of credits, precious metals (gold, silver, etc.), pre-Rifts artifacts, or tradeable goods, supplies or special services. The latter three may include new clothes, new gear, weapons, machine parts, furs, food, grain, booze, repair service, healing, and so on. However, pay is often low, because the people who live in the region are poor, so many Pathfinders take their reward in the company of people, a hot meal and the knowledge that they did a good thing for someone. This makes Pathfinders "people persons," and many are skilled storytellers or musicians.

Unfortunately, the Pathfinder's skills also bring them unwanted attention as they are often the targets of bandits, raiders, spies and invaders who have need of the scout's special regional knowledge and force him into service, or don't want their enemies/intended victims to have the resource of a Pathfinder at their fingertips and hunt them down and kill them. Many Pathfinders in the fallen Kingdom of Tolkeen haven't been heard from since the war. Most are missing in action and presumed dead.

Alignment: Any, but leans toward Principled, Scrupulous, and Unprincipled.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 9, M.A. 9, M.E. 9, and P.E. 12 or higher. A high P.S. is helpful, but not required.

Special Bonus: Add a bonus of 2D6+10 to the character's physical S.D.C., +1 to the P.E. attribute and +1D6+6 to Spd attribute, +1 to saving throws vs poisons and disease, and a +1 to save vs Horror Factor at levels 1, 5, 9, 11, and 15.

O.C.C. Skills:

Aerobic Athletics

Astronomy (+20%)

Camouflage (+20%)

Cartography (+30%; see Special O.C.C. skill)

Cross-Country Pacing (+20%; see Special O.C.C. skill)

Detect Concealment (+10%)

Cooking (+10%)

Climbing (+10%)

Horsemanship: General (+10%)

Language (choice of two, +15%) plus Speak Native Language (American) at 98%.

Land Navigation (+20%)

Land Navigation: Regional (see Special O.C.C. skill)

Mathematics: Basic (+20%)

Roadwise (+20%; see Special O.C.C. skill)

Tracking (People; +15%)

Trail Blazing (+30%; see Special O.C.C. skill)

Wilderness Survival (+20%)

Running

W.P. Knife

W.P.: Two of choice.

Hand to Hand: Basic; can be changed to Hand to Hand: Expert at the cost of one O.C.C. Related Skill, or Martial Arts (or Assassin if an evil alignment) for the cost of two O.C.C. Related Skills.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select *six* other skills, but at least two must be selected from the Piloting category and one from the Wilderness category. Plus, select three additional skills at level two, and one at levels 4, 6, 8, 11 and 14. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+5%).

Cowboy: None.

Domestic: Any (+10%).

Electrical: Basic Electronics only.

Espionage: Detect Ambush, Detect Concealment, Escape Artist and Intelligence only (+5%).

Horsemanship: Exotic Animals only (+10%) but counts as two skill selections.

Mechanical: Basic Mechanics and Automotive Mechanics only.

Medical: First Aid (+10%), Animal Husbandry (+10%), and Holistic Medicine (+15%) but the latter counts as two skill selections.

Military: Find Contraband, Recognize Weapon Quality, and Trap Detection only (+10%).

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics (+10% where applicable).

Pilot: Any, (+20% to Kayak/Canoeing and sailboats), excluding Robots, Power Armor and Military vehicles.

Pilot Related: Navigation and Read (and Operate) Sensory Equipment only (+5%).

Rogue: None, except Cardsharp Gambling (standard) and Seduction.

Science: Advanced Mathematics, Anthropology, Biology and Botany only.

Technical: Any, except Cyberjacking (+10% applies to Lore, Language, Rope and Salvage skills only).

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any (+20%).

Secondary Skills: The character also selects *five* Secondary Skills from the O.C.C. Related list and these are limited to (Any, Only and None) as previously indicated. These skills are additional knowledge that the character has picked up but they do not benefit from the bonuses listed in parentheses. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill proficiency.

Special Pathfinder O.C.C. Skills: See O.C.C. Skill list for additional bonuses.

1. Land Navigation: Regional: This is specific knowledge about one particular region that the Pathfinder is known to frequent. It can be the character's home range, an adopted stretch of territory or favorite region for hunting and exploring. The Pathfinder's extensive knowledge of the area enables him to find hiding places (+30% to Camouflage skill to conceal himself, a vehicle or inanimate objects, but only +10% to Camouflage himself and *others* unless they are also some type of Wilderness Scout, Native American or Psi-Stalker). He can also travel at maximum speed when on the run without leaving much of a trail behind for others to follow (or leave a super-obvious one if he desires to lead them on), or do general scouting without missing a vital detail, while covering twice as much ground as those in pursuit. **Bonuses:** When in that region, the character applies an additional bonus of +10% to Land Navigation, Tracking (people and animals), and Prowling. Camouflage bonus noted above. **Range:** Regional knowledge is centered on one specific landmark, such as a particular lake, river, mountain peak, valley, village, ruin, or outpost. The home range extends for a *radius* of 1D6x10+60 miles (112 to 192 km) around the landmark. Add 1D4x10 miles (16 to 64 km) for each level of experience the Pathfinder has remained predominantly in this region. No increase if he has been traveling or adventuring beyond that territory. *Exclusive to the Pathfinder O.C.C.*

2. Cross-Country Pacing: Pathfinders are known for pacing themselves for cross-country travel. This not only includes pacing their physical exertion and speed, but also pacing their food and water intake, enabling them to cover great distances on foot, horseback or by mountain bicycle for maximum speed at a pace that can be maintained for days. This skill combined with Regional Land Navigation also enables them to accurately predict how long a trip will take (for them alone or with others in tow – the latter always taking twice as long) within 2D6x10 minutes, 6D6 hours if unfamiliar with the area.

This makes the Pathfinder an excellent messenger between parties with no other form of communication. While no substitute for a radio, or a jet pack equipped courier, the Pathfinder is able to cut across country avoiding roads and other well trafficked areas, in favor of little known back roads, hunting trails, waterways and shortcuts, often ensuring secrecy and safety for the travel. (**Note:** A scout *never* reveals his most secret and favorite routes to clients or strangers accompanying him unless it is an absolute emergency.) These guys come and go without anyone knowing how, when or where they've been. Once a Pathfinder travels out of sight, he seems to simply vanish into the wilderness.

On a bicycle, this skill enables the Pathfinder to achieve three times his running speed on level ground, and travel cross-country at twice normal running speed. They can maintain this maximum bike speed for a time equal to their P.E.x10 in minutes without overexerting themselves. On foot, this skill enables the character to move at full running speed cross-country for a time equal to his P.E.x5 in minutes without overexerting himself.

Base Skill: 25% +5% per level of experience. *Exclusive to the Pathfinder O.C.C.*

3. Trail Blazing. Not only can the Pathfinder navigate the swamps and forests of the southeast, but he can cut and mark trails through the wilderness for others to follow. Base Skill: 20% +5% per level of experience.

4. Cartography: The specialized art of mapmaking, cartography is one of the most important skills that a Pathfinder learns. Characters with this skill can produce highly accurate maps with a wide variety of tools, including pen and paper, computer plotting and even advanced holographic displays. (Computer mapping requires a character to have the Computer Operation skill.) The Cartography skill also includes the rudiments of mathematics. A character with the Cartography skill has the equivalent of the Basic Math skill at a fixed base of 50%, plus any applicable bonus for an exceptional I.Q. attribute, or provides a bonus of +5% to Math: Basic if it is also selected as an O.C.C. Related or Secondary Skill. Base Skill: 30% +5% per level of experience.

A successful roll means the map is not only accurate and easy to use, but elegant and aesthetically pleasing. A failed roll indicates that some details are wrong, other details have been left out, and the scale and specified locations are off by 1D10 miles. **Note:** With Game Master approval, the Cartography skill can be purchased by any character as a Technical Skill, but counts as two "O.C.C. Related Skill" selections, and cannot be taken as a Secondary Skill. Base Skill: 34% +4% per level of experience.

5. Roadwise: Same as the Roadwise skill described on page 83 of the **Rifts® G.M. Guide**, but applies only to territory that falls within his Land Navigation: Regional skill. Basically knows every road, back road, hunting trail, bike trail, path, and shortcut in the region. Base Skill: 26%+4% per level of experience.

Standard Equipment: They are likely to carry map making and survey equipment in a protected, hard case. Writing implements include six pieces of white chalk, two pieces of charcoal, a mechanical pen with 24 refills, 1D6 pens or markers, plus two pocket note pads, a sketchbook, 6D6 sheets of loose paper, pocket calculator, a laser range-finder, and language translator. Plus the usual gear like: one extra set of traveling clothes, a set of dress clothes, two pairs of boots, a pair of leather gloves, 1D10 pairs of plastic surgical gloves, sleep-

ing bag, shoulder satchel and/or backpack, utility belt, 1D4 sacks made of heavy cloth, 1D4 waterproof sacks, 60 feet (18.4 m) of lightweight rope, claw hammer, wooden mallet, hatchet, folding utility knife, survival knife, Vibro-Knife, 1D6+6 signal flares, 1D6 smoke grenades, a dozen pencil-sized chemical lights, cigarette lighter, compass, canteen, infrared distancing binoculars, telescopic gun scope, and passive nightvision goggles. Those with a Computer skill will also have a portable or pocket-sized computer.

Weapons: One for each W.P. known by the Pathfinder. Tend to prefer lightweight weapons like the Wilk's line of laser weapons. They tend to shy away from large, heavy, cumbersome weapons in favor of those that make travel light and easier.

Vehicle: All Pathfinder characters will start with a sturdy mountain bicycle or a fair quality riding horse. Tend to prefer ATV type vehicles, hovercycles and off-road motorcycles. They aren't likely to have a street bike, or other road bound vehicle.

Money: Starts with 3D4x1000 in Universal Credits and 3D4x1000 in tradeable goods.

Cybernetics: Pathfinders will usually avoid "unnatural" implants and augmentation unless absolutely necessary as a prosthetic. Even then, they will seek to replace the prosthetic through such means as magic.

Legacy Scout O.C.C.

The Legacy Scout is part woodsman, part archeologist, part historian and part treasure hunter all rolled into one. Unlike all the other Wilderness Scout types, the Legacy Scout seeks neither plant or animal, but the past. The character specializes in finding and exploring the thousands of ruins that have been buried under the shifting sands of time and swallowed by the wilderness. They seek to unearth the trappings of the past so they may learn more of their human heritage.

Legacy Scouts have a special knowledge and understanding of the Time Before the Rifts, and are experts in finding and identifying authentic pre-Rifts artifacts. Their rapport with nature enables them to press further into the wilderness to find forgotten and lost remnants of the Golden Age of Man, and gives them the first look at places not seen by humans in hundreds of years. More than that, they can see images and signs of the past by peering into an ancient artifact that probably looks like junk to anyone else. Unlike looters and scavengers, they excavate sites for knowledge and secrets of the past, not just tangible treasure in the form of artifacts and relics. Knowledge about Earth's history is worth more to these people of learning than an old artifact that could turn a quick profit.

Legacy Scouts are often found in the company of Rogue Scholars/Historians and Scientists and have the most "book learning" of any type of Wilderness Scout. However, while they may be able to discuss the downfall of the Golden Age and identify an ancient corkscrew, they are equally knowledgeable in the ways of nature, woodcraft and wildlife. They bring a very rustic and practical approach to understanding Earth's past and the promise of the future.

Alignment: Any, but lean toward Unprincipled, Anarchist and Aberrant. Far too often, knowledge and relics of the past mean more to these characters than people or wildlife.

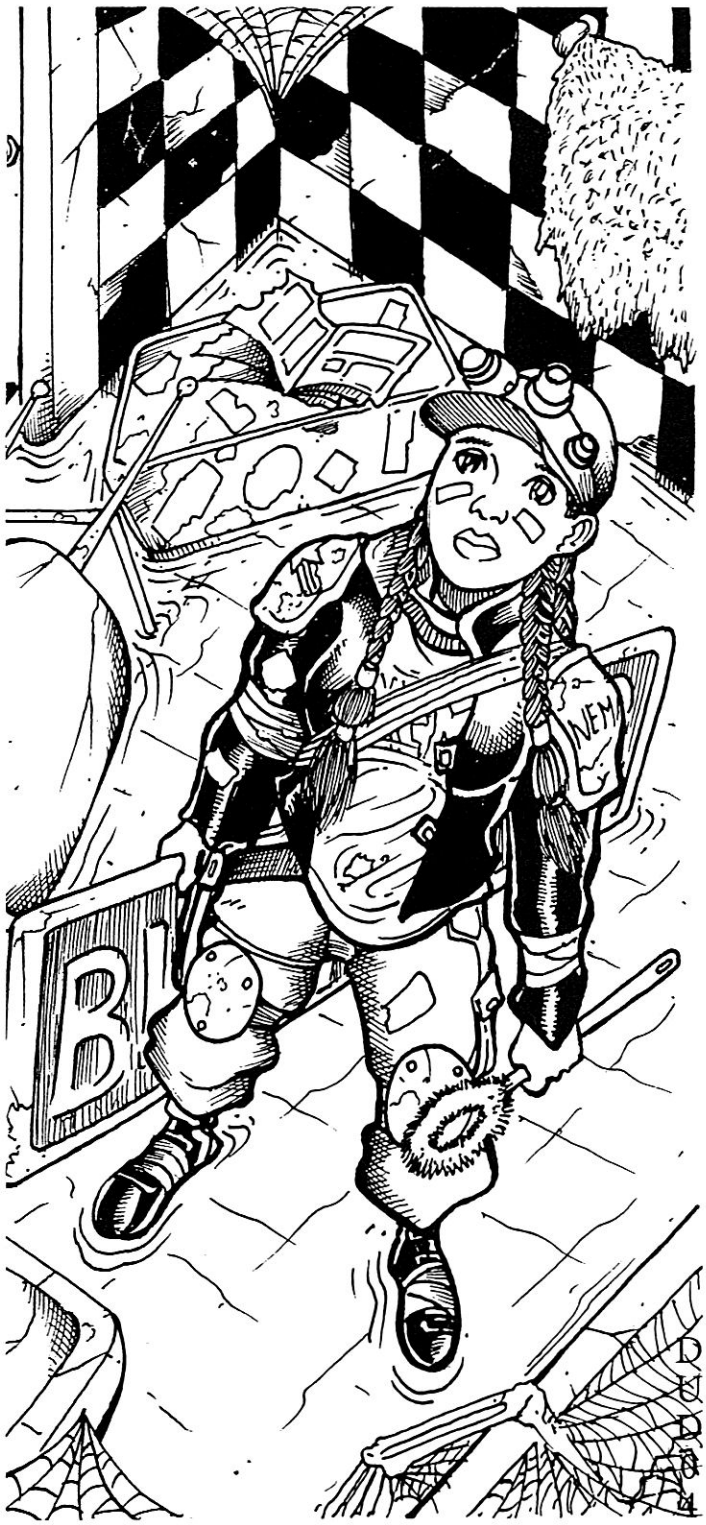
Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 10, M.E. 10, and P.E. 10 or higher.

Special O.C.C. Bonuses: Add a bonus of 1D6+10 to the character's physical S.D.C., +1D4 to the P.E. and P.S. attributes, and +1 to save vs Horror Factor at levels 3, 6, 10 and 15.

O.C.C. Skills:

Anthropology (+10%)

Archaeology (+20%)



Athletics (General)

Carpentry (+15%)

Climbing (+10%)

Detect Concealment (+15%)

History (+20%)

Gemology (+15%)

Hunting

Language (choice of one, +15%) plus Speak Native Language (American) at 98%.

Literacy: American: (+20%)

Land Navigation (+15%)

Mining (+15%)

Preserve Food (+15%)

Salvage (+10%)

Spelunking (+15%)

Wilderness Survival (+15%)

W.P.: Two of choice.

Hand to Hand: Basic; can be changed to Hand to Hand: Expert at the cost of two O.C.C. Related Skills, or Martial Arts (or Assassin if an evil alignment) for the cost of three O.C.C. Related Skills.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select *seven* other skills, but at least one must be selected from the Technical and two from the Technical or Wilderness category. Plus, select two additional skills at levels 2, 5, 7, 10, and 13. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any.

Cowboy: None.

Domestic: Any (+5%).

Electrical: Basic Electronics only.

Espionage: Detect Ambush, Pick Locks and Tracking only (all +5%).

Horsemanship: General and Exotic Animals only (+5%).

Mechanical: Basic Mechanics, Automotive Mechanics, and Field Armorer only.

Medical: First Aid, Brewing, Criminal Science/Forensics, and Animal Husbandry only (+10%). Military: Camouflage, Demolitions, Demolitions Disposal (+10%), and Recognize Weapon Quality (+10%) only.

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics and Boxing.

Pilot: Any (+5%), excluding Robots, Power Armor and Military vehicles.

Pilot Related: Navigation and Read (and Operate) Sensory Equipment only (+5%).

Rogue: Gambling, Palming and Safe-Cracking only.

Science: Mathematics, Astronomy, Biology, Botany and Chemistry only (+5%).

Technical: Any (+10%), except Cyberjacking. Masonry, Rope Works, and Gemology receive +15%.

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any (+10%).

Secondary Skills: The character also selects *six* Secondary Skills from the O.C.C. Related list and these are limited (Any, Only and None) as previously indicated. These skills are additional knowledge that the character has picked up but they do not benefit from the bonuses listed in parentheses. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill proficiency.

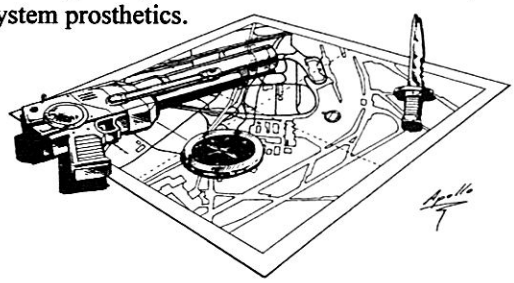
Standard Equipment: One extra set of traveling clothes (typically a jump suit), set of dress clothes, one pair of walking boots, one pair of climbing boots, a pair of leather gloves, a box of 100 plastic surgical gloves, six small specimen containers, four medium and two large containers, box of 100 zippered (gallon size) plastic bags, 1D6+4 pens or markers and pencil kits, 1D4+2 large pieces of white chalk, one can of flourescent orange or yellow spray paint, pocket notebook, sketchbook, sleeping bag, shoulder satchel, backpack, utility belt, 2D4 sacks made of heavy cloth, 1D4 waterproof sacks, spool of wire (20 feet/6.1 m), 10 signal flares, two colored smoke grenades, two demolition charges, grappling hook, nine rock climbing spikes/pitons, small hammer/mallet, 120 feet (36 m) of climbing cord, hammer and chisel, four heavy iron spikes, ice pick, shovel, hand axe, hand pick, brush, and a few other digging and excavation tools, block and tackle, a folding utility knife, a hooked skinning knife, a dozen pencil-sized chemical lights, cigarette lighter, canteen, small mirror, magnifying glass, large flashlight, pen flashlight, gas mask, air filter, light sensitive tinted sunglasses or goggles, digital distancing binoculars, telescopic gun scope, passive nightvision goggles, multi-optics goggles, and a digital camera with memory cards/disks for as many as 360 photos. Those with a Computer skill will also have a portable or pocket computer.

Weapons: One for each W.P. and 1D4 E-Clips for each, plus a Vibro-Knife and one weapon that is likely to be an authentic pre-Rifts item. Many will still have the original NEMA or US Military markings. If it survived the Great Cataclysm and centuries of neglect and still works, it's got to be special (many consider such items to be good luck).

Vehicle: Legacy Scouts often travel on foot unless part of a larger group. When anticipating a dig, they usually have several pack animals or an all-terrain vehicle such as a jeep or small truck capable of hauling a large amount of supplies and cargo (i.e., artifacts). Any vehicle or animal, however, is acquired later.

Money: Start with 2D6x100 Universal Credits and 4D4x1000 credits worth of items in the form of pre-Rifts relics, and a single artifact of significance worth 2D6x1000 credits (book, artwork, weapon, computer disk, movie disk, etc.). This is going to be a recognizable item with a value known to historians, collectors of pre-Rifts materials and officers in the Coalition Army. Remember, the CS has outlawed most ancient artifacts, and certain books and films are considered especially subversive and dangerous.

Cybernetics: None to start. Legacy Scouts are open to getting minor cybernetic implants (mainly sensors, compass, optics, etc.) that might help them with their excavations, as well as Bio-System prosthetics.



Dinosaur Hunter O.C.C.

The Dinosaur Hunters may be thought of as the big game hunters of the swamplands. Some see themselves as the ultimate predators themselves, others as heroes or daredevils, and others as the lords of the wilderness. All are thrill-seekers who take pleasure in the hunt and killing, or as they call it, "The Taking," and they are unshakable in their task. With no wasted movement, no unintended sound, no unintended energy blast, they are imperceptible to man and beast alike when on the prowl in their domain – Dinosaur Swamp (+10% to Prowl, Land Navigation and Detect Concealment in the swamplands).

Many are proud, haughty and arrogant, but the worst of the lot are bullies and power-mongers who use their knowledge and skills to manipulate and extort what they want from frightened and desperate people. They do so by refusing to kill man-eating carnasaurs or rampaging monsters unless the people pay their price. That price may be credits, gold, gems or other tangible valuables, to women, a position of power (even lord of the village) or some valuable service or information. Some Dinosaur Hunters not only hunt game, but also take bounties on fugitives. For them the challenge of hunting intelligent prey is the ultimate test of their skills. Many have no malice or cruelty in their intent, it's just another type of hunt and the money can be good. There are a few though, particularly those of evil alignment, who take great joy in The Taking of intelligent prey. This is not to imply that all Dinosaur Hunters are hardened and callous or men of evil. Many are courageous, compassionate and kind, donating large portions of the meat and hides of their kills to feed local people and hunting menacing predators, monsters, and raiders preying upon the innocent. There is also another breed of Dinosaur Hunter, one that does not participate in The Taking. They are devoted to the stalk and the hunt, but instead of shooting their prey with a gun, they shoot them with a camera. For them the thrill is in the hunt, not the kill. These new styled Dinosaur Hunters are becoming recognized as reconnaissance scouts, intelligence gatherers and research assistants.

As the name suggests, the Dinosaur Hunter specializes in tracking, stalking and slaying dinosaurs and other large game animals. All creatures deemed to demand the greatest risk, bravery and skill. A deadly game of life and death where the hunter becomes the hunted.

Alignment: Any. More than any other Scout, the Dinosaur Hunter includes the full range of possible alignments, including Miscreant and Diabolic evil.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 10, P.E. 10, P.P. 12, and M.E. 12 or higher. A high P.S. is considered macho, but is not a requirement.

Special Bonus: Add a bonus 4D6+10 to the character's base physical S.D.C., +1D4 to the P.E. attribute, +1 to save vs poisons and disease, and +1 to save vs Horror Factor at levels 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15.

O.C.C. Skills:

Body Building & Weight Lifting

Camouflage (+20%)

Cooking (+10%)

Climbing (+10%)

Hunting

Language (choice of one, +15%) plus Speak Native Language (American) at 95%.

Land Navigation (+16%)

Lore: Dinosaurs (+30%; see Special O.C.C. skill)

Lore: Swamp & Everglades (+15%; see Special O.C.C. skill)

Prowl (+15%)

Skin & Prepare Animal Hides (+20%)

Sniper

Track Animals (+20%; Dinosaurs +30%)

Tracking (people; +15%)

Wilderness Survival (+20%)

W.P. Knife

W.P. Energy Rifle

W.P.: Three of choice. **Note:** For the non-lethal Dinosaur Hunter, substitute Photography (+15%) and T.V./Video (+10%) for two of the W.P.s.

Hand to Hand: Expert; can be changed to Hand to Hand: Martial Arts (or Assassin if of an evil alignment) at the cost of one O.C.C. Related Skill.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select *seven* other skills, but at least two must be selected from the Physical category and two from the W.P. or Wilderness category. Plus, select two additional

skills at levels 3, 6, 9 and 12. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any.

Cowboy: Any.

Domestic: Any.

Electrical: Basic Electronics only.

Espionage: Detect Ambush, Detect Concealment, Escape Artist, Intelligence, and Interrogation only (all +5%).

Horsemanship: General (+10%) and Exotic Animals only but counts as two skill selections.

Mechanical: Basic Mechanics, Automotive Mechanics, and Field Armorer only.

Medical: First Aid (+10%), Brewing, Holistic Medicine (+5%) but the last counts as two skill selections.

Military: Any (+10%).

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics (+5% where applicable).

Pilot: Any (+10%), excluding Robots, Power Armor and military vehicles.

Pilot Related: Navigation, Read (and Operate) Sensory Equipment, and Weapon systems only (+5%).

Rogue: Any, except for Computer Hacking.

Science: Basic Mathematics and Advanced Mathematics (+5% to both), Astronomy, Biology, and Marine Biology only.

Technical: Any (+5%), except Cyberjacking (+10% to Falconry, Lore and Language skills).

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any (+15%).

Secondary Skills: The character also selects *five* Secondary Skills from the O.C.C. Related list and these are limited (Any, Only and None) as previously indicated. These skills are additional knowledge that the character has picked up but they do not benefit from the bonuses listed in parentheses. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill proficiency.

Special Dinosaur Hunter O.C.C. Skills: See Skill List, above, for bonuses.

1. Lore: Dinosaurs. A specialized skill uncommon in the rest of the country. It provides in-depth knowledge about *living* dinosaurs, in general, and the dinosaurs and other exotic creatures that inhabit Dinosaur Swamp, specifically. Range of knowledge includes the animals' habits, species, what they eat, where they are typically found, means of defense, the value of their meat, hide, teeth, claws, bones, etc., strengths and vulnerabilities, recognizing them by their tracks and dung, and so on. Base Skill: 20% +5% per level of experience. The Dinosaur Hunter is even more expert about living dinosaurs than the Swamp Stomper.

2. Lore: Swamps & Everglades. Another skill unique to the region of Dinosaur Swamp. It provides a deep understanding of the swamplands, their ecology, nature, hazards, wildlife and waterways, including the best methods of traveling the swamps and paths through them. Base Skill: 30% +5% per level of experience.

3. Track Dinosaurs. For the Dinosaur Hunter, tracking dinosaurs is part of the character's *Track Animals* skill, and includes dinosaurs because they are a vital part of the local ecology. The bonus for tracking dinosaurs (+30%) is higher than the character's ability to track other types of animals because he specializes in hunting dinosaurs. This ability may be used for *avoiding* dinosaurs as much as it is to track them down. Base Skill: 20% +5% per level of experience (same as Track Animals).

4. Stalking: The specialized technique of sneaking up on prey to kill or capture it. Stalking is a companion skill to Hunting, however neither is a prerequisite for the other. Stressing patience over speed, the act of stalking is a skill of physical and mental concentration in which the hunter slowly and quietly moves into position to get his best shot without the animal catching his scent, hearing a noise, catching a glimpse of movement, or being frightened. **Note:** Takes 1D4+1 melee rounds to get into striking position.

Capturing the animal or killing with knife/melee weapon or bare hands: The hunter gets within range to lunge and strike, or grab or grapple the animal without causing it to startle and flee or attack before he is ready. This is the type of move the Animal Channel and wildlife shows on TV depict when a naturalist grabs a venomous snake or crocodile (e.g. the Crocodile Hunter).

Bonuses: Stalking also provides the following bonuses as applicable.

+2 to entangle, leap on and pin/incapacitate/wrestle with the animal.

+1 to strike on an aimed shot (includes bows and thrown weapons).

+5% to Prowl.

+5% to Camouflage.

+5% to Track Animals/Dinosaurs.

+5% to Detect Concealment.

+10% to Detect Ambush.

+10% to Detect Traps/Mines.

+1D4 to Perception (optional).

Note: The Stalking skill can be purchased by any character that can take Wilderness Skills, but counts as *three* "O.C.C. Related Skill" selections, and cannot be taken as a Secondary Skill.

5. Sign Language: Always concerned about noise, Dinosaur Hunters have developed their own specialized form of Sign Language. Originally based on military hand signals, it has grown in sophistication and has its own syntax and vocabulary that is virtually unintelligible unless one has been taught how to use it. While not a closely guarded secret, most Dinosaur Hunters do not teach it to anyone except their apprentices or trusted companions. Considering how few people a Dinosaur Hunter truly trusts, this typically ensures that only a handful are taught the language. Base Skill: 35% +4% per level of experience. **Note:** At the approval of the Game Master, the Sign Language skill can be purchased as a Communications skill, or given as an O.C.C. Skill to other Wilderness Scouts, Rangers and Special Forces type characters, but it should count as *two* selections, and cannot be taken as a Secondary Skill.

Standard Equipment: One extra set of traveling clothes (typically camouflage fatigues or other hunting/sportsmen clothing), hunter's vest, wide brimmed hat or baseball cap, set of

dress clothes, one pair of walking boots, one pair of climbing boots, a pair of moccasins, a pair of leather gloves, a box of 100 plastic surgical gloves, 1D4 pens or markers, 1D4 pieces of white chalk, pocket notebook, sleeping bag, shoulder satchel, backpack, utility belt, bandoleer, 2D4 sacks made of heavy cloth, 1D4 waterproof sacks, spool of wire (20 feet/6.1 m), 1D6 signal flares, two colored smoke grenades, small hammer/mallet, 120 feet (36.6 m) of climbing rope, hand axe, a folding utility knife, a hooked skinning knife, 1D6 pencil-sized chemical lights, cigarette lighter, flint, canteen, small mirror, laser distancer, digital distancing binoculars, telescopic gun scope, passive nightvision goggles or gun scope, multi-optics goggles, flashlight, sunglasses, and a few personal items.

The Ghillie Suit (Special): The most important part of a Dinosaur Hunter's equipment, aside from his weapons, is the Ghillie suit. Made of layers of dyed burlap strips, the Ghillie suit breaks up the human silhouette, providing some of the best camouflage for the least amount of investment. While an apprentice, a Dinosaur Hunter will handcraft his own suit, creating a bond of sorts between the maker and the suit. There is nothing magical about it, but more of an extreme familiarity with their particular suit and how it looks and feels in the field. Ghillie suits provide excellent prevention from detection by the naked eye and even from enhanced optics, but do not conceal one from thermo-imaging or magical or psionic means of detection. The Dinosaur Hunter's handmade Ghillie suit provides a bonus of +10% to Prowl, Camouflage and Blend skills. All other characters that try and use it only get a +5% bonus on those skills. Proper use of a Ghillie suit first requires a successful roll on the Prowl, Camouflage or Blend skill for it to be effective.

Weapons: One weapon for every W.P. plus 1D6+2 E-Clips (or 200 rounds of ammo) for each as applicable, and a Vibro-Knife. Dinosaur Hunters tend to prefer long-range weapons known for precision and utility, including the JA-11 Juicer Assassin Energy Rifle, any of Viggo's custom rifles (described elsewhere) and other weapons that can fire a single, precision shot or can switch from rapid fire to single shot.

In the case of the Hunters who photograph rather than kill their prey, substitute two weapons with a digital camera with memory cards/disks for as many as 600 photographs and a video camera (typically palmcorder size) with 48 hours of film disks.

Vehicles: Dinosaur Hunters like small, fast, quiet vehicles such as hovercycles; some prefer a riding animal. See the **Rifts® Game Master Guide**, page 253, for several popular models of hovercycles.

Money: Starts with 2D4x1000 in Universal Credits and has 2D4x1000 credits worth of animal and/or dinosaur pelts, hides, teeth and claws (can command an extra 1D4x1000 credits if sold away from Dinosaur Swamp where such things are considered rare and exotic) and/or exotic plants/herbs or artifacts.

Cybernetics: Dinosaur Hunters shun prosthetics and implants, not just because they aren't natural but because they aren't macho. Any prosthetic will be a Bio-System if possible.

Barbarians

By Todd Yoho & Kevin Siembieda

The Earth has had 300 years in which to heal since the eruption of the ley lines and the return of magic that reshaped the world. In the blink of an eye, literally overnight, humanity went from being the dominant species on the planet to just another species trying to save themselves from extinction. Three hundred years in which the oceans have calmed, the land has stabilized, and the atmosphere has spent its fury. Life has fallen into a period of relative normalcy after centuries of adjustment. The planet and humankind will never be the same, but they have survived. In the sheltered Great Plains, civilization came out of the Dark Age with the ascension of the Coalition States, the Federation of Magic, and other "civilized" communities, though they may be populated by *nonhuman* D-Bees. Technology has been rediscovered, if it was ever truly lost, and life has gone on. It isn't easy, it isn't peaceful, but civilization is being restored. If there is one strength about humanity, it is that even in the most adverse of circumstance, humans tend to come together in mutual support. There is strength, pooling of resources, and safety in numbers, but all did not fare as well as others.

In the east, beyond the barrier of the Appalachian Mountains, Dinosaur Swamp is only just beginning to take the first steps out of the Dark Ages that blanketed North America in the centuries following the Great Cataclysm. Here society had been reduced to barbarism and savagery.

Ten thousand years of development was wiped away in a matter of one generation. Soon, new social structures began to develop among the, then, infant tribal societies that appeared in the east and, especially, the southeast. Today stories about the Golden Age of Man, the Great Cataclysm and the subsequent Dark Age have been reduced to the equivalent of folklore passed on by oral tradition from one generation to the next. Over time these traditions and tales became instrumental in defining who these barbarian people were. Old college sports mascots, once marks of pride, became tribal totems. The tribes now known as the Wolf Runners, the Rams, and the Devil Hordes sprang up in the ruins of central North Carolina, whereas the Yellow Stingers, and the Bull Hounds of South Carolina rose from the distant memories of their ancestors. What were once symbols of friendly rivalries in an age past have turned into marks of cultural identity and warring tribes.

Of all the resources available in Dinosaur Swamp, none are more important than food and water. They are the fundamentals for life, and they are the predominant reason for conflicts among the tribes. With agriculture mostly a lost science in the early days of the Dark Ages, hunting, foraging and raiding became the predominant methods to acquire what one needed to survive. Tribal conflicts were waged over animal trails, hunting grounds, grazing fields, food stockpiles, locations and, with the appearance of D-Bees, race. When it came to food, water, land and race, there was never a drought on violence. The strong overcame the weak, and the weak either survived as best they could or perished. It would be decades before most tribes could grow the simplest of vegetables. Producing enough food to feed a group of people isn't as simple as covering a few seeds with dirt and watering them from time to time. With the shattered and

sometimes contaminated landscape, the fact that agriculture resurfaced among any of the tribes is perhaps the most important lucky break that the barbarians have had in the past centuries.

As the tribal communities began to stabilize, and the succeeding generations began to adapt to their new lives, trade began to develop among some of those with less hostile intentions. Money and intrinsic value was a lost and forgotten concept, and the trading of tangible goods and services became the rule. An item had value if it could be used for some purpose: ammunition, medicine, alcohol, food, tools, clothing, certain plants and crafted goods all make good currency, as do skills like carpentry, building, healing, and hunting.

While the southeast is littered with ruins from the past, most salvageable technology and goods were looted in the early days after the Great Cataclysm. Thus, technological and sociological development among the people of the southeast have been stunted for centuries, making it a savage land filled with uneducated people living a bare bones existence under Stone Age conditions. Even in 109 P.A., the pinnacle of social achievement is a lawless shanty town with the ominous name of *Char*. The solitary, uniting factor they share is their language: American.

Like the rest of North America, the predominant language is American (English). Even after centuries of isolation, the resiliency of the language has kept it intact and even the D-Bees have adopted it as their own. There has been some drift in many of the pronunciations, but such a phenomenon is not unusual since even before the Cataclysm there was a marked difference in accents in people from different parts of the continent. The unique speech marker once known as the "Southern Drawl" is the common speech pattern of Dinosaur Swamp. This gives native inhabitants a very distinct mark of identification and allows them to pick up on strangers instantly by the way they talk. A barbarian hunter need not see a trespasser in his territory to identify them as outsiders, he only needs to hear one of them speak.

Most barbarian tribes and other locals are suspicious of strangers, with some being openly hostile. When a barbarian comes into contact with outsiders, most are extremely wary about them. They have remained secure for generations by not trusting strangers. Furthermore, they regard most strangers, humans and D-Bees, as unwelcome invaders, and systematically target them for raids, robbery, rape, slavery and murder. (**Note:** Specific tribal attitudes are addressed in the section entitled, **Civilizations of Dinosaur Swamp.**)

Barbarians and Alignments: Barbarian characters can of course be of any alignment, but their overall tendency is toward Unprincipled and Anarchist. The barbarian people of Dinosaur Swamp are reminiscent of Native Americans with three big differences, 1) they don't have a sense of history, 2) they don't revere the land and nature, and 3) they tend to be very aggressive and war-like. Barbarians of even good alignments see outsiders as invaders, and as such, they are fair game for raids, plunder, slavery and murder. Outsiders are invaders/enemies so their abuse and murder are *not* acts of evil, but follow the *unspoken* laws of war and survival to harass, loot and slay the enemy.

Much like the Wilderness Scouts, barbarians are used to following their own rules and principles and not living by someone else's. They are adapted for survival, which gives them a strong instinct toward serving their own ends before those of someone else. They work for the benefit of their own tribe, which is how they have survived for centuries. The survival of the tribe most often insures the survival of the individual within that clan.

Barbarian O.C.C.s: Not all barbarians follow the skill template for the Eastern Wilderness Barbarian presented as follows. Player characters are free to choose any other O.C.C. that the Game Master makes available to them, but they do of course get the benefits of the five Special R.C.C. skills listed below. Should a player wish to create a barbarian character using another O.C.C. template, reduce the total number of O.C.C. Related and Secondary Skills for that character by half, rounding down in the case of odd numbers. The barbarian will still tend to rely on his natural abilities more than any other training, and their total number of skill selections should reflect that.

As a few guidelines for Game Masters and players alike, few barbarians ever train to become power armor pilots, but some have been known to apprentice themselves to wandering Cyber-Knights as they pass through the region. Few barbarians ever become City Rats, except in Char where there are several exceptions to that rule. All types of magic are available for study, but most barbarians wishing to study magic will follow the path of the Wilderness Barbarian Eco-Wizard O.C.C.

Barbarian Males:

60% Wilderness Barbarian/Raider
15% Wilderness Scout
7% Swamp Stomper
5% Pathfinder
10% Eco-Wizard
2% Master Psychic
1% Nurturer

Barbarian Females:

76% Barbarian Nurturer
10% Wilderness Scout
10% Eco-Wizard
2% Swamp Stomper
2% Master Psychic (50% are mutants)

Note: Of course a young barbarian can be taken out of his environment and trained to become *any* O.C.C., those described here are just the ones most common among the typical barbarian tribes of the east and southeast.

Barbarian Wilderness Scout

Typically a male barbarian

It should first be noted that these are not the axe and sword swinging, oil skinned, muscle bound barbarians that permeate fantasy literature, movies and television. Barbarian as used here is in the classical sense, as in someone who lives outside of standard, modern civilization. These are the native inhabitants of Dinosaur Swamp, centuries removed from the original survivors that have organized themselves into tribes, clans and villages who live in the wilderness among the animals, the forests, the swamps and the ruins. They are unique products of their environment; natural survivalists that are strongly adapted to living in the wilds after generations of exposure to it. Thus, they are at home in the wild and are, in effect, Wilderness Scouts.

Roll up as the standard Wilderness Scout. See the **Rifts® RPG** for this O.C.C. They may use stolen and found technology, but such items are limited to basic body armor, weapons, tools and gear – not electronics or elaborate machines. A simple modern vehicle, like a hovercycle or jeep *may* also be used provided there was someone to teach the barbarian how to use it. However, the Barbarian Wilderness Scout is likely to prefer his own two feet, riding animal, a magic vehicle, and when it comes to water, basic styles of barges, canoes, row and sail boats.

Ignore Engineering, Electronic, Mechanical and Science skills that might normally be available to the Wilderness Scout O.C.C. and replace them with Domestic, Horsemanship, Physical, Rogue, Technical Skills that don't use advanced technology (i.e., Art, Lore, Masonry, etc.), Weapon Proficiencies (most any) and Wilderness Skills.

Barbarian Swamp Stomper

Typically a male barbarian

Roll up the same as presented in this book, but limit technological knowledge and equipment the same as the Barbarian Wilderness Scout, above.

Barbarian Pathfinder

Typically a male barbarian

Roll up the same as presented in this book, but limit technological knowledge and equipment the same as the Barbarian Wilderness Scout, above.

Barbarian Nurturer O.C.C.

The typical female barbarian

Female barbarians fall into the *Vagabond O.C.C.* category with an emphasis on domestic, family, and health based skills; i.e., the traditional nurturer, homemaker, child bearer and child rearing orientation. They may use stolen and found technology, but such items are limited to basic body armor, weapons, tools (i.e., sewing needles, pots and pans, etc.) and resources (fabric, paper, pens, tape, etc.) – not electronics or machines other than simple things like a flashlight, pen, marker, stapler, flare, gun, etc.

Roll up as the standard Vagabond. See the **Rifts® RPG** for this O.C.C. Ignore Engineering, Electronic, Mechanical and Science skills that might normally be available to *Vagabond O.C.C.* and replace them with Domestic, Horsemanship, Medical, Physical, Rogue, Technical Skills that don't use advanced technology (i.e., Art, Lore, Masonry, etc.), Weapon Proficiencies (typically Ancient and basic Modern W.P.s) and Wilderness Skills.

Medical Skills are limited to Animal Husbandry, Brewing, Entomological Medicine (on a very basic level), First Aid or Paramedic, Holistic Medicine and Sea Holistic Medicine (all get a bonus of +10% for this character).

Other considerations are the same as the Wilderness Scout, above.

Barbarian Master Psychic

Male or Female Barbarian

Remember, these barbarians are predominantly human (with adopted D-Bee members of the tribe) and have the same psychic potential as any human. This means it is possible for a barbarian to be any of the following Psychic R.C.C.s: **Burster, Mind Melter, Nega-Psychic, Psi-Druid, Psi-Warrior, Zapper** and **Mystic**. Bursters, Psi-Warriors and Zappers are typically regarded as elite warriors. The Mind Melter, Psi-Druid and Mystic are usually given a place of honor as a *Shaman* or on the *Tribal Council* – Mind Melters sometimes rise to the level of Tribal Chieftan.

A barbarian psychic *may* use stolen and found technology the same as other barbarians, but is more likely to rely primarily or entirely on his or her psychic abilities. As always, Major and Master Psychics are uncommon among the overall population; one in fifty or a hundred.

Ignore Engineering, Electronic, Mechanical and Science skills that might normally be available to the Psychic R.C.C. and replace them with Domestic, Horsemanship, Medical (same restrictions as the female), Physical, Rogue, Technical Skills that don't use advanced technology (i.e., Art, Lore, Masonry, etc.), Weapon Proficiencies (most any) and Wilderness Skills.

Wild Knives Warrior O.C.C.

By Kevin Siembieda

The Wild Knives Warrior is a barbarian O.C.C. that is equal parts warrior, raider, hunter and Wilderness Scout. They live off the land and survive by fishing, hunting dinosaurs and animals, and raiding and plundering their enemies (outsiders, rival tribes, Mutant Barbarians, D-Bees and even supernatural beings), taking what they need and desire before vanishing back into the forest or swampland from which they emerged. First and foremost on their list of hated enemies are the *Minions of Splugorth,* closely followed by *Horune Pirates*, both of whom regularly raid and capture humans and D-Bees for gladiatorial arenas and slave markets. With much of the land an untamed wilderness, and no unified government, or even contact with much of the outside world, the primitive people of Dinosaur Swamp (and the East Coast in general) are easy pickings for the Splugorth Slavers and pirates of every stripe. Consequently, these brigands are the most feared and hated of them all, and struck down whenever encountered. Outsiders, other barbarian tribes, mutants, and D-Bees are just invaders and rivals. Hated enemies are hunted down with the intent of killing them, and any booty that results from the conflict is a bonus. Outsiders and rivals are regarded as cultivated prey to be plundered, and when necessary, slain, but otherwise they are left alive and their property, homes and crops left in good repair so they can be raided again and again.

Eastern Barbarians are predominantly human, tribal nomads who pick out a territory or hunting ground they consider to be theirs, and then spend most of their time roaming their domain in search of food, plunder and resources. When their own resources get tight or dwindle below what can support the tribe, the Wild Knives are sent forth to raid others. Of course, outsiders are fair game to raid whenever and wherever they are encountered, but young warrior bands of Wild Knives may venture into the territory of other tribes in pursuit of game, or in search of combat when their blood boils for revenge, war or just brutal fun. Most barbarian tribes have long running feuds against three to several other tribes they consider rivals. A life as a raider earns a tribe and its warriors many enemies and rivals, but to the Wild Knives one can tell a tribe's or warrior's worth by the number of enemies he has "earned." Except for hated enemies, rival people are usually treated with some degree of respect, another reason the members of a rival tribe are not slaughtered wholesale. Thus, raiding rival tribes is almost a game for the Wild Knives. Likewise, the warriors see death by combat as a noble way to die, especially if it was in the act of protecting or serving the greater good of the tribe. These odd, but strangely noble attitudes are what has helped the barbarians survive and maintain their lifestyle for these many generations, and the Wild Knives are the chief implementers and perpetrators of that way of life.

Even the wilderness is seen as a lifelong rival, for it is a friend offering life sustaining resources and an enemy for its many dangers. Wilderness Barbarians are locked in constant battle with the forces of nature and made to face the jaws of carnivorous dinosaurs, monsters, other predators, man-eating plants, and poisonous snakes and insects, as well as survive being savaged by storms, and heat, and the very environment at large all conspiring against them. One must be a wild thing of blood and iron – a wild knife – willing to risk life and limb ev-

ery day if he expects to survive in this land of monsters, swamp and heat. The Wild Knives are simply the warriors and defenders who take on the risk and responsibility to defend their people and play in nature's games.

Alignment: Any. Wild Knives include the full range of possible alignments, including Miscreant and Diabolic evil.

Attribute Requirements: I.Q. 10, P.E. 10, P.P. 12, and P.S. 12 or higher.

Base P.P.E.: 2D6+8; does not increase with experience.

Special Bonus: Add a bonus +4D6+10 to the character's base physical S.D.C., +1D4 to the P.E. attribute, +2 to save vs poisons and disease, and +1 to save vs Horror Factor at levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 14.

Racial Breakdown: 94% Human, 5% D-Bee, 1% Mutant Humans.

O.C.C. Skills:

Body Building & Weight Lifting

Cooking (+10%)

Climbing (+10%)

Detect Ambush (+15%)

Fishing (+10%)

Horsemanship (General)

Hunting

Language (one, +15%) plus Speak Native Language (American) at 90%.

Land Navigation (+16%)

Lore: Dinosaurs (+10%; see Special O.C.C. skill)

Lore: Swamp & Everglades (+10%; see Special O.C.C. skill)

Prowl (+10%)

Skin & Prepare Animal Hides (+20%)

Track Animals (+15%; includes Dinosaurs)

Tracking (people; +10%)

Wilderness Survival (+20%)

W.P.: Knife and two Ancient Weapons of choice.

W.P.: Two Modern Weapons of choice.

Hand to Hand: Expert; can be changed to Hand to Hand: Martial Arts (or Assassin if of an evil alignment) at the cost of one O.C.C. Related Skill.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select *six* other skills. Plus one additional skill at levels 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Radio Basic only.

Cowboy: Roping only.

Domestic: Any (+5%).

Electrical: None.

Espionage: Detect Concealment, Escape Artist, Intelligence, and Interrogation only (all +5%).

Horsemanship: Exotic Animals only but counts as two skill selections.

Mechanical: None.

Medical: First Aid (+10%), Brewing, and Holistic Medicine (+5%) but the last counts as two skill selections.

Military: Recognize Weapon Quality only (+10%).

Physical: Any (+5% where applicable).

Pilot: Motor & Sail Boat (+10%), Kayak/Canoes (+10%), and Hovercycle only.

Pilot Related: None.

Rogue: None.

Science: Basic Mathematics and Astronomy only.

Technical: Any, except Cyberjacking and other high-tech skills (+10% to Gemology, Language, Lore, Breed Dogs, and Rope Works skills).

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any (+15%).

Secondary Skills: The character also selects *five* Secondary Skills from the O.C.C. Related list and these are limited (Any, Only and None) as previously indicated. These skills are additional knowledge that character has picked up but they do not benefit from the bonuses listed in parentheses. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill proficiency.

Special Wild Knives O.C.C. Skills: See Skill List, above, for bonuses.

1. Lore: Dinosaurs. A specialized skill uncommon in the rest of the country. It provides in-depth knowledge about *living* dinosaurs, in general, and the dinosaurs and other exotic creatures that inhabit Dinosaur Swamp, specifically. Same as Swamp Stomper & Dinosaur Hunter. Base Skill: 20% +5% per level of experience.

2. Lore: Swamps & Everglades. Another skill unique to the region of Dinosaur Swamp. It provides a deep understanding of the swamplands, their ecology, nature, hazards, wildlife and waterways, including the best methods of traveling the swamps and paths through them. Base Skill: 30% +5% per level of experience.

3. Track Dinosaurs. For the Wild Knives tracking dinosaurs is part of the character's *Track Animals* skill, and includes dinosaurs because they are a vital part of the local ecology. This ability may be used for *avoiding* dinosaurs as much as it is to track them down. Base Skill: 20% +5% per level of experience (same as Track Animals).

Standard Equipment: One extra set of traveling/hunting clothes (typically made from animal hide), two pairs of mocassins or boots, a pair of leather gloves, backpack or satchel to carry booty and supplies, belt with pouches or detachable purses, 2D4 sacks made of heavy cloth, 1D4 waterproof sacks, small hammer/mallet, 120 feet (36.6 m) of climbing rope, hatchet/Tomahawk (1D6+1 S.D.C. damage), two knives (do 1D6 S.D.C. damage), a hooked skinning knife, cigarette lighter, flint, water skin or canteen, and a small mirror.

Modern binoculars, telescopic gun scope, passive night-vision goggles and other high-tech optics are highly coveted but starts with none.

Homespun Armor (Special): A piecemeal, non-environmental body armor made from Dinosaur hide and bone, or from M.D.C. scraps from high-tech body armor, vehicles and other M.D.C. materials. M.D.C. of main body – 26+2D6, M.D.C. of Limbs – 1D10+6. M.D.C. of helmet – 2D6+30. Mobility Penalties: -10% to Prowl, Swim, and other skills that require ample freedom of movement. Cost: 12,000 to 20,000 credits or equivalent in trade.

Weapons: One weapon for every W.P. plus 1D4 E-Clips (or 200 rounds of ammo) for each as applicable. Wild Knives love Vibro-Blades of every variety and start with one Vibro-Knife. They also like long-range energy weapons and magic items but start with none.

Vehicles: Other than a canoe or row boat, none. A riding animal or vehicle may be acquired later.

Money: Starts with 2D4x1000 in trade goods, that's it.

Cybernetics: Don't know what that is.

Note: Most barbarian tribes range in size from 50–500 members, but the largest can number 1000-2000.

Barbarian Eco-Wizard O.C.C.

By Todd Yoho & Kevin Siembieda

In the early days following the Great Cataclysm, as the survivors began their fall into tribal barbarism, they also began to explore the strange, new phenomenon that had gripped the shattered Earth: magic. For lack of a better word, magic was now a reality and it became a part of the daily life of many tribes. Some developed the skills and powers of the more traditional magic wielding classes presented in the **Rifts® RPG**. Others, however, took a slightly different path, developing a particular practice of magic strangely familiar to more civilized characters, but wholly unique to Dinosaur Swamp.

As the survivors learned to rely on the wilderness around them for food, shelter and raw materials, a select few began to realize that the forces of the ley lines could be used and channeled not only through themselves, but also into their weapons and other crafted items. At first, these items were not usable by everyone, only the creator, their select apprentices, and a few random people. As the years progressed, and mutation began to spread throughout the barbarian tribes, psychic abilities began to become commonplace, and consequently, the number of individuals who could wield these magical items grew, earning the people who could make enchanted items an elevated status in the tribal structure.

This sorcerer has come to be known as the Eco-Wizard. As the name implies, the character specializes in making weapons and equipment from the *ecosystem* of Dinosaur Swamp (wood, animal teeth, bone, etc.) and instilling them with magical properties. In this regard, they are reminiscent of Techno-Wizards, but rather than working with wire, gears, circuit boards and crystal, they work in sinew, bone, wood and other organic components. One could argue this makes them cousins to the Necromancer or Bio-Wizard, except the Eco-Wizard has no knowledge of those dark arts and doesn't enslave spirits or consort with demons or the dead. If anything, they wield a more primitive and visceral offshoot of Techno-Wizardry. Like TW weapons, anyone with sufficient P.P.E. or I.S.P. can use the device, and *anyone* can use the weapon when on a ley line. (**Note:** Specific weapons and items created by Eco-Magic are described in the section entitled the *Magic of Dinosaur Swamp.*)

Eco-Wizards are close to nature but are not Druids, nor do they draw upon any animal or spirit totem to use their power. Like most barbarians, they see nature as the environment in which they live and as both friend and enemy, resource and place for danger. Thus, they don't love or revere nature, and use its resources any way they can to survive and help the tribe. At the same time they are attuned to the world around them and don't deliberately or wantonly kill or destroy any living thing.

Special O.C.C. Skills and Abilities of the Eco-Wizard:

1. **Fashion Weapons & Tools:** The skill and knowledge of carving and shaping wood, bone, teeth, animal hide, and plant fiber, nuts and material into weapons and tools. Base Skill: 40% +5% per level of experience.
2. **Craft Eco-Wizardry Devices:** The character has the unique ability to fashion weapons and tools out of naturally occurring materials, but then can *enchant* them to emulate magic abilities. This is identical to the process in which a Techno-Wizard enchants a machine, except that the Eco-Wizard uses organic tissues rather than manufactured components.

   Initial Spell Knowledge: The Eco-Wizard has an intimate knowledge of spell magic and tapping into ley lines for additional power. However, they are not masters of spell magic because their focus is in channeling their energies through their constructs. Consequently, their spell casting abilities are significantly reduced when compared to other sorcerers.

   Spell Casting Penalty: Reduce all spell ranges, duration, M.D.C./S.D.C., damage and any other effects by *half* when an invocation is cast as a spell rather than channeled into a handmade creation.

   At first level, the Eco-Wizard knows the following spells commonly required for instilling magic abilities into their constructs. Blinding Flash (1), Electric Arc (8), Globe of Daylight (2), Ignite Fire (6), Fuel Flame (5), Fire Bolt (7), Magic Shield (6), Manipulate Objects (2+), Energy Bolt (5), Create Wood (10+), Life Source (2+) and Power Weapon (35).

   At experience levels 2, 4, 8, and 13, the character gets two new spells, with selections made from Spell Invocations levels 1-4.

   At experience levels 3, 6, 9, 12, and 15 the character gets one new spell, with selections made from Spell Invocations levels 5-8.

   Learning New Spells: Additional spells and rituals of any magic level up to Ninth can be learned and/or purchased at any time regardless of the character's level of experience. However, the majority of spells are usually limited to levels 1-6, and like Techno-Wizards, their primary area of interest will be in spells that can be applied to building magic weapons and tools. These additional spells are usually learned by returning to their mentor for further instruction, or through serving the Shaman or Eco-Wizard of another tribe for a period of time. They don't trust "outsiders" and will not (as a rule) study magic with them, and *never* share the secrets of

Eco-Wizardry. **Note:** The Eco-Wizard can also figure out how to use and power TW weapons, but not how to make them.

Magic Related Bonuses: +2 to save vs Horror Factor and possession, +1 to save vs magic at levels 2, 5, 9, 12, and 15, and +1 to Spell Strength at levels 3, 7, and 9.

P.P.E.: Like all practitioners of magic, the Eco-Wizard is a living battery of mystic energy that he can draw upon to create magic. Permanent Base P.P.E.: 2D4x10 +P.E. attribute. Add 2D6 P.P.E. per each additional level of experience. Of course, the character can draw P.P.E. from ley lines and nexus points, but not other people. However, the mage can draw P.P.E. from animals (anything larger than a sparrow; no insects) by touch without having to hurt the creature! This is done by petting the animal for one melee round. Only 1D6+6 P.P.E. points can, however, be drawn from a single animal before the process must be repeated with a different creature, and the Eco-Wizard can only draw on the animal's P.P.E. to use it in Eco-weapons or tools, or to activate and power one of his creations.

3. **Natural Psionics:** Minor Psychic with any two powers selected from the Category of Healing or Sensitive. I.S.P. is M.E. attribute number +1D6, +1D6 additional points per level of experience. Needs a 12 or higher to save vs psionic attack.
4. **Affinity with Ecosystem:** The Eco-Wizard is so attuned to his or her natural environment that the character can sense when certain things occur within it. This includes:
   - Sense the coming of a storm 10 minutes per level of experience before its arrives. Can also sense the severity (light shower, rain, downpour, hurricane).
   - Sense danger in water within a 400 foot (122 m) radius, but cannot tell what the danger is, where it is coming from, nor pinpoint its location. "Danger" is always something that is waiting or planning to attack, often a predator, monster or dinosaur.
   - Sense toxic, unnatural chemicals/pollution/poison in the earth, plants and water upon close examination or touch.
   - Sense when food is spoiled or contaminated upon close examination or touch.
   - Sense if an animal is diseased/sick, poisoned or injured by touch, but cannot tell the exact cause, the severity or how to cure the problem.
   - Sense when a supernatural being (god, demon, Elemental, Haunting Child, etc.) is within one mile (1.6 km) of him. Cannot tell the nature of the being, its location, its intention or whether it is coming closer.
   - Sense Ley Line at a range of one mile (1.6 km) per level of experience.
   - Impervious to the secretions, poisons, acids and adhesives of alien and man-eating plants!
   - Resistant to lightning (and electricity): Half damage.
   - Resistant to insect bites, poisonous snakes, infection and disease: +1 to save at levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 14.

Alignment: Any, but leans toward Scrupulous, Unprincipled, Anarchist and Aberrant.

Attribute Requirements: M.E. 12, P.E. 12. A high P.S. is desirable, but not required.

Special O.C.C. Bonuses: Add a bonus of 2D6 to the character's physical S.D.C., and +1D4 to the M.A. attribute.

O.C.C. Skills:

Astronomy (+15%)
Boat Building (+10%)
Carpentry (+20%)
Dowsing (+20%)
Gardening (+15%)
Holistic Medicine (+10%)
Identify Plants & Fruits (+20%)
Language (choice of one at 10%) plus Speak Native Language (American) at 92%.
Mathematics: Basic (+15%)
Rope Works (+10%)

Skin and Prepare Animal Hides (+20%)

Wilderness Survival (+15%)

Whittling & Sculpting (+15%)

W.P. Knife

W.P.: One of choice (Ancient or Modern).

Hand to Hand: Basic only; cannot be upgraded.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select *five* other skills, plus one additional skill at levels 2, 5, 7, 10, and 13. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Performance and Radio: Basic only (+5%).

Cowboy: None.

Domestic: Any (+15%).

Electrical: None.

Espionage: None.

Horsemanship: General and Exotic only (+5%).

Mechanical: None.

Medical: Brewing and First Aid only (+10%).

Military: Camouflage only.

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics, Boxing and Wrestling.

Pilot: Bicycling, Sail, Row and Motor Boats, Kayak/Canoe, Motorcycle and Hovercycle only.

Pilot Related: None.

Rogue: None.

Science: Basic Math only.

Technical: Any, except Computer skills and Photography (+10% to Language, Lore and building related skills).

W.P.: Any Ancient Weapon and basic Modern Weapons; no Heavy Weapons or Sharpshooting.

Wilderness: Any (+10%).

Secondary Skills: The character also selects *four* Secondary Skills from the R.C.C. Related list and these are limited (Any, Only and None) as previously indicated. These skills are additional knowledge that the character has picked up but they do not benefit from the bonuses listed in parentheses. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill proficiency.

Standard Equipment: Most Eco-Wizards travel light. Standard starting equipment includes a set of traveling clothes, a pair of sturdy boots made of thick hide or moccasins, utility belt, a large backpack, two canteens or waterskins, several stone or bone skinning knives of various sizes, 1D6 animal snares, and a small collection of preserved animal parts such as 1D6 feet of sinew, a collection of leg bones, and a patch of leather hide for creating their constructs. They typically wear hide armor with two or three special magic features of the player's choice. (Common favorites include Chameleon, Shadow Meld, Repel Animals, Cleanse, as well as other practical applications).

Weapons: One weapon for each Weapon Proficiency they possess, with at least one instilled with one or more magic capabilities. Sickness Spears are common and so are Skin Nets. See the *Magic of Dinosaur Swamp* section for more details on such items. Eco-Wizards typically shy away from technological weapons, preferring to use weapons with an organic origin. This aversion extends to traditional Techno-Wizardry devices. While they can use them just as any psychic or practitioner of magic can, they prefer not to on philosophical grounds. They also find Bio-Wizard creations to be cruel and sick, and refrain from using them.

Game Masters, at their discretion, can also allow the player of an Eco-Wizard to craft one or two unique weapons for himself to start with. However, should the weapon be lost, damaged, or stolen, the character would either have to acquire the spell or spells necessary to repair or create the item, or return to their teacher for assistance.

Vehicles: None to start with. Most Eco-Wizards prefer to travel by foot, relying on companions to give them a ride over long distances.

Money: No valuables in the form of Universal Credits, but does start with 1D6x100 credits worth of black market items. This can be in the form of salvage, cut or uncut gems, animal hides, or some other tradable natural resource.

Cybernetics: None to start with, and Eco-Wizards will avoid them at all costs.

Mutant Barbarian R.C.C.

The Mutant Barbarian is part Wilderness Scout, part Vagabond Warrior and part instinctual animal. They have adapted to the wild in such a way that they are resistant to disease and poison, and enjoy enhanced senses and animal-like instincts to complement their wilderness skills. Furthermore, many have at least a few psychic powers and/or strange physical features and abilities. Random mutation is a fact of life for these tribes, and a particular mutation may afflict an entire tribe, a particular generation, or strike at random. Some tribes are so afflicted by mutation that they are incapable of breeding outside of a narrow genetic pool.

Mutation is a blessing, as it has afforded the barbarians advantageous adaptations, but it is also their curse, marking them with physical deformity and making them feel different and isolated.

Mutant Barbarians tend to rely on their natural abilities and are uniquely suited to live in their hostile environment. The occasional Mega-Damage weapon or plate of armor is a welcomed thing, and the tribes do make use of some modern equipment, but the desire to learn and manufacture such marvels is non-existent. That having been said, Mutant Barbarians know how to craft crude but effective weapons and tools out of wood, bone,

stone, sinew, animal hides, plant fibers, etc., on a Stone Age level with adequate weight and balance to make them just as effective as their modern counterparts. Examples include stone hammers, stone axes, stone knives, stone tipped spears and arrows; wooden clubs, staves, bows and arrow shafts, shields, eating utensils, bowls, cups, spikes/stakes; bone and shell fishing hooks, needles, carved toys, statuary, jewelry; leather/hide armor, clothing, moccasins, gloves, hats, bags, water skins, and rope; and plant fiber clothing, string and rope, to name a few. They can also adapt and modify select modern weapons and tools such as attaching a shaft to a Vibro-Knife to make a Vibro-Spear, or using Mega-Damage scrap to mold M.D.C. armor (probably applied to padded clothing or leather). Mutant Barbarian player characters will recognize the obvious advantage of Mega-Damage weapons, armor, and equipment, and many own and desire them. However, most Mutants still rely heavily on their natural abilities.

Mutant Barbarians are also hunters and raiders, but tend to act more like a predatory animal than a bandit, ignoring machinery, vehicles, electronics, credits, jewelry and other valuables, in favor of stealing food, livestock, clothing, weapons, tools and other vital supplies. Since they are rather animalistic, a Mutant Barbarian will challenge, fight and slay anybody who stares him in the eye, or refuses to back down and act submissive. Likewise, they are known to cut out and eat the heart and other internal organs of those they've slain and tend go wild and more savage when a lot of blood has been spilled. This is a bloodlust or frenzy similar to what one sometimes sees among wolves, wild dogs, felines and predatory dinosaurs. Unlike the Dinosaur Hunter and some crazy "civilized" folk, Mutant Barbarians try to avoid conflicts with the big predators and prey upon small dinosaurs, mammals and their fellow humanoids. Like other barbarians, the Mutants regard Splugorth, Horune Pirates, and D-Bees not common to the region as invaders and mortal enemies. Human outsiders, non-mutant barbarian tribes, Native Americans, Psi-Stalkers and villagers/settlers are regarded as rivals suitable for pillaging and robbing. However, Mutant Barbarians are more likely to kill, especially when met with resistence, than the human barbarians.

Mutant Barbarian R.C.C. Features & Abilities:

1. **Random Mutations:** The Mutant Barbarian tribes suffer from an increased occurrence of random genetic mutations much higher than those found in other parts of North America. Whether this is a result of chemicals or alien energy or microorganisms in the environment, exposure to radiation, an effect of ley lines and magic energy, generations of selected breeding, or all or none of the above, no one knows. Among the mutants, many members of a particular tribe will exhibit the same mutation, or a variation on a specific theme. Players must roll on the following tables to determine their character's particular mutation, or with Game Master approval, they may select them. These tables have been compiled from pre-existing ideas found in the **Rifts® RPG, Mutants in Orbit™,** and **Rifts® Conversion Book One.** They are far from complete, and Game Masters are encouraged to expand and customize them for their own games.

   Number of Mutations: First, roll percentile dice for randomly determining the number of mutations, or with Game Master approval, pick one.

   01-15% Human, no random mutations.

   16-40% One mutation.

   41-60% Two mutations.

   61-80% Two mutations and one additional psychic power if the character is already psionic. Ignore the additional psychic power if the character is not psychic.

   81-90% Three mutations.

   91-00% Three mutations and one additional psychic power if the character is psionic. Ignore the additional psychic power if the character is not psionic.

   Mutant Features: Next, roll to determine the mutations themselves, or with Game Master approval, the player may select them at character creation. **Note:** Similar results on the mutation tables are not possible. For example, it is not possible for a character to have metallic, scaly skin and tough, lumpy skin. Game Masters should use their best judgment and see that the player re-rolls such results.

   01-03% Long, bushy dog-like tail.

   04-06% Long, slender rat- or lizard-like tail.

   07-10% Long, monkey-like tail.

   11-13% No body hair; +1D6 to P.P.E.

   14-17% Body is thin and lanky, but lithe and flexible (+1 to roll with impact/fall).

   18-21% Body is strong and muscular (+1D4 to P.S. and Spd, +1D6 to S.D.C.).

   22-25% Body is covered in short, soft fur.

   26-28% Body is covered in long, soft fur; +1D6 to P.P.E.

   29-31% Body is covered in long, coarse, thick fur (A.R. 10, +15 S.D.C.).

   32-35% Body is covered in tough, lumpy skin (A.R. 11, +2D6+4 S.D.C., -1 P.B.).

   36-38% Body is covered in lizard-like, scaly skin (A.R. 13, +3D6+6 S.D.C., -1 P.B.).

   39-41% Body is extremely tall, with long limbs (add 3D6 inches to height).

   42-44% Facial features are extremely attractive (+1D4 to P.B.); +1D6 to P.P.E.

   45-48% Facial features are extremely canine; +2D6 to P.P.E.

   49-51% Facial features are extremely ape- or Neanderthal-like (-2 P.B.).

   52-55% Facial features are extremely lizard-like.

   56-58% Padded feet (+2 to Prowl, +1 to Spd attribute).

   59-61% Skin is an odd color. (Examples include brown, red, dark green, purple, or even slightly transparent, etc., but adds +5% to Blend, Camouflage and Prowl skill.)

   62-65% Teeth have a pair of fangs (1D4 S.D.C. bite damage).

   66-69% Teeth are pointed.

   70-72% Teeth are large and flat with a wide, gaping mouth.

   73-75% Skull is oddly shaped and large or pointed (-1 P.B.), but +2D6 to P.P.E.

   76-79% A crown of small horns protrude from the skull (+1 M.A.).

   80-83% Tiny ears, but excellent hearing; 20% greater range (+1 on initiative, -1 P.B.).

84-86% No obvious nose (two open slits, -2 P.B.).

87-89% Large, round eyes with an unusual color (pink, dark red, orange, etc.), but perfect 20/20 vision and +1D6 to P.P.E.

90-92% Cat-like eyes, almond shaped, green or yellow iris (Nightvision 60 feet/18.28 m).

93-95% Six fingered hands (01-50% two opposable thumbs, 51-00% two extra fingers).

96-97% Clawed fingers (1D6 S.D.C. damage, +2% to Climb skill).

98-99% Body is covered in fine, attractive, lizard-like, scaly skin (A.R. 16, +4D6+6 S.D.C., +1 P.B.; has a light green, yellow, or red iridescent skin color).

00% Extra pair of arms (+1 attack per melee round, +1 to parry).

2. **Environmental Awareness:** Generations of adaptation to living in the wilds of Dinosaur Swamp has given the Mutant Barbarians a connection to their environment. This isn't a spiritual connection, but rather heightened senses of hearing and smell, quick reflexes, and the ability to read the warning signs around them. They are survivors in tune with the language of the forests and swamps. They know danger looms when they smell it in the air, or the forest becomes silent around them. To the Mutant Barbarians, the forest is a living, breathing organism. When the forest holds its breath, it is a sure sign that danger is near. They can instinctively tell when an animal is frightened by a predator, and tell when a predator feels backed into a corner and ready to strike, or is likely to back off and go away. They recognize bloodlust in beast and man, and are rather like instinctive predators themselves, always ready to hunt, fight and kill to survive.

   The following abilities and bonuses apply only when in a wilderness environment. They are completely negated in large towns and cities.

   Heightened Sense of Hearing:

   Range: 400 foot (121.92 m) radius.

   Estimate distance: 45% +5% per level of experience.

   Estimate speed and direction: 30% +5% per level of experience.

   Recognize voices, or other sounds: 35% +5% per level of experience.

   Heightened Sense of Smell:

   Range: 100 foot (30.48 m) radius.

   Recognize specific odors: 40% +5% per level of experience.

   Track by scent alone: 25% +5% per level of experience (+5% to follow blood scent).

   Alert and Ready: Extremely difficult to surprise, as the character is likely to detect the smell (or hear a noise) of a person, vehicle, gun or machine/robot before it reaches him.

   Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +1 to dodge, +1 to disarm, +5% to Tracking skills, +5% to Detect Concealment, +10% to Detect Ambush.

3. **Natural Poison and Disease Resistance:** Poison and disease are daily threats to anyone living in Dinosaur Swamp. Whether delivered through insect bites, animal stings, contaminated water, or improperly prepared food, there is no shortage of dangerous chemicals and microorganisms in day to day activities in the wilderness. After living with such conditions for generations, the barbarian population has adapted by developing a wide scale strengthened immune system. While it does not make them impervious to disease and toxins, they are extremely resistant to them. Barbarian characters do not roll a standard twenty-sided die when making saving throws against poisons and disease. They instead roll percentile dice as if they were performing a skill, and as a Barbarian character advances in level, their resistance improves. Base Resistance Percentage: 64% +3% per level of experience, plus a one-time bonus of +1% for each P.E. attribute point over 20.

4. **Natural Psionics:** Southeastern Barbarians have also adapted to the rigorous environment of the wilderness with a high incidence of low level psionics. Barbarians with 1D4 minor abilities are considered Minor Psychics requiring a 12 or higher to save against psychic attacks.

   A) To determine if a character has psionic powers, roll percentile dice.

   01-40% means that a character has some limited psionic powers. Roll 4D6+6 to determine the starting amount of I.S.P. Add 1D6 I.S.P. per level of experience.

   41-90% Means no psychic ability.

   91-00% Means the barbarian is a Master Psychic and should roll up a *Barbarian Psychic.* **Note:** If the player would rather not play a powerful psychic, assume the roll was 01-40% for minor abilities or 41-90% for no abilities.

   B) Determining Psionic Abilities. Roll on the following table to determine the number of psychic powers, and then select them from the list of available psionic powers.

   01-20% One psionic power, but does not manifest until level two.

   21-45% Two psionic powers.

   46-70% Two psionic powers, but one manifests at level one, the other at level three.

   71-80% Three psionic powers.

   81-90% Three psionic powers, but only two manifest at level one, the other does not manifest until level three.

   91-00% Four psionic powers, but they manifest one at a time starting at level one, and continue to manifest one at a time for each level of experience until the last power manifests at level four.

   Psionics Available for Selection: Bio-Regenerate (Self; 20) – Impervious to Cold (2) – Impervious to Fire (4) – Impervious to Poison (4) – Nightvision (4) – Resist Fatigue (4) – Resist Hunger (2) – Resist Thirst (6) – Summon Inner Strength (4).

Alignment: Any, but lean toward Unprincipled, Anarchist and Aberrant.

Attribute Requirements: P.S. 10 and P.E. 10. A high I.Q. and P.P. are desirable, but not required.

Special Bonus: Add a bonus of 3D6+16 to the character's physical S.D.C., +2 to roll with impact, and +1D4 to P.E. or 1D6+1 to Spd attribute.

Base P.P.E.: 4D6+6; does not increase with experience.

O.C.C. Skills:

Athletics (General)

Climbing (+10%)

Horsemanship: Exotic Animal (+5%)

Imitate Voices (and Animal Sounds) (+15%)

Identify Plants & Fruits (+20%)

Land Navigation (+15%)

Language: Speaks Native Language (American) at 88%.

Lore: Dinosaur (+15%)

Hunting

Prowl (+10%)

Running

Swimming (+10%)

W.P. Knife

W.P. Spear

W.P. Archery & Targeting or one Ancient Weapon of Choice.

W.P. Ancient Weapon: One of choice.

W.P. Modern: One of choice (S.D.C. or M.D. weapon).

Hand to Hand: Expert; can be changed to Hand to Hand: Assassin (if an Anarchist or evil alignment) for the cost of one O.C.C. Related Skill.

R.C.C. Related Skills: Select two other skills from the each of the following categories: Domestic, Physical or W.P. and two Wilderness. Plus, select one additional skill at levels 4, 8, 12, and 15. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Performance only.

Cowboy: None.

Domestic: Any (+10%).

Electrical: None.

Espionage: Detect Ambush, Detect Concealment, Escape Artist, and Interrogation Technique only (+5%).

Horsemanship: General only.

Mechanical: None.

Medical: Brewing and Holistic Medicine only, but the latter counts as two skill selections.

Military: Camouflage and Trap/Mine Detection only (+5%).

Physical: Any (+10% where applicable).

Pilot: Sail Boat, Kayaking/Canoes, Hovercycle, Automobile and Truck only, but most prefer a riding animal.

Pilot Related: None.

Rogue: None.

Science: Astronomy and Basic Math only.

Technical: Any, except Computer, Photography and other tech-based skills. +10% on Language and Lore skills.

W.P.: Any.

Wilderness: Any (+15%).

Secondary Skills: The character also selects *two* Secondary Skills from the R.C.C. Related list and these are limited (Any, Only and None) as previously indicated. These skills are additional knowledge that the character has picked up but they do not benefit from the bonuses listed in parentheses. All Secondary Skills start at the base skill proficiency.

Standard Equipment: Most travel light, not relying on a lot of heavy equipment. A set of traveling clothes, a pair of sturdy boots usually made of thick hide or moccasins, utility belt, a small backpack or satchel, a canteen or waterskin, a metal bladed knife, a stone skinning knife, 100 feet (30 m) of fishing line with a collection of hooks, 1D4 animal snares, and 2D6 miscellaneous pocket items ranging from half finished whittling, to river stones, and interesting bits and pieces. Armor is going to be light and typically a homespun non-environmental suit or a creation of an Eco-Wizard. Most suits of armor are cobbled together from many styles and parts of suits, but the Huntsman armor (40 M.D.C.) is extremely popular among Mutant Barbarians. **Armor Note:** Homespun suits are described under the Wild Knives Barbarian, but because the Mutants can be much larger and stronger, they can wear heavier suits with 1D6+10 more M.D.C. to the main body.

Weapons: Anything goes from modern M.D. weapons to S.D.C. melee weapons that are handmade, high-tech (attained through trade or by vanquishing an opponent) or Eco-Wizard magic weapons. In fact, Mutant Barbarians love magic items of all kinds, including rune weapons, Splugorth Bio-Wizard items and Techno-Wizard weapons. The simple weapons may be made from a variety of materials, including Steel-Tree, and may mix low and high technology. For example, a spear could be a Vibro-Knife attached to a wood or SteelTree shaft. Exotic or unusual weapons, of course, require Game Master approval.

Vehicles: None to start with. Most Mutant Barbarians travel by foot, relying on companions to give them a ride over long distances.

Money: 1D6x100+100 credits worth of tradeable goods.

Cybernetics: None to start with. Mutants Barbarians are not opposed to cybernetics and bionics per se, but don't trust the outsider who can provide them.

Note: Female Mutant Barbarians have the same basic skills and background as the human barbarian Nurturer. Of course a young barbarian can be taken out of his environment and trained to become *any* O.C.C., those described here are just the ones most common among the typical barbarian tribes of the east and southeast.

Most Mutant Barbarian tribes range in size from 40–240 members, with the largest seldom exceeding 1000. Mutants represent only 15% of the overall barbarian population and tend to see themselves as unique and superior to ordinary humans. However, they do not usually underestimate their enemies. Their most hated enemies include the Minions of Splugorth, particularly Slavers, and Horune Pirates.

O.C.C.s from Rifts® & Sourcebooks

Dinosaur Swamp is generally an isolated region. With the oceans to the east and the south, the Appalachians to the west and little more than wilderness to the north, characters found in Dinosaur Swamp are likely to be a *native* born and raised in the region and therefore one of the O.C.C.s previously described, or

an *outsider* who has been adopted by the locals as one of their own and has probably lived in the region for some time, or a *visiting outsider/adventurer* who is not trusted or highly regarded. An outsider can be *ANY* O.C.C. from Juicer and 'Borg to Ley Line Walker or Cowboy.

The wilderness is not like the 'Burbs of Chi-Town, or the slums of Cuidad Juarez, or even the Federation of Magic. Natives and outsiders are going to behave differently than one another, even though they may share the same occupation and general training.

Below are some general guidelines for creating and playing characters from the **Rifts® RPG** line and select other sources in Dinosaur Swamp. The list is far from exhaustive, Game Masters and players should, as always, use their best judgment.

Men of Arms

Cyborgs, Crazies and Juicers. 'Borg, Crazy and Juicer characters native to Dinosaur Swamp are a rarity. Even in Char, where such services are available for double the usual price, these characters are most likely to have traveled from other places on the continent. The primary reasons are an inability to manufacture the necessary materials to support their enhancements, a lack of money to import parts, and a desolate, hostile environment that chases people away and makes delivery of tech-parts difficult and expensive. The sophisticated technology required to produce bionics, cybernetics and other high precision implants is almost non-existent in the southeast. Trade is also limited, as the Appalachian Mountains act as a barrier to the more prosperous regions to the west. With that being said, there are two other common methods of acquiring enhancement technology: Cyber-Snatching and salvaging.

Cyber-Snatching is perhaps more common in the wilderness than in some of the seamiest 'Burbs. With no efficient way to manufacture or import enhancement, parts and modification technology, often the fastest and easiest way to acquire it is to snatch it. Rare is the cyborg character, player character or NPC, in Dinosaur Swamp that doesn't carry at least one or two "recycled" parts with him. This macabre form of recycling extends even to the drugs and drug harnesses used by Juicers. It is survival of the fittest, and the dead have no need of a bio-comp harness. Enhanced and modified characters will not only learn to watch their back in places like Char, but also in even the smallest, most innocent looking villages, and especially chance meetings with other bands of *outsiders*. Selling something as simple as a bionic arm can feed a family for months or earn them a ton in trade.

Salvaging, on the other hand, is perhaps ghoulish, but not nearly as morally questionable as Cyber-Snatching. Often, the occasional cache of vintage enhancement technology will be uncovered in the ruins of a hospital, or through some other lucky strike, but most salvaging is done as a result of combat and lost expeditions. Of the many adventurers and explorers who enter Dinosaur Swamp, most do not return. Those who fall prey to disease, monsters and combat are reduced to mere salvage to those who find them. Some Wilderness Scouts have been known to lead these so-called "salvage expeditions" whose goal, which is often profitable, is to collect the remains of deceased explorers. One particular fact noted by many salvage teams is that most military grade bionics and hardware, if not shredded by being chewed, can pass through the digestive system of the larger predatory dinosaurs relatively unharmed. Retrieving materials that have been processed in that manner requires particular intestinal fortitude, and is quite insightful in just how much gross (no pun intended) waste product a dinosaur can produce.

Cyber-Knights. In keeping with their traditions, there are no communities, or even organized gatherings of Cyber-Knights in Dinosaur Swamp, but they are occasionally found wandering the wilds alone or in small numbers or as a member of an adventuring group. Some may adopt a community as its protector, at least for a while, and others roam from settlement to settlement acting as transitory protector, champion or helper. Many Cyber-Knights that come to the region find that the job is too big for them alone and the culture too strange and uncivilized for their taste, and abandon the region content in knowing they helped others when they could. Others come seeking to test themselves against the dinosaurs and monsters of the region, and bring or send their apprentices here for further or final training before becoming a Knight. The wilderness has, at times, claimed even the most experienced and wild-wise of the Cyber-Knights.

Coalition Military O.C.C.s. The majority of Coalition characters east of the Appalachians are enlisted deserters, criminals, wanted fugitives, and those who have forsaken civilization for a dream of freedom in the wild. Dinosaur Swamp (and much of the east) is a great place for fugitives and soldiers to lose themselves. Some Coalition soldiers traumatized during the Tolkeen War found themselves drawn to the eastern wilds, but most are roughnecks, cutthroats and mercenaries who have deserted the army and their country. Coalition Technical Officers, especially those whose MOS was engineering, can find themselves in an excellent position to sell and trade their knowledge and experience to Char, other towns and visiting mercenaries. Runaway and feral Dog Boys, however, are best suited for life in the eastern wilderness. In fact, a few small packs are known to roam the Dinosaur Swamp, pitting their instincts and military training against the barbarians and rigors of the wild, and loving it.

Glitter Boys, Power Armor and Robot Pilots. Glitter Boys and related character types are almost always *outsiders* and don't usually fare well. They usually make up the strong-arm section of well-equipped exploratory parties, adventurers, raiders and bandits, especially the light and agile models like the SAMAS, Samson, and Triax Terrain Hopper. This is not to say that power armor pilots among the native population do not exist, but they are rare and typically found at a town or village. Suits may be salvaged from adventuring groups and explorers who perished, and the occasional suit of vintage power armor is discovered in an ancient ruin. Power armor, robot vehicles and other high-tech weapons and armor may also be put up for sale, given away, or handed down when an adventurer (native or outsider) retires. The problem with power armor is identical to the problems encountered by cyborgs and robots: parts, ammunition, repairs and maintenance are uncommon and expensive in Dinosaur Swamp. Without proper care and repairs, most robots and suits of power armor break down and become admirable statues fit for proud display in a village square or as a totem pole.

Power armor, robot vehicles and their parts are also prime targets for thievery. With replacement parts at a premium, an unattended suit of power armor, robot, or even a pilot not on his

guard, can quickly fall prey to a brigand looking for an opportunity. It is a hard life in Dinosaur Swamp, and while a character sealed inside his power armor or a robot vehicle may feel almost invincible, when the power is off, and pilot exits, it is little more than a metallic corpse waiting to be scavenged.

Headhunters, Mercs and other Warrior-Type O.C.C.s. Warriors of all training are extremely common sights within Dinosaur Swamp. Whether they are outsiders or locals, they are a part of the landscape. With no standing governments or organized powers with armies to engage in wars and disputes, fighters must often resort to the life of a bandit, salvager, gun-for-hire, hunter, guide, or whatever work they can find. Adventurers and explorers from the outside would do well to respect the locals, barbarians included, and not underestimate the primitive wilderness folk of Dinosaur Swamp, no matter how poorly they may seem to be armed.

Scholars & Adventurers

Body Fixers and Cyber-Docs. Doctors, like anywhere else, can often mean the difference between life and death in Dinosaur Swamp. Between animal and monster attacks, disease, combat, and just day to day living, the wilderness can kill those who don't have access to proper medical treatment. In the case of the Body Fixers, they are usually the ones who manufacture the synthetic and natural medicines needed to help battle the diseases that flourish in the swamps, as well as diagnose and treat sickness and injury. However, with no formal education centers and an impoverished clientele, there is little incentive for Doctors and Healers to come or stay in the region. Consequently, the Body Fixers and Healers in Dinosaur Swamp are typically missionaries committed to helping the poor, unscrupulous rogues from outside looking to sell their services for the best deal, or natives to the region who learned the trade through apprenticeships. Local Body Fixers and Healers created a brotherhood almost as secret as that of the Operators, more than a century ago. There are also physicians who have come to the Swamplands to study the various dinosaurs, plant life and local remedies in hope of discovering new and more powerful medicines, while others wish to study them to create even deadlier biological weapons. Most of these latter characters are sponsored by the Coalition States and some small kingdoms looking for whatever advantage they might be able to obtain against their enemies.

Cyber-Docs are virtually non-existent, though the ones there are fill a very specialized niche in Dinosaur Swamp. Rarely found outside the city of Char, a Cyber-Doc is sometimes part of a visiting group of adventurers and may be willing to offer his services to those who need them. Depending on the circumstances, the Cyber-Doc could make out pretty good. On the other hand, a blackguard in need could blackmail, kidnap or otherwise force the Cyber-Doc to do as he's told. Most of the cybernetics in Char are acquired by less than honest means, and remember, the Swamp tends to attract fugitives, desperados and people living on the edge. Not all Cyber-Docs start out dealing with Cyber-Snatched goods or catering to scoundrels, but out of necessity are forced to work with the supplies that they have on hand and deal with the clients that come to them. Such is the Cyber-Docs' unique tragedy in Dinosaur Swamp.

City Rats. While out of place in the deepest wilds of Dinosaur Swamp, City Rats are right at home in the slums of *Char*, or in any of the Fadetowns such as *Ash* or *Bone*. They know the ins and outs of living in a wilderness town, and can find goods and services often at lower prices than most reputable merchants offer. Player characters may find themselves dealing with these frontier City Rats in order to acquire necessities. Hacker City Rats are rarely found in Dinosaur Swamp simply because there are few computers and no computer networks. Most of the so-called City Rats found in Dinosaur Swamp are actively involved in Cyber-Snatching gangs, and often provide the majority of the recycled equipment that passes through the few Body-Chop-Shops. All City Rat characters native to Dinosaur Swamp are able to take Wilderness skills as O.C.C. Related selections, but each counts as two skill selections and they are not available as Secondary Skills.

Operators. Just as the sick and injured need the services of a physician, mechanical devices of all sorts need someone to keep them in good working order. A vehicle can be jury-rigged in the field to keep it functioning for a time, but eventually, it's going to need someone to make lasting repairs. Consequently, Operators are some of the most important people in Dinosaur Swamp. Something as simple as a malfunctioning water purifier can significantly reduce the quality of life in many villages. Without someone with the ability to make repairs and maintain equipment, an entire community may suffer.

There are a great number of local Operators who pass their trade down from generation to generation, living in the same community for years. These *Community Operators* are often the most honest, hard working people around and highly respected by the community. They are essential to the survival of many people and are always glad to help a neighbor. However, they are also the least likely to take jobs for suspicious strangers. Unless an outsider has managed to win the trust or obligation of the Operator or the townspeople, or he is offering something in payment that the Operator or the town needs or wants badly, the outsider's job is always low priority, the last to be finished and the most expensive.

Other Operators are adventurers from other parts of the continent who are either passing through or have decided to stay and set up shop for a while. They are much more accommodating to strangers, and may even welcome seeing someone from the "outside world" and give them a good deal. Depending on where these outsiders set up shop, however, they run the risk of extreme levels of competition by some of the locals. Outsider Operators are better served by roaming the region as a traveling service that never stays in any one place for long, or find a village that doesn't already have an Operator in residence. Otherwise, territorial feuds will result, and the outsider can expect to suffer robbery, vandalism and false claims on his reputation. The worst mirror the violence of the Appalachian Coal Wars of the early 20th Century; just another way of history repeating itself, although in a much more barbaric way. Regardless of who they are, Operators are highly valued by those who rely on their services, and in some cases, kidnaped by those unwilling, or unable, to pay. Kidnaping an Operator is a common practice among the human and mutant barbarian tribes, though the mechanic is usually released, unharmed when they are done with him or ransomed back (nothing too steep) to the people he was taken from. Kidnaping even occurs around Char, where some of the less scrupulous adventuring groups want to cut costs, and find that slave labor mechanics are a way to do it. Of course, the

Operator can get his revenge by making sure his repairs are temporary and his kidnapers suffer mishap through mechanical failure deep in the wilderness.

Rogue Scholars and Scientists. Given the untouched nature of Dinosaur Swamp, the region offers a vast catalogue of unique, alien and rare plants, insects and animals. This attracts Rogue Scholars and Scientists alike. With so much waiting to be discovered in the wilds of the southeast, there is always someone putting together an expedition into the swamps. Native men and women interested in medicine or learning may find an educated outsider willing to teach and train them in new areas of knowledge (i.e., the sciences) and may even offer an apprenticeship to them. This knowledge can then be passed down from one generation to the next, and this is how the Body Fixers, Scientists and learned people in the swamplands typically earned their knowledge. Still, both classes of characters are uncommon to the region, as life is hard and the culture lacking in sophistication, books, and fellow academics. Those who stay are either dedicated to the people (and probably native to the region) or dedicated to some scientific or scholastic study rooted in the territory.

Thieves, Pirates and Brigands. Like the barbarians, many a lowlife family clan, band of unscrupulous mercenaries, or gang of miscreants turn to robbery, raiding and bushwhacking to earn a living. Bandits and criminals are known to thrive at Char, but most towns and villages are free of them. Instead, raiders and bandits pitch camp out in the wild, often living the life of a nomad, and raiding permanent settlements and plundering outsiders, pirates, the Minions of Splugorth and small groups of barbarians, especially the mutants.

Pirates and Splugorth Slavers can be found along the coast, but travel inland only to make raids on villages and to conduct "slave runs" – expeditions where they capture people and haul them away for sale in Atlantis and other places. Some of the bandits and barbarian tribes also dabble in the slave trade, capturing and selling rivals and outsiders to the pirates (mostly Horune) and Slavers (mostly from Atlantis) for hard to get supplies, tech weapons and armor, magic items and other items the pirates and slavers may have to trade. Dinosaurs aren't the only predators in the forest and swamp.

True Atlanteans. Unknown to most people, True Atlanteans regularly visit Dinosaur Swamp, and some believe there may be a secret village or camp of them somewhere in one of the more remote areas of the swamplands or up in the mountains, or both. Tattooed Men and handsome warriors have begun to appear more often in recent years. One theory suggests several noble and far thinking True Atlanteans have begun to scout Dinosaur Swamp as a possible location to base an operation to retake their ancestral continent in the Atlantic. With Africa and Europe overrun by monsters, and home to demon empires friendly to Splynncryth's Atlantis, the southeast of North America is perhaps the last, best hope for any True Atlanteans to establish a forward outpost. Any such plans are years, likely decades, in the making, but would explain why they are found here. Another theory is that True Atlantean warriors come to Dinosaur Swamp to test their mettle as warriors and to hunt exotic game. Others claim that since the Minions of Splugorth regularly visit the region to capture people, mutants, monsters and rare plants, that it is a natural place for True Atlanteans to attack them on an even playing field, and some even believe the True Atlanteans are heroes who have come to protect the inhabitants of the swamplands from the evil Minions of Splugorth. Still others believe Dinosaur Swamp reminds the Atlanteans of their lost homeland as it once was thousands of years ago, and they come to visit out of sentimentality. Whatever the reason, True Atlanteans *are* encountered adventuring and traveling through the region. To hear the locals talk, more Atlanteans are found in Dinosaur Swamp than anywhere on Earth. A claim most outsiders scoff at – but they'd be wrong.

The presence of True Atlanteans in Dinosaur Swamp and the mountains may also explain why the mysterious Sunaj have also begun to be noticed more often, as well as the occasional Splugorth Conservator or squad of Kittani and Powerlords. For now, whatever is going on, it is a small-scale game of cat and mouse between the two ancient enemies. (See **Rifts® World Book 2: Atlantis** for information on True Atlanteans, the Sunaj and Minions of Splugorth.)

Vagabonds abound in Dinosaur Swamp, for they are often the classic, "Jack of all trades and master of none." Diversity of knowledge and ability is often vital to surviving in the swamplands, and so is a willingness to try new experiences and travel to wherever work may be found. These characters are usually a bit more cultured and learned than their barbarian counterparts, but can range from bookworms and tradesmen to scoundrels and roughnecks. Like most people native to the region, those who grew up in Dinosaur Swamp (which is easily 70% of all Vagabonds found in the region) know a good share of Wilderness skills as well as a range of other skills/trades. Many of the native Vagabonds around Char are the orphaned descendants of failed expeditions into the southeast in decades past. They live side by side with the City Rats, and are often used as the eyes and ears of many of the locals. A wary 'Borg or power armor pilot will usually notice the interested City Rat eyeing their gear, but most times, it's the nondescript, ubiquitous Vagabond that slips by their attention. As for Vagabonds from the outside world, most seem to be people who just find themselves in the swamplands as they traveled from place to place, or thought the place offered them new and rare opportunities, including seeing dinosaurs, prospecting and salvage operations to extract valuable pre-Rifts artifacts worth a fortune out west.

Practitioners of Magic

Ley Line Walkers. With the comparatively close proximity to the Federation of Magic, and the exile lands of Alabama's Dark Woods, it should come as no surprise that Ley Line Walkers visit Dinosaur Swamp. However, there are few native people who practice this brand of magic, and little to attract these practitioners of magic to come to the region and stay for any length of time.

Mystics. The native Mystics of Dinosaur Swamp are much more primal than Mystics found throughout the rest of North America. Their development in the wilds leads them to be rougher around the edges than most Mystics, and this is also reflected in the way they view their place in the world. Their minds are open, but there is always a part of them on alert against strange, new things. They are wary of strangers and often have strong allegiance to local villages or tribes. (Mystics are found among the human and Barbarian tribes.) Mystics from

the outside world are drawn to Dinosaur Swamp for the isolation (a good place for meditation and journeys of self-discovery) and to get a deeper affinity for nature.

Necromancers. In a region where survival and death are daily concerns, it is natural for the magic of Necromancy to take root. Whether introduced by an outsider decades ago, or developed on its own, the Death Magic is a powerful force in the wilds of Dinosaur Swamp. Native Necromancers are heavily reliant on drawing from the natural strengths of some of the region's most powerful creatures, the dinosaurs. Many, having learned their magic in the wilds, use nothing but dinosaur parts, and travel with an entourage of animated saurian skeletons. While a pack of Raptors is frightening, a pack of undead Raptors is terrifying. In some cases, Necromancers are little more than animals themselves, the alpha member of a perverse tribe of dead things and the living willing to worship the dead and accept him as their leader. Raiders and pirates led by one or more Necromancers are among the most loathsome and feared.

Outsiders may be attracted by the power offered by a dinosaur corpse and other exotic animals. Outcasts in many parts of the world, others come to the region to escape persecution or to practice their dark arts in seclusion and build their power base before returning home. Necromancers, particularly groups of them, have, from time to time, tried to establish their own kingdom, supported by a loyal legion of the dead, and people willing to accept them for the protection they have to offer. In a place where death lurks around every corner, Necromancers are not perceived as villains, but as another harsh method of survival. See **Rifts® World Book 4: Africa** for more information on Necromancy, but **Rifts® World Book 18: Mystic Russia** is the best and most complete source for details about the Necromancer O.C.C. and the magic of Necromancy.

Shifters. Dinosaur Swamp attracts more Shifters from the outside world than any other practitioner of magic, with the possible exception of the Necromancer. Shifters are drawn to the isolation of the wilderness, the vast lattice of ley lines and the number of strange monsters and animals that live in the region. Here, in the solitude of the swamps, they can experiment with their magic undisturbed by others and away from fearful and prying eyes. Here they can develop their powers, make dark allegiances with demonic forces, and grow strong before returning to the outside world. Native Shifters have been known to bond with species of smaller dinosaurs as familiars, some as fierce as Tiger Claw Raptors.

Techno-Wizards. Like the Ley Line Walker, there is little to attract or keep Techno-Wizards in the region. Outsiders are sometimes drawn to the region based on tales of the ancient ruins containing lost technology and machines from the Golden Age of Science, but little else. And while it is the widely held belief of locals that the Eco-Wizard Barbarians are an early type of Techno-Wizard from which the twin science of magic and technology was born, most Techno-Wizards dispute this, and have little interest in Eco-Wizardry. Indeed, most believe Eco-Wizardry is primitive by comparison and an example of parallel development.

Techno-Wizards, even outsiders, are welcomed by the indigenous people of Dinosaur Swamp, who treat them with even greater regard than Operators. Native Techno-Wizards often attain a position of influence or leadership in most swamp communities and tribes.

Psychic R.C.C.s

Bursters. Burster characters in Dinosaur Swamp are likely to be seen as forces of nature unto themselves. They can harness the primordial power of fire with only a thought, causing some of the more primitive settlements and tribes to revere them as walking gods or demigods. This has led several of the barbarian tribes of the region to install Bursters as their War Chief over the more traditional warriors. This attitude has carried over into the way that they see themselves, making Bursters throughout the southeast more confident and cocky than their cousins living elsewhere in North America. Burster outsiders should be on guard against letting such attitudes go to their heads, and be careful of native Bursters who are likely to see them as rivals to be eliminated.

Mind Melters. Their powerful psionic abilities make them more feared than revered among the people of the southeast. Tales of Mind Melters are used to frighten children as often as warnings about dinosaurs, carnivorous plants and other regional dangers. In most villages and towns, children and teens that exhibit the signs of being a Mind Melter are wise to keep them secret, and use them sparingly, otherwise they will incur the fear of their very families and/or neighbors. It is tales of 12 and 14 year olds bringing a village to its knees that have led to such outright fear of the Mind Melters, and perpetuate this cycle.

Among Barbarian tribes, Mind Melters are seen as gifted and usually elevated to the position of Shaman or other level of authority, including High Council and War Chief, and sometimes the Chief of the entire tribe. The most powerful and aggressive Mind Melters use the fear and their psionic powers to their full advantage, often seizing power and ruling as though they had a divine right to be lord, king or god.

Outsider Mind Melters would do well to conceal the extent of their powers in most towns, villages and among people who consider themselves "civilized." All barbarian people will greet them and those associated with them as visiting dignitaries, at least until they can determine if the outsiders represent a threat to them or not.

Psi-Stalkers. Whether Coalition military, mercenaries or Wild Psi-Stalkers, they will all find an immense amount of joy in the wilds of Dinosaur Swamp. As natural hunters, Psi-Stalkers have an immediate affinity for the region. They will, however, regard the predatory dinosaurs as competitors even though they hunt separate quarry. Many Coalition Psi-Stalkers assigned to explore the southeast find that they cannot bear to return, and instead choose to remain in the wild. They do not regress to the point of some beast, but are rather taken with the instinctual life of a hunter and live in small family clans or join barbarian tribes. Note that Psi-Stalkers are not indigenous to the region.

Other Psychics O.C.C.s are also possible, but exceedingly rare except among the barbarian tribes, both human and mutant.

Experience Point Tables

Mutant Barbarian O.C.C. Legacy Scout O.C.C.	Eco-Wizard O.C.C.	Dinosaur Hunter O.C.C. Pathfinder O.C.C.	Swamp Stomper O.C.C. Naturalist O.C.C. Wild Knives Barbarian O.C.C.
1 0,000 – 2,100	1 0,000 – 2,200	1 0,000 – 2,100	1 0,000 – 1,900
2 2101 – 4,150	2 2,201 – 4,400	2 2,101 – 4,100	2 1,901 – 3,800
3 4,151 – 8,300	3 4,401 – 8,800	3 4,101 – 8,250	3 3,801 – 7,300
4 8,301 – 16,600	4 8,801 – 17,600	4 8,251 – 16,500	4 7,301 – 14,300
5 16,601 – 25,000	5 17,601 – 27,700	5 16,501 – 24,600	5 14,301 – 21,000
6 25,001 – 35,000	6 27,701 – 37,800	6 24,601 – 34,700	6 21,001 – 30,000
7 35,001 – 50,000	7 37,801 – 53,900	7 34,701 – 49,800	7 30,001 – 40,000
8 50,001 – 70,000	8 53,901 – 75,100	8 49,801 – 69,900	8 40,001 – 53,000
9 70,001 – 95,000	9 75,101 – 100,200	9 69,901 – 95,000	9 53,001 – 73,000
10 95,001 – 130,000	10 100,201 – 140,300	10 95,001 – 130,000	10 73,001 – 103,000
11 130,001 – 180,000	11 140,301 – 200,400	11 130,001 – 180,200	11 103,001 – 138,000
12 180,001 – 231,000	12 200,401 – 250,500	12 180,201 – 230,000	12 138,001 – 188,000
13 231,001 – 280,000	13 250,501 – 300,600	13 230,001 – 280,400	13 188,001 – 238,000
14 280,001 – 341,000	14 300,601 – 350,700	14 280,401 – 340,500	14 238,001 – 288,000
15 341,001 – 401,000	15 350,701 – 425,800	15 340,501 – 400,600	15 288,001 – 328,000

Weapons of Dinosaur Swamp

Aside from the variety of magical weapons that are prevalent in Dinosaur Swamp, there are also several examples of both modern and ancient weapons that have been developed for use in the swamps and forests. Most notable are *Viggo's Custom Firearms of Char*, and the everyday hand to hand weapons of the Barbarian tribes. Some of these weapons have been designed to hunt and kill everything from squirrels and deer to the massive dinosaurs that roam the wilds. **Note:** Cost is listed in credits, but usually requires an equivalent in trade goods or services.

Viggo's Custom Firearms

Firearms dedicated to hunting, unlike those of modern warfare, aren't necessarily about the biggest gun, the largest magazine, or the rate of fire, they are about skill and precision. In a combat situation, hundreds or even thousands of rounds will be expended in the matter of a few, short minutes, whereas on a hunting trip, perhaps only one or two rounds will be expended. Those two rounds fired while hunting are sometimes more important that the thousands of rounds fired in combat. A single, well placed shot can feed a family for days, and most often, it's only those one or two shots that a hunter will ever get, so they need to count. However, these hunting rifles have also found a place on the battlefield. Combat snipers find them to be quite suitable for picking off enemy targets.

Viggo's Custom Firearms are handcrafted with the necessary care and precision to get the job done better than any other firearms that have come into the region. They are expensive for S.D.C. and minor M.D.C. weapons, but the quality and reliability of their construction make them more than worth the price.

The Legacy Bolt-Action Rifle

Built to exacting personal measurements for the buyer, and machined with unequaled precision, the Legacy is arguably the most accurate projectile rifle in the world. Each rifle is individually made, specifically sized for the buyer, taking into account the future owner's weight, body size, and four points of contact: cheek, shoulder, trigger hand and resting hand. In the hands of the person for whom the gun was made, it is a wondrous piece of workmanship. In the hands of anyone else, it's a very nice gun. They come ready-made with mounting brackets for attachment of a scope or other vision enhancement device.

Weight: 7 lbs (3.1 kg).

Cartridge: 30-06

Damage: 5D6 S.D.C.

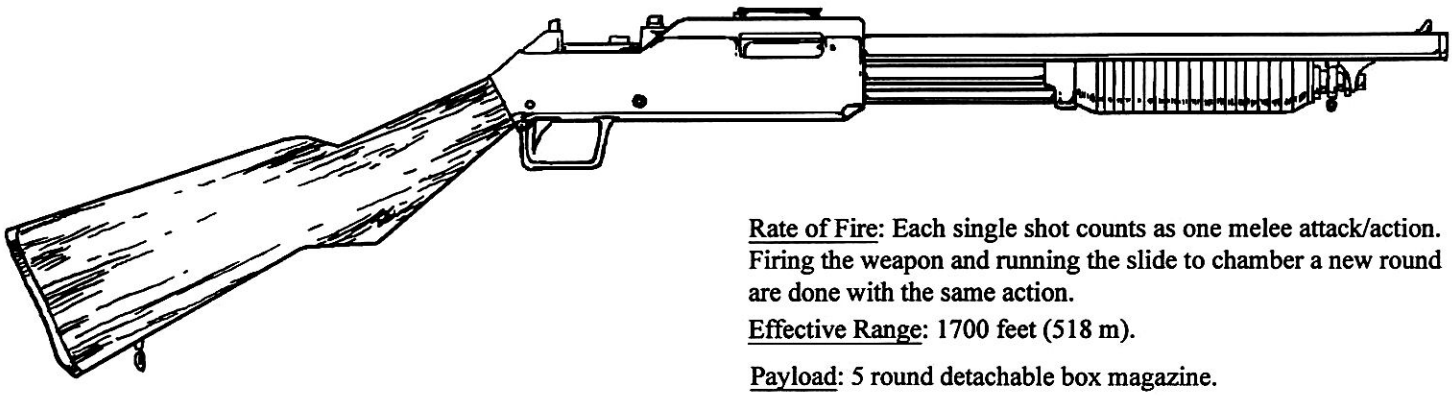
Rate of Fire: Each single shot counts at *two melee attacks/actions*; one action to fire and one action to work the bolt and reload the chamber.

Effective Range: 2500 feet (762 m).

Payload: 5 round internal box magazine.

Cost: 5,000 credits for a quality but generic weapon. 10,000 for a custom-made weapon. Ammunition costs 300 credits per box of 100 rounds.

Special Bonuses: Because of their precision craftsmanship, anyone firing a Legacy bolt-action rifle receives a +1 to strike on aimed shots. However, when the weapon has been carefully custom designed for one specific individual, the character is +2 to strike on aimed shots. However, this is not a "standard" bonus to strike on aimed shots. For the purposes of dice rolls, these are *Natural Bonuses to Strike*, meaning that a die roll of 18, 19 or 20 on a 20-sided die, before other bonuses to strike are applied, is actually read as a *Natural 20* and is a critical strike (inflicts double damage). This increases the lethality of the weapon, making it ideal for precision shots for big game hunting and sniping.



The Savage Pump-Action Rifle

A compromise between accuracy and rate of fire, the pump-action rifle is an attempt to shorten the gap between the first shot and the sometimes necessary follow-up shot. The Savage is still a finely crafted firearm, but the addition of many more moving parts than the Legacy bolt-action means that some of the accuracy is lost, and the reduction in the size of the cartridge means that some of the range and power is lost as well. Regardless, it is still a superb, custom crafted weapon.

Weight: 9 lbs (4 kg).

Cartridge: .300 Short Magnum.

Damage: 4D6 S.D.C.

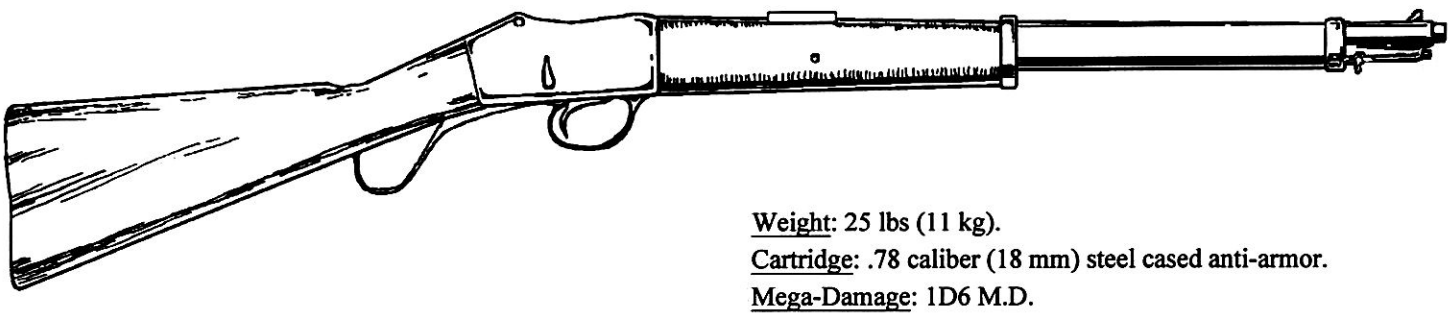
Rate of Fire: Each single shot counts as one melee attack/action. Firing the weapon and running the slide to chamber a new round are done with the same action.

Effective Range: 1700 feet (518 m).

Payload: 5 round detachable box magazine.

Cost: 9,500 credits for a quality rifle, but 14,300 credits for a custom-made weapon. Ammunition costs 400 credits per box of 100 rounds.

Special Bonuses: Because of their precision craftsmanship, anyone firing a Savage pump-action rifle receives a +1 to strike on aimed shots. When fired by the specific individual the weapon was custom made for, it also provides a bonus of +1 to strike on aimed shots. However, this is not a "standard" bonus to strike. For the purposes of dice rolls, this is a *Natural Bonus to Strike*, meaning that a die roll of 19 (or 20) on a 20-sided die, before other bonuses to strike are applied, is actually read as a Natural 20 and is a critical strike (inflicts double damage). This increases the lethality of the weapon, making it ideal for precision shots for big game hunting and sniping.



The Provider Single-Shot Breach Loading Rifle

The Provider is the most powerful of Viggo's custom firearms. It has the fewest moving parts, the sturdiest construction, and fires an extremely large projectile with a tremendous amount of force. In the hands of a Dinosaur Hunter, the rifle has been known to bring down an adult dinosaur with a single shot to the head.

Weight: 25 lbs (11 kg).

Cartridge: .78 caliber (18 mm) steel cased anti-armor.

Mega-Damage: 1D6 M.D.

Rate of Fire: Single shot only. Each shot counts as *three melee attacks/actions;* one action to fire, one action to open and reload the breach, and one action to close the breach and realign the weapon.

Effective Range: 4000 feet (1219 m).

Payload: Single shot.

Cost: 11,500 credits for a quality rifle, but 16,000 credits for a custom-made weapon. Ammunition costs 1000 credits per box of 20 rounds.

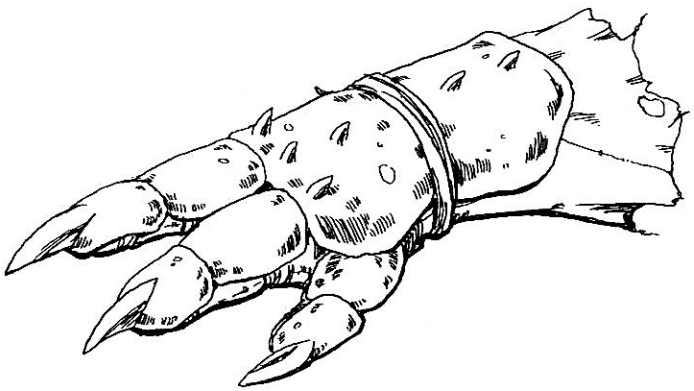
Special Bonuses: Because of their precision craftsmanship, anyone firing a Provider single-shot rifle receives a +1 to strike on aimed shots. In the case of the specific character for whom the weapon was custom-made, it provides a bonus of +2 to strike on aimed shots. However, this is not a "standard" bonus to strike on aimed shots. For the purposes of dice rolls, these are *Natural Bonuses to Strike*, meaning that a die roll of 18, 19 or 20, on a 20-sided die, before other bonuses to strike are applied, is actually read as a *Natural 20* and is a critical strike (in this case, triple damage). This increases the lethality of the weapon, making it ideal for precision shots for Dinosaur hunting and sniping.

Special Penalties: Anyone firing the rifle that does *not* possess the skill *W.P. Bolt-Action Rifle* is automatically stunned by the recoil, taking 1D4 points of S.D.C. damage and also losing their next melee attack/action. Characters that do possess the skill must make a saving throw vs pain at a 10 or higher or suffer 1D4 points of S.D.C. damage from the recoil, but are otherwise unaffected. Characters in M.D.C. body armor are unaffected by the damage, but can still lose their melee action because of the intense recoil.

Barbarian Weapons of Note

A large percentage of the human population in Dinosaur Swamp cannot use magic weapons and constructs built by Eco-Wizards or Techno-Wizards for lack of sufficient P.P.E. or I.S.P. They are limited to conventional weapons that can be scavenged, built, bought and traded for the same way anyone else would get them. Any M.D. weapons common to North America – Wilk's, Northern Gun, Manistique Imperium, Black Market, Golden Age Weaponsmiths, and even weapons of the Coalition Army, among others – may be acquired through trade or combat by the barbarians and other peoples of the southeast.

Listed below, however, are some of the more notable and notorious weapons that originate in Dinosaur Swamp. **Note:** See *Conventional Weapons* in the **Rifts® RPG** for Hit Point/S.D.C. damage for most types of melee weapons. Also see *SteelTree Weapons and Armor* described later in this section.



Claw Gauntlets

Claw Gauntlets take the sharpened claws or teeth of dinosaurs (sometimes bone, stone or knives are used) and mount them into a heavy gauntlet-style glove that covers the hand and forearm. The glove is sewn together and heavily interlaced with patterned stitches made of sinew and gut thread, giving it a very elegant, but patchwork, appearance.

The weapon is used to stab, cut and slash an opponent, leaving raking wounds across bare skin and slicing through clothing, padded armor and soft leather with ease. They are often employed in close combat and grappling maneuvers.

Claw Gauntlets are essentially mundane versions of the Eco-Wizard *Bleeder Claws*, but vary much more widely when it comes to their appearance. There are versions with three fingers or five fingers, ones that have multiple rows of claws lining the forearm up to the elbow, and even some with claws on the knuckles rather than the fingertips. Other versions are specifically utilitarian and have multiple blades on the sides and even on the palms of the hands specialized for gutting and skinning animals.

Weight: One pound (0.45 kg).

Damage: 2D6 S.D.C.

Special Damage: An opponent not wearing M.D.C. armor and held/pinned by an opponent with Claw Gauntlets will take 1D6 S.D.C. for every attempt to break the hold. It's impossible to do so without getting caught by one or more of the claws/teeth/blades.

Bonuses: +1 to parry and +1 to disarm.

Cost: 250 credits for a simple gauntlet, up to 1000 credits for elaborate styles with many claws, teeth or blades.

Tooth War Clubs

The Tooth Club is a popular weapon among barbarian warriors. It is made of wood and bristling with spikes, large or small, made of the serrated teeth of predatory dinosaurs. They produce incredibly horrific wounds, not only breaking and shattering bones, but also impaling and tearing out large chunks of flesh. Oftentimes, the teeth break off in the wound, requiring surgery to remove it. Some individuals coat the teeth with toxins or animal dung, adding to the damage that these weapons can cause via the poison or infection.

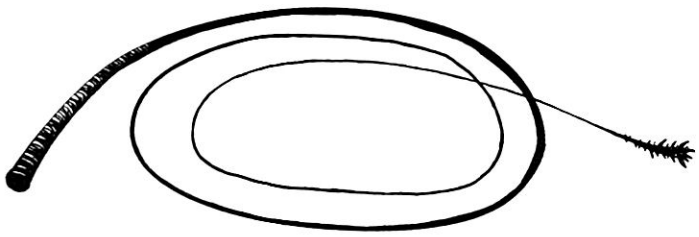
Weight: Small: 2 lbs (0.9 kg). Medium: 5 lbs (2.25 kg). Large: 9 lbs (4 kg).

Damage: Small: 1D6 S.D.C. Mace-sized war club: 2D6+2 S.D.C. Baseball bat-sized club: 3D6+3 S.D.C.

Special Damage: If coated with a poison or toxin, then upon a successful hit the victim must make a saving throw vs lethal poison (14 or higher to save) or nonlethal (16 or higher). Dung has a 01-45% chance of causing infection within 24 hours unless the wound is thoroughly cleaned and bandaged within 12 hours of receiving it. On a Critical Strike, the club loses 1D4 teeth in the victim, inflicting an additional 1D6 damage, and requiring additional measures to heal.

Cost: Small: 50-100 credits. Medium: 200-300 credits. Large: 400-600 credits.

Note: Tooth or claw axes do similar damage (hand-axe/tomahawk, battle axe, and large/two-handed). Stone axes weigh 50% more.



Tooth Spiked Whip

This may be a bullwhip with a single lash or a cat-o-nine tails style whip with 1D4+5 strands for the whip, each ending with a cluster of small, sharp dinosaur or alligator teeth.

Weight: 5 lbs (2.25 kg).

Damage: Bullwhip: 2D6+2 S.D.C. Reach: 12 feet (3.6 m). Bonuses: +1 to strike, +2 to disarm and +2 to entangle. Note: Strong and flexible, it may be used to entangle and trip an opponent or for the user to entangle an appendage/pole/outcropping and to swing from it like a rope (the latter counts as two melee actions/attacks).

Damage: Cat-O-Nine Tails: 2D6 S.D.C. +1 point for each "tail" (that's +9 S.D.C. if there are nine whip strands). S.D.C. Reach: 7 feet (2.1 m). Bonuses: +1 to parry and high damage. Penalty: -3 to strike a moving target. Note: Used primarily to punish slaves, prisoners, etc., who are probably already an incapacitated foes. Not great in real combat.

Cost: Bullwhip: 200-300 credits. Cat-O-Nine Tails: 300-400 credits, but both have different uses and advantages.

Vibro-Spears & Vibro-Axes

A combination of natural materials and modern technology, the Vibro-Spear or Vibro-Axe is most often a standard Vibro-Knife lashed to the end of a pole, or sometimes even a rough-hewn tree limb. Adding the shaft to the knife gives it greater range as a throwing weapon, and also provides for a more comfortable fighting distance in hand to hand combat. Other versions are more suited for hand to hand combat like having a Vibro-Saber attached to a shorter shaft.

Attaching one or more Vibro-Knives to a wooden haft at a 90-degree angle makes for a crude, but effective Vibro-Axe reminiscent of ancient Bronze Age axes. The most common drawback to all of these weapons is that batteries are sometimes hard to replace, often depending on trade with adventurers and explorers, or by taking a trip to Char.

Weight: 7-10 lbs (3.1 to 4.5 kg).

Mega-Damage: Varies according to the type of Vibro-Blade. Typically 1D6 M.D., 2D4 M.D., or 2D6 M.D.

Cost: 10,000-15,000 credits; limited availability of Vibro-Blades. Must be acquired from outsiders.

SteelTree Weapons

The locals living near the SteelTree Forest have come to rely on products made from the trees found there. When Rogue Scholar Deearn Neenok first encountered tools made from the SteelTrees, he immediately thought that he had found evidence of a Millennium Tree hidden somewhere deep in Dinosaur Swamp. This led him to search as much of the region as possible. While he did not find a Millennium Tree, he did discover an entirely new species of tree with Mega-Damage properties. The comparison to the Millennium Tree is obvious and valid, but as Neenok learned, SteelTrees are not related in any way to the mystical Tree of Life, nor are they intelligent, but rather a natural, if extremely durable, tree from an unknown alien world.

The following weapons, armor, tools and items are made from the alien tree known as SteelTrees found only in the piedmont forests of South Carolina. The actual forest and region is described later in this book, see page 134, but some of the most notable items currently being made from this amazing wood are presented here. **Note:** The city of *Char* has only recently begun manufacturing and selling such items to the public, but the barbarian tribes have been making them for their own people for over 200 years.

SteelTree Weapons, Armor & Tools

The wood from SteelTrees has a unique quality in that when burned in a forge, it can be shaped and hammered like steel to make Mega-Damage weapons and tools. The wood is extremely resistant to burning, requiring the intense heat of a forge or plasma weapon or magical fire to get it to a state in which it can be worked. Thankfully, one or two plasma blasts or magical fire balls will get a log, branch, plank or sheet of SteelTree wood burning quickly. Once started, the wood catches on fire but burns ponderously slow with little smoke and flame. The heating effect on the wood travels down the entire length of the material in a few minutes, transforming it in an unusual way by making it soft and malleable. In this state, the wood can be easily hammered, shaved, sliced, cut into shapes, bent, folded, twisted, shaped and formed as if it were a soft metal or warm piece of rubber. A log, plank or sheet of burning SteelTree releases an enormous amount of heat and stays hot (and malleable) for a long period of time. This makes it excellent as firewood where a single log the size of a man's arm gives off the heat of six normal logs of equal size, and burns for 36 to 48 hours. When the wood stops burning, the log will have shrunk in size by about one third and have turned into forged SteelTree wood – a chunk of darkened wood as hard as steel. Once forged, the wood cannot be reused. Burning it again under high heat or a steady M.D. flame will cause it to turn red and, after 1D6+6 minutes, the wood turns black and crumbles away into ash. This weird reaction to heat makes working with the wood difficult. Men manning a SteelTree forge must wear protective suits or power armor, or use magic to keep themselves cool in the intense heat. Furthermore, weapons, armor, and all forged items and material are vulnerable to Mega-Damage heat and take 50% greater damage from M.D. fire and plasma, including magic fire attacks.

Even stranger, there is also a process by which heated SteelTree can be combined with mundane iron, copper or aluminum ore and melted into a liquid composite alloy resulting in a kind of alien steel. The exact process and the ratio of the mixed metals is a closely held secret among the barbarians and forge masters of Char. Simply burning the wood and heating a hunk of metal in the fire is insufficient to enact the qualities. It requires particular knowledge about metals and ores, their proper-

ties, and the proper temperature necessary for the SteelTree wood to impart their components of the liquefying process. Some scholars and Operators who know of SteelTree forged materials say there is something *magical* about the process (and the wood), while others insist that it is little more than a strange chemical reaction from an alien form of plant life. Regardless, no outsider has ever learned the secret method.

(**G.M. Note:** Much like the secrets of Tattoo Magic, this knowledge should not fall into the hands of player characters, even player characters of the Eco-Wizard O.C.C. It takes a decade of hard work as an apprentice to learn the secrets and master the craft of working SteelTree wood. Most, if not all player characters, are too caught up in their adventurous lifestyle to spend ten years in one spot, working on one skill to learn the craft. Nor is it a skill that can be transplanted to other parts of the world, one needs to be where SteelTrees are available, and that's only in Dinosaur Swamp. Of course, the final forged weapons and tools can show up anywhere in the world – taken to other parts of North America by adventurers who have visited the southeast, and to the four corners of the world by pirates and Minions of Splugorth. In these instances, however, it is only the item, not the creation process or even the source of the M.D.C. material that is carried away. The secret of its manufacture and the very existence of SteelTrees remain unknown to the world at large. A detailed metallurgical analysis would reveal it to be an unknown alloy, but unless an analysis of SteelTree lumber was available as well, it would remain an unknown material.)

SteelTree forged weapons, whether molded from heated wood or made from the steel alloy, are incredibly strong, and hold an edge without peer, but they are also incredibly dense and quite heavy. The alloy, like the wood, takes its strength from the addition of the SteelTree's metallic component, but it also gains density from the alien wood. The final result of both processes is an M.D. metal that has coloration similar to that of the SteelTree tree bark – a dark gray color with a brushed metal appearance and quality to it. Faint sinuous lines also run through the metal, resembling veins just beneath the surface. SteelTree blade weapons are comparable to Vibro-Blades in their damage capacity, and are strong enough to be wielded by characters with Supernatural Strength without fear of breaking on impact. This makes them extremely popular among adventurers and nonhumans who learn about them. **Note:** Any weapons, armor, plating and material forged from a SteelTree are vulnerable to Mega-Damage heat and take 50% greater damage from M.D. fire and plasma, including magic fire attacks.

Ordinary properties and everyday uses of SteelTree: Despite the several extraordinary uses for SteelTrees, there are a hundred ordinary and mundane applications of the tree's unique properties. It can be cut with lasers into wood beams, planks, poles, sheets, pegs, etc., as raw materials for building furniture, fencing, housing and any type of M.D.C. building. It an also be turned into a metal alloy sheeting that can be pressed into sheets, panels, beams, cable, or wire and be used to make anything that ordinary metal can be turned into.

SteelTrees are the best natural building material available to the inhabitants of Dinosaur Swamp. It is, however, limited to one particular region, but that doesn't preclude the possibility of transport to other places. SteelTree lumber, after it has been milled, has 5 M.D.C. per square foot. While not as durable as military grade Mega-Damage metal, armor, and concrete, it is indeed a fabulous building material. Notched logs can be used to build log cabins, and have 10 M.D.C per square foot. They are more difficult to handle when compared to milled lumber, however the costs are much lower, and the material is much more readily available than hewn SteelTree planks.

In addition to making buildings out of SteelTree lumber, simple vehicles can be built with it as well. While the alien wood is hard and dense, it is still buoyant enough for making a raft or carving a canoe out of a single log. With enough processing, wagons and carts can be constructed out of SteelTree trees, making for some of the most durable, yet deceptively fragile looking vehicles that an adventurer may ever come across. Taking the idea to the extreme, the "wood" could actually be incorporated into automobiles, trucks and other vehicles.

The fibers of SteelTree sapling can be split and woven into an extraordinarily strong twine, or rope, or spun into a heavy and course, but durable (triple the usual S.D.C.) fabric ideal for tents, tarps and canvas.

Household items including bowls, cups, plates and even eating utensils could be made out of SteelTree. With its extremely high combustion temperature, they can even be used for cooking pots and baking pans, resting on or in a low S.D.C. fire or oven in temperatures that would burn an ordinary wood item to a cinder.

Of course, in the wilds of Dinosaur Swamp, the most important uses for SteelTrees are in the construction of weapons and armor. Not just in the sophisticated creation process of the SteelTree forged alloy, but also in the simple, yet effective weapons and armors that can be created from the SteelTree trees themselves.

SteelTree Forged Tools

Mundane, but as important as weapons, are tools forged from SteelTree coals. They are typically found only in barbarian tribes and settlements who trade with barbarians, as well as Char, which sells them on the open market. In a pinch, tools such as a hammer or axe may also be used as weapons, but only inflict 1D4 M.D.

Type of Tool	Availability	Cost in Credits
Axe	Excellent	100
Hammer	Excellent	80
Hinges	Poor	200
Mallet/Maul (large)	Poor	400 (and does 1D6 M.D.)
Nails	Good	10 per dozen
Poker/Rod	Good	100
Tongs/Pliers	Fair	80
Scissors	Good	200
Spoon, Large	Good	70
Saw, Hand	Poor	250
Saw, 2-man	Poor	500
Saw, Hack	Poor	400
Scythe	Fair	120
Spike/Chisel	Fair	50
Shovel/Rake	Excellent	110

SteelTree Forged Weapons

Weapons forged through the SteelTree process are going to be readily apparent to those who know what to look for. The brushed gray metal, lined with veins, usually attracts the eye even if the buyer doesn't know exactly what he is looking at. The weight of the weapon sometimes discourages a customer, but given their durability and M.D. capacity, the tradeoff is well worth the price. Below are a sample of SteelTree forged weapons. Most SteelTree forged weapons are going to be acquired through trade with barbarians and other locals, or taken as spoils of combat. The city of Char is the only place in Dinosaur Swamp where they can be found openly for *sale* in any significant quantity. It is up to the individual craftsman to ensure that the weapon is well balanced and of good quality. Sloppy workmanship can produce a strong blade, but one that is unsuitable for combat (-1 to strike, -2 to parry). It is a subtle art, but the natives of Dinosaur Swamp have had generations to perfect their skills.

A note on arrowheads, even though they may be capable of delivering very minor Mega-Damage, unless the shaft is constructed of SteelTree or some other M.D.C. material, the arrow itself is most likely going to be destroyed upon impact. Another note on arrowheads, when hunting large animals, such as certain types of dinosaurs, the arrowhead is typically coated with a toxin. The arrowhead does negligible damage to such a large beast, but is enough to pierce their tough, mega-damage hide, introducing the toxin to the animal's system, weakening it for the protracted kill.

Cost is listed in credits, and is the approximate market value for items sold in Char, but it can fluctuate wildly in any given circumstances. One pound (lb) equals 0.45 kg, One foot equals 0.3048 meters.

Weapon Type	Average Length	Average Weight	Damage	Cost in Credits
Arrow, Broadhead	2 in	6 oz	2 M.D.	200
Arrow, Target Head	1.5 in	4 oz	1 M.D.	100
Axe, Battle	2.7 feet	6.6 lbs	2D6+2 M.D.	1600
Axe, Hatchet	1.25 feet	4 lbs	1D6 M.D.	300
Axe, Throwing	1.25 feet	3 lbs	1D6 M.D.	350
Dagger/Knife	9 in	1.5 lbs	1D6 M.D.	300
Dagger, Throwing	9 in	1 lb	1D4 M.D.	325
Mace/Morning Star	2.5 feet	6-8 lbs	2D6 M.D.	1000
Spear, Short	4 feet	6 lbs	1D8 M.D.	850
Spear, Long	8 feet	8 lbs	2D6 M.D.	1000
Sword, Broad	3 feet	5-6 lbs	2D6+2 M.D.	1600
Sword, Long	3-4 feet	7-10 lbs	3D6 M.D.	2500
Sword, Short	2.5 feet	3-4 lbs	2D4 M.D.	1200
War Hammer	2.5 feet	6-8 lbs	2D6 M.D.	1000

SteelTree Bows & Arrows

The tensile strength of the SteelTree lumber doesn't just lend itself to bashing and slashing weapons, but it is also an excellent material to craft bows with. The amount of stored energy in a drawn SteelTree bow is equal to that of any modern bow, and is superior to any bow made of "natural" wood. It has remarkable reflexivity, but the downside is in the draw weight. A bow made from forged SteelTree requires a P.S. of at least 21, or having augmented bionic (P.S. 18), robotic (P.S. 15) or even Supernatural Strength (any P.S. above 6) to use it. Combine that with arrows made of SteelTree and it is a mighty projectile that will hit with the velocity of a small gauge rail gun round. Normal arrows, whether wood, plastic or even graphite, fired from an SteelTree bow will deliver a lot of damage (4D6 S.D.C.), but will also shatter on impact. A SteelTree bow is one of the few muscle-powered weapons that a normal human, with a P.S. score of 21 or higher, can use to inflict Mega-Damage.

Crossbows can also be created using SteelTree, but are much more sophisticated, requiring a level of craftsmanship not usually found among the majority of barbarian tribes in Dinosaur Swamp. They are usually the products of Operators and similarly educated characters that have applied their significant technical knowledge using forged SteelTree material provided to them. Crossbows are extremely rare in the southeast, but highly valued weapons by those familiar with them. They are doubly valued since they are mechanical, and do not require much muscle power to take full advantage of their damage potential. Anyone with a P.S. as low as 8 can use a crossbow.

Weight & Penalties: Because they are constructed of SteelTree, they are going to be slightly heavier than other woods, or lightweight, modern materials.

Short bow: 4 lbs (1.8 kg); -1 to strike.

Long bow: 7 lbs (3.1 kg); -2 to strike.

Crossbow: 10 lbs (4.5 kg); -1 to strike.

Damage: Varies with the type of bow. If using explosives, or other types of high-tech arrowheads, damage will depend on the explosive, not the arrow. If using normal, S.D.C. arrows double the damage listed under the *W.P. Archery and Targeting* skill.

Short bow: 1D6 M.D.

Long bow: 3D6 M.D.

Crossbow: 2D6 M.D.

Rate of Fire: 2 to 8; see W.P. Archery and Targeting.

Effective Range: Varies, see below.

Short bow: 680 feet (207 m).

Long bow: 1000 feet (305 m).

Crossbow: 1200 feet (366 m).

Cost: Price is in credits if purchased at the market at Char. Prices will fluctuate wildly everywhere else. Short bow: 3,200 credits. Long bow: 7,600 credits. Crossbow: 15,200 credits.

M.D.C. Root Rope/Cable

The aerial roots of the SteelTrees are as thick and flexible as rope used on ships, but are as strong as steel cable. They cannot be forged or processed, but can be scraped clean of loose fibers and grime and used like M.D.C. rope or steel cabling. Actually, the material has 100 S.D.C. per one foot (0.3 m) length, which is equivalent to *one point of Mega-Damage*. Miles and miles of this tough, durable *Root Rope* is found growing at the base of the trees starting on the ground and working its way up to 15 feet (4.6 m) high, creating a network of root that resembles a giant spider's web or tangled netting.

Cost on the open market at Char is two credits per foot, though the merchants are considering tripling or quadrupeling that price.

M.D. SteelTree Whips

The inherent flexibility of SteelTree seedlings and newly formed branches (still soft and bendable) makes them ideal for turning into whips. The branch or seedling is taken as a whole piece, stripped of smaller offshoot branches and leaves, and the bottom wrapped in leather or affixed to a hardwood base for the handle. The switch can cut flesh as if it were a flexible piece of steel. In the right hands, it can even lash open Mega-Damage skin and armor. The power rests in the impact of the tip, flaying open tissue and causing a great deal of pain to be inflicted.

Length: Typically, the best whips are around 5-6 feet (1.5 to 1.8 m) long, no thicker than the diameter of the wielder's thumb at the base, and thinning to a taper no smaller than half the width of their smallest finger at the tip.

Weight: The ideal weight is no more than 5 lbs (2.25 kg) for a human sized weapon. Larger characters will of course want a heavier whip, while smaller will opt for less.

Mega-Damage: 1D4 M.D. per whip strike against M.D. armor, but 1D6 M.D. against the flesh of Mega-Damage creatures.

Penalties: The whip starts to become brittle with the tip breaking off in small pieces after about six months and needs to be replaced within eight months.

Cost: 1000-2000 credits.

SteelTree Forged Armor

Suits of M.D.C. armor composed of SteelTree composite alloy or cut and shaped in a forge are uncommon and valued commodities, but are sometimes available. In fact, Char is trying to build a successful business by being the only place where adventurers can buy the armor on the open market. They are even considering making custom armor to the exact size and specifications of the purchaser, only it takes 3-6 weeks to make such armor.

SteelTree Forged Armors are extremely heavy, lack environmental capabilities, and are almost impossible to repair without the aid of someone who knows how to forge SteelTree alloy, but they do have one thing going for them, they are cheap when compared to modern armors of the same protective value. Remember, modern armor is very difficult to acquire in Dinosaur Swamp, and the production facilities for high-tech ceramics and fibers don't exist out in the wilderness. The SteelTree Forged Armors are no more expensive to make than their mundane alloy counterparts, but their density makes them a hard sell against the lightweight, ceramic composite armors typical of Rifts Earth when they are available. However, they cannot be beaten when that's all that's available! Popular among characters with enhanced or Supernatural Strength, as their abilities offset the issue of density and weight. The availability listed is on the streets of Char, as is the cost in credits. Availability is poor to none most elsewhere (most barbarians wear the lighter Leaf Armor, half armor or Eco-Wizard armor).

Mobility Penalty: All full suits inflict a movement penalty of -30% on all skills that require flexibility and mobility, including Acrobatics, Gymnastics, Climbing, Swimming and Prowl. The penalty is -15% for half suits (M.D.C. protection and cost are also half).

Armor Type	Average Weight	Main Body Protection	Availability	Cost in Credits
Chain Mail	50 lbs	40 M.D.C.	Poor	4,000
Scale Mail	60 lbs	90 M.D.C.	Poor	7,000
Plate	70 lbs	150 M.D.C.	Poor	10,000
Helmet	10 lbs	60 M.D.C.	Good	2,000
Shield	25 lbs	40-80 M.D.C.	Good	4,000-8,000

Unforged Bark Armor

Crafted from the rough, gray bark of a SteelTree, this armor is used in many different applications. Everything from skullcaps, to shields, to chest plates, to shoulder pauldrons, to bracers and leggings are possible. These pieces can be worn together to create a full, if non-environmental, suit of armor, or they can be worn separately, creating a patchwork effect. They are, however, heavy and restrict movement, but they are often more readily available than most modern suits of armor. Many suits are often personalized, with barbarian tribes decorating them with animal carvings and other insignia.

M.D.C. by Location:

Skullcap/Helmet: 25.

Shoulder Pieces: 15.

Arm Bracers: 18.

Leggings: 20.

Main Body/Chest Plate: 40.

Shield (Optional): Depending on the size of the shield, as little as 15 M.D.C. for a small one to 40 M.D.C. for a large one.

Weight by Location:

Skull Cap/Helmet: 9 lbs (4 kg).

Shoulder Pieces: 10 lbs (4.5 kg).

Arm Bracers: 8 lbs (3.6 kg).

Leggings: 12 lbs (5.4 kg).

Main Body/Chest Plate: 30 lbs (13.50 kg).

Shield: Depends on the size, but as little as 10 lbs (4.5 kg) up to 50 lbs (22.5 kg).

Mobility: Poor in a full suit: -20% to Prowl and perform other skills that require good mobility, but -10% in a half-suit. -5% penalties for just wearing the helmet, arm and leg protectors.

Special Bonus: +5% to Camouflage.

Cost: Price varies on availability and craftsmanship, but average prices at Char for the most basic, non-ornamented pieces are as follows:

Skullcap/Helmet: 1000.

Shoulder Pieces: 2000.

Arm Bracers: 3000.

Leggings: 4000.

Main Body/Chest Plate: 6000.

Shield (Optional): Depending on the size of the shield, as little as 2000 for the small one and as much as 6000 for a large.

Unforged Twig Armor

Twig armor is made from the smallest untempered twigs and bits of bark from the SteelTrees, all placed snugly together, glued, stitched and strapped tight. The armor may look crude and primitive (some say it has a straw or porcupine look to it because of the latticework of twigs), but it does offer very good protection, just as strong as any artificial alloy or ceramic armor.

M.D.C. by Location:

Skullcap/Helmet: 30

Shoulder Pieces: 22

Arm Bracers: 28

Leggings: 34

Main Body/Chest Plate: 56

Shield (Optional): Depending on the size of the shield, as little as 20 M.D.C. for a small one to 50 M.D.C. for a large one.

Note: Weight, penalties, special bonus and most other stats and aspects of the armor are the same as Bark Armor, previous.

Cost: Price is 30% higher than Bark Armor.

Unforged Leaf Armor

Made from the mature, fallen SteelTree leaves, Leaf Armor is often used for camouflage and minor M.D.C. protection. The suit is usually designed as a hooded cloak, cape or poncho, often with a separate helmet; anything from a dinosaur skull or Bark helmet to modern armor traded for, or scavenged or stolen from an outsider. The color is a dark, metallic green that blends well in most woodland surroundings, but especially well in the SteelTree Forest. Many Wilderness Scouts, Dinosaur Hunters, and barbarians wear such a cape, sometimes over other armor, other times as their only armor protection.

M.D.C. by Location: Capes, cloaks and ponchos have 14+1D6 M.D.C.

Weight: Surprisingly light, 6 lbs (2.7 kg).

Mobility: Good mobility, -5% to Prowl, Climb, and similar skills that require mobility.

Special Bonus: +10% to Camouflage, +5% to Blend.

Cost: 2,000-4,000 credits.

Unforged S.D.C. Clubs and Staves

Simple, but effective, any piece of deadfall can be picked up and used as a club or staff, but with SteelTrees the branch is as hard as steel, 10x stronger than ordinary wood, and twice as heavy. This means a branch can be used as a decent weapon without being forged or any further work being done to it. Furthermore, the SteelTree weapon/branch can parry Mega-Damage melee weapons (Vibro-Blades, rune weapons, etc.), as well as M.D. claw strikes and bite attacks from Dinosaurs and other M.D.C. creatures.

Some barbarian Mystics, Eco-Wizards and Wilderness Scouts carry a SteelTree staff as much for its natural beauty as its strength. Cost for a tree limb found on the ground that does the job with little or no further work to it is *free*, but they are also traded by barbarians, Wilderness scouts and at places like Char to visitors who don't know where to find such incredible wood. Note that a little woodworking and decoration with feathers, teeth, claws, paint and/or carving, and the basic tree limb is given greater aesthetic value and can be traded or sold for more money. The prices listed below are presumed to be for such slightly embellished items.

Damage Note: The actual wood from the SteelTree tree is incredibly dense, and the natural strength of the wood allows it to deliver and take extraordinary amounts of punishment without breaking or damaging, as if it were made of steel. In the hands of beings with *Supernatural Strength,* the weapon can be used to deliver the creature's usual M.D. as per Supernatural P.S., plus half the S.D.C. damage listed below as Mega-Damage. So if a weapon does 2D6 S.D.C., in the hands of a mortal, a Supernatural being can inflict 1D6 M.D. with it, plus the damage he'd inflict from his M.D. punch. **Metrics Note:** One pound (lb) equals 0.45 kg, one foot equals 0.3048 meters.

Weapon Type	Average Length	Average Weight	S.D.C. Damage	Cost in Credits
Ball & Chain made from SteelTree Root & Stone . . .				
	3-4 ft	4-6 lbs	2D6	250-350
Club/Cudgel/Cane	2-3 ft	5 lbs	2D4	50-100
Staff, Long	6-8 ft	6-10 lbs	2D6+4	300-400
Staff, Short	4-5 ft	4-6 lbs	2D4	75-200
War Club/Mace	3 ft	5-8 lbs	2D6	200-300

SteelTree Root Brew

The brew can only be made from the underground root of a *sapling* SteelTree. It is often used by barbarians as a strength-enhancing drug, particularly if they are going on the hunt for large game such as the Iron-Hoof or a dinosaur. A draught of the brew makes "even the weakest of warriors to be as stout as a SteelTree." The brew temporarily converts a character's strength and endurance to *Superhuman/Robotic* (not Supernatural), enabling them to inflict Mega-Damage with their bare hands. It also increases their damage resilience by turning them, temporarily, into a Mega-Damage creature themselves. However, despite the benefits, it is incredibly toxic because of the metallic content. Repeated uses induce severe hallucinations, damage to the nervous system, tremors, mood swings, and severe personality alteration. The brew is only effective on mortal, S.D.C. beings. It has no enhancing effect on M.D.C. creatures, although the metal poisoning is still a very real possibility. The brew isn't addictive in and of itself, but the power that it can convey, despite the risks, is enough to make some people abuse it. Most barbarian tribes recognize this, and make it so only the tribal Shaman(s) know the secret of making the brew and they also control the distribution so it cannot be abused.

Cost: Depending on the availability, anywhere from 20,000 to 100,000 credits per dose. Barbarians rarely sell or trade the brew, but may offer it to an outsider as a gift or reward for some great service, kindness or sacrifice. Warriors may be given the brew when facing a life and death conflict.

The Enhancing Effects of the Brew:

Add +10 to the character's P.S. score, and consult the table on page 27 of the **Rifts® Game Master Guide** for damages as-

sociated with *Robot Strength & Damage.* Combine the character's S.D.C. and Hit Points total, then divide that number by three. That's the character's M.D.C. while under the influence of the brew. The character also fatigues at only half of the normal rate. Duration: The brew takes effect after one minute (four melee rounds) and lasts for 1D4+1 hours. After which, the character will come down from their chemical high and feels extremely groggy, suffers from a headache and slight nausea, and is -2 on all combat moves (initiative, strike, parry, dodge, disarm, etc.), and -10% to perform all skills for 1D6 hours.

The Toxic Effects of the Brew:

Every time a character drinks SteelTree Root Brew, he must make a saving throw vs poisons at a 16 or higher. These toxic effects occur after the character has come down from their chemical high, and are cumulative with the penalties listed above under Duration. For each time a character fails the saving throw, they gain a permanent, cumulative -1 to future saving throws vs the SteelTree Root Brew toxic effect. Also, each time a character fails to save, roll on the following table. All of the effects are cumulative.

01-25% Lucked Out, no negative effect . . . this time.

26-35% A Minor Sensory Hallucination. The character sees things that aren't there. A slight bit of movement in his peripheral vision, a sound that's just not quite right. Penalties: -1 initiative, -1 to pull punch and dodge, -10% on skills (distracted and jumpy, can't concentrate). Effects last for 1D6 hours.

36-45% Deadened Senses. A deadening of the senses that imparts the following penalties: -2 on initiative, -1 to strike, parry and dodge, -5% on skill performance, and any special/mutant sensory abilities like Nightvision (range), Track by Smell, etc., are reduced by half. Effects last for 2D6 hours.

46-55% A Major Sensory Hallucination. The character imagines he sees fully realized figures that are straight out of his imagination. He cannot tell friend from foe, and is prone to wild visions and odd behavior (shouting, waving his sword in a threatening manner, running away, etc.). Depending on the background of the character, this can be interpreted as a powerful vision, or a damning curse, and at different times, both. Penalties: -1 on initiative, -3 to strike, parry and dodge, -15% to perform all skills, and the character will not be able to concentrate on anything except for their hallucination. The "real world" just doesn't exist for them at the moment. Effects last for 2D6 hours.

56-65% Temporary Nervous Tremors. The character suffers from an episode of "the shakes." Muscles twitch involuntarily, leaving the character with reduced coordination, distraction, and a lingering effect of muscle soreness. Penalties: -3 to aim and strike with a thrown or ranged weapon, -1 to strike and disarm in melee combat, and -5% to skills that require precise hand coordination, like Palming, Pick Pockets, surgery, repair work, etc. Effects last for 1D6 hours.

66-75% Temporary Mood Swings. The character shifts violently from one emotional extreme to another. One minute they are happy and joyful, the next they are openly hostile and angry at nothing in particular. They are extremely difficult to be around and respond to situations according to their current emotion. Roll on the following table every two hours or when a situation suddenly changes (for the good or bad, it's the change that triggers the mood swing). The character is not aware that they are acting out erratically, and their new behavior will seem perfectly normal to them.

01-10% Aggressive and hostile; looking for a fight; quick to accept challenges and start a fight (+1 on initiative).

11-20% Joyful, kind and helpful (+5% on all skills, +10% to charm and impress).

21-30% Happy but loud, pushy and needs to be in the spotlight (which may make enemies, start arguments and fights, etc.; -20% to charm and impress).

31-40% Sad and depressed (reduce all combat bonuses by half).

41-50% Argumentative, disagrees and argues about everything.

51-60% Happy, playful, fun and likable (+20% to charm and impress).

61-70% Meanspirited: makes snide or hurtful remarks, puts people down, etc.

71-80% Frightened worry wart. Sees and points out the danger and downside to everything (-1 on initiative, -5% on all skills).

81-90% Angry and vengeful. Wants to fight and is quick to attack, hurt and kill (+1 on initiative, +1 to strike, -1 to parry and dodge).

91-00% Short tempered and annoyed by those around them. Lashes out at those who are happy, playful, or making noise (laughing, talking loudly, singing, playing music, and generally having a good time).

76-80% Permanent Nervous Tremors. The same as 56-65% above, except the penalties are permanent.

81-85% Permanent Haunting Hallucination. The character is *haunted* by an illusionary odor (i.e., he thinks he exudes a pungent, foul or strange odor that he can't get rid of no matter how often he bathes or how much perfume he wears) or a ghostly figure that only he can see. The ghost may be that of a slain enemy, a slain dinosaur, deceased family member or friend, a victim he failed to save, etc. In any case, the *ghost* represents the character's failings and weakness, and inflicts the following penalties: -1 to all combat bonuses, -10% to skill performance, and reduce M.A. and M.E. attributes by 1D4x10% because the character feels he is doomed.

86-90% Permanent mood swings. The same as Mood Swings 66-75% above, however the mood swings are a permanent part of the character's personality. The magic spell Cure/Remove Insanity, if successful, will permanently eliminate the mood swings, but if the brew is used again, and this side effect reoccurs, the magic will not work a second time.

91-95% Temporary Alignment Reversal. The character suffers a complete moral and personality reversal, becoming a complete dichotomy of their original self. Good becomes evil, evil becomes good, and selfish characters become more altruistic in their beliefs and practices (Scrupulous). The character will likely not be aware that they are acting out of the ordinary, and their new behavior will seem perfectly normal to them.

96-00% Permanent Alignment Reversal. The same as 91-95% above, except that the reversal is permanent. Repeated rolling of this effect is liable to drive a character insane.

Magic Weapons & Items

The practice of magic in Dinosaur Swamp has evolved to reflect the day to day struggle for survival. Like the rest of Rifts Earth, magic is an ever-present element, a force of nature like the blustering wind or a rushing river. One particular form of magic dominates the lives of the native tribes in Dinosaur Swamp, the art of Eco-Wizardry. A form of magic that molds bone, teeth, muscle and sinew into magical weapons of impressive power. Even characters like Ley Line Walkers, Mystics, and Shifters, as well as Native Americans and Druids, find Eco-Weapons immediately comfortable and pleasing. Deearn Neenok had this to say about them:

"Despite having grown up in Lazlo, surrounded daily by any number of magical devices, I am never at a loss for amazement when I encounter a new type of magic, or in this case, a new take on a very familiar one. I expected I might encounter native magic in Dinosaur Swamp, perhaps even discover a type of mystic art unique unto themselves, but discovering that they had developed a sort of natural version of Techno-Wizardry was astounding. I've seen enchanted amulets, the repulsive Bio-Wizardry of Atlantis, suffered first hand at the power of Necromancy, and of course been witness to a Shifter's dimensional manipulation, but never have I seen so complex, yet simple an application of magical enhancement. I hesitate to even call it Techno-Wizardry, for there is most definitely no technology involved – at least not as we civilized people think of technology. In fact, a more appropriate name would be . . . I don't know . . . Eco-Wizardry, for lack of a better word. Eco-Wizardry because it draws upon nature as its source of inspiration as well as the physical components for the items themselves.

Anyone, especially Techno-Wizards, who might dismiss the practice of this art as somehow less effective because it was developed by barbarian people, or because it makes use of simple, natural materials, would be making a grave mistake. Despite the crude and primitive appearance of the weapons, I've seen natives demonstrate the power of their magic, and it only makes me fear them all the more."

– An excerpt from Deearn Neenok's book, The Dinosaurian Swamp: Notes from the Field, Circa 87 P.A.

Eco-Wizardry was developed and practiced exclusively by the barbarian people of Dinosaur Swamp and is known by both humans and mutants. It is a visceral and organic approach to magic very similar to Techno-Wizardry, but rather than using circuit boards, machine parts and crystals to direct and store power, Eco-Wizardry uses sinew to conduct power, and bone and wood to direct and store it. It is primitive, crude in some ways, but it is a natural application for infusing magic power into manmade constructs. Though it may appear crude, it is no less powerful or effective than the combination of magic and technology practiced by Techno-Wizards.

Some observers confuse the use of bone and teeth and muscle with Necromancy, but Eco-Wizardry has nothing to do with the dead and everything to do with the living. Even the component parts, often taken from slain animals, dinosaurs and plant life (wood, vine, glue, etc.) are seen as being taken from the living to help people survive in a hostile domain. An environment where tooth, claw and bone are a natural resource and common materials used in everyday life. When an Eco-Wizard kills or uses the skin, bones, or teeth of a dead animal, he is using the parts of the animal as *raw materials* the same as others might use the animal's hide to make clothing or rawhide for rope, and bone to whittle a flute or to carve sewing needles, and the meat cooked to feed a family or the entire tribe. There is no malice, ulterior motive nor death worship involved. In fact, many Eco-Wizards and Shamans find the art of Necromancy to be completely repulsive because it is wasteful and malicious, whereas Eco-Wizardry is part of the natural cycle of *life*. Nor is Eco-Wizardry related to Bio-Wizardry, which is devoted to the enslavement and mutation of *living organisms*, nor is it related to the extremely rare art of Biomancy native to South America. The Eco-Wizards' use of organic materials in their magic is nothing more than a reflection of their environment and primitive way of life. A place and time where animals are hunted and eaten and their every part used in some economical manner. More than that however, when it comes to the dinosaurs and other predators, they symbolize primordial power and strength that help the sorcerers to focus and direct the magic energy placed in the weapon or item that utilizes the animals' parts.

The similarity to Techno-Wizardry *is* staggering, yet many Techno-Wizards refuse to see any similarity between the two. The tiny few who have heard of Eco-Wizardry dismiss the mystic art as primitive enchanters using Stone Age technology to work their crude magic. Likewise, most barbarian Eco-Wizards see no similarity to Techno-Wizardry which utilizes modern technology and is oblivious to nature and the cycle of life. Perhaps it is these basic philosophical differences, or plain and simple arrogance, that keeps the two mutually exclusive from one another, for neither can seem to understand or duplicate the work of the other. A Techno-Wizard can no more use sinew and wood to create a magic weapon than an Eco-Wizard can use wire and crystals to create a magical gun.

Eco-Wizardry is entrenched in the culture of Dinosaur Swamp and they and their EW weapons originate exclusively from this region. Yet here, in Dinosaur Swamp, Eco-Weapons and items are quite common, especially among the warriors of the barbarian tribes, as well as many Wilderness Scouts and Swamp Stompers. The dominance of the barbarians is one reason for this, and the fact that it is one of the few magicks that turns ordinary S.D.C. or minor M.D.C. material into Mega-Damage weapons is another. The abundance of the commonly used materials (e.g., dinosaurs) is also a contributing factor. Of course, not all Eco-Wizard weapons are made exclusively from dinosaur parts. Wood, shaped tree limbs, wooden pegs, vine, leather, rawhide, glue made from animals or plants, fasteners and material from S.D.C. animals, such as antlers from deer, as well as claws, teeth, horn, fur, and feathers, may all be part of the creation. The only key to the components is that they must be from nature, and ideally from a living creature (plant or animal). Stones and gems may be used for decoration or as a small part of the weapon.

While places like the city of Char sell Eco-Wizard items, Eco-Wizards do *not*, as a rule, create magic items for resale. Eco-Wizard items are specifically created to help the tribe by providing warriors and scouts with weapons that can slay dinosaurs and combat outsiders. They are also created and given away as gifts and boons to tribal champions, heroes and friends of the tribe. Only occasionally are they used as trade, and then only with people the tribesmen know. Items offered by townspeople, traders and adventurers have usually been won in combat or taken from the vanquished (slain or enslaved barbarians). Surprisingly, even the Splugorth and their Minions see minimal value in the crude looking weapons and have not tried to produce and sell them in mass quantities. Their clientele is typically more sophisticated and looking for magic weapons that appear impressive or cutting edge, not primitive items made of wood and dinosaur claws. All of this helps contribute to keeping Eco-Wizardry local and unknown to the rest of the world.

Eco-Wizard Items

By Todd Yoho & Kevin Siembieda

Human and Mutant Barbarians use traditional looking melee weapons (knives, swords, spears, clubs, bow and arrow, etc.) and tools in their everyday life. Many are S.D.C. weapons with nothing magical about them. Arms and armor are supplemented with advanced Mega-Damage technology from items like Vibro-Blades and energy rifles. Advanced weapons are equipment that the barbarians find in the wilderness (lost by adventurers from the outside world or found among their skeletal remains), or seized from vanquished enemies, or acquired through trade with outsiders, pirates and some of the permanent settlements.

Eco-Wizard items on the other hand, are usually created by one or more (NPC) Eco-Wizards, who hold a place of honor in the tribe and whose job is to create magic, M.D. weapons for the tribe's hunters and defenders. (**Note:** Barbarians adore all types of magic weapons, including those used by the Minions of Splugorth, created by Techno-Wizardry, and others, especially if they are melee weapons: swords, spears, axes, etc.)

One of the defining characteristics of Eco-Wizard equipment is the primitive and organic nature of the items they create. Each is clearly handcrafted using carved wood and/or bone, animal teeth, claws, horns, spikes, feathers, skin, and similar raw materials obtained from dinosaurs. Dinosaurs are the primary resource for Eco-Weapons because they are plentiful and because dinosaurs signify strength and power. They never contain glass, metal, or any type of technological component, and even the use of stone is rare.

The actual style and appearance of Eco-Magic weapons varies wildly from tribe to tribe and maker to maker. Some constructs are simple, quick, and crude – or perhaps *basic* is a better word. Something as uncomplicated as a wood or bone club and a dinosaur tooth, claw or spike tied together and enchanted by an Eco-Wizard can be a formidable M.D. weapon. Others may be carefully shaped and carved, polished and painted, or decorated with artistic designs or animal images carved out of, or into, the wood or etched into the bone. They may be adorned with ornamentation like feathers, colored twine, fur and frills for show, but only the key elements are magical. In fact, a couple of tribes have taken to carving human hands to hold spikes, claws and horns, and ornate handles and shafts with etched or painted designs or pictures. Likewise, when we say the Eco-Wizard uses bone and *sinew* it means the mage can actually take muscle tissue and magically attach it to wood and bone, claws and teeth, to hold the various components of a weapon in place rather than glue or tie them with leather strips. The use of "sinew" is often reserved for moving parts or components that need flexibility, and can bend or magically move. Again, which approach the Eco-Wizard chooses will depend on his personal preference, the style or look he is trying to achieve, the level of artistry desired, who the item is for (i.e., Chiefs are often give ornately decorated EW items), and the amount of time available to make the weapon. The greater the amount of time the fancier the piece can be, if that's what the maker desires.

Most practitioners of magic can determine if an item is the enchanted creation of an Eco-Wizard by physically examining it, while other characters with the skill *Lore: Magic* are at -15% to tell if it is magical after a personal inspection of the item. Most other folks can't tell one way or the other. It is important to note that like Techno-Wizard devices, anyone with sufficient P.P.E. or I.S.P. (double the P.P.E. number) can activate and use Eco-Wizard items. Thus, a Techno-Wizard can *use* an EW device even though he cannot create it, and vice versa for the Eco-Wizard. Likewise, barbarians with high P.P.E. or sufficient I.S.P. should be able to figure out and use TW weapons thanks to their familiarity with Eco-Wizardry.

What follows are only a few samples of the most popular EW constructs. There are sure to be others, with some, perhaps, unique to only certain tribes. Depending on the situation, player characters could acquire any of the items described in this section, or come across unique and imaginative EW constructs created from their own imagination or that of the G.M., provided the Game Master allows it.

Biting War Club

A small, versatile war club that can be used as a blunt or raking weapon. It is roughly the size of a ping-pong paddle, though oval shaped with a longer handle and all-around heavier, thicker and designed for fighting. One side is covered in 10-15 serrated teeth 1-2 inches (2.5 to 5 cm) long, the other side curved and smooth. Either side can be used with a quick flip of the hand. The side covered in teeth to rake and cut, the blunt side to club, hammer and knockout an opponent.

Creation Requirements: A club made of wood, a number of sharp small- to medium-sized dinosaur teeth, and animal skin glue to hold it all together.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Superhuman Strength (10), and 40 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 4 P.P.E. or 8 I.S.P.

Duration: Ten minutes per activation.

Damage: Normally, the blunt side does 1D6 S.D.C. and the teeth side does 2D4 S.D.C., plus applicable P.S. damage bonuses (if any). When the magic is activated, the Biting War Club does 1D4 M.D. from a blunt attack or 2D4 M.D. from a cutting/raking attack; P.S. bonuses do not apply.

Additional Effects or Bonuses: +1 to strike and +2 to damage when thrown. Effective range: 80 feet (24.4 m).

Penalties for the User: None. Compact, fairly light, and portable.

Cost: 20,000-35,000 credits. Common among the barbarian tribes.

Battle Claw

Battle Claws are a wildly popular melee weapon among all the tribes of Dinosaur Swamp. They can take on several different shapes and forms, with some tribes preferring one particular style to another, but the most popular style is that of a three fingered hide glove taken from the forelimb of a Raptor or other medium-sized dinosaur. The skin is stretched and treated to fit a human hand, with the thumb fitting a pocket, index and middle finger fitting a pocket, and the ring and pinky fingers fitting the other pocket. The ends of the two fingers are tipped with the forelimb claws of small predatory dinosaurs, while the thumb of the glove is tipped with either the hooked claw of a Raptor or the long/large claw of some other dinosaur. The glove is sewn together and heavily interlaced with patterned stitches made of sinew and gut thread, giving it a very elegant, but patchwork, appearance.

The claws themselves are wicked S.D.C. weapons, but when the magic is activated, they function as Mega-Damage weapons that can gouge and tear through any manmade M.D.C. material. This also makes them valuable for hunting and fighting dinosaurs.

Creation Requirements: A properly prepared set of gloves, all the necessary components, and enough sinew and/or thick thread made from dinosaur guts to stitch the gloves together.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Superhuman Strength (10), and 70 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P.

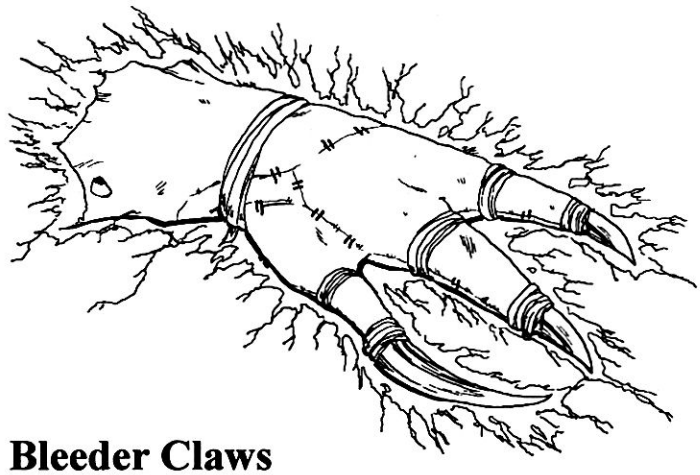
Duration: 5 minutes per activation.

Damage: 2D6 S.D.C. normally, 2D6 M.D. when the magic is activated. Does triple damage on a Natural 20 plus the opponent is stunned for one melee round (15 seconds), leaving him/it with only two melee attacks, speed reduced by 75%, no initiative and all usual combat bonuses reduced to zero.

Additional Effects: Devastating clawing/slashing attacks; see damage. Furthermore, Battle Claws can be used to block M.D. biting attacks (via a successful parry) and parry M.D. claw attacks as well as M.D. melee weapons such as Vibro-Blades, most Eco-Wizard weapons and other types of magic weapons (rune swords, TW Flaming swords, etc.).

Penalties to the Wearer: Battle Claws prevent normal use of the hands, preventing most skills requiring precision dexterity from being performed. All skills requiring use of the hands are performed at -50%, while use of thrown weapons, the bow and arrow and other projectile weapons suffers from a -4 to strike even on an aimed shot. Hand to hand weapons can be wielded, but are still somewhat clumsy, resulting in a penalty of -1 to strike and parry. Battle Claws are designed to be a weapon in and of themselves.

Cost: 60,000-75,000 credits. Must be worn as a pair. Common among the tribes.



Bleeder Claws

Another popular magic glove or gauntlet. They are basically the same general look and design of the Battle Claws, except all three fingers of the Bleeder Claws use the large, hooked, Raptor claws. In this case, the strike of the claws do dies S.D.C. (or Hit Points) damage directly to characters inside protective, environmental M.D.C. body armor! Against unprotected S.D.C. animals and humans, it causes intense pain and penalties as well as damage. Against M.D. animals it does Mega-Damage and inflicts combat penalties.

Creation Requirements: A properly prepared set of gloves, all the necessary components, and enough sinew and/or thick thread made from dinosaur guts to stitch the gloves together.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Agony (20), Life Drain (25), Superhuman Strength (10), and 95 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 15 P.P.E. or 30 I.S.P.

Duration: One minute (4 melee rounds) per activation.

Damage: 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Points of damage accompanied by great pain, easily twice the pain of the actual damage inflicted. This attack will not harm Mega-Damage body or power armor, but will hurt the character *inside,* doing 2D6 damage, first to S.D.C. and when all S.D.C. are gone, to Hit Points. Does not affect the driver or passengers inside a vehicle or a giant robot. Also see Additional Effects.

Additional Effects: *S.D.C. humans, D-Bees and animals* without M.D.C. armor protection suffer the 2D6 S.D.C. damage plus the following cumulative penalties from searing pain: -2 on initiative, -1 to strike, parry and dodge, and -5% to skill performance. Blood trickles from the victim's nose and each wound seems to bleed profusely (looks worse than it is, though damage and penalties are pretty bad). Penalties are accumulative and last for three melee rounds per each successful strike. **Note:** Magical armor blocks damage from the body as well as the excessive pain and penalties, but the magical protection/armor/field takes double damage (4D6 M.D.) from each attack. Bleeder Claws can be used to block M.D. biting attacks (via a successful parry) and parry M.D. claw attacks as well as M.D. melee weapons, but

each parry uses up one of the gloved character's melee attacks/actions.

Mega-Damage creatures suffer 2D6 M.D. and the initial penalties from the first successful strike, but after that, there are no cumulative penalties, only the 2D6 M.D., from subsequent attacks. However, a Natural 20 will paralyze the limb it struck, rendering it useless for 1D4 melee rounds. If the main body/chest/back or head is struck by a Natural 20 attack, the character or animal loses one attack for that melee round, speed is reduced by half and all combat bonuses are reduced by half for the rest of that melee round.

Penalties to the Wearer: Bleeder Claws prevent normal use of the hands, preventing most skills requiring precision dexterity from being performed. All skills requiring use of the hands are performed at -50%, while use of thrown weapons, the bow and arrow and other projectile weapons suffers from a -4 to strike even on an aimed shot. Hand to hand weapons can be wielded, but are still somewhat clumsy, resulting in a penalty of -1 to strike and parry. Bleeder Claws are designed to be a weapon in and of themselves.

Cost: 100,000 credits. Must be worn as a pair. Common among the tribes.

Climb Claws

A pair of five-fingered gloves tipped with small dinosaur claws used for climbing trees and scaling rock and concrete, including the sides of buildings and ruins.

Creation Requirements: A properly prepared set of gloves, all the necessary components, and enough sinew and/or thick thread made from dinosaur guts to stitch the gloves together.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Climb (3), Superhuman Strength, and 60 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 5 P.P.E. or 10 I.S.P.

Duration: 15 minutes per activation.

Damage: 1D6 S.D.C./Hit Points of damage per clawing attack, but is not designed for combat.

Additional Effects: The wearer can climb trees and rough surfaces (old concrete, rough rock, brick, etc.) at a skill equivalent of 98%; climb smooth but porous surfaces (new concrete, pitted steel, sheer cliff facing, etc.) at 88%; smooth surfaces (polished steel, ceramic, glass, ice, and similar) at 58%, and rappel at 80%.

Penalties to the Wearer: Climb Claws impair skills that require touch and dexterity; -20% penalty, and the use of thrown weapons, the bow and arrow and guns suffers from a -1 to strike even on an aimed shot. Hand to hand weapons can be used without difficulty.

Cost: 40,000-50,000 credits. Must be worn as a pair. Common among the tribes.

Digger Claws

Another magic glove or gauntlet of the same basic design as the Battle Claws, except the gloves have a mitten shape with a small thumb and two larger, shovel-like claws or plates on the top of the mitten and extending 8-12 inches (20 to 30 cm) beyond the fingertips. The gloves lace up the length of the forearm and make doing anything other than digging impossible. When activated, these Eco-Magic gloves enables the wearer to dig as fast as a badger with minimal exhaustion (can dig for 1D4 hours before feeling fatigued).

Creation Requirements: A properly prepared set of gloves, all the necessary components, and enough sinew and/or thick thread made from dinosaur guts to stitch the gloves together. The shovel-like claws or plates are often attached with sinew that looks like living muscle tissue.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Mystic Fulcrum (5), Superhuman Endurance (12), and 70 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 15 P.P.E. or 30 I.S.P.

Duration: 30 minutes per activation.

Damage: 1D4 S.D.C./Hit Points of damage when used as a weapon, plus applicable P.S. damage bonuses (if any). Also see Additional Effects.

Additional Effects: The wearer can clear away the earth, dig holes or make tunnels. Tunnels are surprisingly sturdy and will not collapse unless they are blasted or explosives are used or someone or something deliberately pokes at the walls with the intention of causing a collapse (3D4 yard/meter section). However, the tunnel cannot survive rain, animal stampedes or more than one giant Sauropod walking within 7 yards (approx 6 meters) of the tunnel, nor will the tunnel last on its own for more than 1D4 days. Applies only to dry earth conditions.

Penalties to the Wearer: Digger Claws prevent normal use of the hands, making most skills requiring any kind of manual dexterity impossible to perform. All skills requiring use of the hands, including driving and turning a doorknob, are performed at -80%. Throwing and using a gun impossible and even fighting with the Digger Claws imposes a penalty of -1 to all combat bonuses. Digger Claws are designed for . . . well, digging, not to be a weapon.

Cost: 30,000-50,000 credits. Must be worn as a pair. Not very common even among the tribes.

Basher Mace

A large, especially long-handled mace (3-4 feet/0.9 to 1.2 meters for just the handle; reminiscent to the Hercules Mace) made from the heavy tail of the Ankylosaur, glued and bound to a hard wood or bone handle. Once the magic is worked to create the weapon, it is not as heavy or clumsy as it appears. It has acceptable balance, and is designed to inflict heavy hammering damage.

Creation Requirements: A long shaft or club made of wood or dinosaur bone, the severed tail of an Ankylosaurus, and leather strips or sinew to bind the tail to the club.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Aura of Power (4), Mystic Fulcrum (5), Featherlight (10), Superhuman Strength (10), and 50 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 8 P.P.E. or 16 I.S.P.

Duration: Ten minutes per activation.

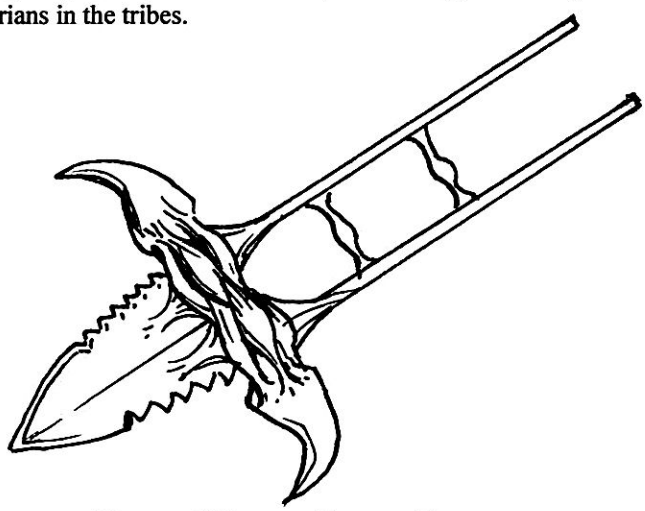
Damage: Normally, does 3D6 S.D.C. damage plus applicable P.S. damage bonuses (if any). When the magic is activated, the Basher does 4D6+2 M.D.; P.S. bonuses do not apply.

Additional Effects or Bonuses: +2 to disarm, and there is a 01-40% chance of knocking a human-sized opponent (up to 8 feet/2.4 m tall) off his feet, making him lose initiative and one melee attack/action with each successful hit; +10% if the target is struck in the leg. Make that a 01-75% chance to knock down (or a successful disarm) when a Natural 20 is rolled. The Basher Mace cannot be thrown.

Hitting a dinosaur that is under five tons in the leg or foot with a successful critical strike will cause its leg muscle to cramp and reduce Spd by 20% and impose a penalty of -1 to strike. Subsequent strikes to the same limb inflict accumulative Spd and combat penalties. **Note:** The giant Sauropods barely notice the attack until the M.D.C. of the leg or foot is reduced by half, then each subsequent attack reduces the monster's Spd by 2%; no combat penalty. A foot typically has two thirds the M.D.C. of a leg.

Penalties for the User: Requires a P.S. of 21 or higher to use the weapon one-handed. Those with a lower P.S. attribute must use both hands or suffer a penalty of -4 to strike, parry and disarm.

Cost: 40,000-55,000 credits. Popular among the strongest barbarians in the tribes.



Fang Claw (Short Sword)

The Fang Claw is an Eco-Wizard variation on the *Katar* from India, though few are likely to have ever heard of the weapon, making this a case of re-invention. The Fang Claw can be used one-handed or two; typically one-handed, using two for power stabs and slashes. The weapon consists of a short, main blade, serrated toward the bottom. The blade is either carved from a Stegosaurus spinal plate or the armored plate of some other dinosaur. To the left and right of the hilt are a pair of Raptor claws (or similar dinosaur). Blade and claws are attached to the hilt by living sinew. These muscles allow the user to mentally control the pair of Raptor claws to make them fold back, curve forward or even to claw and stab in forward motion an opponent impaled by the main blade. The blade and claws are attached to the hilt crossbar from which two parallel bars run from the hilt. They are strengthened by two crossbars which serve as the handles of the weapon; the one closest to the clawed hilt is the one used for one-handed combat. The parallel bars run along the forearm, providing the arm some additional protection, and can be used to parry knife, sword and claw strikes by lifting the arm. The two Raptor claws, whether extended as a hilt guard (as shown in the illustration) or when pulled back to rest on the parallel bars, also provide excellent parrying capabilities and hand protection.

Creation Requirements: One carved and sharpened dinosaur plate for the main blade, two Raptor claws, sinew/muscle, and other required materials (the handles and shafts can be made of bone, wood, or SteelTree wood).

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Manipulate Objects (6), Light Target (6), Superhuman Strength (10), and 60 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P.

Duration: Six minutes per activation.

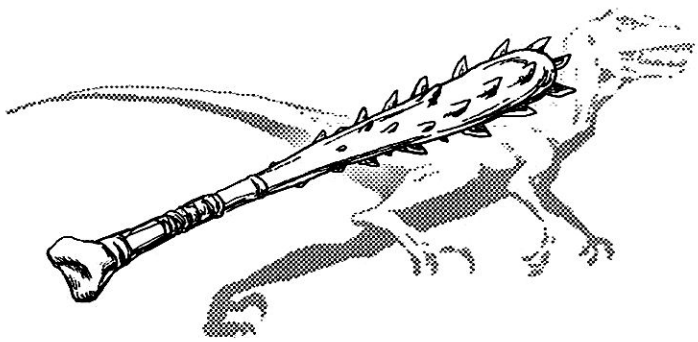
Damage: Main blade normally does 2D6 S.D.C. damage plus applicable P.S. damage bonuses (if any); the Raptor claws have no special ability in S.D.C. mode.

When the magic is activated, the main blade of the Fang Claw does 3D6 M.D. and the Raptor claws (when appropriate) each do an additional 1D6 M.D. to opponents impaled by the blade; P.S. bonuses do not apply. **Note:** A critical or killing strike or two-handed power stab (the latter counting as two melee actions/attacks) against an *animal/dinosaur or dragon* (not humanoids, cyborgs, power armor) does maximum damage: 5D6 M.D. x3 from the stab of the main blade and the quick, simultaneous double strike of the Raptor claws.

Additional Effects or Bonuses: +2 to parry, +2 to disarm, and one or both Raptor claws can be made to move at will (by the user) to pin and help disarm or parry an opponent's weapon. The Fang Claw cannot be thrown accurately (-4 to strike) or a significant distance (40 feet/12.2 m maximum).

Penalties for the User: Requires a P.P. of 21 or higher to use two Fang Claws as paired weapons. Characters with a lower P.P. suffer a penalty of -3 to strike, parry, dodge and disarm when trying to use two Fang Claws simultaneously, one in each hand, even if they have the W.P. Paired Weapons skill.

Cost: 70,000-90,000 credits. Popular among only certain barbarian tribes. May appeal to visiting Cyber-Knights, Assassins and Quick-Flex Aliens (a type of D-Bee common to the Midwest and southern Canada).



Horror Mace

The Horror Mace is made of a wooden or bone club with rows of teeth running up and down the shaft. It is often enchanted with illusionary magic to distract an opponent, allowing the wielder to fall upon them without fear of immediate retaliation, or catching them by surprise. The illusion projected is usually that of the dinosaur whose teeth are used in the club. Those who see the illusion usually react to the predator, ignoring or forgetting about the club wielding barbarian bearing down on them.

Creation Requirements: A wood or bone club at least three feet (0.9 m) in length with the teeth of a dinosaur predator set into it. Requires a minimum of six teeth from a T-Rex, Allosaurus, or other large dinosaur predator, double that number of teeth from a smaller predator. Held together by animal glue and/or sinew.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Fear (5), Horrific Illusion (10), and 110 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 17 P.P.E. or 34 I.S.P.

Duration: Illusion: One melee round. Mega-Damage Capability: Six minutes.

Damage: 2D6 S.D.C. plus applicable P.S. damage bonuses (if any) normally, but 3D6 M.D. when the magic is activated.

Effect: Everyone who sees the illusion must make a saving throw vs Horror Factor at a 14 or higher for the melee round that the weapon is activated. Failure results in the standard combat penalties for Horror Factor for that one melee round, in addition to all who see the illusion being so shaken that they are -3 to strike, parry, dodge and disarm for the rest of that melee, and -2 on initiative for the following melee round.

Cost: 60,000 to 75,000 credits. Fair availability among the barbarians. Characters who see themselves as heroes or true warriors will not resort to such subterfuge. Wilderness Scouts, Vagabonds and Bandits, on the other hand, find it a delightful weapon.

Hungry War Club

The Hungry War Club is a simple club made from dinosaur bone and three long teeth or spikes. The blunt side can be used for parrying and blunt attacks, the tooth side for parrying, disarming and chopping or slashing attacks.

Creation Requirements: A length of strong bone 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m) for the shaft, three long dinosaur teeth or spikes/spines (a la the Stegosaurus), animal glue and some leather to wrap the handle for better grip.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Light Target (6), Deflect (10), Superhuman Strength (10), and 50 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 7 P.P.E. or 14 I.S.P.

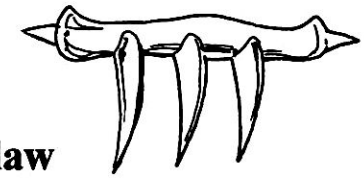
Duration: Ten minutes per activation.

Damage: Normally, the spiked side does 3D6 S.D.C. damage plus applicable P.S. damage bonuses (if any), the blunt side 1D10. When the magic is activated, it turns into a Mega-Damage weapon. The spiked side of the Hungry War Club does 3D6+3 M.D. and the blunt side/end does 2D6 M.D.; P.S. bonuses do not apply.

Additional Effects or Bonuses: +1 to parry, +2 to disarm. Barbarians sometimes use the weapon to impale and hook onto a large dinosaur and hang on as the beast runs off with them holding on to the club; works best with two Hungry War Clubs. Often used as Paired Weapons, and can be used to climb trees, walls and mountains (the latter two by repeated chopping into the surface and pulling oneself up), as well as chopping through jungle and marking trails.

Penalties for the User: None.

Cost: 30,000-40,000 credits. Popular among warriors and raiders.



Panthera Claw

Similar in concept to the tiger claws of India, this is a weapon that is clutched in the palm of the hand, something like brass knuckles, with three sharp blades made from dinosaur claws or teeth sticking out between the fingers of a clenched fist. A small tooth often sticks out from either end to punch and puncture with the side of the hand. Also see the Raptor's Claw.

Creation Requirements: A small piece of smooth wood or bone that lets the fingers curl around comfortably and snugly. Three dinosaur claws or teeth, two small teeth and animal hide glue.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Superhuman Strength (10), and 50 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 5 P.P.E. or 10 I.S.P.

Duration: Ten minutes per activation.

Damage: Normally, does 3D4 S.D.C. damage plus applicable P.S. damage bonuses (if any), but when the magic is activated, the Panthera Claw becomes a Mega-Damage weapon that does 3D4+3 M.D.; P.S. bonuses do not apply.

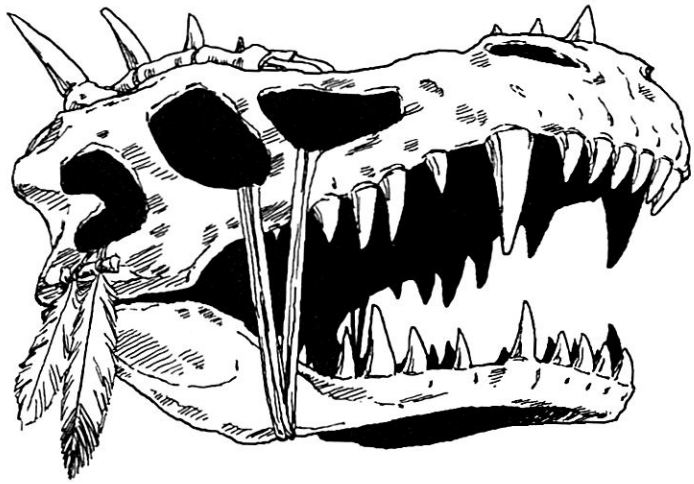
Additional Effects or Bonuses: None, but easy to conceal and palm.

Penalties for the User: None.

Cost: 15,000-20,000 credits. Popular among bandits, sneaks, and backstabbers.

Predator Mask

Rare, but highly prized are the constructs known as Predator Masks. Created from the head of a medium-sized predatory dinosaur, they confer upon the wearer enhanced sensory, detection and hunting attributes. The mask is made from the hollowed out and padded skull (or head with the skin preserved) of a dinosaur, and fits completely over the head of the wearer, forcing them to see out of the creature's tooth-filled, gaping mouth. The mask may be left plain or decorated with the foot and hand claws of the beast to form a crown of claws around its top or painted with stripes, spots and other designs similar to war paint. When the magical abilities are activated, the eyes of the mask glow with a muted greenish-yellow light, and the neck cowl merges with the skin of the person wearing the mask. While the mask is active, it cannot be removed, even by force, unless the wearer is slain. Predator Masks are extremely expensive, time consuming to make, and require not only a great amount of magic energy, but also a wide variety of spell selec-



tions to create. This often requires the pooling of several Eco-Wizards working together to create one. As a result, these items are so rare that it is common for a single village or tribe to own only one or two masks, usually being in the hands of their most renowned hunters, bravest warriors or a war chief. They are *never* sold or traded to outsiders, but may be given as a gift to an exceptionally worthy ally (like someone who genuinely risked his life to save the tribe or rescue a chief). It is interesting to note that any Predator Mask seized by spilling the blood of its owner becomes inert and powerless.

Creation Requirements: The primary component is an intact head of a Raptor, or a juvenile Allosaurus, T-Rex, or other carnosaur. The head is typically stripped of its skin, but the skull left complete (the jaw connected by sinew on the inside). It also requires enough sinew and gut thread to interlace the gruesome headdress with a wooden helmet frame or padding inside the skull so it sits on the head without tilting or falling off, and a neck cowl made from the dinosaur's own skin attached to the back of the helmet and draping over the neck and down to the shoulder blades. Claws mounted on the skull are optional.

Creation Spells: Eyes of the Wolf (25), See Aura (6), Detect Concealment (6), Fear (5), Light Target (6), Shadow Meld (10), Influence the Beast (12), Superhuman Endurance (12), and 450 P.P.E in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 15 P.P.E. or 30 I.S.P.

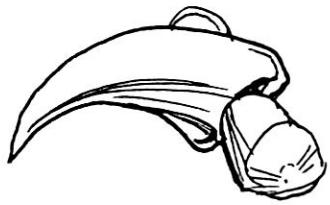
Duration: 30 minutes per level of experience of the wielder.

Effects: Upon activation, the wearer is endowed with the following magical abilities, and has access to the following spells for the duration of the enchantment at reduced costs:

Abilities Endowed by the Headdress: Nightvision (60 feet/ 18.3 m), Identify Tracks (85%), Track (80%; humanoids, dinosaurs and animals), See the Invisible (60 feet/18.3 m) and Stalking (same ability as described under the Dinosaur Hunter O.C.C.).

Additional Spell Abilities: Each additional spell ability requires an additional expenditure of P.P.E. as listed here. *Chameleon* (2 P.P.E. or 4 I.S.P.), *Detect Concealment* (2 P.P.E. or 4 I.S.P.), *Fear* (2 P.P.E. or 8 I.S.P.), *Influence the Beast* (4 P.P.E. or 12 I.S.P.), *Light Target* (3 P.P.E. or 6 I.S.P.), *See Aura* (2 P.P.E. or 4 I.S.P.), and *Superhuman Endurance* (6 P.P.E. or 12 I.S.P.). **Note:** All spells are cast as if the wielder were a third level practitioner of magic.

Cost: Rare and never for sale from a barbarian or Eco-Wizard. Would fetch a minimum of 250,000 credits.



Raptor Claw

A single Raptor's claw mounted to a smooth piece of wood that fits comfortably in a clenched fist, the Raptor's claw sticking out like a hook, two fingers on either side. Used as a tool for carving meat, cutting trails, chopping wood and as a close combat weapon.

Creation Requirements: A small piece of smooth wood or bone that the fingers curl around comfortably and snugly, one large Raptor claw and animal hide glue.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Superhuman Strength (10), and 40 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 5 P.P.E. or 10 I.S.P.

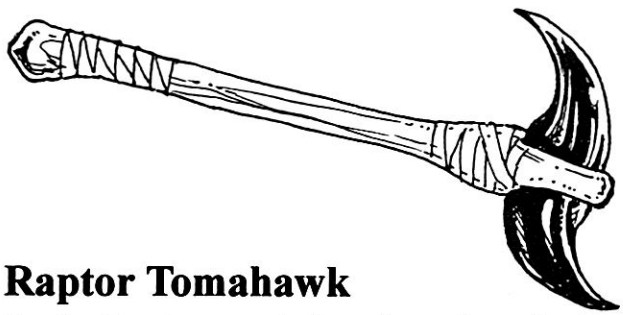
Duration: Ten minutes per activation.

Damage: Normally does 1D6 S.D.C. damage plus applicable P.S. damage bonuses (if any), but when the magic is activated, the Raptor Claw becomes a Mega-Damage weapon that does 2D4 M.D.; P.S. bonuses do not apply.

Additional Effects or Bonuses: None, but easy to conceal and palm.

Penalties for the User: None.

Cost: 12,000-15,000 credits. Popular among bandits, sneaks, and backstabbers.



Raptor Tomahawk

Creation Requirements: A piece of smooth wood or bone 18 to 24 inches (0.45 to 0.6 m) long, two large Raptor claws, living sinew and/or leather strips and animal skin glue to secure the claws to the handle. Leather may be wrapped around the handle for better grip.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Superhuman Strength (10), Throwing Stones (5) and 50 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 5 P.P.E. or 10 I.S.P.

Duration: Ten minutes per activation.

Damage: Normally does 2D4 S.D.C. damage plus applicable P.S. damage bonuses (if any), but when the magic is activated, the Raptor Tomahawk becomes a Mega-Damage weapon that does 2D6 M.D.; P.S. bonuses do not apply.

Additional Effects or Bonuses: +1 to parry and +2 to strike when thrown. Can be thrown accurately 60 feet (18.3 m).

Penalties for the User: None.

Cost: 20,000-25,000 credits. Popular among Wild Knives Warriors, raiders, hunters and scouts of all barbarian tribes.

Cursed Arrows

Cursed Arrows were originally created to aid in hunting dinosaurs and other very large and dangerous animals. The variety of effects available has made them extremely popular among hunters not only for bringing down game, but also in dealing with outsiders, trespassers and hostile members of rival tribes. While the effects that they inflict can be a minor nuisance to some, in the right hands these arrows can be downright dangerous. They can be created for any size bow, ranging from small hunting bows to the much larger and more powerful longbows as well as crossbows.

Creation Requirements: The shafts are typically made of any kind of sturdy wood, a stone arrowhead, and animal glue and sinew to secure the tip to the shaft. The fletchings are made of feathers and glued into place.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Minor Curse (35) and 60 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P.

Duration of the Curse: The curse lasts 24 hours, unless the victim saves vs magic. Intelligent beings need a 14 or higher to save. Animals must roll a 19 or 20 to save, even dinosaurs. Familiars, pets or animals owned by player characters and NPCs may save on a roll of 17 or higher. A successful save means the effect of the curse is half that of normal and passes after 1D6 minutes. Once fired and the arrow hits something, the curse in that arrow is used up. If the arrow is retrieved, intact, it can be re-enchanted by an Eco-Wizard at a future time for a cost of 5,000 credits or equivalent (or acceptable) trade and an expenditure of 45 P.P.E. by the mage. More often than not, however, the arrow is lost or broken.

Damage: 1D6 damage for light/small bows, 2D6 for longbows and crossbows. Cursed Arrows do Hit Point/S.D.C. damage to S.D.C. beings and M.D. to Mega-Damage creatures, plus the influence of the curse.

Curse Effect: Any of the effects (Fever, Headache, Nausea, etc.) as described under the *Minor Curse* spell invocation, except that the range is *touch*, as in the arrow striking the target. See page 122 of the **Rifts® Book of Magic** for complete details and descriptions for this spell and the minor ailments it can inflict.

Cost: Fairly common among Barbarians and other wilderness people in the swamplands (high demand), with *Vertigo* and *Nausea* being the favorites for hunting applications. 8,000 to 10,000 credits per each magically cursed arrow.

Sickness Spear

Simplicity in itself, the Sickness Spear is another example of a hunting weapon converted to a brutal and popular weapon of war to debilitate and undermine the enemy. Originally intended to weaken large dinosaurs so they could be more easily hunted for their meat, hides and other products, it has made the transition to weapon of war to be used against fellow humanoids. Spears, in general, are designed for use in close combat and for throwing. Since getting close to an angry Sauropod or Carnosaur is not recommended, most Sickness Spears are well designed for throwing (average effective range: 100 feet/30.5 m). The enchantment does not last very long, and is expended when a living target is successfully struck.

Creation Requirements: Throwing versions require a 5-6 foot (1.5 to 1.8 m) long shaft made of wood or bone, and a bladed tip carved from dinosaur bone, horn, sea shell, or SteelTree wood (sometimes stone) at least 4 inches (10.16 cm) long, held in place with animal skin glue and/or leather straps or living sinew.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Sickness (50) and 125 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 15 P.P.E. or 30 I.S.P.

Duration of Sickness: The magical Sickness lasts 12 hours, unless the victim saves vs magic. Intelligent beings need a 14 or higher to save. Animals must roll a 19 or 20 to save, even dinosaurs. Familiars, pets or animals owned by player characters and NPCs may save on a roll of 17 or higher. A successful save means the effect of the Sickness is half that of normal and passes after 4D6 minutes. Once the spear has struck a living target, the Sickness in that spear is used up, but can be re-enchanted by an Eco-Wizard at a future time for a cost 40,000 credits or equivalent (or acceptable) trade and an expenditure of 90 P.P.E. on the mage's part.

Damage: 1D6 or 2D4 damage for most spears, doing Hit Point/S.D.C. damage to S.D.C. beings and M.D. to Mega-Damage creatures, plus the influence of the Sickness.

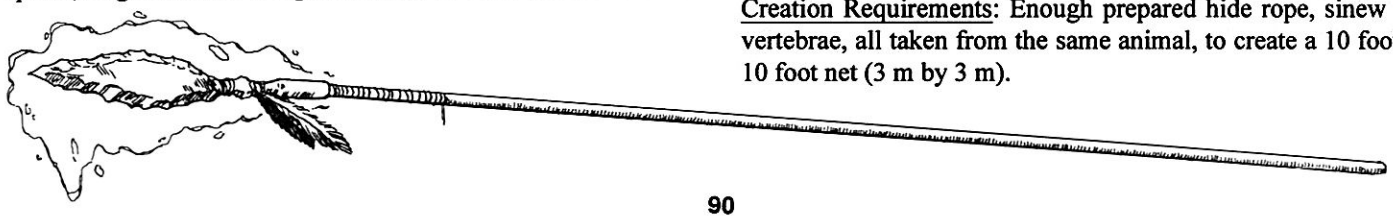
Magical Effect and Penalties: The victim's number of attacks are reduced to one, physical endurance is reduced by 70% (and when the person or animal is fatigued, Spd is reduced by 70%), plus the victim is -4 on all combat bonuses, has no initiative and skill performance is -40%. The person or animal is weak, disoriented by high fever and dizziness, and generally feels terrible. The complete description of the Sickness Spell can be found on page 124 of the **Rifts® Book of Magic**, though the info here is all one needs to know.

Cost: Common, 80,000 credits each.

Sinew Net

A net woven from strips of living sinew and weighted with stone or heavy bone. They are usually made from the body of juvenile sauropods because one animal can provide enough raw materials for up to three complete nets. It is of course intended as a hunting device, but is also effective for capturing humanoid trespassers and slaves. Ensnaring and capturing an opponent may give a character time to assess a given situation and decide exactly what to do with his captive. One of the drawbacks to the net is that it is subject to being damaged when the enchantment is not activated and by captives strong enough (or armed) to inflict Mega-Damage when its magic is active. The net can, of course, be repaired, but tears and holes may allow prey to escape until such repairs can be made.

Creation Requirements: Enough prepared hide rope, sinew and vertebrae, all taken from the same animal, to create a 10 foot by 10 foot net (3 m by 3 m).



Creation Spells: Magic Net (7), Energy Bolt (5), and 45 P.P.E. in addition to the previous spells.

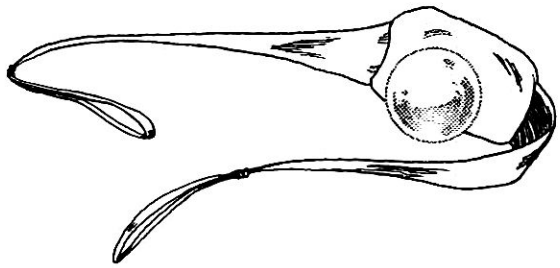
P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 8 P.P.E. or 16 I.S.P.

Duration: Ten minutes per activation, and can be repeatedly activated as long the user has sufficient P.P.E. and the net is in good repair.

Magical Effect and Penalties: Even without being magically activated, the Sinew Net is strong, requiring 1D4+1 melee rounds for a humanoid to cut a hole large enough to escape, and a Supernatural P.S. of 17 or higher (or mortal P.S. of 50 or greater) to rip the net open.

When magically activated, the net is nearly indestructible, requiring 50 M.D. to cut or tear a single strand/link of the netting. Victims caught inside the net are pinned or entangled, losing all but one melee action/attack per round and unable to use any but the smallest handgun (-6 to aim and strike at something outside the net) or an M.D. dagger to cut the strands of the netting, both of which are obvious to the captor and easily prevented (+4 to disarm victims trapped in Sinew Netting). The captive is otherwise helpless while trapped, unless he can cast magic or possesses mind powers.

Cost: 30,000 credits. Fairly common, especially among hunters, trappers, slavers and barbarians who wish to capture their prey alive.



Sinew Sling

Easy to make, easy to conceal, and easy to use, Sinew Slings are favorites of both apprentice and master Eco-Wizards as well as barbarian youngsters and Nurturers. Usually made out of little more than a long leather strap with a pocket sewn onto the middle, sling may be simple and plain or decorated with stitching. It folds up and fits in a coat or pants pocket, can be tied around the neck or arm, or tucked in one's belt, boot, or pouch. Though simple and effective weapons, slings are often overlooked by even the most wary of civilized soldiers and fighters (but not barbarians).

Creation Requirements: A strap of soft leather, 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m) long, and a small pocket or patch of cloth or leather in the center. Dinosaur skin/hide and sinew are used for this enchanted sling.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Throwing Stones (5) and 80 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 3 P.P.E. or 6 I.S.P.

Duration: Two melee rounds per activation. Every stone slung while the magic is activated inflicts Mega-Damage and has enhanced range.

Damage: As per the stone used. When not activated, damage is typically 1D4 or 1D6 S.D.C. When the magic is activated, small stones inflict 1D4 M.D., medium stones (golf ball sized) 1D6 M.D. and stones the size of a hardball or peach do 2D4 or 1D8 M.D.

Magical Effects and Bonuses: More than double the normal effective range (200 feet/61 m) and +1 to strike. Target must be visible to hit; line of sight.

Cost: 5000-10,000 credits.

Skin Blanket

This is for all intents and purposes a finely decorated, short, dinosaur skin blanket that is also a trap when its magic is activated. Made of dinosaur hide and decorated like an embroidered tapestry with dyed threads, it can be used as a blanket to keep warm and dry or to ensnare a foe, and hold someone, or something where they stand. A common item decorating most Eco-Wizard's and barbarian Chieftains' and Shamans' homes, it is also widely used by hunting parties, by luring their prey onto the blanket, throwing it on them, or tossing it under foot. Once activated, captives find it almost impossible to break free before the magic elapses.

Creation Requirements: A properly prepared dinosaur skin blanket, usually no larger than a 4x5 foot (1.2 x 1.5 m) or 5x6 foot (1.5 x 1.8 m) rectangle of fabric. Decorations, color and ornamentation are optional.

Creation Spells: Carpet of Adhesion (10), Energy Bolt (5), and 50 P.P.E in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 6 P.P.E. or 12 I.S.P. per activation.

Duration: Four minutes per activation.

Magical Effects & Penalties: When the magic is activated the blanket turns into a *Carpet of Adhesion*, basically the same as the spell of the same name. Anyone stepping on or getting the blanket tossed on top of them becomes stuck to it like a giant sheet of flypaper, and entangled. If the arms and upper body are covered, it is impossible to use the limbs to strike, parry or disarm (no bonuses, no such actions possible), and if the blanket covers the head, the victim is blind (-10 on all combat rolls). If the feet are stuck and entangled, running Spd is reduced to zero (crawling using one's arms only is 10% normal running Spd), and the character is -6 to dodge and -2 to parry or disarm.

Cost: 35,000-50,000 credits. Fair availability within barbarian communities only.

Skin & Bone Armor

This is a simple form of Eco-Wizard armor that comes as a hooded poncho or cloak cinched at the waist by a pouched belt. The poncho is made from a pale colored dinosaur hide. Plating made of bleached dinosaur bone is located around the neck and covers the top of the chest. Shoulder pads, forearm plating/vambraces, and leg guards attached separately are also part of the armor. In addition to providing some Mega-Damage protection, the Skin & Bone Armor has a cloaking capability.

Creation Requirements: A properly prepared dinosaur skin poncho (pale color), bleached dinosaur bones, pouched utility belt (typically made of handcrafted leather), bone vambraces on the forearms and lower legs, animal skin glue, leather thread and other necessary components. Additional decoration and ornamentation are optional.

Creation Spells: Armor of Ithan (10), Magic Shield (6), Energy Bolt (5), and 70 P.P.E in addition to that required for the previous spells, plus double the cost of the "cloaking magic" built into the suit. Typically custom made to fit the needs and desires of the recipient/buyer.

M.D.C. Protection: 2D6+20 main body and 1D6+8 for the head.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: Base M.D.C. protection (2D6+20) is constant, but a character can get an additional 20 M.D.C. (via Armor of Ithan) by pumping 5 P.P.E. into the suit. The 20 magical M.D.C. are lost before the Base M.D.C. Duration is six minutes or until the extra 20 M.D.C. is reduced to zero. To activate the cloaking feature another 6 or 7 P.P.E. is required.

Duration: The M.D.C. protection of the suit is constant. When all M.D.C. is lost the suit is reduced to tattered rags. Cloaking magic lasts for six minutes per activation of that special magic feature. Requires the wearer to spend 6 or 7 P.P.E.

Additional Magical Effects or Bonuses: Any *one* of the following cloaking abilities can be placed in the armor, provided the creator knows that spell and spends the required P.P.E. while creating the suit. To activate the cloaking ability, the wearer must expend the necessary P.P.E. All effects last for five minutes: *Chameleon (6), Cloak of Darkness (6), Invisibility: Simple (6)* or *Multiple Image (7)*. The suit is lightweight and there are no movement penalties.

Cost: 70,000-90,000 credits. Good availability within barbarian communities only, mainly among hunters, scouts and Eco-Wizards.

Skin, Skull & Plate Armor

Typically known as "Skull Armor," the most notable aspect of this Eco-Wizard armor is the helmet/headdress made from the skull of a suitably sized dinosaur (small predator or juvenile animal). A mantle over the chest and shoulders made of dinosaur hide and 2-4 dinner plate-sized sheets or plates from a dinosaur (Stegosaurus or other) offers protection equal to a suit of heavy M.D.C. armor, but is as lightweight as a sweater.

Creation Requirements: A properly prepared dinosaur skin for the mantle worn over the chest and shoulders, dinosaur plating, animal skin glue, leather thread and other necessary components. Additional Decoration and ornamentation is optional.

Creation Spells: Armor of Ithan (10), Breathe Without Air (5), Featherlight (10), Magic Shield (6), Energy Bolt (5), and 70 P.P.E in addition to that required for the previous spells.

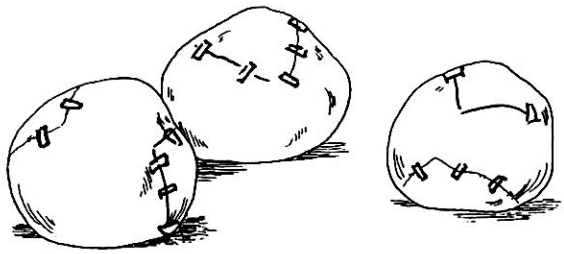
M.D.C. Protection: 6D6+68 main body and 3D6+32 for the head.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: Base M.D.C. protection (6D6+66) is constant, but a character can get an additional 20 M.D.C. (via Armor of Ithan) by pumping 5 P.P.E. into the suit. This also activates Breathe Without Air. The 20 magical M.D.C. are lost before the Base M.D.C. Duration is six minutes or until the extra 20 M.D.C. is reduced to zero.

Duration: The M.D.C. protection of the suit is constant. When all M.D.C. is lost the suit is reduced to tattered rags. The extra, magical M.D.C. and Breathe Without Air lasts for six minutes per activation of that special magic feature. Requires the wearer to spend 5 P.P.E.

Additional Magical Effects or Bonuses: The activation of the Armor of Ithan and Breathe Without Air feature effectively turns the suit into environmental armor. Very light, no movement penalties.

Cost: 100,000-150,000 credits. Good availability within barbarian communities only, mainly among Wild Knives Warriors and other raiders/fighters in the tribe.



Spoil Bombs

A favorite of barbarian tribes seeking to force trespassers off of their territory without hurting anyone or engaging in outright combat. They are silent, harmless, and do the job with efficiency. However, they can also be used in such a way that they destroy food supplies or taint stored (standing) water, both of which should force intruders to turn back to resupply or face potential trouble. If it weren't for the expense involved in creating them, and that they are destroyed upon use, they might be more prevalent; poor availability even among the barbarian tribes.

Creation Requirements: An animal bladder filled with swamp mud, stitched shut with animal thread and the seams sealed with glue.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (25), Spoil (50), and 75 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 8 P.P.E. or 16 I.S.P.

Duration: Will release its power in 1 melee round after activation or upon impact after being thrown. Use of the construct will result in its destruction as part of the course of the spell being activated.

Effect: As per the invocation spell Spoil, except the radius affected is 25 feet (7.62 m).

Cost: Rare, but disposable and thus, cheap. 9000 credits each.

Stegosaur Battle Axe

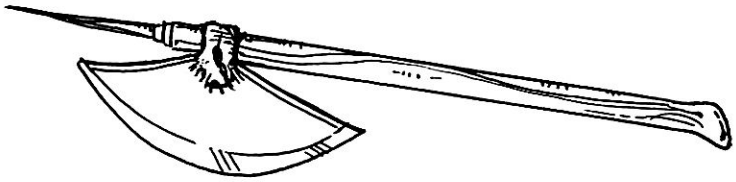
Uses the carved, shaped and sharpened back plate of a Stegosaurus or similar plate-like appendage from a dinosaur. One of the Stegosaur's smaller tail spikes is usually placed on the top for parrying and jabbing capabilities. The axe has good weight to it.

Creation Requirements: A length of strong bone or wood 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m) long, dinosaur plate (may include the bone from the shoulder blades), one Stegosaurus tail spike, and living sinew to hold the axe blade firm, animal glue to secure the spike and some leather to wrap the handle for better grip. Ornamentation is optional.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Mystic Fulcrum (5), Light Target (6), Superhuman Strength (10), and 55 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 7 P.P.E. or 14 I.S.P.

Duration: Ten minutes per activation.



Damage: Normally the weapon does S.D.C. damage (same number of dice as indicated for M.D.), but inflicts Mega-Damage when the magic is invoked. The axe blade does 3D6 M.D., the spike 1D6 M.D. and the blunt end 1D4 M.D. A two-handed power strike does 6D6 M.D. but counts as two melee attacks/actions.

Additional Effects or Bonuses: +1 to strike, +1 to disarm, and can be accurately thrown 60 feet (18.3 m).

Penalties for the User: None.

Cost: 30,000-36,000 credits. Popular among barbarian warriors, raiders and scouts.

Stegosaur Knives & Swords

Made from the carved and sharpened tail spikes, plates or bones of the Stegosaur, a creature the barbarians respect for its brute strength, independence, fighting tenacity and warrior traits (armor plating, spiked tail, etc.). These knives and swords are basically simple, sturdy, nearly unbreakable S.D.C. weapons that can be turned into Mega-Damage weapons at will.

Creation Requirements: Carved from a single length of strong bone, plating, or tail spike from a Stegosaurus and some leather to wrap the handle for a better grip.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Light Target (6), Superhuman Strength (10), and 40 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 5 P.P.E. or 10 I.S.P.

Duration: 20 minutes per activation, turns an S.D.C. dinosaur bone weapon into an M.D. weapon.

Damage: Normally the weapon does S.D.C. damage (same number of dice as indicated for M.D.), but inflicts Mega-Damage when the magic is invoked.

Knives: 1D4 or 1D6 M.D.

Short Swords: 1D6 or 2D4 M.D. – Long One-Handed Swords: 2D4 or 2D6 M.D. – Large Two-Handed Swords: 3D6 M.D. (can be used one-handed only if the warrior has a P.S. of 22 or greater or Supernatural Strength).

Additional Effects or Bonuses: Almost anyone can use these weapons because they require so little P.P.E. to activate.

Penalties for the User: None.

Cost: 7,000-15,000 credits. Virtually all barbarians own at least one of these weapons.

Stegosaur's Might

This weapon is one of the stranger, multi-purpose creations of the Eco-Wizards and is both a tool and a weapon. As a *tool*, the tapered spade or plate of the item can be used like a scythe to cut down plants/crops, clear vegetation, cut a trail, or split wood, as well as chop and dig in the earth (used for farming and digging up burrowing animals, insects and edible plant bulbs and roots). The pair of hooked Raptor claws (or other dinosaur predator's claws) can be used to rake debris or hoe the earth for planting.

As a *weapon*, the spade-like blade can be used like a scythe or long-handled axe, or it can be turned around and the twin Raptor claw-blades used to slash, impale, disarm or trip an opponent. The plate/spade and Raptor claws are always held together and attached to the wood or bone shaft by living sinew, giving it a gruesome appearance. The living sinew enables the user to adjust the angle/tilt of the spade and lock it in place, as well as adjust the angle of the Raptor claws.

Creation Requirements: A single length of strong wood or bone 3-6 feet (0.9 to 1.8 m) long, a large plate or shoulder bone of a Stegosaurus, two large Raptor claws (or claws of a similar dinosaur), 10-12 living sinew strips, and a connecting piece of bone to hold it all together. Some leather to wrap the handle for better grip is optional.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Crushing Fist (12), Manipulate Objects (4), Mystic Fulcrum (5), Shatter (5), Superhuman Strength (10), and 80 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

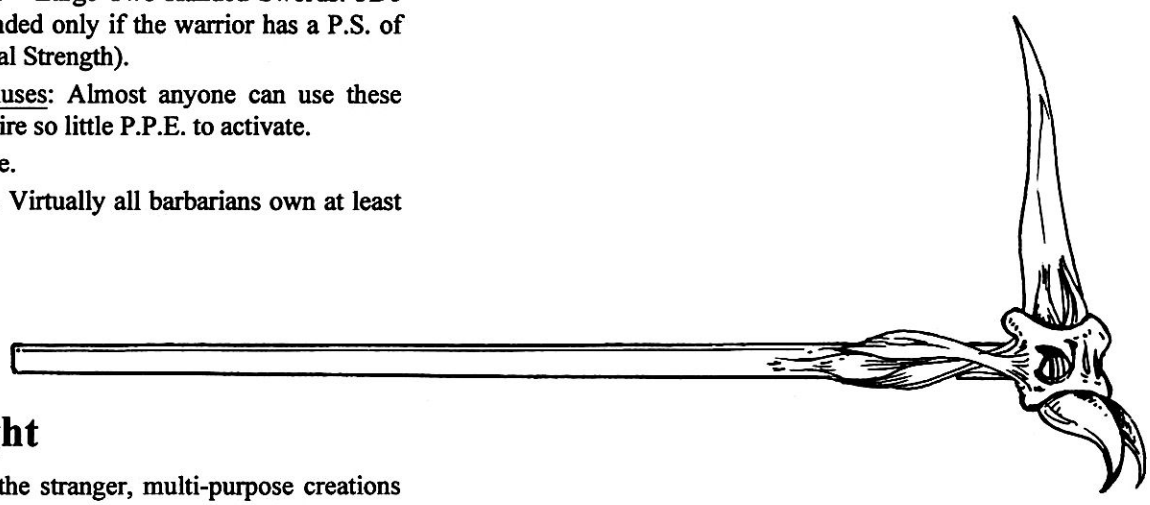
P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 8 P.P.E. or 16 I.S.P.

Duration: Ten minutes per activation.

Damage: Normally the spade/shovel side does 3D6 S.D.C. damage plus applicable P.S. damage bonuses (if any), the Raptor claws 2D6 S.D.C. and the blunt side 1D6. When the magic is activated, it turns into a Mega-Damage weapon. The spade/shovel/sickle part of the weapon/tool does 3D6+3 M.D. (double damage to S.D.C. or M.D.C. rock, concrete/brick, earth and wood), the Raptor claws do 2D6 M.D. and the blunt end does 1D6 M.D.; P.S. bonuses do not apply. A power strike using the spade/shovel end only does 6D6+3 M.D. (1D6x10+10 to rock/earth) but counts as two of the user's melee attacks/actions.

Additional Effects or Bonuses: +1 to strike.

Penalties for the User: Characters with a P.S. less than 12 or who are smaller than five feet (1.5 m) tall are -3 on all combat moves (strike, parry, dodge, etc.) when using this item.



Cost: 80,000-90,000 credits. Uncommon even among the barbarians. One in ten or twenty warriors may have one, and there may be a half a dozen in the tribe used primarily as tools.

Stegosaur Spear

A wooden shaft with a spearhead made from the spike or carved and sharpened bone from a Stegosaurus. A basic, sturdy S.D.C. spear that can be turned into a Mega-Damage weapon at will.

Creation Requirements: A length of strong, straight wood 4-6 feet (1.2 to 1.8) long, tipped with a spearhead made from the tail spike, plate or bone of a Stegosaurus, animal glue and some leather to wrap the handle and/or secure the spearhead.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Light Target (6), Fingers of the Wind (5), Energy Bolt (5), and 50 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 7 P.P.E. or 14 I.S.P.

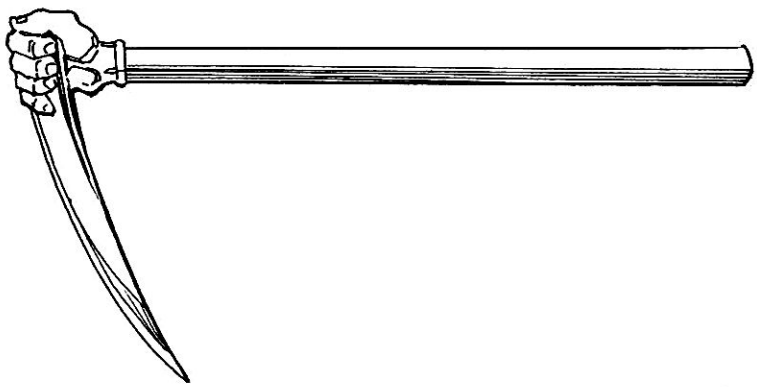
Duration: 15 minutes per activation, turns an S.D.C. spear into an M.D. weapon.

Damage: Normally the weapon does S.D.C. damage (same number of dice as indicated for M.D.), but inflicts Mega-Damage when the magic is invoked. Spear/blade end does 2D6 M.D., 3D6 M.D. if the spearhead is long and made from the tail spike of the Stegosaurus, or 1D4 M.D. from the blunt end of the weapon.

Additional Effects or Bonuses: +1 to strike when thrown. Can be accurately thrown 200 feet (61 m), which is double the usual distance for a spear. Almost anyone can use these weapons because they require so little P.P.E. to activate.

Penalties for the User: None.

Cost: 12,000-16,000 credits. Common among all the barbarian tribes.



Stegosaur Vengeance (Fire Pick)

A vicious looking war pick. The handle can be made from a single piece of carved wood or dinosaur bone, but the pick is made from the tail spike of a Stegosaurus. A few tribes like to make the spike/pike placed in a housing that is carved to look like a warrior's fist. In combat it is used to chop and stab opponents, but can also be used like a sickle to chop down vegetation, mark a trail and even chop wood, split rock, dig and mine. What makes this weapon truly different is the fact that it can unleash bolts of magical fire.

Creation Requirements: A length of strong bone or wood 2-4 feet (0.6 to 1.2 m) long, one Stegosaurus tail spike, and animal glue or living sinew to hold the spike firmly in place. Leather lashing may be used to wrap the handle for a better grip. Additional decoration, carving and ornamentation are optional.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Mystic Fulcrum (5), Light Target (6), Superhuman Strength (10), Fireblast (7), Ignite Fire (6), Fire Ball and 95 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P.

Duration: Five minutes per activation.

Damage: Normally the weapon does S.D.C. damage (same number of dice as indicated for M.D.), but inflicts Mega-Damage when the magic is invoked. The pick does 2D6 M.D. and the blunt end 1D4 M.D. A two-handed power strike does 4D6 M.D. but counts as two melee attacks/actions. Plus the weapon can burst into flame doing an additional 2D6 M.D. or shoot fire; see Additional Effects & Bonuses.

Additional Effects & Bonuses: +1 to disarm.

Mega-Damage Fire Strike: The pick portion of the weapon can be made to burst into flame, adding an additional 2D6 M.D. to the weapon's normal damage. The fire can be maintained throughout the duration of the enchantment or turned on and off at will. Making the pick burn or go out happens in an instant and does not use up a melee attack.

Long-Range Fire Attacks: Fireblast: 50 feet (15.2 m) and does 3D6 M.D., Fire Ball: 200 feet (61 m) and does 4D6 M.D.; each blast counts as one of the wielder's melee attacks/actions.

Penalties for the User: None.

Cost: 60,000-75,000 credits. Popular among barbarian warriors, raiders and scouts.

Stegosaur Trident

The classic, three-pronged trident made from the spikes of a Stegosaur's tail attached to a shaft of wood. A basic, sturdy S.D.C. spear that can be turned into a Mega-Damage weapon at will.

Creation Requirements: A length of strong, straight wood 4-6 feet (1.2 to 1.8) long, tipped with three tail spikes of a Stegosaurus, each approximately the same length (may come from different animals), animal glue and some leather to wrap the handle and secure the spikes.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Mystic Fulcrum (5), Light Target (6), Fingers of the Wind (5), Energy Bolt (5), and 60 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

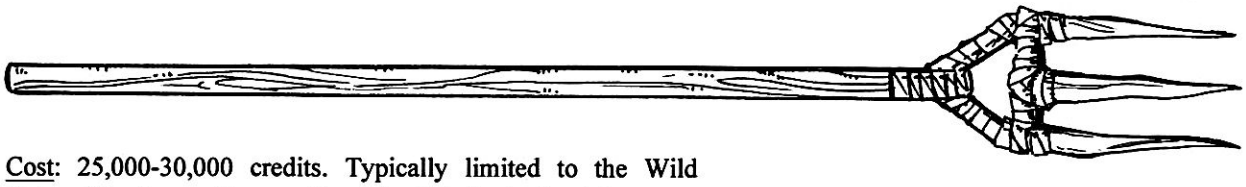
P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P.

Duration: 10 minutes per activation, turns an S.D.C. trident into an M.D. weapon.

Damage: Normally the weapon does S.D.C. damage (same number of dice as indicated for M.D.), but inflicts Mega-Damage when the magic is invoked. The forked end does 4D6 M.D. or 1D4 M.D. from the blunt end.

Additional Effects or Bonuses: +1 to parry, +1 to entangle/trip and +2 to disarm. Can be accurately thrown 150 feet (46 m), which is double the usual distance for a trident.

Penalties for the User: None.



Cost: 25,000-30,000 credits. Typically limited to the Wild Knives Warriors, raiders and bandits of the barbarian tribes.

Thunder Horn Spear (or Pike)

Made from the large, heavy horn of a Triceratops or similar horned dinosaur, it is 30% longer than most spears, with the animal's horn making up about one third of the overall length.

It cracks with the sound of thunder when it hits its mark; no sound when it misses. Surprisingly light and balanced after it has been enchanted and can be tossed twice the distance of a normal spear.

Creation Requirements: A length of strong, straight wood 5-6 feet (1.5 to 1.8 m) long, tipped with a spearhead that is the horn of a Triceratops or similar horned dinosaur (2-3 feet/0.6-0.9 m long), plus animal glue and some leather to wrap the handle and/or secure the spear head.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Light Target (6), Fingers of the Wind (5), Featherlight (10), Energy Bolt (5), Superhuman Strength (10), Thunder Clap (4) and 75 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P.

Duration: 10 minutes per activation, turns an S.D.C. spear into an M.D. weapon.

Damage: Normally the weapon does S.D.C. damage (same number of dice as indicated for M.D.), but inflicts Mega-Damage when the magic is invoked. Spear/horn end does 4D6 M.D. or 1D6 M.D. from the blunt end.

Additional Effects or Bonuses: +1 to parry and +1 to strike when thrown. Flies straight and true despite the long, curved horn of the spear blade, and can be accurately thrown 200 feet (61 m), which is double the usual distance for a spear. The spear unleashes a Thunderclap roughly equivalent to a shotgun blast when the spear strikes (no sound if it misses its mark). Used in hunting, the sound of thunder will usually frighten and scatter the rest of the herd or pack, isolating the animal under attack, as well as startling and confusing the animal the spear has struck (the animal is -1 on all combat rolls, and loses initiative and one melee attack for that round). Penalties apply only to wild animals, not intelligent beings. In addition, most other animals, dinosaur predators included, usually move away from the sound of thunder.

Penalties for the User: None per se. If there is a negative feature, it is that the Thunderclap may attract other humanoids, especially other barbarians who are likely to recognize what the sound means.

Cost: 45,000-55,000 credits. Typically limited to the Wild Knives Warriors and hunters of the barbarian tribes.

Thunder & Lightning Spear

Basically the same as the Thunder Spear, above, only the wood is bleached white, feathers are attached just below the spearhead and the weapon inflicts electrical damage when it strikes.

Creation Requirements: A length of strong, straight wood 5-6 feet (1.5 to 1.8 m) long, tipped with a spearhead that is the horn of a Triceratops or similar horned dinosaur (2-3 feet/0.6-0.9 m long), plus animal glue and some leather to wrap the handle and/or secure the spearhead.

Creation Spells: Power Weapon (35), Light Target (6), Fingers of the Wind (5), Featherlight (10), Energy Bolt (5), Superhuman Strength (10), Thunder Clap (4), Call Lightning (15), Electric Arc (8) and 110 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 12 P.P.E. or 24 I.S.P.

Duration: Five minutes per activation, turns an S.D.C. spear into an M.D. weapon.

Damage: Normally the weapon does S.D.C. damage (same number of dice as indicated for M.D.), but inflicts Mega-Damage when the magic is invoked. Spear/horn does 4D6 M.D. or 1D6 M.D. from the blunt end. Plus the weapon can unleash an electrical blast when it hits, doing an additional 3D6 M.D., or shoot an electrical blast; see Additional Effects & Bonuses.

Additional Effects & Bonuses: +1 to strike when thrown. Flies straight and true despite the long, curved horn of the spear blade, and can be accurately thrown 200 feet (61 m), which is double the usual distance for a spear. It unleashes a Thunderclap roughly equivalent to a shotgun blast when the spear strikes (no sound if it misses its mark).

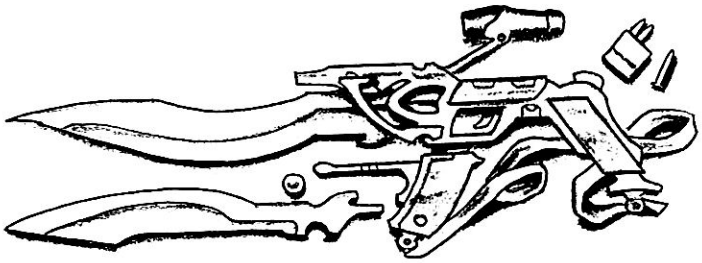
Mega-Damage Lightning Strike: The spear unleashes an electrical discharge adding 3D6 M.D. to the weapon's normal stabbing/spear damage (only does damage when it stabs/hits a target/opponent as part of an attack, not when parrying or striking with the blunt portion). The electrical aspect can be maintained throughout the duration of the enchantment or turned on and off at will. Making the spear electrified happens in an instant and does not use up a melee attack.

Long-Range Electric Arc Attack: 50 feet (15.2 m) and does 2D6 M.D. Each blast counts as one of the spear wielder's melee attacks/actions.

Penalties for the User: None per se. If there is a negative feature, it is that the Thunderclap may attract other humanoids, especially other barbarians who are likely to recognize what the sound means.

Cost: 80,000-100,000 credits. Typically limited to the Wild Knives Warriors and hunters of the barbarian tribes.

Note: The spear may also be made to into a Thunder and Lightning Trident with the same stats and cost.



Techno-Wizard Equipment

Most Techno-Wizard equipment produced for use in Dinosaur Swamp is directed toward survival and wilderness exploration. Techno-Wizardry provides for some of the most efficient survival equipment that can be produced and the cost is usually well worth the price. They have a potentially limitless supply of energy, operate cleanly and quietly, and a single, lightweight TW device can take the place of literally hundreds of pounds of conventional supplies and gear. This is especially true in water creation and purification devices, generators, and portable shelters. Some of the best funded and most well equipped expeditions, particularly those from Lazlo and New Lazlo, make more use of Techno-Wizard gear than they do conventional equipment. Likewise, many professionals – Wilderness Scouts, Dinosaur Hunters, Naturalists, Explorers – make a point of acquiring TW devices to help them survive and navigate in the wild.

TW Animal Repellent – Whistle Clickers

Many adventurers scoff at something so small and humorous, but when one is used to frighten off a hungry pack of Raptors, no one laughs. With predators a constant danger to adventurers and exploration teams, these TW Animal Repellents can literally be a life saver. The Whistle Clickers have two components, a whistle part and a "clicker" part patterned after the WW II "crickets" carried by Allied paratroopers. They can come in simple, plain designs or elaborately decorated pieces of jewelry.

Creation Requirements: Generally some sort of whistle and "clicker" combination, with a single small quartz crystal wrapped in wire inside the whistle instead of the traditional "pea."

Creation Spells: Energy Bolt (5), Repel Animals (7), Thunderclap (4), and 50 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 3 P.P.E. or 6 I.S.P. to Repel Animals, and 2 P.P.E. or 4 I.S.P. to sound the Thunderclap.

Duration: Immediate.

M.D.C. of the TW Device: 1D6 M.D.C.

Magical Effects or Bonuses: Functions as if someone just cast the spell invocation *Repel Animals* or *Thunderclap* as appropriate. The whistle activates the Repel Animals and the clicker activates the Thunderclap.

Cost: 30,000 credits; good availability.

TW Cleansing Bowl

One of the inescapable hazards of traveling in the wilds is getting dirty. There just isn't any way to avoid it. Keeping clean isn't only a matter of aesthetics and keeping pleasant company, it's a matter of health. Given the disease laden swamps and marshes, keeping one's body and clothes clean and free of surface parasites and germs should be a high priority for anyone traveling the region. To help facilitate this, the TW Cleansing Bowl is a powerful, handy device that not only keeps the traveler's body clean, but also magically washes their clothing.

The TW device itself is as basic as they come, a portable wash basin and laundry machine all wrapped into one. The wash basin is just a large bowl or cooking pot whose magic is activated by either dry-washing one's hands in it (instantly cleans the entire body as if the character had taken a bath), or placing a pile of dirty laundry inside the bowl and, in both cases, infusing it with P.P.E. It may sound mundane, but it's a necessity, and the device does away with the need for clean water, soap and detergents.

Creation Requirements: A large metal, ceramic or high-impact resistant plastic bowl or pot with a single, large, clear quartz crystal fastened to the bottom by a wire cage.

Creation Spells: Energy Bolt (5), Cleanse (6), and 35 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 6 P.P.E. or 12 I.S.P.

M.D.C. of the TW Device: 10 M.D.C.

Duration: Immediate results.

Effect: As per the Invocation spell *Cleanse.*

Cost: 80,000 credits. Fair to good availability.

TW Food & Water Purifier

One of the worst fates that can befall a large group of adventurers is to have their food supply spoiled. This can happen as a result of faulty packaging, poor preservation methods, bad equipment, sabotage, poor planning, heat, moisture, insects, etc. Food lost through insect infestation, disease, and spoilage may be harder to replace than one might think, especially if there is no one trained in Wilderness Survival or Hunting. Likewise, though the adventurers may be in the middle of a swamp, finding good, clean drinking water may be difficult, and drinking polluted or contaminated water can result in dysentery and disease. In the category of equipment that it's better to have and not need, the TW Food and Water Purifier is at the top of the list. Not only will the device purify water and foods placed inside (turning rotten or larvae infested meat or vegetables to edible food), but it can also "flash cook" the food, or "flash boil" the water in an instant.

Creation Requirements: A metal, ceramic or tough plastic pot with a mechanized flip-top lid hinged to the pot. A dial on the lid indicates the desired result (i.e., Food Purification, Water Purification, Flash Cook, Flash Boil – each with a symbol to indi-

cate each function). A series of red rubies worth a minimum of 1000 credits each line the rim of the pot, linked with a complex series of metal wires shaped like fanning flames.

Creation Spells: Energy Bolt (5), Ignite Fire (6), Fuel Flame (5), Purification (20), and 150 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 20 P.P.E. or 40 I.S.P.

Duration: Results within 1D6 seconds.

M.D.C. of the TW Device: 10-40 M.D.C. depending on the size (the bigger it is the greater the M.D.C.).

Magical Effect or Bonus: As the Invocation spell Purification, except the amount of food or water is limited by the size of the pot (typically 2-5 gallons), and radioactive contamination cannot be eliminated by the TW Purifier. Any food or fluid placed in the container comes out fresh and good to eat. **Note:** Food and drink that has been spoiled for longer than 10 days cannot be restored and purified. Any food beyond the machine's capabilities will cause a buzzer to sound and a tiny red light to flash indicating the food is no good.

Cost: 40,000-50,000 credits. Good availability.

TW Ghillie Suit

Wildly popular among Wilderness Scouts, especially the Dinosaur Hunters, the TW Ghillie suit was one of the first TW devices to be produced for wilderness regions. The suit looks like a traditional handcrafted Ghillie suit, made of mesh with leaves, branches and other natural detritus to break up the human silhouette. However, recent styles also include those made in the form of overcoats, capes, and cloaks, as well as hunting vests and pants with numerous pockets built into it. The Techno-Wizard Ghillie Suit, however, has the specific advantage of being effective as normal camouflage and exceptionally effective when its magical abilities are activated. This is why many Wilderness Scouts choose it over any other type of camouflage clothing, or even personal body armor.

Creation Requirements: An intact piece of clothing interlaced with wire mesh tied into three small to medium-sized emeralds, each worth approximately 2000 credits. The emeralds are usually used to replace three buttons that may have been on the garment.

Creation Spells: Energy Bolt (5), Chameleon (6) and Globe of Silence (20), plus 100 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P.

Duration: 20 minutes.

M.D.C. of the TW Device: 18 M.D.C. Main Body.

Magical Effects or Bonuses: As per the Invocation spells *Chameleon* and *Globe of Silence* combined; adding a +20% to Camouflage and Blend skills, and +15 to Prowl. The range on the Globe of Silence is reduced to cover only the wearer and the area within approximately one foot (0.3 m) around his body.

Cost: 300,000 to 500,000 credits. Expensive, but a favorite. Fair availability.

TW Lantern Poles

Rather than travel with fuel oil lanterns, or even solar or battery powered electric lights, adventurers can travel with the much less troublesome TW Lantern Poles. There are two varieties, one that uses the spell *Lantern Light*, the other using the much more powerful *Globe of Daylight*. The Globe of Daylight version has the added advantage of keeping vampires and other supernatural creatures afraid of or harmed by natural sunlight at bay. Essentially a large quartz crystal is enclosed in a wire mesh lantern housing that hooks to a pole. The pole can be tied or hooked onto, or slid into, a backpack so that the lantern dangles over the head of the traveler, carried by hand like a walking stick or staff, or stuck in the ground at campsite. A weighted base to hold the pole is an optional purchase (10 credits) and suitable for use indoors or out. The mesh lantern portion can also be unlatched and removed to set on a tabletop, hung from a tree branch, carried by hand, and so forth. TW Lantern Poles are multipurpose, sturdy and reliable pieces of survival equipment that can be counted on in all types of weather, including torrential downpours and even underwater!

Creation Requirements: A wood, plastic or metal shaft, typically 5-7 feet (1.5 to 2.1 m) tall with a wire mesh lantern attached to the top of it, one or two large, clear quartz crystals worth at least 100 credits total for the *Lantern Light* version, or one clear quartz crystal worth at least 400 credits for the *Globe of Daylight* version. The crystal is housed in a tight wire mesh inside of a glass sphere suspended inside of a metal framework cage complete with a handle on top.

Creation Spells: Energy Bolt (5) and either Lantern Light (1) *or* Globe of Daylight (2), and 55 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 2 P.P.E. or 4 I.S.P. for the Lantern Light version, or 4 P.P.E. or 8 I.S.P. for the Globe of Daylight version.

M.D.C. of the TW Device: Lantern 12 M.D.C. – Pole: 18 M.D.C.

Duration: 4 hours for the Lantern Light version, 2 hours for the Globe of Daylight version.

Magical Effect: Functions as per the spell invocation Lantern Light or Globe of Daylight. A knob on the lantern can "dial down" the intensity of the light by as much as half.

Cost: 10,000 credits for the Lantern Light, and 20,000 to 25,000 credits for the Globe of Daylight. Good availability and very popular in Dinosaur Swamp.

TW Med-Shooter

What is essentially a TW converted Compu-Drug Dispenser, the TW Med-Shooter is a staple in any magically equipped medical kit. The chemical storage unit has been removed and replaced with three crystals in a rotating cylinder apparatus. Each crystal serves to produce a different desired effect, with some providing healing medicines, while others produce some very harmful results. Characters of good alignment will most likely not have the more unsavory crystals built into the device, while selfish and evil aligned characters may want them all.

Creation Requirements: A Compu-Drug Dispenser, materials to modify the chemical storage unit, and a specific crystal for each effect desired. Each Med-Shooter can only hold three Medical

Crystals at a time, each loaded by hand. Each Medical Crystal is a crystalline stone wrapped in wire and contained in a small glass container that is loaded into the Dispenser. Each Med Crystal has two magical charges that induce the desired effect. All act instantly and all have the same impact as the spell they contain. A Techno-Wizard (or Eco-Wizard or Bio-Wizard) can recharge the spent crystal by spending the P.P.E. required to cast the spell +70 P.P.E. The cost for this service is usually 75% of the original cost for two doses, but can be as much as 50% to 200% greater depending on the seller and circumstance.

Creation Spells: Energy Bolt (5), specific spells as needed per effect (see below), and 150 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: Varies depending on the specific spells.

Range: Touch. The Compu-Drug Dispenser must touch the body of the person its *medicine* is intended for.

Duration: Immediate results. Duration of effects is the same as the spell as if it were cast by a fifth level mage.

Saving Throw vs Magic: Those who resist the magic need to roll a 14 or higher, but suffer a penalty of -2 to do so.

M.D.C. of the TW Device: 2 M.D.C.

Magical Effect: The spell is listed first, followed by the activation cost in P.P.E, then the crystal needed and the average cost for a two dose Med Crystal. Duration of effects is the same as the spell as if it were cast by a fifth level mage.

Agony (20): 16 P.P.E. or 32 I.S.P. to activate. Yellow or Brown Diamond. Cost: 400,000 credits.

Blind (6): 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P. to activate. Black Sapphire. Cost: 300,000 credits.

Breathe Without Air (5): 3 P.P.E. or 6 I.S.P. to activate. Blue Sapphire. Cost: 200,000 credits. 10 minute duration.

Cure Illness (15): 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P. to activate. Rose Quartz. Cost: 500,000 credits.

Cure Minor Disorders (10): 8 P.P.E. or 16 I.S.P. to activate. Garnet. Cost: 200,000 credits.

Domination (10): 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P. to activate. Amethyst Quartz. Cost: 200,000 credits.

Fear (5): 5 P.P.E. or 10 I.S.P. to activate. Green Crystal. Cost: 170,000 credits.

Fortify Against Disease (15): 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P. to activate. Red Agate. Cost: 100,000 credits.

Hallucination (30): 25 P.P.E. or 50 I.S.P. to activate. Star Sapphire. Cost: 200,000 credits.

Light Healing (6): 3 P.P.E. or 6 I.S.P. to activate. Ruby Quartz. Cost: 80,000 credits.

Negate Poison/Toxin (5): 3 P.P.E. or 6 I.S.P. to activate. Topaz. Cost: 50,000 credits.

Paralysis: Lesser (5): 3 P.P.E. or 6 I.S.P. to activate. Smoky Quartz. Cost: 100,000 credits.

Sleep (10): 8 P.P.E. or 16 I.S.P. to activate. Pink Quartz or Sapphire. Cost: 100,000 credits.

Trance (10): 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P. to activate. Citrine Quartz. Cost: 150,000 credits.

Cost: 50,000 credits for the delivery mechanism/dispenser, plus the cost of each "Medical Crystal." One cannot be used without the other. Poor availability of both the dispenser and most Medical Crystals.

TW Shelter

Developed to offer something more than a standard tent, the TW Shelter takes up much less storage space, and sets up in less time. It is a no-frills, lightweight magic camping tent that doesn't get torn or holes poked in it, is impervious to fire, and does not collapse under the weight of too much snow. Simple, elegant and practical, TW Shelters come in several sizes, ranging from the standard two person, four person and six person dome tents, to a large, hut-like structure with enough height that those inside can stand up without their heads touching the ceiling. The largest TW Shelters can serve as sleeping quarters for 8-12 people, or be used as a supply shed, mess tent, expedition headquarters, and similar needs. The TW shelter is lit by a single light at the peak of the shelter, and the light will dim or brighten at a spoken command.

The shelter's only physical components are the respective four to twelve tent stakes topped with gemstones that are placed in the ground at the perimeter of the desired shelter location and at the points of the desired shape that the shelter is to take. The stakes must be within the confines of the area of effect for the magic to be effective, and they will not activate unless they are within range of one another.

Creation Requirements: 4-12 metal tent stakes, depending on the size of the shelter, topped with red agates, each worth at least 100 credits.

Creation Spells: Energy Bolt (5), Sheltering Force (20), Lantern Light (1), and 65 P.P.E. for the small and medium tents, 90 for large dome style shelters, and 120 P.P.E. for the large, hut style shelters, in addition to the P.P.E. required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P. for the small and medium versions, 20 P.P.E. or 40 I.S.P. for large, and 40 P.P.E. or 80 I.S.P. for the large hut shelters.

Duration: 24 hours.

M.D.C. of the TW Device: Small: 50 M.D.C., Medium: 100 M.D.C., Large: 150 M.D.C., Very Large: 200 M.D.C. – 30 M.D.C. per tent stake.

Magical Effects: As per the Invocation spells Sheltering Force and Lantern Light.

Cost: Small & Medium: 40,000 credits. Large: 80,000 credits. Very Large/Hut: 130,000 credits.

TW Sustain Belt

Another subtle, but powerful, everyday TW item created with explorers in mind. The enchantment is usually built into a utility belt, web vest, or harness, replacing several buttons and snaps with small crystals. These belts can come in much more complex varieties, including some extremely rare and even more expensive versions that include pouches with Dimensional Pocket enchantments and other exotic forms of magic built in, but they are exceedingly rare (and 3-10x the price).

Creation Requirements: Typically a modern utility belt, web vest, or harness with at least six emeralds worth a minimum of 3000 credits each integrated into it.

Creation Spells: Energy Bolt (5), Sustain (12), and 250 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 25 P.P.E. or 50 I.S.P.

Duration: 48 hours per activation.

M.D.C. of the TW Device: 2-8 M.D.C. depending on size.

Magical Effects: As per the spell invocation *Sustain*, except that should the wearer remove the belt, the magic immediately expires/stops.

Cost: 350,000 credits. Poor to fair availability at cities of magic, unheard of elsewhere, except Dinosaur Swamp where outsiders regularly visit. Coveted by Wilderness Scouts, hunters and barbarians, but costs more than most could ever afford.

TW Watchguard Poles

Sometimes combined with the TW Lantern Poles, TW Watchguard Poles are good for groups that don't have the necessary manpower to post sentries around the entire perimeter. Each Watchguard Pole operates independently to warn if an intruder comes within its range, but placement can make them effectively interlinked with no "holes" in the invisible sensor fence. When an intruder is detected (anything that is the size of a medium, 40 pound/18 kg dog, or larger), the pole alerts the individual who activated it. That individual knows the exact location of the intrusion and a rough idea of how many (one, two, a few or many), and the tripped Watchguard Pole emits a bright, flashing strobe light noticeable by everyone within 100 yards/meters. The flashing usually scares off most animals, except predators and intelligent beings, though they may both be smart enough to take cover and wait to see who comes to investigate. The Pole can be reset by turning it off with a verbal command from the person who activated it, and reactivating it (at the full 7 P.P.E. cost).

Creation Requirements: Similar to the TW Lantern Poles, except the necessary crystal is a large Alexandrite worth at least 6,000 credits.

Creation Spells: Energy Bolt (5), Watchguard (10), Lantern Light (1), Blinding Flash (1), and 95 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 7 P.P.E. or 14 I.S.P.

Duration: 8 hours per activation.

M.D.C. of the TW Device: Lantern (for the warning light): 12 M.D.C. – Pole: 16 M.D.C.

Magical Effect: As described above.

Cost: 40,000 credits per each Pole (+10,000 if also a TW Lantern Pole). Poor to fair availability at cities of magic. Poor to no availability elsewhere, except Dinosaur Swamp where outsiders regularly visit.

TW Water Well

Rather than depend on finding a supply of fresh water in the wilderness and then purifying it for drinking and washing, some explorers prefer to take a reliable supply of water with them. Some water supplies in Dinosaur Swamp are radioactive or otherwise contaminated with something that cannot always be purified, even with magic. Instead of trying to transport the necessary water, the TW Water Well magically creates fresh water as needed! Constructed from a water pump and attached catch basin, this unit can supply a large group of travelers with an unlimited supply of fresh, clean water for the extent of their expedition.

Creation Requirements: A manually operated water pump with a tripod stand, an integrated catch basin, and 6 large aquamarine crystals worth at least 2000 credits each.

Creation Spells: Energy Bolt (5), Create Water (15), and 200 P.P.E. in addition to that required for the previous spells.

P.P.E. Cost to Activate: 10 P.P.E. or 20 I.S.P.

Duration: Immediate results.

M.D.C. of the TW Device: 60 M.D.C.

Magical Effect: Create fresh, drinkable water, up to 10 gallons (37.8 liters) per activation.

Cost: 175,000 credits. Poor to fair availability at cities of magic. Poor to no availability elsewhere, even in Dinosaur Swamp.

Necromancy Items

Necromancers are an undeniable part of the landscape in Dinosaur Swamp. Dinosaurs are powerful monsters as feared as any demon or alien creature from a Rift. It's no wonder that Necromancers would be drawn to them for use in their own personal magic. Most Necromancers will try to obtain limbs, bones and other body parts from small or young dinosaurs, as the adult sizes are often unwieldy. However, a Necromancer can make due with adult parts, as they will shrink with the augmentation magic to be in proportion with the character. However, the larger the part is, the harder it is to store and transport.

Every dinosaur limb, tooth and claw exudes power, both physical and psychological, and Necromancers crave them for it. While a Necromancer is automatically granted a certain amount of fear and respect among practitioners of magic, one empowered by dinosaur parts garners a level of respect greater than most and is put on a higher plane even among their own kind. Couple that with an entourage of skeletal dinosaur companions, and that respect turns to fear. Necromancers from Africa and other faraway places have been known to attempt the journey across the Atlantic for the opportunity to hunt in the North American southeast for dinosaurs. Most do not survive the journey or survive the wilds, but that hasn't stopped them from coming.

Within the forests and marshland of Dinosaur Swamp there are plenty of dinosaurs and animals to hunt and scavenge. There is no shortage of places for a Death Mage to create a lair, or

even attempt to build himself a kingdom, and most importantly, there is blessed isolation. Despite the city of Char, small human settlements and the various barbarian tribes, there are still hundreds of square miles of uninhabited territory belonging to whomever is powerful enough to claim it and hold it for themselves. With the fall of Tolkeen, some of those fleeing the aftermath of the conflict have begun to migrate to the wilds of the southeast in search of safety, solitude, and perhaps a chance to rebuild their power base or plot for another chance to strike back at the Coalition. Those who have chosen to take up the Necromantic arts dream of invading Chi-Town (or at least CS border towns and military outposts) with an army of dead dinosaurs at their command. Who knows what dreams may grow into reality from the fertile depths of the swamps, or what power they may be able to cultivate in the coming years? It's an important question whose answer is yet to come.

Dinosaur Skulls

Typically worn as a helmet or headdress, skulls are highly prized items.

T-Rex/Large Predator: P.P.E. Cost: 30. Provides the following powers: 20 M.D.C., +4 to the Necromancer's personal Horror Factor rating, +8 to save vs Horror Factor, +4 to save vs disease and poison, track by following blood scent or decaying flesh: 85%, can cast the spell invocation *Domination* (5 P.P.E.) and has a bite attack that inflicts 3D6 M.D.

Raptor/Small Predator: P.P.E. Cost: 20. Provides the following powers: 8 M.D.C., +1 to the Necromancer's personal Horror Factor rating, +4 to save vs Horror Factor, track by following blood scent or decaying flesh: 70%, and has a bite attack that inflicts 1D6 M.D.

Sauropod/Herbivore: P.P.E. Cost: 20. Provides the following powers: 30 M.D.C., +5 to save vs Disease and Poison, and has a head butt attack that inflicts 1D4 M.D.

Triceratops/Horned Herbivore: P.P.E. Cost: 25. Provides the following powers: 20 M.D.C., +3 to save vs Disease and Poison, and has a head butt attack that inflicts 2D6 M.D.

Dinosaur Limbs/Feet

Used to enhance the Necromancer's running capabilities, feet can also be used to inflict some devastating kick attacks.

Predator: P.P.E. Cost: 25. Provides the following powers: +15 to the Spd attribute, can run at a burst that's twice the character's normal running speed for one melee round (15 seconds), can leap 20 feet (6.1 m) high or lengthwise, and has a kick attack that inflicts 2D6 M.D.

Running Herbivore: P.P.E. Cost: 35. Provides the following powers: +25 to the Spd attribute, can leap 30 feet (9.1 m) high or lengthwise, and +2 to dodge.

Sauropod: P.P.E. Cost: 40. Provides the following powers: +8 to the Spd attribute, has excellent balance, can detect low frequency vibrations through the ground (such as explosions, earthquakes, thunder, stampeding animals, and even robot vehicles) from 30 miles (48 km) away, has a kick attack that does 1D6 M.D. and a stomp attack that inflicts 1D6+3 M.D.

Dinosaur Forearm Claws

The most commonly desired dinosaur parts, no Necromancer can resist owning a set of forearm claws.

T-Rex/Large Predator: P.P.E. Cost: 25. Provides the following powers: +1 to strike and parry, inflicts 1D4 M.D. from punches, and add +2 to the P.S. attribute. The claws are clumsy and do not have an opposable thumb, making them extremely poor at grasping weapons or tools: -50% to skill performance when using modern vehicles and machines, -5 to strike using guns.

Raptor/Small Predator: P.P.E. Cost: 35. Provides the following powers: +2 to strike and parry, inflicts 1D6 M.D. from punches, +2 to the P.P. attribute, and +10% to Climb. The claws do have partial opposable thumbs, but are not as agile as humanoid hands: -15% to skill performance when using modern machines and vehicles, -2 to strike using guns.

Running Bipedal Herbivore: P.P.E. Cost: 25. Provides the following powers: +2 to parry and entangle, inflicts 1D4 M.D. from punches, and +2 to the P.E. attribute. The claws do have partial opposable thumbs, but are not as agile as humanoid hands: -15% to skill performance when using modern machines and vehicles, -2 to strike using guns.

Dinosaur Tails

Prized as much as an extra appendage as for their enhancement of running abilities. Tails are also popular raw materials among Necromancers.

Predator: P.P.E. Cost: 25. Provides the following powers: +20% to balance, +3 to roll with impact/fall, +1 to dodge, +5 to the Spd attribute, provides one additional attack per melee and a tail strike inflicts 1D6 M.D.

Herbivore: P.P.E. Cost: 25. Provides the following powers: +2 to roll with impact/fall, +3 to the Spd attribute, provides one additional attack per melee, and a tail strike inflicts 1D4 M.D.C. from small tails, 3D4 M.D. from long, thick or whip-like tails, and 3D6 M.D. for large, bony club-like or spiked tails.

Armored Spikes, Spines & Plates

Excellent for a Necromancer to add a layer of natural armor, they are also heavy and unwieldy to transport. Most Necromancers will only carry these with them when they are expecting to go into battle.

Limbs: P.P.E. Cost: 35. Applying spikes and armor plates to the Necromancer's limbs provides the following powers: 20 M.D.C., +2 to roll with impact/fall, +1 to P.E. attribute, +1 to save vs magic, and a punch or kick from the character inflicts an extra 1D6 M.D. However, the plates are extremely heavy, adding 50 lbs (22.5 kg) to the character's weight, and inflicting a -6 penalty to the Spd attribute and -5% to skills involving mobility, including Acrobatics, Gymnastics, Climbing, Swimming and Prowl. A character must armor a minimum of two limbs to benefit from these powers, but armoring more than two does not grant any additional bonuses. These powers and bonuses are in addition to any that may be gained from armoring the torso and body in this manner.

Torso and body: P.P.E. Cost: 50. Applying spikes and armor plates to the character's torso and body provides the follow-

ing powers: 30 M.D.C., +2 to roll with impact/fall, +2 to P.E. attribute, +1 to save vs magic, +2 to save vs poison, and a body block from the character inflicts 1D6 M.D. However, the plates are extremely heavy, adding 50 lbs (22.5 kg) to the character's weight, and inflicting a penalty of -10 to the Spd attribute and -15% to skills involving mobility, including Acrobatics, Gymnastics, Climbing, Swimming and Prowl. These powers and bonuses are in addition to any that may be gained from armoring the limbs in this manner.

Dinosaur Tongue

One of the more unusual powers that a Necromancer may draw upon is that of the union with a dinosaur tongue.

Predator: P.P.E. Cost: 17. Provides the following powers: The Necromancer can emit an air shattering roar that behaves exactly like the spell invocation Thunderclap (2 P.P.E.), and he can also track by scent at a base skill of 35% (+10% to follow blood scent).

Herbivore: P.P.E. Cost: 10. Provides the following powers: The Necromancer can locate fresh, drinkable water within one mile (1.6 km) of his present location with 75% proficiency and is +15% to identify herbs, fruits, plants and poison by tastes.

Dinosaur/Pterosaur Wings

The wings must have a span at least as wide as the Necromancer is tall, and they must also be strapped to the Necromancer's back for the magic to be activated. Once they are activated, the wings (leather or partially feathered) will shrink to proportion to fit his body, if necessary. P.P.E. Cost: 35. Provides the character with a maximum flying speed of 40 mph (64 km). However, the wing membranes will join with the arms and legs of the Necromancer, making walking and using handheld items clumsy; reduce running speed by 50% and all combat bonuses also by 50%.

Vehicles of Dinosaur Swamp

Transportation is difficult and varied throughout the wilds of Dinosaur Swamp. The southeastern wilderness is vast and the terrain varies from rugged mountains and dense forests, to lowlands swamps and everything in between. It is populated by barbarian tribes, dinosaurs, natural and supernatural predators, bandits, adventurers, explorers, and a host of animals great and small. Getting from one point to another can take time. It is not like getting in one's car and taking the highway. Speaking of which, there are no highways, nor mass transit system.

The most basic form of transportation is good ol' foot power and shoe leather. Among adventurers and explorers from the Midwest, hovercycles are extremely popular and work on most terrains, even marshlands and shallow swamps. However, the telltale whine of their engines makes them, at times, rather conspicuous, alerting people in the region to their presence, chasing away game animals and attracting curious and hungry predators. (See the **Rifts® Game Master Guide**, page 253, for a range of hovercycles and rocket bikes.)

Other popular vehicles are the *Mountaineer, Big Boss* and similar types of SUVs/Jeeps/ATVs. They are excellent for crossing broken roads, and rugged terrain, but are blocked by dense forests, and get stuck in the sucking mud of most marshes and swamps. The larger vehicles work better as mobile homes and base camps where smaller, lighter vehicles and personnel are dispatched.

Robot vehicles and power armor are also good modes of transportation in the wilderness, but unless the armor or vehicle can float or fly, they too may get stuck in the marshlands and swamps, or at least see their speed reduced by half. This includes the popular *Behemoth Explorer* class of vehicles from Titan Robotics. Rumor has it that Deearn Neenok is planning another expedition into Dinosaur Swamp in late 109 or early 110 P.A., and has approached Titan Robotics to design and construct an amphibious version of the famous walker model for his central operations vehicle.

The following pages present a selection of popular vehicles from a variety of manufacturers used to navigate the wilderness of Dinosaur Swamp. Everyone from Northern Gun, the Manistique Imperium, Golden Age Weaponsmiths and even the Coalition States produce similar versions of these vehicles, all of which are available from their respective manufacturers and on the Black Market.

Bicycles

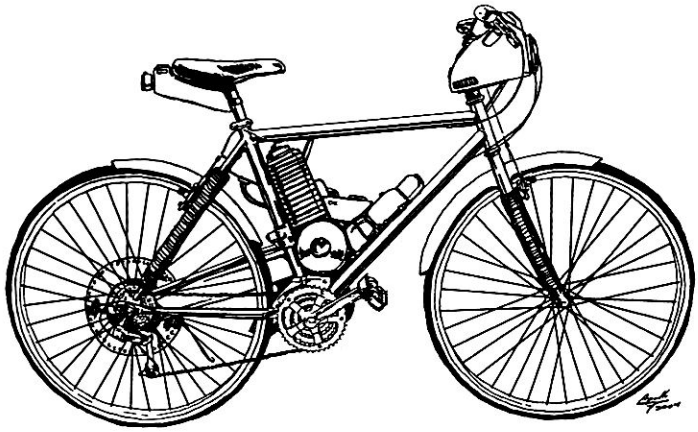
Sturdy mountain and dirt bikes are extremely popular with settlers, traveling merchants, Wilderness Scouts and even barbarians. Bicycles are fast, quiet, and give off no heat signature or emissions of any kind. They don't require fuel, are lightweight, require very little in the way of maintenance, and repairs are inexpensive and easy to make. A tire repair kit and basic tools can be carried in a pocket, or, at most, a belt pouch, and parts are available to purchase or easy to scavenge. Bicycles can even be loaded down and used as a handcart if necessary, while the operator walks along side. **(Author's Note:** If there is any doubt about the usefulness of bicycles, keep in mind that between the years 1970 and 2000, over 2 billion bicycles were built and sold, and the number of people who use a bicycle for their primary utilitarian/transportation needs has topped 1 billion worldwide, half of which are in China.)

Typical Bicycles

Speed: Double running speed at one third the level of fatigue.

Note: Can effectively Prowl on a bike (-10% skill penalty), provided the vehicle is traveling under 8 mph (12.8 km).

Cost: 60-200 credits for bikes with 60-100 S.D.C. – 5,000 to 8,000 credits for bikes made of M.D.C. materials with 15-30 M.D.C.; the higher the price, the greater the M.D.C.



The Copperhead

Electric Motor Geared Bicycle

Part bicycle and part motorcycle, the Copperhead augments pedal power with a small electric motor, allowing for the rider to achieve a higher speed and travel a longer distance than under manual pedal power alone. Made out of lightweight but strong Mega-Damage composite materials with puncture proof tires, these bikes have a reputation of reliability even with the electric motor. The Copperhead comes standard with a small solar panel array that connects to the internal battery, and can be jury-rigged to run off E-Clips if necessary (96 hours per E-Clip). The motor also runs a small onboard computer complete with a digital compass, tachometer, clock function and power indicator, and front headlights and rear driving lights.

Model Type: EMG-2098

Manufacturer: Generic/Black Market.

Class: Bicycle, electric.

Crew: One rider; one passenger is possible but riding conditions are uncomfortable.

M.D.C. by Location: Tires (2): 2 each. Main Body – 30

Speed: Peddling: 20 mph (32 km) in short spurts, but 8-10 mph (13 to 16 km) is a maintainable cruising speed. 25 mph (40 km) using the electric motor.

Range: 160 miles (256 km) before needing a complete recharge (takes 6 hours); triple that using an E-Clip.

Statistical Data: May vary by 20% depending on specific models.

Seat Height: 3 feet (0.9 m).

Width: 1 foot, 6 inches at the handlebar (0.45 m).

Length: 5 feet (1.5 m).

Weight: 45 lbs (20 kg).

Cargo: Limited, 600 lbs (270 kg).

Power Systems: Manual and electric motor combination.

Market Cost: 9,000-12,000 credits.

The Old Mule

Two Wheeled, Gear Driven Bicycle

A heavy-duty off-road bicycle powered solely by the efforts of the rider, it is a no frills, military grade piece of hardware. The pedals not only provide power for the rear wheels, but it also has a dual chain drive enabling the rider to switch over to a two-wheel drive function that provides even greater traction. It comes standard with front and rear lights powered by a magneto that attaches to the wheels, but is removable for travel during the day, or when stealth is required. The bike folds in half and comes with a specially designed backpack that enables the rider to carry it with them, or it can be easily stowed away in a vehicle, taking up a minimal amount of space. This bike is truly what some Scouts like to call "Wilderness Proof," and is a universal favorite among *Pathfinders*.

Model Type: TWD-1138. Also produced by the Coalition as the CS-015-Bicycle.

Manufacturers: Generic: Black Market, Northern Gun, and Manistique Imperium, but the Coalition produces an identical model for their CS Rangers and 'Burbs patrols.

Class: Bicycle, manual.

Crew: One rider.

M.D.C. by Location: Tires (2): 2 each – Main Body: 40.

Speed:

Driving on the Ground: 20 mph (32 km), though 10-15 mph (16 to 24 km) is a maintainable cruising speed.

Flying: Not possible.

Range: Effectively unlimited, but the average soldier can cover approximately 75-150 miles (120 to 240 km) on a good day.

Statistical Data:

Seat Height: 3 feet (0.9 m).

Width: 1 foot, 4 inches at the handlebar (0.4 m).

Length: 4 feet, 8 inches (1.4 m).

Weight: 25 lbs (11.25 kg).

Cargo: Limited to what the rider can carry.

Power Systems: Manual.

Market Cost: 7000-10,000 credits.

Motorcycles

Motorcycles are fairly popular, but models like the Highway-Man and the Wastelander are more suited for the flat terrain of the Midwest and surviving roadways. It is the so-called off-roaders and dirt bikes that dominate the mountains and valleys of the southeast. On the negative side, motorcycles are loud and leave behind a trail of motor emissions and tire tracks. On the positive side, they are inexpensive, small, fast, maneuverable and, arguably, sturdier than hovercycles. Where a hovercycle could have its engine clogged by mud, dirt, bugs, grimy water and other hazards, the motorcycle is right at home.

The Wildcat – Off-Road Dirt Bike

Built for speed and mobility, the Wildcat is a rough and tumble dirt bike that eats up ground and can cover some of the roughest terrain that the wilderness has to offer. Supported by a series of heavy-duty shock absorbers, the Wildcat is a remarkably smooth ride and has excellent handling. It performs well on the open road, but not near as well as motorcycles like the Highway-Man which were built for cruising. Off road, however, the Wildcat can navigate woodlands, meadows, and mountain terrain with ease, and the harder it is run, the better it performs. It

gets its name from the distinctive roar the engine emits when the throttle is "punched."

Model Type: ORM-108

Manufacturers: Black Market, Northern Gun and most major manufacturers.

Class: Motorcycle.

Crew: One rider.

M.D.C. by Location: Tires (2): 3 each. Main Body – 45 to 75.

Speed:

Driving on the Ground: 100 mph (160 km) even under rugged conditions.

Handling Bonus: +10% to perform tricks, stunts and other maneuvers at speeds in excess of 30 mph (48 km) in rough terrain.

Flying: Not possible.

Range: 300 miles (480 km) on an electric engine, 500 miles (800 km) on a combustion engine.

Statistical Data:

Seat Height: 3 feet, 3 inches (0.97 m).

Width: 1 foot, 8 inches at the handlebar (0.5 m).

Length: 4 feet, 8 inches (1.46 m).

Weight: 220 lbs (99 kg).

Cargo: Limited to what the rider can carry.

Power Systems: Combustion or electric engine.

Market Cost: 20,000-30,000 credits for a combustion engine, 30,000-40,000 credits for an electric engine. The higher price buys maximum M.D.C.

Hovercycles

Hovercycles are extremely popular in the southeast. They are high-tech, fast and capable of riding over most terrains. Their air cushioned ride even enables them to ride across soft marshland and shallow swamps. However, there are problems using them in Dinosaur Swamp. **1)** They tend to be larger and less maneuverable in dense forests (reduce speed by 25% to 50% and is -20% to make trick maneuvers and fast turns). **2)** In the marshlands, the engines and air intake valves tend to get clogged by mud, bugs and vegetation – reduce maximum speed and jump capabilities by half, and may conk out completely within the next 4D6+12 hours, requiring a thorough cleaning to get the bike back in working order. Needs to be cleaned every two or three days to keep the hovercycle in top condition. **3)** The telltale whine of the engine makes hovercycles conspicuous, alerting people in the region to their presence, chasing away game animals and attracting curious and hungry predators. **4)** Few residents of Dinosaur Swamp can afford a hovercycle (or a big, fancy ATV), and barbarians often (80% of the time) ride stolen hovercycles into the ground, dumping them when the hovercycle gets clogged. That means a hovercycle is the "mark of an outsider," and targets the rider for all kinds of trouble. See the **Rifts® Game Master Guide**, page 253, for a range of hovercycles and rocket bikes. **World Book 13: Lone Star** also presents a nice selection of hovercycles.

A.T.V.s

Similar to motorcycles in form, function and popularity are the All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs). They offer the stability and reliability of a large wheeled vehicle/car with the power and reliability of a motorcycle. Being a four-wheeled truck designed for off-road handling and wilderness travel, they can carry more cargo and/or passengers. The tradeoff is the vehicle's large size (sometimes limiting where it can travel), less maneuverability and lower speed. The ATV category includes the ever popular dune or swamp buggies whose crude appearance belies their power and utilitarian functions. (**Note:** Check out **Rifts® World Book 15: Warlords of Russia** or the **Rifts® Game Master Guide** for a selection of snowmobiles suitable for winter travel in the mountains and northern Atlantic seaboard.)

The King Grizzly – 4-Wheel ATV

Where the Wildcat dirt bike eats up ground, the King Grizzly simply mauls it and keeps going. What it lacks in speed and maneuverability it more than makes up for in engine power and determination. Capable of powering up inclines of up to 20 degrees in low gear, it gets where it's going while carrying a heavy load. The cargo containers of the vehicle are modular, enabling it to either carry a widely distributed load of gear and supplies, or tow up to a ton behind it. It is also excellent in all weather, outperforming most vehicles in deep mountain snow that would immobilize even the Wildcat and many hovercycles.

Model Type: KG-ATV4. A similar version is produced by the CS as the CS-Mark III ATV.

Manufacturers: Black Market, Northern Gun and most major manufacturers.

Class: 4-wheel all-terrain vehicle.

Crew: One rider; can accommodate one passenger, but not very comfortably.

M.D.C. by Location: Tires (4): 6 each – Cargo Boxes (3): 2 each – Main Body: 95

Speed:

Driving on the Ground: 60 mph (96 km) maximum, but 35-45 mph (56 to 72 km) is a more likely cruising speed over rugged terrain.

Flying: Not possible.

Range: 300 miles (480 km) on an electric engine, 400 miles (640 km) on a combustion engine, unlimited range (15 year life) on a nuclear engine (but add 2 million credits to the cost for the latter).

Statistical Data:

Seat Height: 2 feet, 10 inches (0.88 m).

Width: 3 feet, 8 inches (1.1 m).

Length: 4 feet, 3 inches (1.3 m).

Weight: 600 lbs (270 kg).

Cargo: 3 watertight cargo boxes, one on the front of the vehicle and two on the rear, capable of carrying a total of 300 lbs (135 kg).

Towing Capacity: 2000 lbs (900 kg).

Power Systems: Combustion or electric engine.

Market Cost: 23,000 credits for a combustion engine, 28,000 credits for an electric engine.

Weapon Systems: Comes standard with none, but one or two light weapons, fixed forward in the front of the vehicle can be added for 15,000-30,000 credits.

The Marsh Raptor – All-Terrain Buggy

At home in the piedmont and lowland marshy regions, the Marsh Raptor is all about speed. An excellent reconnaissance vehicle, it comes standard with some light weaponry that enables it to lay down its own covering fire while it makes a fast getaway. A favorite among some of the gangs of Char, pirates, other marshland raiders, scouts and even a few of the barbarian tribes. It is not a work vehicle, and has gained a certain reputation for trouble. **Note:** Not well suited for highway, woodland and mountain use.

Model Type: MR-ATV

Manufacturers: Black Market, Northern Gun and most major manufacturers.

Class: 4-wheel all-terrain vehicle.

Crew: One driver, and accommodates one passenger comfortably, two by sacrificing half of the cargo space.

M.D.C. by Location: Tires (4): 3 each – Weapon Mount (1): 10 – Main Body: 65

Speed:

Driving on the Ground: 200 mph (320 km) over sand, marshland and level ground, reduce by 50% over rocky ground and woodlands.

Flying: Not possible.

Range: 400 miles (640 km) on an electric engine, 600 miles (960 km) on a combustion engine, unlimited range (15 year life) on a nuclear engine (but add 2 million credits to the cost for the latter).

Statistical Data:

Height: 5 feet, 9 inches (1.75 m).

Width: 5 feet, 2 inches (1.57 m).

Length: 9 feet, 3 inches (2.8 m).

Weight: 1125 lbs (506 kg).

Cargo: Small, 4x2x2 foot (1.2x0.6x0.6 m) open cargo area behind the driver and passenger seats, but can only carry up to 250 lbs (112 kg) before performance begins to suffer.

Power Systems: Combustion or electric engine.

Market Cost: 22,000 credits for a combustion engine, 28,000 credits for an electric engine. Comes with a standard light machine-gun or grenade launcher mounted on the front of the vehicle operable by either the pilot or the passenger.

Weapon Systems:

1. **.40 Caliber Light Machine-Gun:** A belt fed machine-gun armed with armor piercing rounds mounted on a tripod on the dash (or rear) of the pilot's compartment. Equipped with a collector bag to catch ejected casings.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Vehicle and Anti-Personnel.

Secondary Purpose: Defense/Anti-Dinosaur/Animal.

Mega-Damage: 1D4 M.D. per 20 round burst; 1D4x10 S.D.C. per single shot.

Rate of Fire: Each burst counts as one melee attack of the shooter (driver or passenger).

Effective Range: 2000 feet (610 m).

Payload: 1200 round belt (60 bursts).

Note: May be substituted with a light laser (2D6 M.D., 2000 foot/610 m range, powered by an E-Clip; 20 shots per standard clip – or can be tied to a nuclear power supply) for an additional cost of 20,000 credits.

2. **Automatic Grenade Launcher:** A belt fed grenade launcher mounted on a tripod on the dash or rear of the pilot's compartment. Equipped with a collector bag to catch ejected casings.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Vehicle and Anti-Personnel.

Secondary Purpose: Defense/Anti-Dinosaur/Animal.

Mega-Damage: 4D6 M.D. to a 12 foot (3.6 m) blast area.

Rate of Fire: Single shot only. Each shot counts as one of the shooter's melee attacks.

Effective Range: 1600 feet (488 m).

Payload: 40 round belt.

Boats

Boats are important when it comes to navigating the eastern marshes and the depths of the Deep South. In fact, the only way to travel through a large percentage of the old state of Florida is either by boat or by hovercraft. Most barbarian tribes make use of the hundreds of rivers, lakes and swamps that cut through the region for travel, transporting trade goods, hunting, and communication. In fact, next to flying, travel by boat is the fastest, and oftentimes the *only* way to cover distance in the marshlands of the southeast. Of course, traveling the swamps and waterways of the region is extremely dangerous.

The Prowler – General Utility Water Craft

An all-purpose river boat, the Prowler can serve as a fishing boat, cargo transport, hunting barge, houseboat, assault vessel, smuggler's boat, pirate ship, and just about any other job that might be necessary on water or in the swamplands. With the armored pilot's station located in the center of the boat, and a manned heavy machine-gun (or energy weapon) protected by an armored canopy, it is certainly not a pleasure craft, but with ample cargo space it is certainly one of the most versatile small boats on the market and common to the region. The Prowler is intended for fresh water use only, and it lacks the necessary navigation equipment for the open ocean. Its small size and slow speed also make it vulnerable to large sea creatures. Though not ideal for use on the open ocean, it can manage island hopping and short forays out into the Atlantic.

Model Type: GUW-P002

Manufacturers: Black Market, Northern Gun and most major manufacturers.

Class: Patrol Boat.

Crew: One pilot, and as many as 4 crewmen (cargo haulers/workers) or passengers. As many as 30 human-sized passengers (45 cramped) if there is no other cargo.

M.D.C. by Location:

Pilot's Station – 40

Machine-Gun Mount/Turret – 25

Main Body – 145

Speed: 80 mph (128 km) maximum, though cruising speed is typically about 20-30 mph (32 to 48 km).

Range: 500 miles (800 km) on a fuel drive combustion engine. Unlimited, with a 15 year life, with a nuclear power supply, but add 2 million credits to the cost.

Statistical Data:

Height: 10 feet (3 m), with an inside depth of 2 feet, 3 inches (0.64 m).

Width: 9 feet (2.7 m).

Length: 25-30 feet (7.6 to 9.1 m).

Weight: 2640 to 3200 lbs (1188 to 1440 kg).

Cargo: Can carry a total load of four tons (8,000 lbs/3600 kg).

Power Systems: Combustion engine (nuclear is practically unheard of).

Market Cost: 120,000-150,000 credits.

Weapon Systems:

1. **14.7 mm Heavy Machine-Gun:** A belt fed heavy machine-gun/auto-cannon armed with armor piercing rounds mounted in an armored compartment on the bow of the boat. It comes equipped with a collector bag to catch ejected casings.

Primary Purpose: Anti-Vehicle.

Secondary Purpose: Defense/Anti-Water Animals.

Mega-Damage: 2D6 M.D. per 20 round burst; 4D6x10 S.D.C. per single shot.

Rate of Fire: Standard.

Effective Range: 3000 feet (914 m).

Payload: 1000 round belt (50 bursts).

Note: May be substituted with a light laser (2D6 M.D., 2000 foot/610 m range, powered by an E-Clip; 20 shots per standard clip for an additional cost of 20,000 credits) or a medium-laser (3D6 M.D., 2000 foot/610 m range, powered by an E-Clip; 12 shots per standard clip, for an additional cost of 30,000 credits – double the cost and double the damage for a twin-barreled laser; same range and payload per two E-Clips, one for each laser).

The Skeeter – Flat-Bottomed Air Boat

Often purchased as a kit and assembled when and where needed, the Skeeter is primarily useful for navigating through the shallow marshes of the Atlantic coast and the old Florida everglades. When the terrain is too shallow for a conventional boat (which is half the swamps in the region), but too treacherous for wheeled land vehicles, the Skeeter is the cheap alternative to the more expensive hovercraft. It's reasonably fast, easy to pilot, and extremely stable. It sacrifices cargo capacity (tiny) for speed and versatility in the shallow swamps and marshland. It actually makes for an excellent hunting and fishing platform, and many tribes living in or near the marshes make extensive use of them for this very purpose. A small flat-bottom boat with one to three seats (standing room behind the seat if there is only one) with a large fan-engine mounted in the rear.

Model Type: The Skeeter (No model designation)

Manufacturers: Black Market, Titan Industries and a couple places on the east coast only (not much of a market for the vessel except in the southeast).

Class: Flat-Bottom Boat.

Crew: One pilot, can accommodate up to 2 passengers.

M.D.C. by Location:

Fan Cowling & Propeller Blades – 30

Pilot's Chair Assembly – 10

Main Body – 65

Speed: 50 mph (80 km), but cruising speed is typically 20-30 mph (32 to 48 km).

Range: 150 miles (240 km) per tank of fuel or fully charged engine.

Statistical Data:

Height: 7 feet, 4 inches, including the propeller cowling (2.2 m).

Width: 4 feet, 6 inches (1.4 m).

Length: 10 feet, 4 inches (3.1 m).

Weight: 350 lbs (157.5 kg).

Cargo: Not meant for heavy loads, the Skeeter can carry up to 350 lbs (157.5 kg), which also includes the weight of more than one passenger.

Power Systems: Combustion or electric engine.

Market Cost: 11,000 credits for a combustion engine, 15,000 credits for an electric engine.

Weapon Systems: None; only whatever weapon the pilot and passengers might carry.

The Tidal Shark – Power Board

What started out as a recreational vehicle has actually become an excellent, one-man reconnaissance water sled for the lakes, rivers, swamps and, to a lesser degree, the coastal waters of the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico. The Tidal Shark is much smaller and quieter than the more traditional jet ski platforms. Basically a jet powered surfboard, it has excellent balance, speed and range, enabling even a novice rider to become proficient with minimal training. The motor is controlled by a one-handed throttle device that is tethered to the center of the board by a thick cable. Steered is accomplished by the pilot leaning in the desired direction, just like riding a regular surfboard. The motor allows for self-propulsion at high speeds and offers an excellent range. Some interest in the vehicle has been shown by the Coalition, but they have yet to actually produce any of their own models.

Model Type: PB-004

Manufacturer: Black Market, Titan Industries and a couple places on the east coast only, but there are potential new markets throughout North America yet to be exploited.

Class: Surface Water Sled.

Crew: One pilot.

M.D.C. by Location: Control Cable Housing (1): 4 – Control Handle (1): 2 – Main Body: 20.

Speed: 40 mph (64 km).

Range: 100 miles (160 km).

Statistical Data:

Height: 8 inches (0.20 m).

Width: 2 feet at the widest point (0.60 m).

Length: 8 feet, 4 inches (2.54 m).

Weight: 115 lbs (51.7 kg).

Cargo: None, pilot only.

Power Systems: Combustion or electric engine.

Market Cost: 26,000 credits for a combustion engine, 40,000 credits for an electric engine. A Techno-Wizard version of the vehicle appears from time to time. It has the conventional propulsion system, but also a TW mechanism that lets 10 P.P.E. power the sled for 10 minutes, speed is increased to 60 mph (96 km) and to 80 mph (128 km) along ley lines (can run indefinitely along aquatic ley lines as well). The cost for the TW Tidal Shark is 180,000 credits.

Dinosaur Swamp

The Old Southeastern United States

Stretching from *Florida* through *Georgia* and into the *Carolinas*, Dinosaur Swamp is a diverse mixture of environments ranging from wetlands to hardwood forests, populated by flora both native and exotic. The fauna of the region is equally diverse, hosting life forms both native and alien, but many of the "native" animals were, until recently, extinct! While the old States of Florida and Georgia are known as Dinosaur Swamp proper, the environment and conditions extend north into the Carolinas which are also crawling with dinosaurs, dinosaur-like creatures, and a variety of other animals and monsters. However, despite being known regionally as a swamp, the terrain is dryer and less of a wetland the further north and west one travels and as elevation above sea level increases.

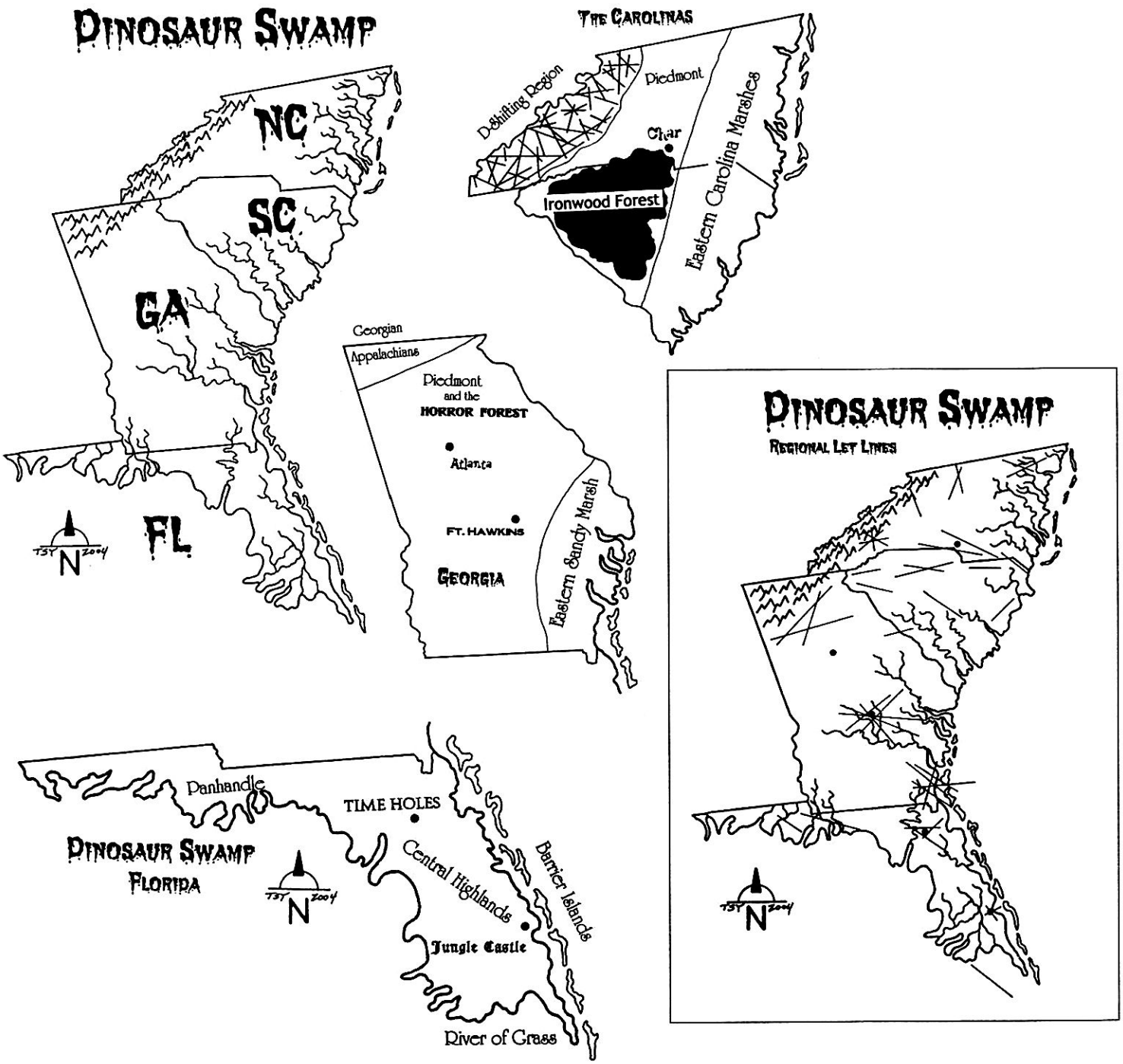
Organized exploration of the region has been sparse, with most adventurers concentrating on salvage and monster hunting. Most of the information known to scholars comes from the publication, **The Dinosaurian Swamp: Notes from the Field by Deearn Neenok**, famed explorer from New Lazlo. Published in 87 P.A., it chronicles his first and largest expedition into the heart of Dinosaur Swamp from the years 82 P.A. through 84 P.A. With the first edition over twenty years old now, it shouldn't be long before Neenok decides to go back to do research for an updated edition or possibly another book entirely.

This is what Neenok had to say about his first visit to Dinosaur Swamp:

My introduction to the southeast came from a most unusual source, a small, tri-fold pamphlet advertising a place where mutant animals (or so I thought), mostly mice and dogs it seemed, entertained children and their families. It was a place of thrill rides, castles, and princesses: a magic kingdom, if you will, and all good fun from what I could gather. I was 7 at the time, and I found the half-rotten pamphlet in an equally rotten book I salvaged from a pile of rubble near Old Detroit. In my ignorance, and innocence, I begged my parents to take me, but they never did. It was probably for the best.

Years later, after completing my education at Lazlo, I still remembered that pamphlet. After a few adventures here and there, my curiosity finally got the best of me. I could not get this magic kingdom out of my mind and I assembled a small force of explorers interested in seeing exactly what lay in the lands of the American southeast. We didn't quite know what to expect, but our minds were open to the wonders that we hoped we'd find. We were young, idealistic and ready to see it all, especially the pictures in that small, moldy pamphlet. Preparing ourselves with the best equipment we could find, and hiring on as diverse a crew of protectors as we could afford, we set out on our expedition into the southeast. We indeed found wonders, but we also found horrors.

The forests were both a delight and devilish in their beauty. Alien plants mingled comfortably with indigenous vegetation. The mountains were splendid, but also sorrowful, as they still show the scars visited on the world by the Great Cataclysm. The swamps were serene, yet stagnant in many places, alive with animals and monsters looking for a meal. We had heard rumors of dinosaurs, but nothing prepared us for the actual face to face encounters, both exhilarating and terrifying. And though we faced our share of barbarians, mutants, dinosaurs and monsters, the environment would prove to be our greatest enemy. A place of unrelenting beauty that conceals danger, evil and terror behind every tree. Life in Dinosaur Swamp may be more challenging than anywhere else on the continent.



The Old State of Florida

The most obvious feature of the old State of Florida is that the landmass has been completely reshaped. In his book, Deearn Neenok broke the peninsula into four distinct regions: The Central Highlands, the River of Grass, the Barrier Islands and the Panhandle. Prior to the Coming of the Rifts, the State had an average elevation of only 100 feet (30.5 m) above sea level. With most of the State consisting of such low-lying land, it allowed for great portions of the peninsula to be savaged by the elements, and then finally swallowed by the raging ocean. Today, much of Florida remains below sea level. Everything south of Tampa Bay is beneath the waves and the entire shoreline has receded many miles inland. The higher elevations of Florida, mostly in the center of the peninsula and the panhandle, remained above sea level, but with the topographical changes enacted on the landscape, the *central highlands* have become a lush, tropical swamp while the panhandle has changed very little other than reverting back to its original forested wilderness.

Climatically, the peninsula only has two seasons: a humid, wet summer, and a dry winter. Periods of intense rain, some so isolated and violent that the rain droplets hit with the force of hail, are followed by periods of no rain at all, though the land is hardly lacking in moisture. Even in the dry season of winter, the low lying parts of the region are inundated with ground water draining into the ocean.

Year long, the peninsula is home to thousands of species of insects, but during the *wet season*, there is a proliferation of insect life which harbors the subtle threat of disease. With mosquitoes and other invasive insects traveling from one organism to another, the threat of disease is higher here than anywhere else in North America, except perhaps in the squalor of unsanitary human settlements like the Chi-Town 'Burbs. There are even some species of mosquito-like insects that can pierce Mega-Damage skin with their blood-gathering proboscis, making everyone a potential victim of disease. Malaria is one of the common ailments, but there are also numerous unnamed, alien diseases that can infect anyone plumbing the depths of Dinosaur Swamp. Many of these diseases are so alien that magic healing is the only known method to cure an infected individual, and cures for diseases that humankind had learned to combat in the century before the Great Cataclysm have been lost in the Dark Age, returning these virulent killers that have slain more humans and D-Bees than all the dinosaurs put together. Every square inch of the peninsula is a veritable breeding ground for disease, especially the wetlands of the central highlands.

Central Highlands & the River of Grass

The central highlands form the backbone of the landmass and run the entire length of the peninsula until they fade into the *River of Grass*. While it was once the dry center of the peninsula, it is now a tropical jungle with a low-lying morass, much like the Everglades in the pre-Cataclysmic days encompassing the southern region. This southern tip, known as the River of Grass, takes its name from the pre-Rifts designation of the same phenomenon. The topography is so flat and shallow that it is only, at its highest point, several feet above sea level. Flooded nearly all year long, the only dry land in this part of the region consists of mats of vegetation hidden among the masses of long grass that grow on them, and anchored to the muddy earth just beneath the water's surface. The gradation of sea level here is so fine that if one stands still and watches closely, the current of water can be observed while it slowly makes its way down the slope to drain into the ocean. Travel through the *center of the peninsula* and the River of Grass is generally slow, tedious and not at all suited for characters loaded down with heavy armor and equipment, nor is it an ideal environment for robots, cyborgs and power armor that can't fly.

The *central highlands* are passable, but the further south one goes, the softer the ground becomes and the more tenuous one's footing becomes.

In the *River of Grass*, the ground is soft under the best of conditions and serves to trap feet readily. Even the most securely fastened shoe or boot can disappear with a sucking sound, devoured by the mud enveloping it. The ground also yields under weight unevenly, causing loss of balance for even the sturdiest robots and most seasoned cyborgs. The depths under the surface of the matted vegetation can give way to a sinkhole at any moment, and even without the other hazards associated with Dinosaur Swamp, the terrain itself is enough to turn back, or strand, an ill equipped group of adventurers. For rules on traveling through a jungle/marsh environment, refer to page 154 of **Rifts® World Book One: Vampire Kingdoms™**.

The Barrier Islands

The eastern coast of the Florida peninsula has developed a series of highland barrier islands isolated from the mainland by shallow bays and lagoons. These shallows are home to large families of crocodiles, alligators, and the Mega-Crocodile known as the Sarcosuchus. There is also the danger of the occasional solitary or small pack of Spinosaurs prowling the waters of these shallows. One notable biological oddity is that these stretches of water are almost devoid of sharks. Historically, sharks dominate as aquatic predators, but the diversity of large to giant crocodiles and Spinosaurs, who will prey on even the sharks, keeps them in check. Small comfort to anyone attempting to brave the lagoons to reach the barrier islands.

The islands themselves are generally long and narrow, with a perimeter of fine,white sand beaches. The beaches rise into high dunes, and the interior of the islands are composed of dense pockets of scrubby trees and bushes on solid ground. Home to mostly birds, the islands are typically devoid of any large land animals, though the occasional small dinosaur, predatory cat or family of alligators may claim the island as its territory, preying on the birds. If there is sufficient prey to be found, like a large group of humanoids, a Spinosaur or Sarcosuchus will come ashore and prowl the islands as well.

Geologically speaking, barrier islands are temporary, as the ocean tides continually deposit and erode away the beaches, constantly reshaping the islands over time. In as little as a decade, a barrier island can have shifted as much as several hundred meters. Depending on the storyteller, despite the ravages of the Great Cataclysm, it is rumored that remnants of a pre-Rifts site known as "The Cape" can still be found on a few (all?) of these barrier islands. The rumors surrounding this near-mythological site attract hundreds of adventurers and explorers every year, and many of the islands are littered with the remains of these failed expeditions.

Debris from the past. Found throughout the barrier islands are perhaps millions of pieces of debris. It's almost impossible to dig a few feet down and not find a piece of *something*. Often these turn out to be nothing more than the rusted husks of land vehicles, pieces from an airplane, or mostly chunks of concrete or metal girders from shattered buildings pulverized during the Great Cataclysm, and other worthless pieces of debris. Sometimes, the debris is the remains of spacecraft or other aerospace salvage such as a piece of a wing, tail section, or a seat frame, but it isn't unheard of to find an intact, if smashed and ruined spacecraft hull. These are typically cargo type shuttles meant to ferry cargo loads and passengers, as most of the other types of spacecraft would not have been on the ground. Often buried, much like everything else associated with The Cape, some are found in massive lots as if an entire group of spacecraft were picked up and deposited together in one location. These so-called spaceship "graveyards" are veritable boons to those who find them. If nothing else, they can provide hands on examination of authentic pre-Cataclysm spacecraft. Collectors of pre-Rifts memorabilia are willing to pay 1D6x10,000 for salvage that has insignia and official markings on them.

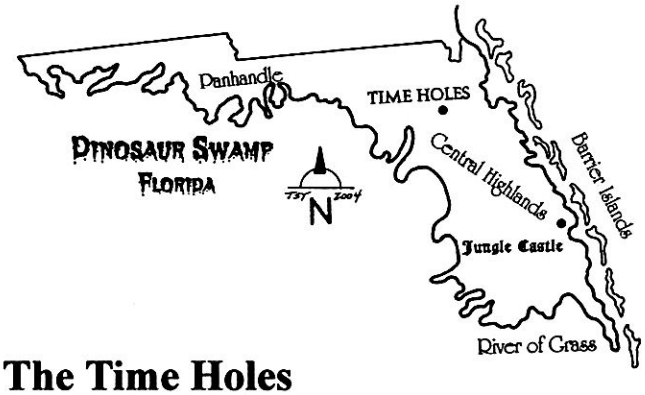
Not limited to spacecraft, there are other important pieces of debris that have turned up from time to time on and around the barrier islands. These include the hulls of fighter aircraft, sunken ships, military hardware, remnants of power armor and robots,

and vaults/safes that could contain almost anything. Rumors tell of one group that found what appeared to be a chrome plated SAMAS-style power armor still mostly intact. This has brought all kinds of speculation about a hypothesized "Glitter-SAMAS" that was part of the pre-Cataclysm military arsenal, but so far, no hard evidence has surfaced. (**Note:** Except for top government officials within the Coalition States, all evidence of NEMA has been lost to history. The ultra-rare adventurer or scholar who does unearth evidence about Earth's past concerning NEMA is hunted down, killed, and their notes and any historical evidence confiscated or destroyed by CS Special Forces. Ostensibly because the Coalition government doesn't want people to know how much of their vaunted military and technological achievements are actually based on reverse engineered technology from the Golden Age of Science, and not their own scientific achievements. Erin Tarn knows the truth, but does not have the name NEMA nor any hard and fast evidence about it or its war machines. While this knowledge would have no real impact on the CS or its military, it could have something of a demoralizing effect on its citizens. Of course, the CS propaganda machine would paint such a revelation as lies. This is another reason the CS regularly dispatches squad to platoon-sized military teams and undercover operatives to Dinosaur Swamp: to sniff out any unique discoveries and to "acquire or destroy" them [and their owner/discoverer] before they can reach the "real world.")

The Panhandle

While most of the peninsula is now a low-lying tropical wetland, the higher elevation of the panhandle changes into an environment typical of the rest of the continental southeast. Though ravaged by the ocean, it has been reclaimed by nature, transforming it into a state similar to that of its pre-Cataclysm days – a realm of lush rain forests. Being a marsh and jungle environment, it is particularly difficult and troublesome to travel the region. Nearly the entire panhandle is composed of limestone bedrock, and is prone to sinkholes, producing what is known as *Karst topography*, where the land is peppered with craters and sunken caverns. While sinkholes are occasionally found in the peninsula proper, the panhandle is littered with them. They are caused by ground water dissolving the subsurface limestone, and producing large cavities underground, i.e., caves. When these caves collapse, they devour the overlying terrain and form sinkholes, creating a hilly and pockmarked topography. When the Great Cataclysm raged, the sheer amounts of water deposited on the panhandle caused widespread dissolution of the bedrock, and the added weight to many aquifers caused many more caves to collapse, swallowing up large portions of the landscape in sinkholes. There are large stretches of land that look like a series of impact craters, creating a lush, overgrown moonscape. Characters unfamiliar with such natural processes might deduce that such regions are the result of mass, pitched battles from the far flung past, but they are a natural phenomenon.

Foot travel is significantly slowed (by at least 60%), and often the only way to cross the crater-filled landscape is to climb down and back up the sides of one crater or sinkhole after another. Ground vehicles must have a way to bridge the holes or sufficient space to travel around them, sometimes driving for miles in search of a suitable point to cross. Flying or hover capable vehicles are the fastest way to make it over the rugged, uneven terrain. However, sinkholes are not the most fascinating, or dangerous, features of the panhandle. There are, of course, the Time Holes, remnants of the KLS Corporation's Aerospace Laboratories near what was Lake City.



The Time Holes

At the middle of the 21st Century, during the race for commercial endeavors in space, experiments by both *KLS* and *Cyberworks Industries* were underway to find faster and cheaper ways to put payloads into orbit. The new phrase of "stronger, longer, better, faster, cheaper," adapted from an old NASA motto, was the hallmark of space programs around the world. After several disastrous events, advances in shuttle technology and new, more powerful engines had brought near-space exploration into the realm of profitability. There was, however, always a desire for even faster, more efficient methods of reaching outer space. While Cyberworks was working on an artificially intelligent spacecraft, the KLS Corporation, thanks to employees contracted to the Defense Department, "acquired" schematics for the American government's top secret Lone Star Sub-Level Nine gateway project.

Using the schematics stolen from the government, KLS Corporation made plans for construction of a revolutionary orbital gateway system accessed from a corresponding gateway built on their aerospace complex in northern Florida. Circumventing the need for payload limits and thus fuel costs to break Earth's gravity, the technology seemed sound enough at the conceptual stage to more than pay for itself in a relatively short amount of time. It would provide them with an unbeatable edge in this new space race. The gateway would make travel to outer, and possibly inner, space as simple as stepping through a door. Their work, as it would turn out, exceeded even their expectations, although none of the designers and technicians would live to see it.

As with the Lone Star complex, the projected power consumption for the project was enormous. Several dedicated micro-fusion stations were built just to run the device. An enormous solar battery array was constructed to augment the initial power level needed to start up the machine. The level of theoretical physics behind the space gate was staggering, requiring the best minds of the KLS Corporation be assigned to the project. Some likened the calculations necessary for the functioning unit as "magical." Quantum leaps in the field of physics occurred over the 40 years of research. Then, on May 14th, 2096, the KLS Corporation successfully sent a small, remote controlled drone through a working gateway, and it appeared through a corresponding gateway in the next room, a whole 20 feet (6.1 m) away. This single success encouraged the company

to construct more small gateways around the complex for further research. It was projected that since the actual concept was proven, a functional orbital gateway could be up and operational in less than a decade. By the fall of 2098, *KLS Aerospace* had 5 functional gateways, each the size of a garage door, operating on a linked series of solar and nuclear power generators. Plans were made for an official unveiling after the first of the year as rumors of the project that had persisted for decades were reaching epic proportions. KLS planned on promoting themselves as the company of the 22nd century, with 2099 as the inaugural year of this bold, new business plan. Advertisements were placed in every major publication of December, 2098. Televid commercial spots were ruthlessly played during the major prime time programs. Sports events that Fall were heavily sponsored by "KLS Aerospace: Your gateway to the future." It was unprecedented for such a major engineering and defense contracting agency to promote itself in this way. 2099 looked to be quite an interesting year indeed. The Coming of the Rifts brought all of those plans to an Earth-shattering end.

Located far enough inland and away from the initial ravages of the seething ocean, the KLS Aerospace Laboratories were spared nature's wrath in the early hours of the Great Cataclysm. It was, however, during an immense Ley Line Storm that the complex was lost forever. The intense use of the five small gateways in such a consolidated region weakened the inter-dimensional fabric around them. When an immense Ley Line Storm passed nearby the site, it literally tore space and time apart, ravaging the very fabric of reality, and altering it forever. The gateways were permanently linked together, drawing on an internal, inter-dimensional power source, transforming them into one immense *Transitional Place of Power* centered around a large, shifting Chrono-Rift with five different doorways, known colloquially as the Time Holes. (**Note:** These are not to be confused with the twelfth level Invocation spell of the same name.)

As the forces of the raging planet pummeled the landscape, the Time Holes were cycling randomly through Earth's past (and any number of alternate Earths) and drew prehistoric animals of all kinds from the pages of history to the present. Dinosaurs, mammals and insects that had gone extinct thousands to millions of years earlier were ripped from their own time and brought into this new landscape. Likewise, animals and plants from alternate worlds were snatched from their reality and thrown into ours, brought together and forced to survive or face a singular form of extinction.

For decades, the Time Holes shifted with an insane fury. Then, slowly the energies of the Great Cataclysm faded, and the Time Holes fell into a more sedate cycle of dimensional shifting. Now they serve as a lure, drawing selfless altruists who wish to travel back in time, to selfish opportunists wishing to use the time portals to acquire wealth and power. They are recognized by those few who know their true origin as a powerful force of nature brought to life through the vast potential of human thought, engineering and the chaotic forces of magic.

In the magic rich environment of Rifts Earth, the Time Holes Transitional Place of Power is obviously much stronger than it would be during a period of low magic intensity. Consequently, it is active at all times, but runs through cycles of power. At its lowest, and the "default" stage, the energy level of the site is equal to standing on a ley line. The holes manifest themselves as gray, milky, amorphous distortions, slowly shifting between time periods. Every twenty-seven days, the site begins a ten-day surge period with the energy level of the first and last days being equal to a Vernal/Autumnal Equinox and the midpoint day being equal to a Lunar Eclipse. The days in between are equal to an increase of magic energy as if it were Midday or Midnight.

During each of these periods there is a 01-99% likelihood of a Rift appearing, with who knows what emerging. The dangers are not only in the form of dinosaurs, dimensional travelers and strange beasts, but of alien environments. These Rifts are tangible connections to other worlds that, unlike most other Rifts, may actually leak atmospheres that are hostile to Earth life, temporarily displacing the native atmosphere much like volcanic gasses escaping from a vent in the earth.

During the ten day energy surge, the Time Holes manifest as bright, shimmering, well-defined rectangles of red, orange and blue light, randomly cycling through dimensions and time periods with lightning speed. The area surrounding the Time Holes is littered with corpses and skeletons of animals brought to Rifts Earth that could not breathe its atmosphere. Upon exiting the Rift, they choke, suffocate and die, collapsing only a few yards from where they emerged. The constantly cycling nature of the Time Holes means new animals are often brought through on a regular basis, unleashing one or more previously unknown monsters into the world, or beasts who feed on the carcasses of the dead. The stench of death and decay permeates the site throughout the ten day surge period and often lingers for weeks afterward, attracting carnivores and scavengers looking for a free meal. Anyone wishing to get a first hand look at the Time Holes themselves must first brave these local carnivores, and then be prepared for the veritable butcher yard that awaits them at the foot of the doors. Adventurers who go looking for the Time Holes, however, especially during the Surge Period, are seldom seen again.

Notable Ruins of Florida

The Florida peninsula was nearly wiped clean by the ocean. There are very few piles of rubble, much less standing structures left. There are no known permanent settlements in Florida, and most barbarian communities are not likely to have a population of more than 50-500 individuals. Even in the heart of the Central Highlands, there are few structures left, but the ones that did survive are quite worth noting.

The Jungle Castle Ruins

Buried deep within the Central Highlands, near where the jungle thins and begins to form the River of Grass, is one of the most interesting, and recognizable, sets of ruins found in Dinosaur Swamp. A ruined theme park, a place that brought great joy into the lives of so many centuries ago, now lays lost and forgotten, slowly crumbling to dust. It lives on now as a chapter in Neenok's book, and has inspired many brave explorers to come see it for themselves.

I'll never forget that morning. We had approached from the west, hacking our way through some of the most dense undergrowth we'd seen since entering the peninsula. We stopped for a

break, and sent out scouts to judge whether we should move on, or break off into another direction. As I rested against an old boulder, I noticed that it was of a peculiar shape. It was smooth, as if worn down by the elements, but it was still recognizable. My heart leapt; with a little imagination, it looked just like the cartoon mouse in that old pamphlet of mine! It was then I began to notice that all around us were bits and pieces, that to the discerning eye, were ruins! Buried deep within these dense trees was part of my childhood dream. Just then, my trusted assistant and partner, Obioma, came running up to me and said, with breathless amazement, the most beautiful words I could imagine hearing: "The scouts found the castle!"

– From Deearn Neenok's book, The Dinosaurian Swamp: Notes from the Field, Circa 87 P.A.

The Jungle Castle, as Neenok refers to it, is mostly a landmark and rests on top of a nexus where two very small ley lines intersect one another. These ley lines stretch no more than a half of a mile (0.8 km) in any direction, and are barely visible during the daylight. At night, they shine with a pale, shimmering light, leading most practitioners of magic who see them to remark that they are, in fact, quite *unremarkable*. The structure's survival, such as it is, is owed largely to the fact that it was somewhat protected during the Great Cataclysm by an infusion of magic energy during the surge in the ley lines.

The castle itself looks like the ruins of something out of an Old World storybook. It was very much a "fantasy" castle with gray stone towers, blue peaks, and an enclosed keep. However, there is only one tower still standing, the rest have collapsed in on themselves and litter the site with chunks of gray stone. The keep is mostly intact, however.

There was at one point a moat around the castle, but that has since filled in, and the site seems to have subsided somewhat into the earth beneath it, as the first floor of the castle is flooded. Access to what was the second floor is available from the ground around it. There were once numerous paved roads leading up to and around the castle, but little remains of those except for the occasional bit of concrete poking out from layers of dirt and plant growth, usually uncovered by a burrowing animal or clawing dinosaur.

There isn't much left of the old theme park except the castle, building foundations buried under centuries of dirt and vegetation, and the odd bit of twisted metal interwoven with vines. Even these are only evident to those who know where to look for them. What the Cataclysm didn't destroy, nature reclaimed after the Earth recovered from the decades of destruction wrought by the ocean and the heaving crust. However, that is not to say that there isn't anything there. The castle was only one part of a much larger complex that was, in turn, only one such complex amid many.

Surrounding the castle were hundreds of smaller structures that were scoured from the earth. However, they were all linked by a *subterranean complex* that supported the above ground park (and connecting park of the future). Most likely built during the original construction of the park, they were expanded upon significantly in the hundred plus years of operation, especially after the introduction of an experimental solid-form holography array that was added to the park in the years immediately before the Great Cataclysm. The immense amount of control needed to run the day to day operations of the park was only possible through the vast subterranean network that housed the equipment and power supplies for thousands of acres of amusement. What began at inception as a small tunnel system and cafeteria for park employees became a city complex all of its own.

The complex beneath the streets of the park has since been mangled, filled in by dirt and flooded after the Great Cataclysm, but some of the tunnel complex must still exist in one form or another, as proved by the initial survey completed by Neenok and his expedition. Beneath the surface is a veritable maze of tunnels, rooms, and possibly whole buildings waiting to be explored. Neenok commented that they only explored a few passages, noting that they lacked the proper equipment for serious underground and underwater exploration, as many of the passageways were flooded. This is what the Neenok Expedition discovered during their short time at the old entertainment compound.

The Castle: There is clearly an entire floor of the castle, the first floor, that has sunk beneath ground level and is underwater. Underneath that there are sure to be tunnels that connect with other parts of the subterranean structures.

The Train Station: Located under a ruined foundation not far from the castle is an entrance to an underground rail system. Probably used by staff of the park to get around unnoticed by the tourists on the surface, this surely connects to all parts of the sprawling entertainment compound. Neenok postulates that a subsequent mapping of the accessible tunnels here could lead to discovering more ruins that are undetectable on the surface.

An Operations Room: Discovered by accident, this small room was found when one of the explorers fell through what turned out to be an open access hatch that was originally disguised as a sewer grate. Inside the room, water came up to a man's chest and saturated a massive bank of computer monitors, lockers, and system access panels. There was evidence of highly sophisticated automated systems here, including robotics and possibly solid-form holography. If there is salvageable technology, this is likely to be one of the locations.

Unfortunately for Neenok's group, they learned that the site isn't uninhabited, which also cut their time there short. The tunnels that are mostly intact have been claimed by a large colony of strange, zombie-like things from some alien world. Neenok dubbed them Tunnel Goblins, but no one knows exactly what they are or from where they may have originated. According to Neenok, they represent a previously unknown life form that seem to exist only in the tunnels of this small region in Florida.

Tunnel Goblins – also known as Clay Men

Tunnel Goblins appeared as hunched over, barrel-chested beings with mottled grey-white skin and large flakes of dried flesh coming off them in sheets like a snake shedding its skin. The things resembled giant grubs with legs and arms. Each had a thick, soft body, large, clawed three-fingered hands, and a thick, short neck with a wide round head mounted atop of it. A pair of large, round black eyes, like those of a beetle, sparkled like polished ebony. The nose was little more than three slits and the mouth wide with thick lips that concealed wide, broken and jagged teeth. If the beings could speak, they did so in raspy growls

and snarling whispers, but the animal noises and insect-like eyes belied an intelligence perhaps close to human.

The leader was a full head larger than the rest of the Tunnel Goblins and he could cast some type of Elemental Magic, while others seemed be warriors or drones. If there was a female among the monstrous pack of humanoids neither Neenok or his teammates could identify her.

Tunnel Goblin Leader & Shaman or Earth Wizard

Alignment: Uncertain, but presumed to be Aberrant evil as it exhibited great hostility to outsiders and loyalty to its clansmen. Presumed to be the clan leader.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+7, M.A. 1D6, M.E. 2D6, P.S. 1D6+16, P.P. 1D6+12, P.E. 1D10+12, P.B. 1D4, Spd. 1D6+6. Supernatural Strength and P.E.

M.D.C.: Leader: 6D6+60 – Warriors: 5D6+40.

Size: Leader: 6 feet (1.8 m) – Warriors: 5 feet (1.5 m).

Horror Factor: 13

P.P.E.: Leader/Wizard: P.E. attribute number x5, plus 1D6+6 per level of experience. Warriors/Drones: P.E. number plus 1D6 per level of experience.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 300 feet (91 m, can see in total darkness), poor day vision 20 feet (6.1 m), excellent hearing, dig in soft earth 10 feet (3 m) per minute, hold breath 20 minutes, toxic fumes and gasses have little or no effect, and heal three times faster than humans.

Turn into Soft Clay (special): When the creature suffers serious damage and needs to escape his attackers, or wants to hide (+20% to Camouflage) or lay an ambush (+10% to Prowl), the Tunnel Goblin can turn into a mound of mushy clay with a vaguely humanoid shape. It cannot attack, move or cast magic in this form, but it seems to be able hear and see (or somehow sense) what's going on around it. Groups of three Warriors would transform from mounds of clay to ambush Neenok's men and turn back into clay when they were severely injured. In clay form Tunnel Goblins are impervious to all forms of attack, and even if blown into pieces, magically reform and metamorph back into living beings. Each transformation counts as two of the creature's melee attacks, but they can otherwise transform at will (provided they haven't used up their attacks/actions for that round). **Note:** All Tunnel Goblins have this ability, but only the Earth Wizard can move in clay form like an oozing mound of mucky clay. Travels at half Spd attribute but can slide along the sides of walls and the roof of a tunnel as well as across the floor.

R.C.C. Skills of Note: Camouflage (+10%), Climbing (+20% on earth and stone, reduce by half for all other surfaces), Dowsing (+10%), Escape Artist (+20%), Gemology (+20%), Land Navigation (+20% underground only), Prowl, Spelunking (+15%), Tracking, Wrestling, W.P. Blunt, W.P. Small Thrown Weapons (including rocks).

Attacks per Melee: Five physical or two by magic.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on initiative (underground only), +2 to strike, +1 to parry and dodge, +8 to save vs poisons, toxins and drugs, impervious to toxic gas and smoke, impervious to cold, +2 to save vs Horror Factor, and +3 to save vs possession and mind control.

Mega-Damage: Restrained claw: 4D6 S.D.C., full strength claw: 1D6+2 M.D., bite: 1D6 M.D.

Average Level of Experience: 1D6+3 for Leader, 1D4+1 for Warriors.

Magic: Only the Leader/Earth Wizard knows the following Earth Warlock spells: Animate Plants (10), Chameleon (5), Clay to Stone (20), Crumble Stone (10), Dirt to Clay (6), Earth Rumble (10), Hopping Stones (6), Mystic Fulcrum (3), Repel Animals (10), Rock to Mud (6), Rot Wood (4), and Wall of Clay (8), plus a total of 1D6+1 of choice selected from Earth Spells levels 1-4.

Equipment: Unknown. Neenok saw only blunt weapons made of stone or wood and thrown rocks (1D4 M.D.).

Note: Little else is known about these beings, not even how many live in the tunnels of the Castle Kingdom. Neenok has guessed 100 or less, but he honestly doesn't know. There could be half that many or twenty times more. What is known is that these beings are found nowhere else in the world, or elsewhere in Dinosaur Swamp. Just one example of a strange creature found living in one narrow ecology and only in Dinosaur Swamp.

Ruins of "The Cape"

Off of the eastern coast of Florida, out among the barrier islands, rests the legend that is The Cape. These ruins are generally thought to be the primary space port for the old American Empire. There is strong evidence for other space ports, such as the KLS Corporation's site where the Time Holes exist, although they were the property of a private company. The Cape, however, had public, private and military functions, making it a military industrial complex of massive proportions. So massive, that the legends that persist have seen adventurers and explorers set out from across the North American continent to see if they can discover what might be resting buried beneath the sandy dunes of the islands, lost but possibly preserved.

Beginning in its infancy to the present, the Coalition States regularly dispatches expeditionary teams into Dinosaur Swamp in the hope of finding lost technology. The promise of great reward has lured many others into the region and for every team that does return, there is always the slightest bit of tantalizing evidence to warrant further exploration.

Hampering exploration efforts, typical hazards of Dinosaur Swamp not withstanding, are the very location of the barrier islands. Miles off shore from the mainland, simply crossing the shallow water is no mean feat. The waters surrounding the islands are home to Spinosaurs and Mega-Crocodiles, as well as a host of smaller, but dangerous aquatic predators, pirates and winged dinosaurs. None of whom are the least bit afraid of attacking groups of any size or ships trying to cross their territory. Flying across the water is always an option, but this will definitely attract the attention of local predators, causing them to converge on the landing site, bringing more trouble than air travel is worth. Sailing across might attract one or two predators, flying across will most likely bring dozens from a several mile radius.

The other problem is that any ruins are likely to be buried under the shifting sands of the islands, or worse, buried offshore under both the ocean and the bottom sediment. Occasionally a hunk of metal or ruined concrete wall is visible protruding from an island, or from the water itself, indicating a good place to

start any search or excavation, but the fact is, almost anywhere could contain some secret if one dug deep enough. Whether that secret is of any genuine value (or worth risking one's life) is another matter entirely. Often the surface structure sticking out is nothing more than a piece of a gantry, or an unrecognizable piece of concrete. Ruins and signs of pre-Rifts structures can be found out among a 75 mile (120 km) stretch of the barrier islands. These were mostly hardened structures that have survived to present day Rifts Earth.

Runways

Under the shifting sands and tidal basins of the barrier islands, lying just below the surface, are the remains of the vast network of runways that serviced the space ports of Florida's east coast. In order to withstand the tremendous strain put on the space port, these runways were made of resilient Mega-Damage materials, allowing large sections of them to survive the Great Cataclysm.

These runways outline the ruined space port and lead to various structures ranging from cargo warehouses to passenger terminals for the orbital stations. When blown clean of the surface dirt, some of these runways actually have legible markings still visible. These marking were obviously some sort of codification system, identifying the individual runways. Some explorers believe that if a map of the pre-Cataclysm site could be found, these runways could form a roadmap of the barrier island's ruins, and lead to significant new dig locations at important sites. For example, if it were known that Runway 1138 was located near a vehicle assembly building, then it should be easier to locate the ruins of that facility. Of course, the hard part about any excavation of The Cape is that most of it is underwater. Not only would diving and working underwater be required, but there are several types of dangerous aquatic predators trolling the waters who find human prey to be delicious.

Launch Pads

Every so often, Stonehenge-like concrete structures appear out of the sand. They are the remains of the hundreds of orbital rocket launch pads. These launch pads are common sights among the marshes and barrier islands. With over a century of space travel centered around this location, there is no end to the variety of launch pads evident above and below the waves.

Several known sites are as follows and can range from small to the massive. A common type of pad is one that consists of a large, flat circular pad with a huge ringed structure at the center. This structure is supported by thick four-post concrete pillars, and is often several stories tall. Another type of pad looks like a very large bunker with a ramp on one side. The ramp leads up to a massive hole in the center of the structure. This ramp was an exhaust deflector for the vapors created when a spacecraft would launch into space. Almost all launch pads show evidence of where their attached gantries were ripped away during the Coming of the Rifts, sometimes resulting in one side of the edifice having been knocked down or shattered.

Launch pad sites are often claimed by Mega-Crocs as nesting sites for their eggs, though small tribes of barbarians have been known to make pilgrimages to worship at them as holy places. Depending on the tribe, these pilgrimages can be rites of passage for young warriors, or places for them to go as they become old and infirm. A few tribes practice the tradition of exiling their old and the sick to these faraway ruins to "send them to the heavens," suggesting history and religion have melded into one cohesive belief. However, most never make it to the ruins, and fall prey to the elements, predators or pirates.

Much like the runways, some launch pad ruins still have markings that could serve to pinpoint specific locations and other possible ruins and salvage. Neenok even found an engraved metal plaque still attached to one. While time and salt water had mostly rusted the plaque away, a psychic in Neenok's expedition got a vision of a spacecraft blasting into space and felt the exhilaration of the passengers onboard.

Gantries

Some of the largest pieces of ruins found in and around the barrier islands and as far away as the western coast of the peninsula are from the old gantry towers. Demolished in the initial onslaught of the Great Cataclysm, the metal armatures of the gantries were torn apart and scattered for miles. No gantry has ever being found standing in place. Many are only partial structures broken and strewn along the coast like a child's erector set. The few that are jutting up from the ocean floor are bent and twisted wrecks slowly rusting away. One of the largest is barely visible, protruding above the waves in the Gulf of Mexico.

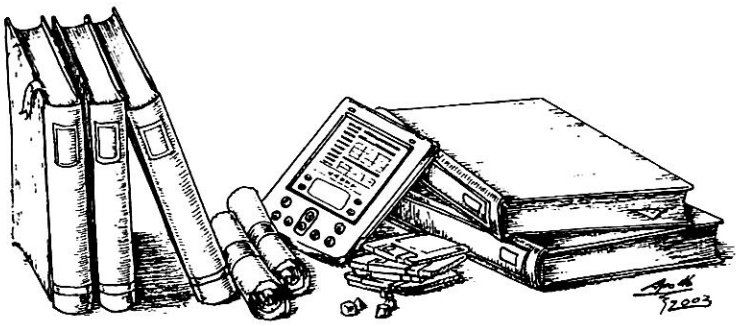
As is the case with other ruins, the gantry wreckage above and below the waves makes excellent shelter and homes for any number of animals. Meanwhile, humanoids may cannibalize them for scrap metal or building material. One industrious party of explorers attempted to use the ruins of a gantry as an antenna for a powerful radio, reporting to have contacted someone claiming to be on a space station in orbit around the planet. This is always told as a "friend of a friend" type story, and has never been validated by any reputable sources.

Blockhouses

One of the most important finds an explorer can run across is a blockhouse, because if there is aerospace technology to be salvaged, this is where it will be found. Blockhouses are reinforced, blast-proof concrete and steel buildings that were used to monitor situations at the launch pads. Most had no windows and many were dome shaped and resembled giant beehives. Behind the exterior blast doors were vast banks of advanced computers, video monitoring systems and other instruments necessary to observe the launch and track the flight of rockets. From a post-apocalyptic point of view, there may also be valuable pre-Rifts artifacts inside: printed operations manuals, journals, books, magazines, calendars, tools, I.D. cards, soda cans, and personal effects that are worth money in today's collector's market for "historic" pre-Cataclysm memorabilia. Not to mention possible stores of video and computer files.

Designed to withstand the hazards of close proximity to a blazing rocket booster and the possibility of it exploding, blockhouses were built to be almost indestructible, and fared well against the onslaught of the Coming of the Rifts. Provided the wildly erratic tectonic forces did not damage them, Mega-Damage blockhouses have been known to remain sealed until adventurers breach the walls or blast door. However, many of these

structures were built with large portions underground flooded and have been filled with water for centuries, destroying most items and machinery inside. Even during the days of pre-Cataclysm Earth, vast amounts of water had to be pumped out of them, as they were prone to flooding due to the shallow Florida water table. Despite being flooded, blockhouses may still offer salvageable materials and relics of the past. It just requires more work to recover them. Of course the dream of treasure hunters and historians is they'll stumble across a sealed and pristine blockhouse containing a wealth of artifacts and information.



Consult the following table for sample blockhouse contents. This list is far from exhaustive and Game Masters should feel free to tailor and modify as they see fit.

Blockhouse Condition Table

01-10% Sealed! Roll on the following Contents Table.

11-40% Filled. Roll first to determine what the blockhouse is filled with, then roll on the Flooded sub-table to determine the extent of the in-fill. Finally, roll on the Contents Table to determine what may have been inside.

01-25% Loose Sediment: The blockhouse has experienced a filtering of small particles of sediment, mostly a buildup of dark, loamy dirt and clay. Depending on the level of the sediment, most items buried under it are ruined.

26-50% Sludge: The blockhouse has filled with a gooey sludge that smells faintly of oil. It has a slick, mucus-like feel to it and clings to everything. It is most likely composed of toxic substances stored at the site during pre-Cataclysmic days and has since drained into the soot and soil and collected here. 01-50% chance of being radioactive! Depending on the amount of the sludge, most items under the surface will have been completely ruined.

51-60% Fungus: The blockhouse has become home to a fungus colony. Depending on the size of the infestation, this could be a small patch, or a major mushroom garden. 01-25% chance that the fungus gives off a hallucinogenic spore that when inhaled, elicits a mild feeling of euphoria. Characters must make a saving throw vs toxins at 16 or higher. Anyone who fails to save is -3 on all combat actions/bonuses, -1 attack per melee, and wants to sleep where they stand. This effect lasts for 1D4 hours per exposure and could lead to characters becoming part of the fertilizer for the mushroom colony if they aren't careful. A close and careful examination of the blockhouse might lead to discovering a few skeletons of animals and/or humanoid explorers that didn't quite make it out. Any equipment in the blockhouse has been ruined by the elements and covered by the fungus decades ago, although metal alloys will be salvageable.

61-95% Sand: 01-100% of the blockhouse has filled with a fine white sand, indicating that it was, at one point (or still is), submerged underneath the ocean. It could also be home to a colony of sand crabs or other sand dwelling creatures. Given that the sand would have been deposited with salt water, most metal items would be heavily corroded and sensitive equipment ruined, often melded into a lump of rust. Interestingly enough, many organic, plastic and ceramic objects can be preserved under the layer of sand, provided they are cared for properly after recovery. Characters trained in Archaeology should recognize the potential and have the skills to do this.

96-00% Geode: The blockhouse has undergone rapid deposition of crystal forming minerals. Given their rapid formation, they are likely to be full of impurities but may be suitable for use in Stone Magic or Techno-Wizardry. However, none are likely to be worth more than 1D6x100 credits each. Depending on how extensive the crystal growth is, the conditions that enabled them to form would have utterly destroyed any equipment.

Roll on the following table to determine the type of crystals formed. There will be only one type of crystal formation present.

01-15% Agate.

16-30% Amethyst.

31-45% Garnet.

46-65% Quartz (roll again to determine the type/color): 01-40% Clear. 41-65% Rose. 66-85% Ruby. 86-00% Smoky.

66-85% Salt.

86-95% Topaz.

96-00% Tourmaline.

41-90% Flooded. Roll to determine the depth of the water, then roll on the Contents Table.

01-10% Ankle Deep: Basically a very thin layer spread out on the floor. There should be little impact on the contents inside, unless otherwise noted.

11-30% Waist Deep: Unless kept on shelves above the water line, most waterlogged items and equipment will be worthless, ruined beyond all recovery.

31-65% Chest Deep: Most items at shelf level and below are ruined beyond recovery.

66-85% Three-Fourths Flooded: At this level most anything in the blockhouse would be ruined beyond recovery. Objects on the ceiling might remain salvageable, but there isn't likely to be anything worth salvaging.

86-00% Completely Flooded: Total loss, anything that might have been of value is gone.

91-00% Collapsed. Roll to determine the extent of the damage, then roll on the Contents Table.

01-20% Lucked Out: The structure is mostly intact.

21-45% Immediate Access Blocked: Roll again to determine the condition of any rooms beyond.

46-85% Severely Buckled: The walls are dangerously warped, cracked, deformed, and have fallen in. Only 50% of materials inside are salvageable.

86-90% Crawling Room Only: The blockhouse has been flattened, but there is room to crawl through most of the building. 95% of materials inside have been destroyed.

91-00% Complete Structural Failure: The building is basically a subterranean pile of rubble. There is only a 01-02% chance of salvaging a couple of items.

Blockhouse Contents Table

01-40% Abandoned/Storage: The blockhouse was apparently abandoned well before the Great Cataclysm and was used for storage of random items. These can include such things as 1D6x10 old magnetic data tapes, CDs or other storage media, which, if salvageable, might provide anything from satellite telemetry of the 20th Century or medical data on astronauts, to lists or bookkeeping. Other common items are 1D4x100 boxes of paper files. These files can include things such as mission reports, technical data, reams of printed calculations, and interoffice memos. There is always the ubiquitous 1D20 pieces of office furniture, ranging from computer desks to lounge chairs. Also don't forget 1D4x10 pieces of obsolete electronics and random machinery parts, such as antiquated telemetry computer banks, turn of the century laptops, plus various buttons, switches and knobs taken from who knows where. All totaled, the haul is worth as little as 1D6x100 credits to 1D6x10,000 credits, to the right buyer.

41-65% Abandoned, stripped and completely empty. This blockhouse was apparently stripped clean and left empty. The only remaining items of interest are the ceiling tiles and a few pipes and wires that may be sticking out from the walls and floor.

66-85% Abandoned, partially stripped. While not stripped clean, the equipment is obviously obsolete, probably from the late 20th Century. Most of the remaining computer banks look as though they had been broken down for parts, but the process was never completed. Salvageable materials include 1D8 computer banks, complete with chairs, 1D4 wall mounted computer display panels, and 6D6 miscellaneous items that include a tool kit, a box of assorted nuts and bolts, and laminated technical schematics for the computer banks and display panels and similar. Estimated worth, providing everything is salvageable, 1D10x10,000 credits.

86-95% Abandoned but intact. While the equipment looks to be antiquated, it appears to have been kept in working order until the Great Cataclysm struck. Everything was at one point clearly labeled, indicating that it was probably meant as a model for tourists or was a training facility. Included are 2D6 computer banks complete with high-backed chairs, 6 wall mounted computer display models, 1D4 small computer terminal stations, and 6D6 miscellaneous items that include model spacecraft, glass ashtrays, wall decorations and insignia of apparent space missions. Estimated worth, providing everything is salvageable, 4D6x10,000 credits, maybe more (G.M.'s discretion).

96-00% Active! A rare find indeed! State of the art, highly advanced computer systems, linked up to tracking satellites and communications gear. Top of the line pre-Cataclysm aerospace computers capable of launching and running a space mission are still working! 1D6 computer stations with holographic manipulation projectors, 4 holographic wall display projectors, an artificial intelligence mainframe devoted to this particular launch system, and accompanying office furniture and odds and ends. A real coup, but what to do with it? Estimated worth, provided everything is salvageable, 6D6x20,000 credits minimum, depending on the buyer.

Missile Silos

Clear evidence that The Cape wasn't just for space launches are the missile silos that have been uncovered. Often flooded and/or full of sediment, occasionally a fierce hurricane will uncover a large, concrete block that serves as the cap to a nuclear missile silo. Always found among the barrier islands off the Florida coast, these silos are more valuable than the civilian launch control blockhouse structures. Deep within the silos are usually sealed, hardened rooms filled with military technology and hardware. As these are sealed, and the launch tubes are often flooded or filled with sediment, they are rarely occupied by animals, and make for a relatively uncontested site to explore. Many of the launch tubes are empty, however the occasional ICBM (Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile) is found. This includes the possibility of an intact rocket booster, and could, theoretically, provide a way into orbit given the right circumstances. Often adventuring groups will set out for Dinosaur Swamp in hopes of finding one of these near mythical sites, and the possibility of space travel.

Consult the following tables for silo condition and contents. This list is far from exhaustive and Game Masters should feel free to tailor and modify as they see fit.

Silo Condition Table

01-05% Sealed! The launch tube and the bunker levels are both sealed tight and have not been adversely affected by the elements. Roll on the following Contents Table.

06-35% Filled. Roll first to determine what the silo is filled with, then roll on the Flooded sub-table to determine the extent of the in-fill. Finally, roll on the Contents Table to determine what may be found inside the bunker levels.

01-20% Loose Sediment: The launch tube has experienced a filtering of small particles of sediment, mostly a buildup of dark loamy, dirt and clay. Depending on the level of the sediment, most items buried under it are ruined. There is a 01-20% chance that sediment has also filtered into the bunker complex.

21-50% Sludge: The silo has filled with a spongy, plastic-like substance. It has a rough, rubber-like feel and is slightly sticky to the touch. It is most likely decomposed solid rocket fuel for an ICBM that has leaked from the fueling tanks and mixed with an unknown agent that has seeped into the silo. 01-30% chance of it being radioactive, and a 01-65% chance that the material is still flammable! There is a 01-35% chance that the sludge has also penetrated its way into the bunker complex.

51-55% Fungus: The launch tube has become home to a fungus colony. Depending on the size of the infestation, this could be a small patch, or a major mushroom garden. 01-25% chance that the fungus gives off a hallucinogenic spore that when breathed in elicits a mild feeling of euphoria. Characters must make a saving throw vs toxins at 16 or higher. A character who fails to make his saving throw is -3 to all combat bonuses, -1 attack per melee round, and wants to sleep where he stands. This effect lasts for 1D4 hours per exposure and could lead to becoming part of the fertilizer for the mushroom colony. A thorough examination at the bottom of the launch tube might lead to discovering the skeletons of animals and/or explorers who fell victim to the fungus spore, or a colony of spiders or snakes. Any equipment in the silo that has been covered by the fungus is ru-

ined, although most metal alloys are salvageable. There is only a 01-10% chance that the fungus has spread into the bunker levels, although if the sealed levels are opened, they are vulnerable to widespread colonization of the spores.

56-95% Sand: The launch tube has filled with a fine white sand, indicating that it was (or still is) submerged underneath the ocean. The immense size of the tubes makes for a great burrow for large sand dwelling creatures, including the occasional mutant crab. If still underwater it could appeal to a shark, giant squid, giant eel, or other aquatic monsters. Given that the sand would have been deposited with salt water, even if the silo is currently dry, the inside of the launch tube looks like the inside of a sunken wreck. Most metal items are heavily corroded, with sensitive equipment ruined, often turned into a lump of rust. There is a 01-65% chance that the sand has filtered into even the sealed bunker portion of the silo.

96-00% Geode: Rarely found in silos, the geode phenomenon does occasionally occur, with spectacularly large mineral formations. Some may grow as big as 6 feet (1.8 m) tall. There is only a 01-10% chance that the mineral formation has also occurred in the sealed bunkers. Roll on the following table to determine the type of crystals formed. There will be only one type of crystal present.

01-15% Agate.

16-30% Amethyst.

31-45% Garnet.

46-65% Quartz (roll again to determine the type/color). 01-40% Clear. 41-65% Rose. 66-85% Ruby. 86-00% Smoky.

66-85% Salt.

86-95% Topaz.

96-00% Tourmaline.

36-90% Flooded. Roll to determine the depth of the water, then roll on the Contents

Table.

01-05% Ankle Deep: Basically a very thin layer spread out on the bottom of the launch tube. There should be little impact on the contents inside the sealed off bunker level. 01-05% chance of having seeped into the sealed bunkers.

06-10% One Flooded: Again, there should be little impact on the contents inside the silo as this water level will only affect the bottommost portion of the launch tube. 01-20% chance of having seeped into the lower bunker levels.

11-25% Half Flooded: The lower reaches of launch tube is covered in water, but there is only a 01-25% chance of it having seeped into the bunker.

26-85% Three Quarters Flooded: Most of the launch tube has been flooded, ruining anything in it. There is a 01-40% chance of having seeped into the bunker.

86-00% Launch Tube Flooded: Anything contained in the launch tube that might have been of value has been ruined, and the level of the water is near the surface. There is a 01-60% chance of the bunker level also being completely flooded.

91-00% Sheered: Tectonic forces have displaced the bottom half of the complex, leaving only the top half of the silo in place. The launch tube just trails off into sediment and bedrock. The actual bunker complex may be as little as 10 feet (3 m) away or as far as one mile (1.6 km), probably destroyed completely, or seriously damaged and its contents lost.

Silo Contents Table

01-40% Abandoned/Storage: The silo was apparently abandoned well before the Cataclysm and was used for storage of military surplus. Examples include furniture such as tables, chairs, desks, lockers, and water coolers, blankets (still in plastic wrapping), boxes of files, or any other random, nonessential quartermaster overstock.

41-60% Abandoned, stripped: Completely empty. This silo was apparently stripped clean, but was not used for storage purposes. There are numerous pipes and conduits running through the complex, wires protruding from walls, inoperable plumbing fixtures, but otherwise, it is completely bare.

61-80% Abandoned, partially stripped: While not stripped clean, there is still approximately 1D4x10% of the original equipment still in place. This includes things like living quarters, computer banks, communications equipment and most electronics, but anything regarding missile launch and/or guidance was long ago removed, and the materials may or may not be in good shape after several centuries of being buried.

81-95% Abandoned, whole: The equipment has not been removed or salvaged, but looks to be antiquated, like mid 20th century computers and electronics. By all appearances, it looks to have been kept in working order up until the Cataclysm struck. Possible reasons include as a piece of living archival history, or even as a training simulator.

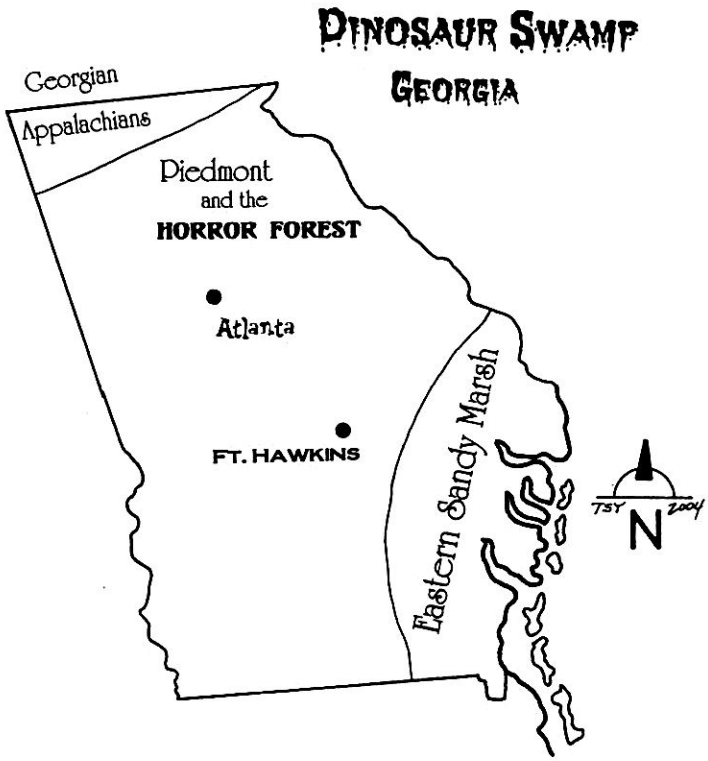
96-00% Intact launch tube with ICBM: Roll on the following table to determine the condition of the missile.

01-09% The ICBM is completely intact. Provided that the conditions rolled above have not resulted in damage to the missile, it is fully functioning and launch capable. A working nuclear warhead is worth approximately 2D6x100,000 credits on the Black Market or to the CS. Asking for more from either party is likely to get the sellers killed and the ICBM taken.

10-65% The ICBM has been damaged. Even if sealed and undisturbed for centuries, time can take its toll. Whether from the influence of seismic disturbance, or simple inattention, the missile is inert, but still salvageable. Salvage value is approximately 2D6x10,000 credits.

66-00% The ICBM has already been salvaged. Tough luck, someone beat you to it and has already uncovered this site. Most of the missile and bunker have already been salvaged. All that remains is 1D6x1000 credits in scrap metal and materials.

Note: Regardless of the condition of the missile, there are still highly advanced computer systems, linked up to tracking satellites and communications gear, still to be found in the bunker complex. Advanced holographic displays and computers make up the majority of the control systems, but there is also complete living quarters and maintenance equipment to be found. The total value of artifacts and salvage can range from 2D6x100 credits to 2D6x10,000. Game Masters, at their discretion, can allow for a maintenance robot, its power cell long since drained, to also be found along with several skeletons of the men and women stationed at the silo. Value of the 'bot is 2D6x10,000 credits depending on the buyer; double if sold at a tech kingdom or the Chi-Town 'Burbs.



The Old State of Georgia

Directly north of the Florida peninsula is the old State of Georgia. Divided into three regions by Neenok in his book about Dinosaur Swamp, it is broken down into the *Eastern Sandy Marsh,* a middle higher elevation known as the *Georgian Piedmont*, and a *northwestern Mountain* region. The south and east is similar in its topography to the Florida peninsula, but the rest of the region has its own unique features. There are also many more ruins found in old Georgia than in the peninsula of old Florida, mainly due to the relative security from the ocean, especially in the western portion of Georgia. There are significant occurrences of spectral haunting in these ruins, leading some to call the western half of the state the *Horror Forest.*

Georgia is part of the continent proper and has the traditional four definable seasons, with temperatures ranging from below freezing in the winter to over 100 degrees Fahrenheit (37.7 C) at the peak of summer.

Travel through the Old State of Georgia is easiest in the Piedmont. In this zone between the marsh and the heavily forested region, the soil composition is generally capable of supporting most land vehicles. The further east and into the marsh one goes, the problems faced become similar to those in the Florida peninsula. The further west one goes, the firmer and dryer the ground and the denser the tree coverage as it rises into mountainous terrain. The uneven ground and dense forest can create havoc for ground vehicles. Small hovercraft, hovercycles, flying power armor, riding animals and one's own foot power offer the easiest methods of travel in this region.

The Eastern Sandy Marsh – The New Okefenokee

The Eastern Sandy Marsh is aptly named, for it is a lowland, wet region with topsoil largely composed of sandy deposits. Moving north out of the Florida peninsula proper and over the Karst topography of the Florida panhandle, the land again becomes a swampy region that empties into a giant salt marsh named for a Pre-Rifts feature known unofficially as the "Okefenokee." The original region to hold that name has since been claimed by the ocean and is under water, but the name transferred easily enough to this new lowland swamp in the post-Cataclysm days. Home to alligators, dinosaurs and carnivorous plants, it is as dangerous a region as anywhere is in the peninsula. The delta regions of the coast are particularly notable for the high concentration of carnivorous plants. Many of the man-eating plants find the sandy soil to be a rich environment in which to grow, spawning large colonies of them throughout the area.

Off of the coast into the Atlantic Ocean, there are small barrier islands beginning to form. While not as large as those found off the coast of Florida, the phenomenon is identical. Before the Great Cataclysm there was a beautiful range of islands off of the Georgian coast, but they are not reforming nearly as quickly as the Florida islands.

The eastern region is home to many of the larger dinosaurs and dinosaur-like herbivores, which clear large swaths of the scrubby vegetation as they pass by, browsing for food. The dinosaurs tend to stay away from the softer marshland, but will venture short distances into the pine forests that border with the Piedmont in search of food. Their large bodies are ill equipped for fitting between trees, and their passing is often marked by whole stands of trees uprooted and flattened, or pushed out of the ground, leaning at a 45 degree angle. Where there are herbivores, there are carnosaurs preying on the young, the injured and the old. Thus, it is not uncommon to find Raptors, Allosaurs, Tyrannosaurus, and the tracks of other predators following the sauropods.

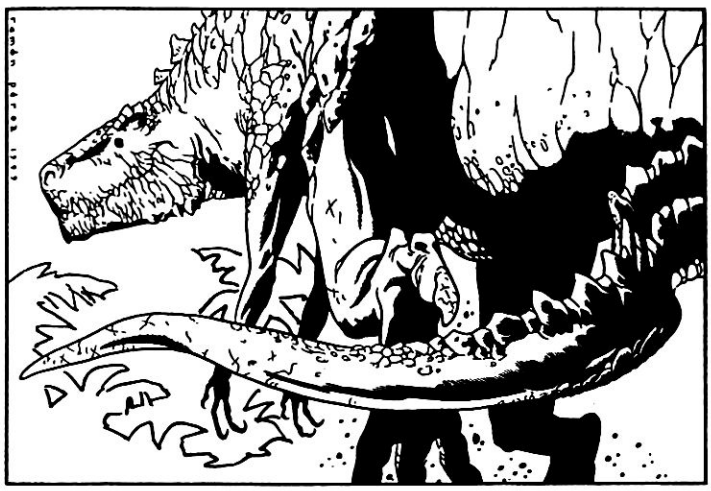
At the very southeasternmost point of the *New Okefenokee* is a powerful concentration of ley lines and nexus points. It is thought that the first carnivorous plants came to Rifts Earth through dimensional portals originating along these ley lines, and spread both north and south along the east coast. There is no doubt that they prosper here, and the high concentrations of ley line nexus points regularly cause Rifts to open and bring forth someone new for the plants to eat. Many monsters, demons and other extra-dimensional creatures that appear in the New Okefenokee never make it out, as they are made a swift meal for a man-eating plant or hungry carnosaur. Ironically, despite the intensity of magic energy, and because of this strange form of predator/prey dynamic in the region, the borders of the swamp are often some of the safest when it comes to supernatural creatures. However, this just means that the dinosaurs have the range all to themselves.

The Georgian Piedmont and the Horror Forest

Outside of the Okefenokee, moving into the Georgian Piedmont region, the land is a large expanse of scrubby bushes and

trees rooted deeply in the sandy soil that covers most of the eastern seaboard. As one gets further inland and closer to the ruins of Macon, small patches of pine trees crop up intermittently, until the actual ruins themselves are reached and a veritable forest of tall, gangly pine trees dominate the landscape. Further inland, the pine forests mix with many species of deciduous trees, and form the first tracts of the massive forest that covers the wilderness east of the Appalachian Mountains.

The middle region of the Piedmont, made up of harder, more clayey soils, is home to the great forest that stretches from the depths of *Alabama,* north and into *eastern Canada.* Dotted with ruins of pre-Rifts cities, including the megalopolis of Atlanta, the *Piedmont Forest* is often the goal of many explorers and adventurers, simply because of the sheer amount of potential salvage. This forest is also known by the less than comforting name of the **Horror Forest** because of the prevalence of haunted ruins found under the canopy of the trees and amid the ruins. As one travels through this foreboding wood, small bits of architecture find their way to the surface. These are the small, almost insignificant remnants of Pre-Rifts civilization that have been reclaimed by nature. Often it is nothing more than a few metal or plastic pipes, the remains of a residential plumbing system, or the crumbling wall of a building. Other common sights are the occasional vehicle chassis, now a rusting metal carcass, jutting out of the ground with a tree growing through it, or the weather battered walls of a few stories of a building, the windows shattered long ago, and now home to a pack of Velociraptors or other animals. Many ruined buildings have been adopted as animal dens for generations of animals. Most of these animals, especially packs of wild dogs, wolves, and carnosaurs, are fiercely territorial, expressing an almost suicidal attachment to their "den." Some of these so-called "Generational Dens" have even stood up to invading humanoids and other predators many times the resident animals' numbers or size. A juvenile Tyrannosaur looking for a new hunting ground has often been brought down for invading the home of a pack of diminutive Scampers or Raptors. *Deearn Neenok* noted it with some fascination, likening it to a perverse form of colonialism.



"Are these packs of dinosaurs any different from other, so-called higher life forms? The very word, 'dinosaur' was once, and still often is, associated with something that is obsolete. Yet these beasts from Earth's past hardly seem 'obsolete' to me. Packs of dinosaurs have found shelter, a place to raise their young, and good hunting grounds among the ruins of man, where given a second chance, they are thriving. They are, in this respect, no different from any of us and they will fight to protect their dens, hunting grounds and young. The Generational Dens among the ruins of man are a nesting ground for offspring who will also find shelter, a place to raise their young, and good hunting grounds of their own. They will seek to expand their sphere of influence in a common and mutual desire for their own survival. How colonial of them. Humans may have once dominated this landscape, but the dinosaurs may be the new lords of this land."

While these ruins are dangerous because of the predatory dinosaurs, there are scarier places to be found. The ample ruins of human civilization have centuries of habitation behind them; millions upon millions of humans lived and died in and around them. These ruins are all that remain of the accumulated hopes, dreams and lives of these millions of people. They are not only rich in history, but also in the raw emotion the people attached to them, leading to numerous ruins that are home to Poltergeists, Haunting Entities, the Haunting Child and other shadows and spirits of the dead. *Deearn Neenok* documented one particularly frightening encounter with a ruined playground located deep within the Horror Forest.

"It was an innocent enough looking set of structures we came upon. Some bits of metal and stone extruding from the ground. Though when I look back on it, they were more like bony fingers that had clawed their way to the surface than ordinary fragments of a dead civilization. Perhaps my recollection has been clouded by the events of that night. We dug near the fingers of the past and pulled out a few artifacts from the ground: the hard rubber seat and rusted chain from a swing set and an armless ceramic doll suggesting this may have once been a schoolyard or playground. We also made a basic survey of the site and a crude map. On many of the plastic pieces, Roy and Teeltan recovered nearby, we could still read the faded red and yellow letters. They were very cartoony looking, almost balloon shaped. Javelle, one of our Pathfinder guides, recognized them as the name of an ancient toy company. We identified several pieces of playground equipment, including a second and third hard rubber swing seat, complete with a rusted chain still attached. Later in the afternoon, under one piece of ruined equipment, we discovered a small, fragile skeleton. Soon, more small skeletons were uncovered, all having perished under collapsing playground equipment, or worse. It was an emotionally draining day for us all, and we foolishly decided to make camp where we were.

"That night, we were awakened by recitations of children's rhymes, seeming to come from the structures themselves. I was amazed at their similarity to ones that I recognized from my own childhood. At the time, I marveled at the sheer resiliency of language to have preserved that ring-around-the-rosy poem through two Dark Ages. I broke from my scholarly reverie when I began to see ghostly images of children wandering through our camp, gathering the pieces of the playground that we had excavated. As they collected them, the spectral children put them back into the ground. Then, when they finished, they turned their attention on us. Javelle and two others were gone and were never seen again."

Of course, not just children's playgrounds are haunted, but they are some of the most dangerous places in the region. It fur-

ther proves that while there are monsters of the flesh in the forests, there are monsters of the spirit to be on guard against as well. Banshees, and Entities, particularly Haunting and Possessing, are common inhabitants of these types of ruins. There is also the occasional Tectonic Entity that builds its body out of the playground equipment and rubble. Wise adventurers usually steer clear of such ruins after only one such encounter. Continuing further to the north and the west, the Piedmont begins to rise into low hill country, and eventually into the ridges and valleys of the Appalachian Mountains.

The Georgian Appalachians

The mountains of old Georgia are heavily forested and marked by numerous streams and rushing rivers. In many of the valleys the ruins of hydroelectric dams can be seen standing like breached fortresses in dry riverbeds, the water long since diverted away somewhere upstream due to the reshaping of the mountains caused by the Great Cataclysm. The oldest of these dams were located near the ruins of Blue Ridge and Nottely. These older structures were some of the first to be breached during the Coming of the Rifts. The skeletal ruins of the dams are often home to flying creatures nesting in the top portion and hosts of subterranean creatures living in the bowels of the complex. These ruined dams are veritable adventures in and of themselves, offering mystery and excitement to those willing to enter into them. However, all have been looted centuries ago and offer no treasure from the past.

Not only are the mountains cut by streams and river valleys, but also by extensive ley lines. The northernmost range of the mountains is the southern edge of a massive ley line lattice that lies over the Appalachian Mountains of Tennessee and North Carolina. This lattice is almost as powerful as the ley lines in the New Okefenokee, but without the added "benefit" of having large colonies of carnivorous plants to help keep the population of dangerous monsters and alien beings in check. Consequently, these mountain ranges are home to any number of powerful supernatural beings, dragons and alien creatures that have emerged from the Rifts. The mountains also attract spell casters from the Federation of Magic who want to take advantage of the abundant magic energy, or to gain minions and/or slaves for their various schemes.

All of Georgia's cities have been reduced to ruins reclaimed by forests and marshes. What's left above ground are toppled skyscrapers, the skeletons of buildings and highway ramps that end in midair. The ruins of Macon and Atlanta are the two largest ruins found in the region.

The Ruins of Atlanta

Located in the northwest area of the Piedmont, the ruins of Atlanta are an imposing sight, rising above the massive trees and vegetation that have grown up, cloaking the city in their shadows. Despite the devastation of the Great Cataclysm and chaos of the last three hundred years, there are still several high-rise structures and skyscrapers (snapped in half or missing their topmost floors) visible above the tree, though they are little more than tattered skeletons of the past. What were once towers of concrete, steel and glass are now hollow sockets and skeletons of metal standing in silent protest of the tragedy that has befallen them. These structures are now home to whatever claims a corner of them as its own. The upper floors are home to birds and bats, winged beasts and the occasional Gargoyle, winged dinosaur, Panthera-Tereon, and even dragons. The lower levels may be inhabited by ghosts and beings of flesh and blood, from puma, bears, packs of wolves, wild dogs, and Panthera-Thrinax to Raptors, alligators and Fury Beetles. Barbarian tribes, bands of D-Bees and adventurers may also claim a building or city block for themselves, but most find the competition with the animal predators, ghosts and demons to be too much to handle and move on to safer ground.

Beneath the surface, there are actually two systems of tunnels running beneath the old city. The first is an old underground train system, and the second is what looks to be a buried city all of its own. These are known as the MARTA Tunnels and the "Underground."

The MARTA Tunnels

Cut from the bedrock beneath the city, the MARTA tunnels, as they are still known thanks to the many signs and markings left on the walls, are a vast network of interconnecting tunnels that span the entire circumference of the city. The walls are made of rough-hewn granite, never polished or covered over by the original engineers as to remind passengers of where they were. The floor is a mosaic of slate and granite tiles that have withstood the centuries with resilient beauty. Despite the ravages of earthquakes, flooding, and wildlife, there are still large portions of the tunnels that are habitable, though what level of habitability depends on one's standards.

Fifty years before the Great Cataclysm, most of the original track and wheel trains were replaced with bullet-fast hover trains, the husks of which still clog many tunnels. The train cars have been used as homes by people for centuries, the original insides gutted and rebuilt by generations of squatters. Train cars and debris are also used as boundary markers and blockades to deter trespassers and keep out predators. Because many of the trains servicing the MARTA system were hover vehicles, the tunnels themselves were reconstructed as to have smooth, curved floors made of concrete rather than the gravel beds used for the rail and tie system that predated it. These smooth, curved walls and floor enhanced the speed and cushion effect of the trains going by, but in the ruins of Atlanta they have taken on a more destructive purpose, and pose a threat to anyone wishing to live in the tunnels. The way the tunnels are constructed, they are natural water canals channeling even small amounts of rain water with terrifying speed, and causing flash floods throughout the tunnel system. Depending on the amount of rainfall, the tunnels can be filled with fast moving rivulets, knee high streams, or in the case of severe thunderstorms and hurricanes, they become veritable pressurized pipes! Because some of the tunnels have been collapsed, displaced or otherwise disturbed from their original placement, this leads to many of these cavities, acting as underground water reservoirs. These reservoirs collect runoff until the sheer amount of water breaks free from whatever is holding it back – whether a debris pile, collected dirt and sediment, or a manmade barrier – and jets through the tunnels and underground cavities pushing the debris ahead of it like a runaway locomotive until the energy is expended. The water

quickly drains away after a rain which only invites the uninitiated to gather or make camp in what seems to be a safe haven, unaware that the next rain may spell their doom. Despite the dangers posed by rain, the tunnels are home to thousands as they do provide protection and solitude from the horrors visited on the world above. As long as the inhabitants take to high ground when it rains, disaster can be averted.

Rat Men of Atlanta

Whether they come from an alien world or are the product of some experiment in genetic engineering gone wrong, there is a small warren of Rat Men living in the tunnels beneath Atlanta. They have colonized the northern tunnels of the metro system and seem content with their territory, at least for now. They have existed in Atlanta for as long as anyone can remember, though neither the Rat Men or anyone else can say when they first appeared or where they may have originated. Most people have *decided* they are mutant animals that escaped from a genetics laboratory during the Great Cataclysm and have managed to (just barely) survive the decades of change and madness that followed. This theory is as likely as any, though they could have originated from an alien world, or be the product of Gene-Splicer experimentation or some other agent of mutation. The Rat Men are surprisingly intelligent and until recently, very shy and reclusive, hiding from the outside world. As a people, the Rat Men have suffered terribly and have teetered on the edge of extinction many times these past three centuries. Moving into the sewers and metro tunnels under Atlanta has helped them to escape the predators and frightened humans who have hunted them for generations. (Some barbarian tribes hunt them like animals and wear their hides!) Their current population is approximately 460, all that's left of nearly 5000 devastated by a virulent plague. That was two years ago, and the virus (attacking only Rat Men) has seemed to completely vanish. A recent string of good luck has bolstered the survivors' outlook and given them the courage to go on. More than that, a new leader, Hirgg, has risen from their ranks to convince them that they have survived the test of the gods and are now on the zenith of a new age of explosive growth and prosperity. This has emboldened the humanoids to make their mark on the world and to carve out their own destiny. Until recently, they ran from everyone and everything, but from now on they will fight back and stand up for themselves. This new sense of unity and strength has already made a positive difference in how they deal with monsters, invaders and hardship, making life more comfortable and promising than they have ever known. This (and some amazing luck) has rocketed Hirgg to greatness. When he appointed himself *King*, all celebrated in open acceptance. Now they follow him with absolute blind faith. There is talk of learning to fight and building an army to defend themselves against the barbarians and monsters, and of building a grand underground city and expanding their territory. For now, they don't know what to quite make of the clan of humans who call themselves Eleytherian Atlanteans, except that they are a possible means to an end, for they have seen them practice and fight and now realize that they are better warriors than the best of the barbarians. The Rat King just hasn't decided if they are potential friends who could teach them the ways of combat (Hand to Hand: Martial Arts and a variety of Weapon Proficiencies), or a new enemy that should be bushwhacked by large numbers and slain. Their self-appointed King, Hirgg, sees the barbarians as his people's primary threat, but the Atlanteans are new, and apparently quite powerful, so he has decided to concentrate on them for the time being.

The Rat Men know that there are two separate groups operating in the south side tunnels, and that the Atlanteans are not yet aware of them or the other set of tunnels. For now the Rat Men, who call the Eleytherians the "handsome ones," hide in the shadows, observe and discuss what to do next, but really, all are waiting for the word from their King and will do whatever he says. Unknown to his people, the bold King Hirgg has already made contact with one of the Atlanteans and has proposed they work together, sharing their knowledge of the tunnels and surrounding ruins in exchange for combat training. Lyxander, seeing a potential ally in the Rat people, and not suffering from prejudice about mutants and D-Bees that so many others share, has agreed. However, the clever Rat King intends to keep half of his people hidden until the strangers have proven themselves honest and trustworthy. His main goal is finding a way to gain some advantage over the human barbarians who have hounded his people for generations.

The Rat Men have been subsisting on limited hunting on the surface, scavenging, and stealing from the barbarians and travelers who pass through the ruins of the ancient city. The average warren citizen would be considered a Vagabond O.C.C., with 10% being Bandits/Thieves, and 10% being Wilderness Scouts. The mystic arts and sciences are both unknown to these primitive beings who have subsisted for hundreds of years by living off the land and scavenging through the trash of others. Only one in six has a functioning Mega-Damage weapon of any kind and that is more than likely than not to be an energy pistol with only 1D6 charges left in the E-Clip, or a Vibro-Blade. They have no method to manufacture goods, tools, weapons, or anything above a true Stone Age technological level and even then they are poor craftsmen with only the barest of skills. Their limited fighting abilities (they usually run away in panic) and lack of suitable weaponry has often turned their own hunting and scavenging parties into prey while searching for food. Many of their young perish due to malnutrition, disease or predators (including a few instances of cannibalism), and their population would be much, much higher if they could find a better way to gather food and defend themselves. This absolute absence of technology and skills further suggests they were lab rats mutated into humanoid form and thrown into the world like babes in the woods by the Great Cataclysm. In the ensuing chaos, they have survived on the instincts of a scavenger and lived in isolation, never learning from the world around them. Under the guidance of King Hirgg, that may all be about to change. What impact that may have on the rest of the world, if any, is yet to be seen.

The Typical Rat Man

Appearance: Almost like a cartoon or comic book style of character, with a human body covered in coarse grey hair. The head is very much like that of rat, though the features are partially human, the ears small and round and the teeth small and pointed (no fangs). A long naked tail marks them as rodents, but their general build, musculature, feet and hands are completely human, and so are their voices. Their fur makes wearing clothing unnecessary, but most choose to wear shirts, vests, or jackets as well as shoes or boots, and utility belts around their waists.

Alignment: Any, but typically Scrupulous, Unprincipled or Anarchist.

Attributes: I.Q. 2D6+6, M.E. 1D6+8, M.A. 2D6+6, P.S. 1D6+10, P.P. 2D6+8, P.E. 2D6+6, P.B. 1D6+6 (at least to humans), Spd. 3D6+14 – roll an extra 1D6 when the stat is maxed out from the initial roll.

M.D.C.: Only by body armor.

Hit Points: P.E. attribute number +2D6 and an additional 1D10 per level of experience.

S.D.C. Bonus: 3D6+6 S.D.C. in addition to those made available from the O.C.C. and physical skills.

Size: Five to five and a half feet (1.5 to 1.7 m) for females and five and a half to six feet (1.7 to 1.8 m) for males. Females are slightly smaller, thinner and shapely, but it is difficult for humans to tell male from female.

Weight: 80-140 pounds (36 to 63 kg).

Average Life Span: 30-42 years, but the most common cause of death is by violent means, suggesting the life span could easily be 50% greater.

P.P.E.: 3D6

Race: Unknown. Mutant rats?

Available O.C.C.s: Vagabond 78%, Bandit/Thief 10%, Wilderness Scout 10% and Holistic Healer 2% (typically a female), but reduce all additional O.C.C. Related and Secondary Skills by half.

Average Level of Experience: 1D4

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 100 feet (30.5 m), instinctive swimmers (Swimming at 80%) and climbers (Climbing at 80%), and keen sense of hearing.

Vulnerabilities: Timid and lack self-confidence; -2 to save vs Horror Factor.

Attacks per Melee: As per O.C.C.

Damage: By weapons, otherwise basically the same physical capabilities as a human.

Special Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +1 on initiative, +1 to dodge, +2 to pull punch, and +1 to roll with impact.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Most everyone and everything.

Allies: Their own people. Used to hide from all others, only now starting to reach out to other humanoids.

Value: None per se. Some barbarian tribes hunt them like animals, skin them for their fur and eat their meat for food.

Habitat: Found only in Atlanta, Georgia.

King Hirgg

Upon first impression, Hirgg is not what one first thinks of when the word "king" is mentioned. He is scrawny, mostly sinew and bone, but there is something about him – a confidence and tinge of anger that makes him seem strong. Hirgg is willing to take a stand, make decisions and give orders. He has great vision and hungers for a future that is much better than the past. If any one thing sets him apart from the other Rat Men it is that Hirgg is not afraid, and his courage gives his people courage. The Rat King is a bold, natural born leader, with a curious mind and a dream.

Real Name: Hirgg.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Attributes: I.Q. 18, M.E. 17, M.A. 19, P.S. 9, P.P. 11, P.E. 10, P.B. 9, Spd 20.

Hit Points: 26

S.D.C.: 29

M.D.C.: By body armor only.

P.P.E.: 9

Age: 22. **Sex:** Male.

Height: 5 feet, 6 inches (1.7 m). **Weight:** 100 lbs (45 kg).

Experience Level: 3rd level Vagabond.

Occupation: Self-proclaimed King.

Natural Abilities: Standard for Rat Men.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Bonuses: +2 to parry, +2 to dodge, +3 to roll with impact, and +2 to pull punch.

Skills of Note: Athletics, Prowl: 35%, Pick Pockets: 42%, W.P. Knife, W.P. Energy Pistol.

Magic Knowledge: None.

Psionics: None.

Weapons and Equipment: Hirgg wears a patchwork suit of Juicer plate armor (only has 23 M.D.C.), carries a Neural Mace, and has a fully charged Wilk's 320 laser pistol with two extra E-Clips. He has a fondness for the sleek, rat-like profile (in his opinion) of the Wilk's laser weapons, and would love dearly to get hold of some Wilk's laser rifles and better M.D.C. body armor for himself and his people.

The Eleytherian Atlanteans

With a sense of irony, a small group of True Atlanteans and their allies have gathered in Atlanta to establish a base of operations dedicated to reclaiming their ancestral home of Atlantis.

They are small in number, limited in scope and power, but determined to accomplish their goals. Calling themselves *the Eleytherians*, meaning "freedom" in Greek/Atlantean, they have taken over a small stretch of the old Atlanta subterranean metro system, mostly to the south of the old city ruins. Young and idealistic, by Atlantean standards, they have spent the past two years scouting Dinosaur Swamp for the perfect place to house their fledgling army. When they found the tunnels beneath Atlanta, they felt a sense of destiny upon them. From here, in the ruins of a city named Atlanta, shall the liberation of the continent of Atlantis begin.

Currently, the Eleytherians of Atlanta number less than two dozen. They are led by a warrior named Lyxander, who is in turn advised by two companions, Falcone and Oxrik, both of whom are also True Atlanteans. The Eleytherians have their roots in, and take example from, the *Liberated Underground* in Splynn. Lyxander and his two advisors were attracted to the noble purpose of helping slaves escape from the torment of Splynncryth's slave pens, and were at first satisfied in the work that they were doing on their usurped, ancestral homeland. Lyxander rose quickly in the ranks of the LU, becoming a leader of his own cell of operatives that included Falcone, Oxrik, and one other, a warrior named Ascalus. They were highly successful in their missions and highly regarded by the leader of the

LU. He had hoped to groom the trio for higher positions of leadership in his growing ranks. However, Lyxander was growing unhappy with the direction and leadership of the Liberated Underground. He wanted to move faster, push harder, and take on more dangerous and spectacular missions. He also wanted to do more than rescue slaves, he wanted to liberate Atlantis. Lyxander and many of the heroes under his command were not content to save a few paltry thousands of slaves. Lyxander was strongly influenced by his second in command, *Ascalus*, who often spoke about taking their fight to the powers that controlled the continent of Atlantis and freeing it from the clutches of the Splugorth. Together, they began to quietly question the leadership of the Liberated Underground and slowly distanced themselves from the leadership of that organization, and began to secretly operate independent of the LU. Things came to a head during an assault on Skyborne Excursions near the Splynn Dimensional Market.

The assault on Skyborne was planned by Lyxander and Ascalus as an effort to cripple the company's operations in the city, and serve as a rallying point for other members of the LU to join their militant approach to strike at the Splugorth rather than rescue slaves. It was to be the first major mission of their new splinter faction: The Eleytherians.

Lyxander had high hopes that several other LU cells would join them. Unfortunately, events didn't turn out that way. All across the city of Splynn there was a massive Sunaj offensive against the LU. The assault on Skyborne was a trap. Half of Lyxander's forces were captured or slain, and the other clans within the LU never materialized to help in any way. Lyxander's picture, along with those of Falcone and Oxrik, all of whom who narrowly escaped, was broadcast across Atlantis. They were branded as known members of the LU and orders were issued to terminated them on sight. Because of the Eleytherians, the Sunaj were able to uncover several LU armories, and captured or killed dozens of members. For the first time, the LU was on the defensive. Max, and the other leaders of the Liberated Underground, were shocked. Because of the Eleytherians, the Liberated Underground was being hunted with a furor not seen in quite some time. They had lost countless millions of credits in weapons and equipment, and at least 50 members of the Underground. Lyxander suffered a devastating personal blow when it was proven to him that his trusted friend and ally, Ascalus was actually an agent of the Sunaj assigned with infiltrating the Liberated Underground. Lyxander was his way inside and ultimately the man who betrayed them all. Hero turned pariah, Lyxander and his top men chose to leave Atlantis and set up shop on the coast of the American continent. More than ever before, he and his men are committed to bringing down Splynncryth and reclaiming Atlantis for humans. Only now, the Sunaj and the traitor Ascalus, his real name *Zash-Danzas,* are at the top of their hit list.

Unknown to Lyxander and his Eleytherians, Zash-Danzas has volunteered to hunt down and destroy the surviving Eleytherians and has tracked them to Dinosaur Swamp. It is only a matter of time before he and his squad find the Atlanta base.

Lyxander

Lyxander was born to a small, unimportant family of Atlanteans living in the Eternal City, near the springs of Bath, England. His parents arrived there only days before he was born, and quickly assimilated into the pastoral life. Rather than advertise their identity, they hid the fact that they were True Atlanteans in an effort to avoid unwanted attention. They had other reasons as well. His parents masqueraded as if they were humans, though from an alien world. Such a story is common enough in the Rift plagued British Isles that it didn't immediately cause suspicion. However, anyone who did become suspicious of them, or made trouble for them, usually met with an unfortunate accident. The reason that Lyxander's parents kept their true identity a secret is because they were exiled Sunaj Assassins. Driven from London of Splynn by their guild fathers for having a child without guild approval, they fled west, taking refuge at the village of Bath. Although having given up their assassin ways, they had a strong need for a sense of community and belonging that had been fostered in the assassins' guild. They filled this need by becoming protectors of the realm and enjoyed their new, peaceful life near the tranquil springs. They raised Lyxander to have a strong sense of respect for the community that they lived in, and instilled in him a code of honor that he lives by to this day. When the time was right, they told Lyxander they were True Atlanteans and taught him the history of the Atlantean people, omitting the fact that they were actually part of the Aerihman clan, and by association, *Sunaj*. As he came into adulthood, Lyxander underwent training as a warrior and protector of the realm, but felt a larger obligation to his people, the True Atlanteans, and the freeing of Atlantis from the Splugorth. Consequently, to the disappointment of his family and his instructors, he never became one of the Eternal Knights, never became one of the protectors of the Eternal City. After completing his training and serving for several years in service of the kingdom as a man-at arms, he set out on his own. This eventually led him to service in the Liberated Underground, and finally to the formation of the Eleytherians.

His family's isolation and masquerade as ordinary humans means Lyxander has never received the Marks of Heritage from his clan, and instead received his marks from a Chiang-Ku dragon that he befriended during his adventures. Lyxander knows that there are many missing pieces to his parents' past, but has never dug deep enough to discover them. He is strong in his convictions, confident in himself, and dedicated to his pursuit to free Atlantis. Should his true heritage come to light, he will be shaken, but the exact effect it will have on him is anyone's guess.

He has found a home in Dinosaur Swamp, finding it fitting that he must hide in the wilderness to gather his army to bring it to abominable Atlantis. He likens it to a testing of his and his companions' resolve and courage. If they can survive in this wilderness and raise an army of champions to fight at their side, then surely they will be able to topple the monsters in their ancestral homeland. Lyxander is fond of saying, in his typical speech-giving manner, *"This fertile ground will sustain us, conceal us, test us, and shape us. Then, we will be ready to harvest what we have grown here, and transplant it in the putrid soil of Atlantis to purify and retake our home."* His speeches are often full of such metaphor, but he usually backs up his talk with quantifiable action.

Real Name: Lyxander Ekbanio.

Alignment: Principled.

Attributes: I.Q. 15, M.E. 24, M.A. 19, P.S. 26, P.P. 9, P.E. 17, P.B. 17, Spd 19.

Hit Points: 43, **S.D.C.:** 91.

M.D.C.: By body armor only.

P.P.E.: 22

Age: 81 (looks 21). **Sex:** Male.

Height: 6 feet, 2 inches (1.9 m). **Weight:** 184 lbs (82.8 kg).

Disposition: Lyxander's dedication to liberating Atlantis borders on obsession. He believes it is his destiny. He is a powerful, decisive, and resourceful leader, but he can be so blinded by his own goals that he allows others to manipulate him by playing to them. Lyxander is generally likable, but opinionated and unflappable to the point of ignoring good advice and being closed to opposing views and ideas. Unless he learns humility soon, his ability to adapt to difficult situations and overcome great obstacles is creating a superiority complex that may lead to his downfall and the demise of all who follow him.

Description: A tall, olive skinned man, well muscled, with a handsome square jaw and steely eyes. He wears his curly hair shoulder length and loose, with a thick circlet of silver to keep it out of his eyes. Lyxander is fond of wearing red and gold Gladiator body armor stylized to look like that of a Spartan Hoplite, complete with a red cape. He purposefully cultivates this image of a statuesque leader to inspire the men and women under his command.

Experience Level: 7th level Headhunter.

Occupation: Resistance Leader.

Natural & Special Abilities: Same as all True Atlanteans; Tattoo Magic, sense vampires, Sense Ley Lines, Ley Line Phasing, Operate Dimensional Pyramids, etc.. See **Rifts® World Book Two: Atlantis**, page 16 for complete details.

Skills of Note: Speaks Atlantean/Greek 98%, American (British Dialect) 98%, Euro 98%, Pilot Jet Pack 76%, History 75%, Hand to Hand: Expert, Boxing, W.P. Energy Rifle, W.P. Energy Pistol, and W.P. Sword.

Magic Knowledge: Marks of Heritage. His sword tattoo takes the form of a Spartan short sword.

I.S.P.: None.

Psionics: None.

Attacks per Melee: Six.

Bonuses of Note: +2 to strike, +5 to parry, +5 to dodge, +11 to S.D.C. damage, +3 to pull punch/roll with impact, +3 to save vs magic, +4 to save vs Horror Factor, +1 to save vs poison, +5 to save vs psionics/insanity, 55% trust/intimidate, and 35% charm/impress.

Weapons and Equipment: Wears a suit of Gladiator EBA (70 M.D.C.), with a cape made of M.D.C. materials (10 M.D.C.). Carries a Free Quebec Q2-20 LLG "Infantry Standard" laser rifle and grenade launcher that he picked up while serving with the LU. Since acquiring the rifle, he has painted it red with gold highlights to match his armor. He is quite fond of the styling, reliability, and diversity of the weapon.

Falcone

Falcone never knew his parents. His childhood was spent as a slave to a warlord who held sway over a small territory in the southwest. His master, a vampire who went by the name of el Arzon, often boasted about how he killed Falcone's parents, and quite enjoyed "dining on the fruit of their union." It was a maddening existence for the boy to be fed upon by el Arzon and his royal court of vampires. Falcone was a plaything and food to them, and his strong spirit provided the Vampire Lord enormous amounts of pleasure. Often el Arzon would allow Falcone the opportunity to escape during the daylight hours, and offered a reward to whoever first captured and brought the boy back unharmed that night. The vampire and his cohorts held dominion over much of the area so no one dared to help Falcone as he was hunted. Anyone who so much as lied about whether they had even seen him last would suffer torture. Brutality and humiliation were all the young boy knew, until the day he encountered someone willing to help.

A traveling group of Vampire Hunters had come from the Techno-Wizard Kingdom of Arzno to challenge this el Arzon and his brood. They protected the boy one night after another one of his planned escapes, and used the knowledge he had about the vampires and the layout of their lair to exterminate their undead plague on the region. One of these Vampire Hunters was a True Atlantean who explained to Falcone what the strange marks on his forearms meant, and how to use them. From then on, the boy knew that he would never have to fear a vampire again. He accompanied the group on their quest, guiding them throughout the region, flushing out vampire nests, and learning the history of his people, the Atlanteans, and how to be a noble warrior. He was quite taken with the human Cyber-Knight in the group and became his apprentice. Eventually, after years of study, and when the Knight finally passed away, Falcone became a knight, but drifted for many decades, a wandering knight-errant until making his way to Atlantis and joining the Liberated Underground. There he found Lyxander, another displaced Atlantean, and they became fast friends and warrior-brothers. He is committed to a free Atlantis, and works well with Lyxander as the team's second in command.

Real Name: Sir Falcone Maviteyolucas.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Attributes: I.Q. 13, M.E. 21, M.A. 18, P.S. 24, P.P. 18, P.E. 24, P.B. 17, Spd 23.

Hit Points: 42. **S.D.C.:** 116.

M.D.C.: Cyber-Armor: (A.R. 16, M.D.C. 56 main body), also by body armor.

Age: 79, **Sex:** Male.

Height: 6 feet, 3 inches (1.9 m). **Weight:** 205 lbs (92.3 kg).

P.P.E.: 44

Disposition: Flamboyant, noble, and adventurous. Having seen such depravity as a child, he strikes out at suffering and injustice wherever he can. He stands tall and proud, but not domineering, and has faith in his abilities. Whenever he does something, he does it with flair and style, almost to the point of showing off. He is uncomfortable with hiding and skulking, but appreciates the necessity of biding time before making a move. He is content with gathering strength in the wilds, but spends a lot of his time scouting and monster hunting.

Description: Well cut, athletic, with dusky colored skin, alert brown eyes, and a proud, beak-like nose. His hair is cropped short, but is very straight, looking almost like plumage rising from his head. His hair, combined with his eyes, nose and air

of confidence, gives him a very predatory look. He wears a suit of light Cyber-Knight styled body armor painted a deep blue with white highlights. Strapped to his thighs in "low-slung" quick-draw holsters are two ion pistols that he wields with a distinctive sharpshooting flair.

Natural & Special Abilities: Same as all True Atlanteans; Tattoo Magic, sense vampires, Sense Ley Lines, Ley Line Phasing, Operate Dimensional Pyramids, etc. See **Rifts® World Book Two: Atlantis**, page 16, for complete details.

Skills of Note: American: 98%, Dragonese/Elf: 98%, Spanish: 98%, Atlantean/Greek: 98%, Euro: 70%, Martial Arts, Cyber-Knight Zen Combat, W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Sharpshooting: Energy Pistol, W.P. Sword, and W.P. Shield.

Experience Level: 5th level Cyber-Knight.

Occupation: Resistance Leader.

Magic: Marks of Heritage. His sword tattoo takes the form of an Egyptian Kopsh. This has led him to believe that his parents and clan are from Africa, or have ties there.

Psionics: None, only the Psi-Sword (2D6 M.D.), and Psi-Shield abilities of Cyber-Knight training. These manifested weapons are usually dark blue-white in color, matching his armor.

Attacks per Melee: Six.

Bonuses: +3 on initiative, +4 to strike, +5 to parry, +5 to dodge, +8 to damage, +7 to pull punch, +5 to roll with impact, +2 to disarm, +7 to save vs magic, +6 to save vs Horror Factor, +5 to save vs poison, and +3 to save vs psionics/insanity. Does not include the Cyber-Knight Zen Combat bonuses vs technology.

Weapons and Equipment: Wears a suit of Light Cyber-Knight EBA (35 M.D.C.) painted dark blue with white highlights. He also carries two NG-57 Heavy Duty Ion Blasters in "quick-draw" holsters. When fighting, a favored tactic is to use his dual pistols to force an opponent to take cover while he covers the distance, and then engage them in hand to hand combat with his Psi-Sword and Shield.

Oxrik

Powerful doesn't begin to explain Oxrik. He is older than the rest of Lyxander's force and is an experienced Mind Melter. No one knows where he came from, or exactly what clan he was born into. He was brought to Rifts Earth as a slave before winning his freedom, and doesn't like to talk about his past. Though something of an enigma, Oxrik has proven his loyalty time and again, earning the trust of his teammates a hundred times over. Lyxander imagines that Oxrik is has lived most of his life around a large population of other Atlanteans, and is noble and brave. What he and the others don't know is that before his life as a slave, Oxrik was an exiled criminal.

Oxrik enjoys manipulating people; twisting their perceptions, and making them feel what he wants them to feel. On his home world, an Atlantean colony somewhere so distant that even he isn't sure that he could ever find it again, he was a wanted criminal. His crimes ranged from simple Telepathic invasion to psychic rape and murder, leaving his victims in a vegetative state. A predator of the first order, his psionic powers were so developed that they supplanted his higher, civilized mental capacity. It was a condition rare among True Atlanteans, but was no excuse for his crimes. He was hunted down, tried, found guilty, and sentenced to a solitary exile on an asteroid prison. However, not long after his incarceration he was discovered, taken prisoner and sold into slavery by an unnamed Splugorth.

Oxrik spent only a very short time as a slave in Atlantis. Keeping his powers hidden until the time was right for escape, he slew his keepers and vanished on the streets of Splynn. He reveled in his new found freedom and new environment. He shopped the streets of Splynn like a demented predator, taking pleasure in twisting the minds of as many Minions of Splugorth as he could. It was his revenge on the Minions that won him the attention of the Liberated Underground. An alliance with the LU helped him to focus his anger and powers in a constructive way, helping other slaves escape and exacting terrifying revenge on the Minions of his hated Splugorth enemies. His savagery and cruelty made many members of the LU reluctant to work with him. Lyxander, however, gladly welcomed him to his squad and managed to bring more control over Oxrik's troubled mind. Lyxander recognizes a weapon when he sees one, and would rather have Oxrik at his disposal than see him run loose.

Since coming to Dinosaur Swamp, Oxrik is finding that the walls are beginning to close in on him, so to speak. He doesn't have nearly the number of victims to turn his powers against, and time spent waiting and planning is eating him alive. Oxrik knows that he cannot indiscriminately prey on the barbarians and other people around him, but without a clear cut enemy to lash out at, the Mind Melter is turning into a time bomb waiting to explode. He will not hurt any of his fellow Atlanteans, but everyone else is open game. Without bad guys to hurt, it's only a matter of time before he hurts innocent people.

Real Name: Oxrik.

Alignment: Anarchist with very strong leanings toward Aberrant.

Attributes: I.Q. 14, M.E. 20, M.A. 13, P.S. 17, P.P. 8, P.E. 19, P.B. 21, Spd 21.

Hit Points: 46, **S.D.C.:** 70.

M.D.C.: By body armor.

Age: 164, **Sex:** Male.

Height: 6 feet, 3 inches (1.9 m). **Weight:** 160 lbs (72 kg).

P.P.E.: 30

Disposition: An insane, calculating hedonist, Oxrik is driven by his emotions and a lust to hurt others. He'd like to indulge his desire to hurt others on bad guys in general and the Minions of Splugorth, specifically, but without bad guys to battle, he's a powder keg of a monster himself, and the innocent will suffer when he goes off. He is loyal to his friends, and would rather abandon them than cause them any pain or trouble. His enemies find him to be a vicious, vindictive torturer and cold-blooded killer. It would bother him for his friends to learn about his past crimes and true murderous nature, but he has no regrets about what he has done, or what he is driven to do.

Description: Thin and wiry for an Atlantean, Oxrik favors clothes and armor with gray-scale coloring. He is bald, with extremely thin eyebrows and narrow, pale pink eyes. His skin is pale, almost albino, which gives him an unearthly, almost angelic appearance. He often uses his looks to stun an opponent, which is all the opening that he needs to assault their mind.

Natural & Special Abilities: Same as all True Atlanteans; Tattoo Magic, Sense Vampires, Sense Ley Lines, Ley Line Phasing, Operate Dimensional Pyramids, etc. See **Rifts® World Book Two: Atlantis**, page 16, for complete details.

Skills of Note: Atlantean/Greek: 98%, American: 90%, Euro: 90%, Hunting, Prowl: 67%, W.P. Sword, and Hand to Hand: Basic.

Occupation: Resistance Leader.

Experience Level: 9th level Mind Melter.

Attacks per Melee: 6 actions per melee round.

Bonuses: +1 to strike, +2 to parry, + 2 to dodge, +4 to S.D.C. damage, +2 to pull punch/roll with impact, +4 to save vs magic, +4 to save vs Horror Factor, +3 to save vs psionics/insanity, +2 to save vs poison, and 55% to charm/impress.

Magic: Marks of Heritage. His sword takes the form of a long, thin whip-like bladed sword known as a Falx.

Psionics: Sensitive: Astral Projection, Clairvoyance, Empathy, Mind Block, Object Read, See Aura, Sense Magic, Sixth Sense, Telepathy. **Healing:** Bio-Regeneration, Deaden Pain, Exorcism, Induce Sleep. **Physical:** Alter Aura, Death Trance, Impervious to Cold, Impervious to Fire, Levitation, Nightvision, Resist Fatigue, Resist Hunger, Resist Thirst, Summon Inner Strength. **Super:** Bio-Manipulation, Electrokinesis, Empathic Transmission, Hydrokinesis, Hypnotic Suggestion, Mentally Possess Others, Mind Bolt, Mind Bond, Mind Wipe, Psi-Shield, Psi-Sword, Pyrokinesis, Telekinesis (Super), Telekinetic Force Field. I.S.P.: 240.

Weapons and Equipment of Note: Oxrik relies on his natural abilities rather than carrying any weapons, but does wear a suit of Huntsman body armor (40 M.D.C.) painted gray that fades into white highlights.

The Sunaj Trackers

Hunting the Lyxander and his Eleytherian gang throughout the wilds of Dinosaur Swamp are a small team of Sunaj Assassins and Minions of Splugorth. They are led by Zash-Danzas, the "inside man" who masqueraded for years as Ascalus, a member of the Liberated Underground. Their mission is to pursue the fledgling splinter group of the LU, and deal with them appropriately. Danzas has been given complete authority to terminate them, but his masters would like to see the group manipulated and used again to hurt other True Atlanteans and enemies of Atlantis. With a little luck, further chaos could be sown and blamed on the Eleytherians. It's all up in the air, and the first act of this drama is going to be played out in the ruins of Atlanta, in the heart of Dinosaur Swamp.

Danzas has under his direct authority two female Sunaj Assassins named Zandra and Zharon (both 5th level and both Aberrant), a Kittani Espionage Agent named Rell (4th level; Anarchist), a Mind Bleeder named Bunkar (5th level; Miscreant) and three Staphra Warlords, Shrilla, Churleen, and Brillana (all 3rd level and all Anarchist).

Zash-Danzas

Even for a Sunaj, Zash-Danzas is incredibly cunning, lethal, and duplicitous. To call him a snake in the grass is an insult to snakes everywhere. A rising legend among the assassin guilds, Zash-Danzas is rumored to be native to any number of Splugorth held worlds, colonies and dimensions. His origins are so mysterious that no one is quite sure which guild he was trained at, or when, or if he was a lone apprentice to another Sunaj. Nor does anyone seem to know if Zash-Danzas is his real name, or an alias, or a combination of the two. Some have speculated that it is actually taken from a figure in history. This rumor may have some validity, as Zash-Danzas is similar to "hashsas," an antiquated definition for a "dark and sinister figure" in the Dragonese language. Interestingly enough, this antiquated word is similar to the ancient Rifts Earth language roots for assassin: "Hassassin" and "hashish." This could be a coincidence, but everything about Zash-Danzas seems to be part of a larger plan.

Zash-Danzas is a dangerous man, and figures prominently in the shadowy world of the Sunaj. He has traveled the Megaverse, plying his trade and ruthlessly carrying out his assignments. He has taken on missions that range from deep cover, as with the LU and various assassinations, to espionage and manipulation. He seems to favor no specific methods, leaves no trail, and considers his every option. He has been known to disappear for years at a time while on an assignment, reemerging only after the dust has settled. Case in point, he was under deep cover with the Liberated Underground for three years before he made his devastating move. He is a perfectionist who tries never to act on emotion nor act in haste, always plotting his next steps in every possible direction, before taking a single step forward.

Personally, Danzas actually admires Lyxander, and regrets that they must be enemies. Danzas doesn't share Lyxander's political views, but respects the man's tenacity and dedication. He enjoyed his time as Lyxander's friend "Ascalus," and often finds himself missing the camaraderie. This will be the first time that Danzas will deeply regret having to kill a *friend,* but such is the burden of being a Sunaj Assassin.

Real Name: Unknown.

Aliases: Ascalus, Adin, and Ajax. He obviously favors names that begin with the letter "A," or the first letter of the alphabet.

Alignment: Aberrant.

Attributes: I.Q. 17, M.E. 19, M.A. 23, P.S. 23, P.P. 17, P.E. 20, P.B. 19, Spd 35.

H.P.: N/A, **S.D.C.:** N/A.

M.D.C.: 107

Age: Unknown, looks to be in his early 40s. **Sex:** Male.

Height: 6 feet, 3 inches (1.9 m). **Weight:** 193 lbs (86.8 kg).

P.P.E.: 82

Disposition: Zash-Danzas can be an incredibly charming and pleasant individual, but very few actually get to know that side of him. He is dedicated to the cause of his clan, and will do anything to further its goals. Danzas is a consummate professional, capable of separating out his personal feelings from his job, and acting with a complete lack of mercy or compassion.

Description: A tall, well-built man with short black hair and a slightly tanned complexion. There is little notable about him, and he goes out of his way to maintain that perception. As Ascalus, he let his hair and beard grow into a bushy, curly mass, making him look like a figure of an ancient Greek statue.

Skills of Note: American: 98%, Atlantean/Greek: 98%, Dragonese/Elven: 98%, Euro: 98%, Spanish: 98%, Gobblely: 98%, Disguise: 93%, Prowl: 88%, Pilot Jet Pack: 98%, Pilot Motorcycle: 98%, Pilot Space Fighter: 90%, Pilot Robots & Power Armor: 96%, Hand to Hand: Assassin, Boxing, W.P. Archery & Targeting, W.P. Blunt, W.P. Sword, W.P. Energy Rifle, W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Paired, and W.P. Whip.

Experience Level: 10th level Sunaj Assassin.

Natural & Special Abilities: Same as all Sunaj Assassins, Tattoo Magic, M.D.C. Transformation, etc. See **Rifts® World Book Two: Atlantis**, page 66, for complete details.

Attacks per Melee: Eight.

Bonuses: +3% I.Q. bonus added to all skills, +3 on initiative, +2 to strike, +6 to parry, +6 to dodge, +12 to S.D.C. damage, +5 to pull punch, +7 to roll with impact, +2 to entangle, +2 to save vs psionics/insanity, +3 to save vs magic, +3 to save vs poison, 60% to evoke trust/intimidate, and 45% to charm/impress.

Magic Knowledge: Marks of Heritage. His sword takes the form of a broad bladed scimitar. He also has the following magic tattoos: A staff covered in flames, Death Touch, Black Sun, Heart of Steel, Eyes: Three, Eye of Knowledge, Heart with Large Wings, Heart Encircled by Chains, Skull Engulfed in Flames, Chain with Broken Link, Lightning Bolts.

Psionics: Deaden Senses, Ectoplasmic Disguise, Telekinesis, Mind Block, Mask I.S.P. and Psionics, Object Read. I.S.P.: 71.

Weapons and Equipment: Zash-Danzas carries a wide variety of weapons that he has acquired from across the Megaverse. When undercover, he typically chooses a suit of armor that has been pre-distressed, or one that has actually been battle damaged. He has a collection of such suits from prior assassination targets. When not undercover, he usually wears a suit of Sunaj EBA (110 M.D.C.). His personal suit has a distinctive, utilitarian look. It is black with very slight deep-red highlights, a knee-length cape, and a long, white, false ponytail flowing from the back of the mask. The mask is form fitting with a series of small spikes in rows around the skull piece, and a line of them running down the face, from the forehead over the bridge of the nose down to the chin. There is no mouthpiece, and the eye lenses are a deep red in color.

When undercover, he will use whatever weapons and disguises are appropriate for the job, but when not undercover, he usually carries the following weapons: a GR-10P Gravitonic Pistol, a TW Starfire Pistol, and a Whip of Pain. He has an extensive collection of weapons to pick from and Game Masters should feel free to add almost anything to his personal arsenal. Given his wide range of travel destinations, he could even own exotic weaponry from Phase World, Naruni Enterprises and/or other Rifts®: Dimension Book settings.

The Kopar Barbarians & the Underground

The Kopar are just one example of the many tribes of human barbarians that make Dinosaur Swamp their home. Numbering at about 730 and living in the ruins of Atlanta, the Kopar are the descendants of survivors of the Great Cataclysm that did not evacuate the city, but instead sought refuge in what was called the *Underground.* Originally a city street, the Underground came into existence when Atlanta was redesigned and streets were elevated, creating, in effect, an underground city street. Businesses simply built upward, abandoning their first floor facades. Eventually, this Underground went through various incarnations and levels of success, but during the time of the Great Cataclysm, it became a place of relative safety for those wishing to escape the terrible storms at ground level, but who also didn't want to brave the flooded metro tunnels. While the Underground saw its share of destruction due to earthquakes and flooding, it was arguably the safest place to be in the city.

One particular group of survivors adopted the image of a giant copper fish statue as a symbol of good fortune, for it pointed the way to food and supplies. Given their fragile psyche after having lived through the first wave of the end of the world, they began to look upon this statue as a real good luck charm. They developed a sense of pride over it, and it became a unifying force that helped these people survive. As civilization began to erode away, a host of tall tales evolved around the Copper Fish, creating a sense of community for those who lived around it and slowly becoming a thing of full-fledged myth. As the people slid into barbarism, they began to call themselves the Kopar, taking after the name of their "copper" statue-god, and it has assumed a primary role in the lives of these barbarians ever since. They believe that this massive 30 foot tall (9.1 m) statue of a copper fish protected their ancestors when the Ocean Floods washed away humankind (which is how they speak about the Great Cataclysm), and that also provided them with food, sanctuary and survival for generation after generation. When the floods or other danger come again, their god, the Great Kopar, will watch over and protect them, too.

The Kopar tribe are a theocracy led by a Mystic named Porter. They are not openly hostile to outsiders and will trade for things like weapons, food and raw materials, but are wary of new ideas brought into their midst. They also accept D-Bees – "false men" – who they believe are "fish and creatures of the sea turned into men by the Great God Kopar" to trick, tempt and challenge "true men." Of course, the Kopar Tribe is the chosen people even among other "true men." As a result, D-Bees and other non-humans are always viewed with a certain degree of suspicion and contempt. D-Bees who linger in the area will find themselves ignored after trade has concluded. The Kopar barbarians are very matter-of-fact about this, going to great lengths to point out that once trade has been concluded, they have nothing else to discuss with "false men" (D-Bees) and that they'd best be going about their own business and stay out of the affairs of "true men."

The Kopar barbarians have no means of manufacturing outside of what can be made by their own hand or by other barbarians. While they appreciate technology, many are a little leery of it and none of them can repair anything more complicated than a flashlight. Most of their weapons and armor are homemade or acquired through trade. They are primarily hunters and gatherers with a few small agricultural plots located in an old downtown park. This makes most of the Kopar barbarians *Wilderness Scouts* and *Vagabonds* with fighting, scavenging, and wilderness skills. For whatever reason, however, the Kopar also have an unusually high proportion of *Mystics* among their population

(roughly 20%). They view these Mystics as natural leaders of their people, and typically shun most types of "learned" magicks. Those wishing to study the ley lines or other divergent paths of magic are usually exiled from the community, but such individuals are few and far between. Less common are those who wish to study technology or the ruins around them. Most Kopar, like other barbarian tribes, are not interested in reclaiming civilization, as it was once known, but the Kopar take matters a step further. They believe the old technology met with the disfavor of their god, the Great Kopar, which is why he shook the earth and sent the waters of the ocean to wash it all away. Those who survived are the chosen people and will only keep his favor if they continue to shun the old ways. To do otherwise is to court disaster, literally. Thus, it is one thing to live among the ruins of the old civilization, it is quite another to draw from it or try to resurrect it in any way. Thus, the Kopar are content to live a simple life, and believe anybody who takes an ancient artifact from the Underground or any ancient (pre-Rifts) ruin is cursed for doing so. Likewise, any Kopar who helps or engages in such an endeavor would be double-cursed, for they are "the enlightened," and can expect a painful and terrible death.

The one group that the Kopar consider an enemy are the Rat Men. When the first group of Rat Men came to the ruins of Atlanta, they stole food and some belongings from the Kopar and have come into direct competition for resources. Clan Chief Porter realizes that the Rat Men are a growing problem unless something is done soon. He has recently become aware of another group living in the tunnels (the True Atlanteans), but needs more information before deciding on what to do about them. His greatest fear is that this new group will ally with the Rat Men and then make war on the Kopar.

Chief Porter

Porter displayed his first talent at age 3 and progressed mightily under the tutelage of the Tribal Mystics. By age 14 he was as powerful as any of his instructors, and possessed a sharp mind and an open heart. His capacity for compassion seemed to know no bounds, with a deep desire to do right in all things. He was an honest child, and grew into quite an honest, and earnest, adult. He was the natural choice to take the place as the tribe's spiritual leader when the elder passed on. Porter was only 17 when he took the mantle of Chief. Since then, the tribe has done exceedingly well, with several new plots of soil bearing crops in the old city park, the hunting grounds providing more game, and more traders have come in the past year than in the previous ten. Chief Porter seems to be leading his people into a new age of prosperity.

However, there is a side of Chief Porter that his people do not see. There is a growing anger and callousness that has begun to harden him. Chief Porter is looking ahead to the day when the Kopar and the Rat Men come into open conflict. He knows that it will have to come, and even with the tribe's superior numbers and Luck God behind them, they may not win. Even if they do, there will be much suffering and loss of luck. He has also become concerned with the rate at which the tribe is growing. They are having prosperous times now, but he knows that a hard winter or an autumn storm from the east could wipe out their food supply, and their (relatively) large population would starve. The Great Kopar will provide, but the god is also in favor of a balance with nature. It was the floods that wiped out their ancestors because they grew too prosperous, and Chief Porter believes that it may be the tribe's responsibility to destroy the "false men" (e.g., the Rat Men) living in the tunnels to preserve their own good fortune. He sees some very hard paths ahead of him, decisions that a man with an open heart may not be able to make, so he is working at hardening his heart for war.

Real Name: Cavor Porter.

Alignment: Scrupulous, at least for the moment, but his judgement is becoming distorted and clouded. (**G.M. Note:** Could this change of heart be the result of some hidden supernatural or mystical influence? Is the young man being quietly manipulated or even possessed? Or could he be showing signs of growing insanity?)

Attributes: I.Q. 21, M.E. 15, M.A. 21, P.S. 10, P.P. 8, P.E. 21, P.B. 9, Spd 13.

Hit Points: 54, **S.D.C.:** 24.

M.D.C.: By body armor only.

Age: 24. **Sex:** Male.

Height: 5 feet, 8 inches (1.7 m). **Weight:** 145 lbs (65 kg).

P.P.E.: 109

Disposition: Chief Porter remains an open, forthright, and compassionate human being. He goes out of his way to be helpful to others, and seeks to lead by example and generosity. He approaches every situation with an open mind, and with the best of intentions. While he knows that some situations must be solved with conflict, as conflict is part of the natural order of things, he does try and seek resolution with as little violence as possible. This has led some adventurers and traders to mistake him to be soft, much to their detriment. He is a peaceful man, but not to be underestimated.

Description: Chief Porter is a young black man with the physique of someone who has lived a rugged life in the wilds. He is extremely fit, but lean, and not overly developed. He has a beaming smile, kind eyes, and a shaven head. He is not handsome, but has a radiant, friendly look about him.

Natural Abilities: None per se, human. See the Mystic O.C.C. in the **Rifts® RPG** for complete details on the magical and psionic abilities of this character class.

Skills of Note: American: 98%, Dragonese/Elf: 98%, Spanish: 98%, Euro: 98%, Holistic Medicine: 72%, Play Musical Instrument: Harmonica and Guitar: 87%, Athletics, Hand to Hand: Basic, and W.P. Automatic Pistol.

Experience Level: 8th level Mystic.

Occupation: Spiritual Chief of the Kopar barbarian tribe.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Bonuses: +7% I.Q. bonus applied to all skills, +1 to strike, +3 to parry, +3 to dodge, +2 to damage, +3 to roll with impact, +2 to pull punch, +5 to save vs psionics, +3 to save vs insanity, +2 to save vs Horror Factor, +5 to save vs magic, +3 to save vs poison, and +2 to Spell Strength.

Magic: Aura of Power (4), Cleanse (6), Create Wood (10+), Cure Minor Disorders (10), Cure Illness (15), Extinguish Fire (4), Globe of Daylight (2), Greater Healing (30), Lantern Light (1), Life Blast (15), Light Healing (6), Locate (30), Magic Net (7), Metamorphosis: Animal (25), Multiple Image (7), Mystic Alarm (5), Negate Poisons/Toxins (5), Purifica-

tion (20), Repel Animals (7), Seal (7), Sustain (12), Turn Dead (6), and Tongues (12). P.P.E.: 109.

Psionics: Clairvoyance, Exorcism, Sixth Sense, Commune with Spirits, Astral Projection, See the Invisible, Deaden Pain, Suppress Fear, Group Mind Block. I.S.P.: 60.

Weapons and Equipment: Porter wears the breastplate from a suit of Triax Explorer (35 M.D.C.) armor that he traded for several years ago. He also carries a TX-5 pump pistol in a shoulder holster. The armor has been painted in a brown and green camouflage pattern, and for everyday clothes, he wears simple utility pants, a drab green fatigue shirt and a dark green hooded cloak. He usually has his harmonica in his pocket and his guitar strung over his back.

The Ruins of Macon

At the transition zone between the forests and the lower level piedmont (marshes) lies the ruins of Macon. Unlike Atlanta, the city of Macon does not have any standing structures taller than 4 stories, with the downtown district reduced to a giant pile of rubble covered by three centuries of dirt and vegetation. Many of the ruins date back to an early time in the American Empire, but most delicate artifacts have long since been destroyed or rotted away. Lucky finds in the ruins, however, can bring a high price to a discriminating collector of Pre-Rifts artifacts.

If there was an underground train system in Macon, there is no evidence of it. Most of the city's buildings on the surface and the entire subterranean strata below the city have been significantly displaced and deformed, causing the entire city to collapse down upon itself. Sadly, there were few survivors in Macon to walk away from the onset of the Great Cataclysm.

A small but growing settlement of farmers have a nice community on the outskirts of the ruins. There are only 230 of them, but they are doing well and have a good relationship with Fort Hawkins and local barbarian tribes.

The Ocmulgee Mounds

Located to the southwest of the ruins of Macon, the Ocmulgee Indian Mounds mark the site of a very important ley line nexus. Constructed around the time of Columbus' voyage of discovery, the mounds were of significant religious importance to the natives living in the region. The builders of the mound village were members of the Mississippian culture, and were predominantly farmers who grew corn, beans, tobacco, and many other vegetables. At their height, their population reached at least 1,000 people, with their village stretching far down the banks of the nearby Ocmulgee River.

Since the Coming of the Rifts, the mounds have come alive with magic energy and Rift activity, making this area a powerful place of magic as well as a doorway to other worlds. That power attracts practitioners of magic (though not many folks outside the area know about the mounds), supernatural beings, Faerie Folk (most of whom are the uglier and unpleasant variety), dragons and other creatures of magic, as well as ley line storms and strange dimensional occurrences. Dinosaurs (usually of the same variety that already inhabit the region, but sometimes other species), monsters and alien creatures regularly emerge from dimensional portals that randomly open and close throughout the year. These visitors from another time or place usually appear as a lone traveler, in pairs or small groups (1D6+4), nothing like the herds of dinosaurs and scores of beings that once poured through the Rifts for the first few decades after the Great Cataclysm. However, the Ocmulgee Mound network is still a dangerous and unpredictable environment best left alone. Even its self-appointed watchmen from the Fort only stay around as long as possible.

Unlike the plains regions to the west, the descendants of its builders have not reclaimed their ancestral homeland. The devastation visited on the southeast by the Great Cataclysm decimated the local native population. If any survived, their ancient traditions were lost. Only the mound village and the ruined site museum stand as mute testament to the ancient village's place as a center of mystical power. However, because of the ruination wrought by the Great Cataclysm and the subsequent isolation and tales of dinosaurs, barbarians and savagery, the site is still virtually unknown outside of Dinosaur Swamp. Local residents of the region usually steer clear of the place, and even most barbarian tribes consider this to be a sacred and haunted land to be avoided. Pennent, Gran, or any number of their students regularly intercept travelers from the outside and steer them away from the mound village. They recognize the power, and thus the importance, of the site and stand guard over it like secret sentinels. The training camp at Ft. Hawkins also recognizes the need to keep anything that comes out of the many Rifts in check, and try, as best they can, to prevent new monsters and unknown aliens from entering Dinosaur Swamp which is already infested with monsters and weird beings. Of course, being good guys, these self-appointed protectors of the Ocmulgee mound network, don't automatically kill anything and everyone to exit a Rift. They try to discriminate between good and peaceful, intelligent beings and evil, dangerous visitors, welcoming the former and chasing the latter back through the Rift they came from or destroying them.

At its strongest point, the mound village contains an intersection of four ley lines with dozens of smaller, double line intersections within its boundaries. The exact purpose of the mounds in antiquity has been lost, however, after the Coming of the Rifts, these sites were energized with immense power, and have taken on properties that even their builders couldn't possibly have imagined.

Fort Hawkins

The original Fort Hawkins had been an archaeological ruin for centuries, until an enterprising citizens group in the 20th Century got the idea to reconstruct one of the fortified three-story guardhouses. The lower floor is made out of stone, and the upper floors out of concrete shaped to look like wood. This was a structure to last the ages, not rot away like an old wooden fort. Reconstruction of the fort was off and on for almost a century until, finally, by the middle of the 21st century, the entire fort had been reconstructed out of durable, modern, man-made materials. Its rebuilding was part of a growing trend to restore historic sites that would be resilient and almost impervious to nature's fury. Looking back, it seems appropriate that they chose one of the continent's oldest forts, because as it once served the frontier in its original days, after surviving the Great Cataclysm, it serves again in a new era and new frontier.

Other than being constructed out of lightweight yet durable concrete, steel and composites, the fort is an exact replica of the original stone and wood edifice. It encloses an area of almost 1.5 acres (6070.28 m²), and has a pair of three-story guardhouses on the southeast and northwest corners of the rectangular stockade. These guardhouses are each topped with a watchtower and overlook a vast expanse of ground that has been cleared for unobstructed observation. In the center of the stockade are four long houses used for storing supplies and for quartering apprentices. The center of the fort also has a large meeting hall used for instruction and group gatherings.

A pair of wizened, retired warriors, named **Pennent** and **Gran**, are the ones who established the community and trading post at the fort. They are also teachers offering a training program in scouting, hunting and combat for anyone willing to serve as an apprentice. Originally seasoned dimensional adventurers, Pennent and Gran have known each other their entire adult life, which is a considerably long time for Elves. They have shared many adventures together, and after coming to Rifts Earth, they found their final mission, guardians of the Ocmulgee mound network. The aging scouts have taken it upon themselves to police the Ocmulgee ruins. As part of that mission, they work to teach a new generation wilderness and combat skills to take their place when they are gone. Apprentice training involves battling creatures from the Rifts.

The pair like it here in Dinosaur Swamp and have already taught two generations of new Wilderness Scouts and local heroes. At any time, there are usually 15-20 apprentices studying at the school, as well as a dozen graduates of the program and their families. The apprentices maintain the fort, keep the grounds clear of vegetation, and help face any threats that might come against the fort. The pair also have many friends and past students scattered across the region, as well as a few who have adventured elsewhere in the outside world. Other heroes and adventurers who hear about the Fort may come to visit. Some use it as a base camp for their own adventures (they are expected to help around the fort and fight monsters to pay for their stay) or to lend a helping hand to Pennent and Gran, at least for a little while. Even Cyber-Knights have been known to journey from the west to visit the fort simply as a test of their skills, or to train a new squire, or to lend a hand battling the horrors that emerge from the mound Rifts. They seldom stay for more than six months, however, before moving on.

Outsiders and travelers are welcome to stay, rest and trade at the fort, but should be warned that amenities are few and far between. It is a rough and hardy existence as they have made no efforts to repair the Pre-Rifts infrastructure built into the reconstructed fort. If repairs were to be made, the fort could have electricity and running water, but that is hardly any way to learn how to live off of the land. Pennent and Gran like it just the way it is, although they do have a small solar generator to run the few necessary electronic devices, such as an E-Clip charger. They put no stock in credits, so all transactions are done through barter. Goods, as well as services, are accepted, and they are fair traders. Just don't try and cheat them.

Fort Hawkins Training Program

The first group of graduates began to spread the word about their training and the two heroes of Fort Hawkins, and soon after, others began to appear at the gates petitioning for wilderness and combat training. Given that Dinosaur Swamp is such a dangerous environment, simply surviving to make it to the fort is one's credentials for entering the training program.

Anyone and everyone who shows up at Fort Hawkins are welcome to train under Pennent and Gran. Credits are simply no good at Fort Hawkins. The price for the training is service to the fort and people of the region, and that includes taking on creatures from the mound Rifts. Services, which almost all students are expected to do as part of their training, also include picking up after themselves, daily maintenance, hunting, tending crops, scouting, standing guard over the nearby mounds, repairing weapons and armor, skinning hides, preparing food, and similar chores.

Goods offered at the trading post require trade of equally valuable goods, including armor, weapons, spare parts, wilderness supplies, and other manufactured goods, as well as SteelTree weapons, magic items, furs, fresh fruit, candy, and practical items. Availability varies depending on season and ongoing trade with locals, travelers and visiting outsiders.

Pennent and Gran's training program is brutal, but not abusive. They are excellent teachers of wild-wise skills and expect their students to take each lesson to heart. Every apprentice is on equal footing at the Fort; Pennent and Gran don't play favorites. As they have been known to say, *"It isn't the straightest shooter, the stealthiest stalker, or the one with the pot-iron stomach that survives in the wilds. It's the ones that keep their wits about them that come home alive."*

The Fort Hawkins Wilderness Scout O.C.C. (Optional)

Anyone trained under Pennent and Gran falls under the Wilderness Scout O.C.C., but ignore the usual *O.C.C. Skills* and replace them with these:

O.C.C. Skills:

Domestic: Brewing, Cooking, Fishing, Recycle (+10%).

Espionage: Detect Ambush, Detect Concealment, Tracking, and Wilderness Survival (+20%).

Medical: Animal Husbandry, Brewing, Holistic Medicine (+15%).

Military: Camouflage (+10%) and Detect Traps (+20%).

Technical: Language: Dragonese/Elven, Falconry and Lore: Demons & Monsters (+15% each), or General Repair & Maintenance and Jury-Rig (each at +10%).

W.P.s: Archery & Targeting and W.P. Blunt or W.P. Knife.

Wilderness: Any five of choice (+15%).

Hand to Hand: Basic (can be improved to Expert for the cost of one O.C.C. Related Skill).

Note: All skills taught are known by Pennent and/or Gran, usually at a 90-98% skill proficiency.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select two additional skills from any of the Skill Categories available to the Wilderness Scout O.C.C. at levels 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 13 and 15.

Secondary Skills: Same as usual for a Wilderness Scout.

Special Bonus: The training is incredibly intense, and characters that train under Pennent and Gran get a special +10% bonus that can be added to any one *O.C.C. Skill* or *O.C.C.*

Related Skill (improved under the tutelage of the Pennent and Gran).

Pennent

An Elf from an alien world, much of Pennent's youth was spent roaming the forests with his aunt, P'quell, who taught him the ways of a Ranger from the day he could walk. He distinguished himself serving as one of the protectors of a small Elven community established on the northeastern edge of the forest. It was a small, closed society of Elves who wanted little more than to be left alone and live in isolation away from the madness they saw in the rest of civilization. Many of them were older, having seen centuries of conflict, and wished to retire away from those affairs. The village was peaceful and secure, having established good ties with local villages. However, there was a wanderlust within Pennent, and he chose to leave the village and see the world – not just the world, but the Megaverse. Teaming up with Gran, another youth from the village who sought adventure, the two set out on what would turn into a life of adventuring.

During their travels, Pennent and Gran trekked from one end of their world to the other. When they discovered there were an infinite number of different worlds and realities, they set off to see as many of these other worlds as they could. After two centuries of adventuring (many not always grand), the two finally settled down on Rifts Earth. The primordial beauty and power of Dinosaur Swamp appealed to both of the men, and that is where they have remained for the last 50 years. When Pennent suggested following in his Aunt's footsteps and teaching people how to survive in the harsh environment of the southeast, Gran welcomed the idea with open arms.

In his old age, Pennent has become very introspective. This is due, in part, to the fact that he has since married an Elven adventurer named Elthrain from England. Elthrain has been a stabilizing influence on him, drawing him from his wanderlust toward more practical matters. Always a hero, Pennent wants to help the people of his adopted home, hence the policing of the mound network and his desire to teach others and instill in them a sense of wonder and determination. Pennent is earthy and "real world" in his lessons. He has a vast array of experience that he genuinely wants to impart. He has found purpose in Dinosaur Swamp, and, to his own surprise, enjoys his life here more than his days adventuring.

Real Name: Pennent Larellen.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Attributes: I.Q. 12, M.E. 26, M.A. 8, P.S. 12, P.P. 17, P.E. 19, P.B. 23, Spd 15.

Hit Points: 42. **S.D.C.:** 54.

M.D.C.: By body armor.

Age: 353, but looks to be in his late fifties. **Sex:** Male.

Height: 6 feet, 2 inches (1.8 m). **Weight:** 170 lbs (77 kg). Is in great physical condition.

P.P.E.: 11

Disposition: Soft spoken and deliberate, Pennent is subtle in his speech and opinions. He often answers questions with a question, probing how much someone knows before committing to an answer. He has become very spiritual and philosophical in his old age.

Description: Pennent is tall and thin, with long, black hair shot with strands of gray. He favors wearing simple green and black tunics under his chain mail, with thigh-high black leather boots. Both boots have dagger sheath sewn into the sides. He has warm eyes and a noble face that shows subtle signs of softening with age as only an Elven face can.

Experience Level: 10th level Wilderness Scout.

Occupation: Currently he is a teacher in the fighting and wilderness arts.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 90 feet (27.4 m; and can see in total darkness), +1 extra archery attack per melee round.

Skills of Note: Dragonese/Elf 98%, American 98%, all Wilderness Skills 95%, Sign Language 98%, Lore: Religion 98%, Hand to Hand Basic, W.P. Archery, W.P. Sword, W.P. Energy Pistol, and W.P. Energy Rifle.

Attacks per Melee: Six, +1 action with a bow.

Bonuses: +2 to strike, +3 to parry and dodge, +3 to roll with impact, +2 to pull punch, +2 to damage, +2 to save vs Horror Factor, +6 to save vs psionics, +9 to save vs insanity, +2 to save vs magic, +2 to save vs poison, and 65% to charm/impress.

Magic: None. **Psionics:** None.

Weapons and Equipment: In his various travels, Pennent has acquired several unique items, many of which are magical. A sampling includes, but is not limited to, the following items. (Game Masters are encouraged to add or subtract from this list as they feel appropriate.) A suit of enchanted, weightless and soundless chain mail armor (165 M.D.C.), a long sword with a coppery colored blade that inflicts 4D6 M.D. and shoots bolts of flame (4D6 M.D. per bolt, 300 foot/91.5 m range), a hunting bow that doubles the normal range of an arrow shot, a gem with a light inside that always points north, an Amulet of Invisibility, and magic boots that leave no tracks behind. He has also taken a liking to Coalition energy weapons, and carries an old style C-14 Firebreather with him everywhere; he has six extra E-Clips and 96 grenades for it.

Gran

Another Elf from the same world, Gran was such a natural adept with the Elvish longbow that he began instructing others when he was in his early 30's. Such a feat was unheard of at such a remarkably young age for an Elf. However, despite his aptitude, or perhaps because of it, Gran was a firebrand. He was the first to voice an opinion and the last one to get a word in. He was known for shooting from the hip, causing controversy, and just generally stirring up trouble. He would constantly question the elders on the least little decision and chafed at living under their rules in the wilderness, and dreamed of visiting exotic lands, learning about civilization, and being free to make his own choices. It was no surprise that he chose to partner with Pennent and set out to explore the lands beyond their home range.

In the outside world, Gran found everything he was looking for and more. His mouth continued to get him and his friend in trouble, and was sometimes reason for the pair to embark quickly on a new adventure at a faraway place. If there was trouble, and they couldn't get away from it, his quick work with

the longbow usually gave him the last word. The easygoing Pennent didn't mind any of this, accepting Gran for his good traits and welcoming the adventure his buddy would bring them. Throughout their travels, Gran developed a great respect for the written word. He began to intensely study every book in every language he could get his hands on, and even sponsored a library in a small town by donating a collection of books too voluminous to carry on their travels. He has taken it up as a personal crusade to preserve knowledge and make certain a diversity of viewpoints are available to be read and considered. He has even written several books himself, mostly about his travels and dissenting opinions about the laws, lifestyles and misuse of authority in places he has visited.

Upon arriving on Rifts Earth, Gran found an immediate enemy in the Coalition States. Spending a great deal of time with Pennent roaming the Domain of Man, he was a fierce and outspoken voice against the CS policies on education, censorship, history, books and the freedoms of all people. Ultimately, he would wreak havoc on the Coalition at every opportunity. He even wrote a series of scathing pamphlets that gained respect among the educated elite of Lazlo and earned him a bit of fame. It also won him the affection of a beautiful Elven Techno-Wizard named Sheilaina, a member of an important family in Lazlo. They were married after a whirlwind courtship, despite the disapproval of her family. Ever the source of controversy, Gran, Sheilaina, Pennent and Elthrain along with ran off to explore the wild land of Dinosaur Swamp and they have never looked back. Gran and Sheilaina have recently had their first child, a boy they have named Gran the Second. This has been as much of a calming influence on Gran senior as marriage was to Pennent.

Gran has committed himself to teaching and he loves it. He views survival as much as a mental condition as a physical one, and most of his students come away with a much more enlightened view of their homeland, and a cynical view of civilization.

Real Name: Gran Anu.

Alignment: Unprincipled.

Attributes: I.Q. 20, M.E. 12, M.A. 9, P.S. 13, P.P. 23, P.E. 13, P.B. 21, Spd 28.

Hit Points: 50. **S.D.C.:** 60.

M.D.C.: By body armor only.

Age: 349. **Sex:** Male.

Height: 6 feet, 3 inches (1.9 m). **Weight:** 184 lbs (83 kg).

P.P.E.: 14

Disposition: Always one to open his mouth, Gran is ready with a smart-aleck remark, subtle observation, or outright verbal barrage. He is hot tempered when it comes to his opinions, and oftentimes goes a bit far with expressing them. He thrives on conflict, and enjoys a good argument, as long as he gets the final say. Gran takes great pride in his archery, so much in fact that he refuses to use any type of firearm or other projectile weapon.

Description: Gran is flamboyant with his mouth, and he looks the part, in a warrior sort of way. He has flowing blonde hair, complete with blonde sideburns that he ties back with a strip of black leather. He also wears black boots, and usually wears a green quilted tunic. Over the top of that he wears a leather cuirass, complete with burnished bronze shoulder pieces, elbow pads and thigh plates. His face is very aquiline, with almost golden eyes that seem to catch even the slightest movement.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 90 feet (27.4 m; and can see in total darkness), +1 extra archery attack per melee round.

Skills of Note: Dragonese/Elf 98%, Gobblely 98%, American 98%, Basic Math 98%, can read and write Dragonese and American 98%, Lore: D-Bee 81%, Law(General) 81%, Sniper, Sign Language, 98%, and most Wilderness skills at 90-98%, Writing 81%, Hand to Hand: Expert, W.P. Longbow, W.P. Sword, and W.P. Blunt.

Experience Level: 11th level Elven Palladium Long Bowman.

Occupation: Currently he is a teacher in the fighting and wilderness arts.

Magic: None. **Psionics:** None.

Attacks per Melee: 6 hand to hand attacks/actions per round or 10 attacks per melee round with a longbow, with a 950 foot (289.6 m) range.

Bonuses: +6% I.Q. bonus added to all skills, +6 to strike, +8 to parry, +8 to dodge, +3 to roll with impact, +2 to pull punch, +3 to damage, and 55% charm/impress.

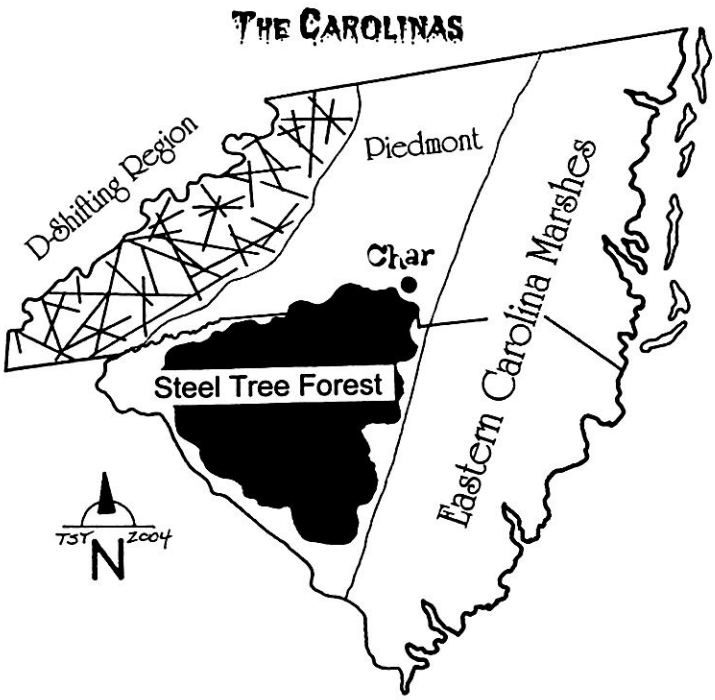
Weapons and Equipment: Gran travels light, and packs only a few regular weapons. In his various travels he has acquired several unique items, many of which are magical in nature. A sampling includes, but is not limited to, the following items. (Game Masters are encouraged to add or subtract from this list as they feel appropriate.) Gran wears a leather breastplate enchanted to make it lightweight and noiseless (it has 79 M.D.C. left). His most important weapon is a simple, unadorned longbow. He takes great pride in his skill with it, and uses a large range of S.D.C., M.D. and magical arrows, including SteelTree arrows and tech-arrows. He is a big fan of Neural Disrupter arrows, and usually has several dozen at his disposal. He also carries an enchanted waterskin that on command transforms into a long sword that does 4D6 M.D., and often wears a Cloak of Invisibility, and an amulet that casts Diminish (Self).

The Old Carolinas

Originally two different States, they are usually lumped together as one region simply called the Carolinas. The differences that made them two separate States in the pre-Rifts days are mostly meaningless today. Geographically and geologically, they are pretty identical, although the old State of South Carolina does not possess any mountains within its old borders, and over 75% of its remaining land area is covered by an alien forest. The western portion of North Carolina is made up of the continuing Appalachian Mountains, then descends into rolling, forest covered hills that meld into the flat land of the Piedmont. Where the hard piedmont soils come into contact with the softer, sandy deposits, marshland becomes more predominant. However, this demarcation between sand and clayey soils is not quite where it once was. The dramatic encroachment of the Atlantic Ocean has caused the boundary between the piedmont and the coastal plain to shift further inland than it was in pre-Cataclys-

mic days. *Raleigh* and the Triangle area, which was once near the border region, is now a sandy marsh with *Greensboro* becoming the boundary between the Piedmont and the Coastal Plain.

While the coast and piedmont offer relatively mild weather compared to the jungle marshes of the Florida peninsula, they are still subject to extremes of heat and humidity. In the winter, flash ice storms can blanket the region, while snowstorms coming down out of the mountains can occur on the heels of otherwise pleasant winter weather. In the mountains, the extremes of cold can be brutal. With temperatures that can dip below freezing for weeks at a time, and feet of snow piling up, adventurers prepared for the hot and humid marshes of southern Dinosaur Swamp can find themselves in serious trouble unless they are also prepared for the winter conditions of the northern region. (See **Rifts® World Book 20: Canada** for more info on cold weather, snow and traveling in it.)



The Eastern Carolina Marshes

Most of the original Carolina coastal region has been swallowed by the rise of the Atlantic Ocean. Part of what was the Piedmont has been transformed into a large swath of marsh. These marshes of the Carolinas are typically waterlogged, salt water quagmires thanks to subsidence and movement along extinct fault lines that run north-south across the region. What was once several hundred feet above sea level is now at an average height of 25 feet (7.62 m) above sea level. The relatively rapid change in sea level and the ocean's assault on the continent as the Great Cataclysm raged, resulted in widespread inundation by saltwater into the water table, and caused the conversion of fresh water marshes into huge tracts of salt water marsh. In the wake of this, the eastern shores of the Carolinas have come to resemble the shores of Georgia, resulting in the coast of the southeast developing into one very large marsh. In pre-Rifts days, *Duraleigh* (the ruins of which are now located at the coast) was a vast megalopolis that encompassed the North Carolina cites of Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill. These three cities were also known as "The Triangle," and a large component of the region was a vast technology center dedicated to industry and research. Today, however, they are wiped from the face of the Earth, and whatever ruins might remain are buried under a vast, shallow salt water lake surrounded by marshlands.

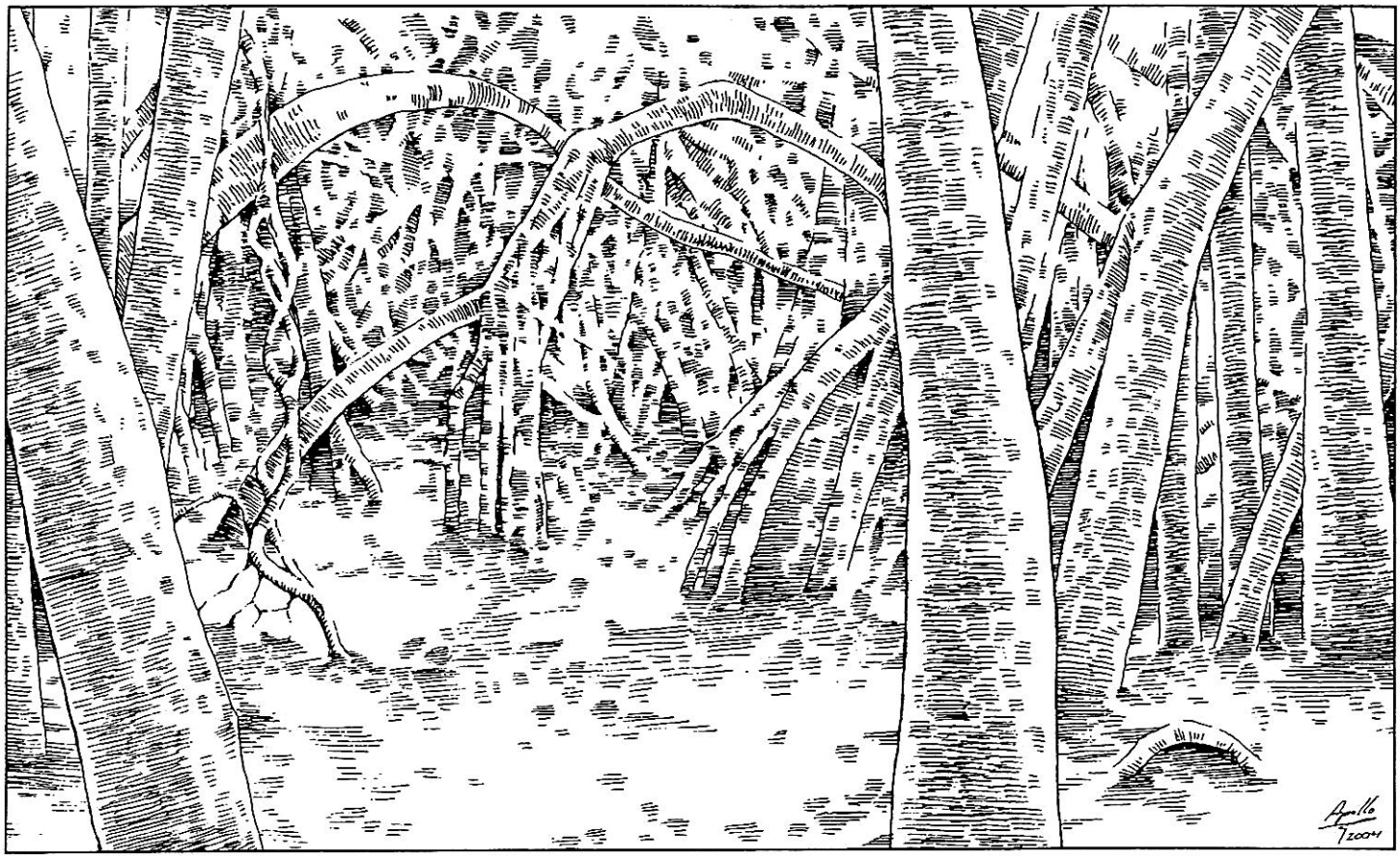
In old South Carolina, gone are the recreational waterfronts of Myrtle Beach, the historic city of Charleston, and the infamous Marine Corp. Recruits Depot at Parris Island. The cites of Sumter, near Shaw A.F.B., and Orangeburg shared a similar fate with the ruined cities of North Carolina's Piedmont and are now coastal ruins, with what is left of *Columbia* poking up from the surface and serving to mark the transition from Piedmont to Coastal Marsh.

Despite the intense devastation of the Great Cataclysm and the centuries that have passed since, one can still find the occasional ruin of what was once a prosperous center of education and/or research. Artifacts at these places include unrecognizable vehicles, pipes, lampposts, and other artifacts poking through the ground and through the shallow water. In his book detailing his expedition to the region, Neenok described one notable site in the region once known as the Triangle, a massive ruin of an elevated highway system.

"Having seen the contrasting wealth and squalor of Chi-Town, the magical intensity of Lazlo, and the technological marvels of the New German Republic, I felt as though no cityscape could awe me as they had. I found myself corrected when I first set my eyes on the ruins of Duraleigh. Reduced to a salt water marsh, there are very few building ruins left standing, although there are the occasional exceptions. It was not the scant ruined buildings poking from the marsh that amazed me, however, but rather the remnants of a vast highway system that linked the cities of the Triangle together. I had seen ruined stretches of highway buried under the sands and mud of the southwest, and even traveled a highway while visiting the New German Republic, and imagined that the small highway I traveled then was but a shadow of the highways that the Americas used to be interlaced with in the past. The ruins in the Triangle only hint at how right I was.

The support pillars are massive, cylindrical structures that must have held at least three tiers consisting of hundreds of miles of ten-lane elevated highway. Evidence suggests that the network of roads was a series of concentric rings, all components of a larger, unified system, stretching out and around the three primary cities of the Triangle and linked up with other roadways that ran up and down the East Coast. I learned from a local tribe that they call the ruined highway system 'The Beltline,' most likely an archaic name dating to pre-Rifts times. In addition to the automobile bridges and roads, there was apparently an interlinked rail system and pedestrian transit facilities alongside the highway system. Today, it serves as neutral territory for the barbarian tribes that live in the region, and shelter for any number of plants and animals. It has been reduced to just another impressive reminder of how much promise was lost after the Great Cataclysm tore down human civilization."

– From Deearn Neenok's book, The Dinosaurian Swamp: Notes from the Field, Circa 87 P.A.



The Carolina Piedmont

After the ruination visited upon the region by the Great Cataclysm, the land, what wasn't devoured by the ocean, was reclaimed by the forests. Vast stretches of pine, oak and alien flora cover the entire area, with the ruins of a city only occasionally poking through the earth among the trees. The diversity of plant life that has taken root is a mixture of the native and the alien. Much of old South Carolina is a perfect example of a landscape that has given way to alien flora. The locals call this stretch of wilderness the "SteelTree Forest," because the dominant species of tree is a transplant from an alien world with wood as hard as Mega-Damage steel. These tall, leafy trees are the primary source of food for a species of dinosaur-like herbivores called the *Iron-Hoof*, and the *Azhure* makes its home in the high branches and preys upon varmints on the forest's floor. Interestingly enough, these SteelTrees will only grow in this particular region of Dinosaur Swamp, and have never been successfully transplanted anywhere else in the world. Why this is the case remains a mystery.

The plant's inherent resistance to damage and strong properties make it a favorite, if difficult to obtain, material for local barbarian tribes who use it to make weapons, armor and for building. The harvesting of these trees by barbarians and other locals has been negligible, and has barely put a dent in the vast forest, thus an ecological balance remains in place.

SteelTree Forest

One of the more exotic regions of Dinosaur Swamp is the SteelTree Forest and its Mega-Damage trees which cover three-fourths of the land area that was South Carolina. It stretches north-south from the outskirts of *Char* to where the pre-Rifts city of *McCormick* once stood, and east-west from *Winsboro*, to the scattered ruins of *Clayton*, Georgia. The trees are undoubtedly transplants from an alien world or dimension, as are the Azhure avian and Iron-Hoof creatures who feed on them. How or why the trees grow in this region only, is a mystery, but represent a boon to the people who live near them. The barbarian tribes, people of Char and other select inhabitants of Dinosaur Swamp make simple weapons and equipment from the trees, but their total annual usage is barely a scratch in the forest. The rest of the SteelTrees are left for the Iron-Hoof to feed upon.

If the outside world discovered an entire forest of alien trees with the strength and durability of man-made Mega-Damage materials growing in the wild, it might bring outside development to the hostile reaches of Dinosaur Swamp. The potential uses and applications for SteelTrees are staggering, and could be especially profitable to the housing industry and other construction applications. The time and resources that the Coalition States and smaller kingdoms could save by putting the wood from SteelTrees into the construction of durable housing for civilians alone would be very significant. Recently, a small, lucrative business has been established in the city of Char that sells SteelTree weapons, tools and crafts. This may be the first step toward a new, regional lumber industry, introducing the material to the outside world via exposure through trade with explorers and adventurers. Of course, unless this is handled wisely, it could lead to such ruthless exploitation of the forest that it might be destroyed and the surrounding ecosystem of the Dinosaur Swamp with it. Exactly how the region might be impacted by throngs of humans and industry moving in, and the return of

civilization is unknown. Deearn Neenok recognized the potential danger to the pristine wilderness in the southeast, and deliberately gave the forest only a passing mention in his book, and no mention of their M.D.C. attribute.

Description of SteelTrees. As noted earlier, SteelTrees are unique to one specific, albeit sprawling, geographic region in what was once South Carolina. The trees are tropical in appearance, but are resilient and handle the extremes of hot and cold weather without difficulty. The bark is a rough, rich metallic gray color, and grows in concentric rings on the exterior of the tree around the inner pulp. The bark, leaves and wood itself has a slight luster to it, as if made of metallic elements drawn from the soil and processed by the trees. SteelTrees start out as a brushy scrub-like plant, but in less than six years grow into giant 120-180 foot (36.6 to 54.8 m) tall behemoths with a 10-15 foot (3 to 4.6 m) circumference. The root structure is a large, complex maze that grows both below and above ground. Almost 75% of the roots extend underground, spreading down and out in all directions, and it isn't uncommon for several neighboring trees to intertwine their root structures. This root system helps to anchor the trees down and support their dense bodies. Without such intertwining support, a SteelTree would reach a size at which it could not support its own weight and would eventually fall over. The remaining 25% of the trees' root structures are what are known as *aerial roots*, meaning they grow above ground. These aerial roots have been known to extend as high as 15 feet (4.6 m) above the surface, and look very much like a weave of interconnecting spider's web on a giant scale. This mess of M.D. strong root fibers makes traveling the piedmont forest even more difficult as the roots form a tangled mesh of tunnels and root-caverns and a sort of latticework through which humans (and animals) must weave in and out. This root canopy provides homes for birds and small animals, and even for the occasional adventurer and explorer.

The SteelTrees are semi-deciduous trees, meaning that they only loose some of their leaves in the colder seasons. In the fall, they shed their older leaves from prior growing seasons, keeping only the new leaves that sprouted during the most recent year. These young leaves are long and broad, almost sword-shaped, and have a shiny metallic green luster to them. They also display a tight, narrow network of veins running lengthwise through them. The older leaves unfold into wide, fan-like shapes, their color a darker green that rather resembles brushed metal, and the veins radiating out from the center. They are firm, and more rigid than young leaves, but lack the same level of tensile strength.

During the spring, small metallic, blue flowers bloom atop the very highest branches of the mature trees. These flowers bear petals similar to a rose, but they are extremely strong, flexible like aluminum, and the edges are razor sharp. They contain the seeds necessary for new SteelTree trees to grow, but so far, the seeds will not grow anywhere except in the piedmont forest of South Carolina, in the shadow of their parent trees. The seeds are a delicious treat for Azhure hatchlings, and play an important part in the development of this alien bird's metallic feathers.

Harvesting SteelTree Lumber. Because of the tree's dense, and consequently Mega-Damage composition, they cannot be harvested by something as simple as an iron ax or saw. Using conventional S.D.C. hand tools is like trying to cut open a steel can with a toothpick. They may produce a few shavings, or even notch the bark, but that's all before the S.D.C. tool breaks or is otherwise ruined – a saw or axe made dull like a butter knife, a chain saw stripped of its teeth, a pickaxe snapped in half, and the user exhausted with nothing to show for the effort but mangled tools.

The simplest way is to pick up fallen leaves and limbs from the forest floor. They are still trees, and are subject to the normal life processes that all trees follow. High winds will break some branches, just as lightning will split a tree into pieces and litter the ground with branches, bark and leaves. Some trees die, be it from saplings with insufficient sunlight, old age or damage from nature or wildlife, like the Iron-Hoof. From this deadfall alone, large amounts of lumber can be gathered and any number of tools made from them, provided one has M.D. tools and machines to work the wood.

However, collecting deadfall isn't taking full advantage of the available resource or plumbing its full potential. A Vibro-Blade is excellent for cutting down the aerial roots, small to medium-sized branches and saplings. Likewise, SteelTree deadfall can be turned into M.D. tools capable of felling a large, healthy tree. This is how the locals have begun to harvest the SteelTree trees. Some barbarians discovered the process of creating SteelTree forged axes and saws using deadfall timber, and then used the SteelTree tools to cut down healthy trees. M.D. lasers and Juicer-style M.D. chainsaws are even better. This process is an example of the progression of technology from the primitive to the sophisticated and how it can be utilized to build an industry.

Aside from the manual processes above, there are more esoteric methods as well. The use of magic, robots, power armor, carefully placed explosives, or even a well-directed volley from a rail gun can bring down a SteelTree. What these methods lack in sophistication they make up for in the end result. Regardless of the method used to cut the trees down, intelligent harvesters will use what nature offers them, and cut the tree at just above the aerial root network. SteelTrees cut above the roots will usually (01-73% chance) regrow to full size within six years, and the roots canopy works like a net that captures and holds the falling tree 15 feet (4.6 m) above the ground where the lumbermen can safely hide. Of course, removing the giant trees on the ground, through the root mess is impossible, requiring the cut-down trunk and sheered branches to be carried *over* the root system or by aerial transport (power armor, aircraft, hover-vehicles, etc.). Any lumber industry that might grow up around the SteelTree forest would certainly need to develop an entirely new system of cutting, clearing and processing the alien trees.

Note: See the Weapons section starting on page 77 of this book for descriptions of specific weapons, armor and items currently made from SteelTrees. The city of Char has only recently begun manufacturing and selling such items, but the barbarian tribes have been making them for their own people for over 200 years.

Dimensional Shifting

The Mountains of the Carolinas & Tennessee

The mountains, of which South Carolina only shares limited foothills and lower elevations, are a vast wilderness of forests, rivers, meadows and valleys very similar to the Georgian mountains. Home to roaming packs of smaller dinosaurs and solitary predators, it is a fertile, pristine wilderness that can offer refuge and sanctuary to those willing to accept the dangers, and who know how to survive in spite of them. Elevations as high as 6600 feet (2011.6 m) mean some of the highest points in the entire mountain range are found among these cloudy peaks. Like the rest of the Appalachian Mountain chain, especially throughout the south, the ruins of hydroelectric dams are a common sight, as are the shattered ruins of industrial plants. Even after centuries of natural reclamation, the chemicals released in the destruction of the industrial plants are still present in the water table, making it difficult to find safe drinking water within 50 miles (80 km) of them.

In addition to all of the usual dangers of Dinosaur Swamp, the North Carolina/Tennessee border region is known for the harrowing phenomenon of *D-Shifting*. Overlaying the river valleys of the Appalachian Mountains is a vast network of ley lines that have destabilized the local dimensional envelope. The immense destruction visited on the land during the Great Cataclysm also had an effect on the very fabric of reality, reinforcing the belief in the theory of a unified universe; that which affects one, affects them all, with the earth, the sky, and the inhabitants part of one larger whole. Thus, in wounding the land, reality itself was injured as well. Consequently, it is a common occurrence to be traveling in the mountains of the Carolinas one minute, and suddenly find one's self facing a completely different environment the next. That different environment can be anything – a freezing, snow covered mountain or woodland setting, followed by a scorching desert a mile (1.6 km) later, or an alien forest, or an ice covered glacier, or parched or burnt wasteland with the stench of sulfur in the air, or a lush jungle like the Brazilian rainforest, or an alien jungle, or a grassy plain, and on and on. This is an example of the environment becoming a hazard taken to the extreme, but it is common enough that any group of wise explorers will plan for it when traveling through this region.

D-Shifting is the result of a Ley Line Storm, or other high intensity surge of magical energy, passing through a region of extreme dimensional instability, which is exactly what the border region of North Carolina and Tennessee along the Appalachian Mountains has become. Such a phenomenon is not unique to Dinosaur Swamp, and can be found at other places where a web of ley lines crosses a region of weak dimensional boundaries. The effects of D-Shifting are very much like those of the Bermuda Triangle and other sprawling ley line triangles usually found over a large body of water, leading many to believe that D-Shifting is the terrestrial equivalent of that phenomenon. As a Ley Line Storm passes through the ley line lattice, it disrupts the energy of the lines in such a way that it creates temporal environmental distortions that, in effect, puncture the walls of reality to temporarily merge two or more worlds. The merging is so subtle that there is not a noticeable dimensional portal, just a shift in reality that changes the environment for one to several miles. Thankfully, the traveler is usually rooted to the world in which his travels originated so he remains on that planet/prime reality, even though the environment may keep changing around him.

In attempting to cross the Appalachians into the southeast, the terrain, the wildlife and the very environment are often concurrent obstacles. Anyone who travels though the D-Shifting region of Tennessee and North Carolina can appreciate why Dinosaur Swamp has remained as isolated as it has since the Great Cataclysm. The only alternative is to simply go around them. However, that will take a group of adventurers through Ohio and Pennsylvania, and down though Maryland, which has its own dangers. Everything from bandits, Splugorth raiding parties and Archie Three stands ready as an obstacle down that route.

Characters caught in D-Shifting will be subject to a wide array of effects, some of which are negligible, while some are downright lethal. Whether walking, flying, or traveling by vehicle, the effects of a D-Shift are equally dangerous. It may seem that flying is the safest mode of transportation, but it is often more dangerous to be caught in the air during a blizzard, hailstorm, or other precipitous event.

"Give me dinosaurs. Give me bandits. Give me a Coalition scouting party. I'll take any and all of the above before I walk blindly into another D-Shift. We had just moved through the mountain basin of a pre-Rifts city called Ducktown when Burin, our Ley Line Walker, warned that a Ley Lline Storm was approaching. He could feel it building along the powerful ley line matrix that permeates the mountains. We had no desire to weather through another one, especially after our experience in the Federation of Magic. We instead turned back north, hoping to avoid the storm. We were lucky, the storm traveled south, away from us, but it did cross over a mountain pass that we wished to cross. Our guides assured us that the pass through the mountains was the best to be found in over a hundred miles, so despite Burin's misgivings of following in the path of the storm, we pressed on.

It began innocently enough, with Burin noting a very strange feel to the land around us. I know now that if we'd had a Shifter with us, we would have picked up on the signs much sooner than we did. Suddenly, it was as if the very sky ripped open and we were pounded with a biting, icy rain. The temperature dropped, in an instant, from a pleasant spring day to that of the peak of

winter. We were suddenly being pelted by these frozen ice crystals, with several of us sustaining severe cuts to our faces. The temperature drop was so swift that the water in all of our belt canteens was flash frozen in almost the instant the change was upon us. Were it not for some quick thinking, and our well stocked medical supplies, we might have all died from exposure in mere minutes. Then, as suddenly as it came, the ice storm stopped, the snow was gone, and we were back in the forest that we had left. As we were tending to our flash-winter injuries, Burin noted that strange feeling again . . . that was the longest five miles of my life."

– From Deearn Neenok's book, Dinosaurian Swamp: Notes from the Field, Circa 87 P.A.

Random Encounters in a D-Shifting Zone

The following random encounters table has been inspired by, and modified from, **Rifts® World Book Two: Atlantis** for terrestrial encounters in a D-Shifting zone. It is far from a complete list, and individual Game Masters are encouraged to modify it for their own use as they see fit. Many of the environments last for several hours at a time, others of minutes. If you feel your player characters can stand more time in these alien landscapes, feel free to adjust the time to days, or even longer if you so desire. Likewise, the time spent can be reduced as desired or appropriate.

01-12% Ley Line Storm: Because of the large-scale dimensional instability, Ley Line Storms are fairly common along the North Carolina/Tennessee border mountains. They are often fierce, wreaking havoc on the local landscape and leading to further environmental fluctuations. After the storm has passed, roll again on this table to determine what new landscape/environment has appeared, or return to the normal Rifts Earth setting. Lasts for 4D6 minutes.

13-17% Debris Shower: Extremely dangerous, as almost anything can fall from the sky during a debris shower. From somewhere above, presumably brought in from another dimension, a veritable rain of "who knows what" falls from the sky, peppering anyone caught in it. The danger is not only in the falling objects, but the effect they may have on the ground. A rain of rocks and boulders may bang up a group of explorers, but if they are of sufficient size and quantity, they may make passage difficult, or possibly dam up a river, causing it to overflow (flash floods) or to dry up to a trickle, making boat travel impossible – and then become a rushing river when the rock-dam eventually gives way. Fortunately, these storms only last for a few minutes, 3D4 to 4D6 on average, unless otherwise noted, but depending on the effects, that can feel like a lifetime. Damage varies according to the debris type. Consult the following table for the most common types of debris showers.

01-10% Giant Rocks: Huge chunks of stone weighing 2D4x100 pounds (100 lbs equals 45 kg) come plummeting out of the sky. Their great weight, combined with the speed of their impact, inflicts a great amount of damage to anything in their path. Damage is 100 S.D.C. (or 1 M.D.) per 100 pounds (45 kg). Aircraft and flying characters are especially at risk, as they can easily be knocked from the sky by this hail of boulders. Game Masters may want to assign damage to aircraft wings, and vulnerable parts of flying power armor and robots. Characters operating under magical flight can find themselves in serious peril, as they may be knocked unconscious by the impact of one of these rocks and sent crashing to the ground. The number of stones that will impact in a given area is 1D6 per 15 foot (4.6 m) radius.

11-20% Flaming Balls of Ash: Balls of ash begin to pour from the sky, not unlike a volcanic eruption, with projectiles ranging in size from that of a golf ball to as large as softballs. Damage is 6D6 S.D.C. per melee round, or 1 M.D. per minute (four melee rounds). To any well-equipped group of characters, the balls of ash are little more than an annoyance. However, the balls have a 01-64% chance of setting any *dry* ground cover, tree limbs, cloth, paper or exposed flammable liquid ablaze. Unless the characters can either flee the area or extinguish the majority of the fires, they could be trapped in a rapidly expanding forest fire. Even fleeing the area may only be a temporary reprieve as the flames are almost sure to grow. Given a dry forest and high winds, this could develop into a major ecological disaster with the characters caught right in the middle of it.

21-30% Pebbles, smaller than a dime: A rain of very small, very fine rocks rain down from the sky. None are larger than a dime, and they are smooth, as though they have been polished in a river or stream. They cause minimal damage, 1D6 S.D.C. per melee, but they are thick and persistent, not to mention that some are so small that they can form a gravel-like cloud that obscures vision. Characters caught out in the shower must shield their eyes, or suffer triple damage, and be temporarily blinded from being hit in the eyes. All characters caught in the rain of pebbles will have visibility reduced to 50 feet (15.2 m), lose one melee action, reduce speed by one third, and will be -3 on initiative. Radar, motion detectors, and other sensors are temporarily disabled, their screens filled with clutter. Blinded characters are -10 to strike, parry and dodge. Small aircraft will be forced to reduce their speed by half, visibility is reduced to 50 feet (15.2 m), aerial maneuvers are at -45%, and suffer combat penalties of -3 on initiative and -2 to strike, parry and dodge. Flying characters will be affected by both the penalties for blindness and for aerial maneuvers, increasing their risk significantly. Their best course of action would be to land and seek shelter immediately.

31-40% Living Fish, Frogs, or Snails: Fish, about the size of a human's hand, fall out of the sky, pelting the area with hundreds if not thousands of them. Frogs and snails can be substituted, or a combination of all three can be used if the Game Master so desires. There is a 01-50% chance that the fish, frogs or snails are *edible*, and this could actually be a blessing to a group of starving characters, or a group that wishes to augment their food supplies. However, eating *non-edible* fish, frogs or snails will cause the eater to suffer from extreme stomach cramps, nausea, and diarrhea for 6D6 hours, during which they will have their speed and attacks reduced by half, and suffer from a -2 on initiative and -2 to strike, parry and dodge. The fish, frogs and snails do no significant damage upon impact, but unless they are washed off, the character will smell of fish for 2D4 days. The downside of this, aside from repulsing fellow explorers, is the character *will* attract predators, as if they were walking pieces of bait. They also suffer a penalty of -15% on Prowl, Blend and Camouflage (self) skills, as they are likely to be smelled long before they are seen.

41-50% Metal shavings/rock slivers and tiny chunks: Perhaps the most unnerving form of raining debris is a shower of metal slivers and chunks, as if an aircraft was blown into a million pieces. These slivers of metal permeate the air, but the actual damage from their impact is negligible, a paltry 1D4 S.D.C. per minute (4 melee rounds). However, the thick and persistent debris will reduce visibility, and blind characters. Characters caught out in a cloud of shavings must shield their eyes or be temporarily blinded (-10 on all combat rolls). Even then, characters with unprotected eyes still have a 01-25% chance of eye damage from shavings entering the eyes. Unless immediate medical attention is given, the penalties for blindness can become permanent. The cloud reduces visibility to 60 feet (18.3 m), people caught in it lose one melee action, reduce speed by one third, and are -3 on initiative. Radar, motion detectors, and other sensors are temporarily disabled, their screens filled with clutter. Small aircraft will be forced to reduce their speed by half, visibility is reduced to 60 feet (18.3 m), aerial maneuvers are at -40%, and suffer combat penalties of -3 on initiative and -2 to strike, parry and dodge. Flying characters will be affected by both the penalties for blindness and for aerial maneuvers, increasing their risk significantly. Their best course of action would be to land, and seek shelter immediately.

Breathing the shavings, however, is another problem. Characters wearing gas masks, air filters or environmental helmets are safe from the shavings. Characters wearing a rag covering their nose and mouth will have a 01-50% chance of inhaling shavings, while characters with no protection see their chances grow to a dangerous 01-90% likelihood of breathing the particles per minute (four melees) of exposure. Breathing the shavings causes an additional 1D6 damage direct to Hit Points, with a 01-60% chance of suffering permanent damage to the lungs. Characters with lung damage will find that they tire much more easily, and have difficulty breathing. The tiny particles trapped in the lungs cause blockages, punctures, and hemorrhaging, resulting in a very uncomfortable feeling. The character could eventually develop asthma or lung cancer, and will routinely cough up blood. They will suffer from the following permanent penalties: Reduce melee attacks by one after the first five minutes of combat or heavy exertion, Spd is reduced by 20%, and the character is permanently -2 to save vs gas clouds and toxins in the air. A brief hospital stay, laser surgery, bionic lungs, or some other form of treatment will be necessary to repair the damage.

51-60% Alien Slimy Things: A technical term, to be sure, it refers to a deluge of sticky, slimy, squishy, rancid smelling alien things. Creatures that could be worms, larvae, fish, slugs or who knows what. Roughly as long as a man's hand, most are still alive and squiggling about. They do no damage, but smell horrific, requiring a scrub down of all weapons, armor, clothes, skin and equipment that came in contact with them. Failing to do so will result in a distinctive aroma that lasts for 2D6 days, reduces Prowl, Blend and Camouflage (self) by -25%, and induces a gag reflex in anyone who fails a saving throw vs Horror Factor of a 10. (Yes, they smell *that* bad!) There is only a 01-20% chance that they are edible, although given their smell, it would take a starving character, or an incredibly worthwhile dare, to eat one. Eating non-edible "things" will result in a rough case of poisoning, with the character taking 4D6 points of damage direct to their Hit Points. They will also suffer from extreme stomach cramps, fever, vomiting, and diarrhea for 1D4+1 days. The following penalties apply while sick: Reduce speed and number of melee actions by half, -4 on initiative, -4 to strike, parry, and dodge, and -20% to perform skills. **G.M. Note:** This can be played with as much silliness as you find appropriate. A deluge of rancid, smelly things can be just the piece of physical comedy to break the tension of a stressed group of player characters.

61-70% Lumber: Huge, full-sized trees or logs plummet from the sky. Ranging in diameter from a few inches to a few feet, with lengths up to 1D4x100 feet (100 feet equals 30.5 m), the area soon looks like an insane lumberjack passed through. The logs can be of any variety of wood, native to Earth or alien, and many will have been stripped of their branches which will fall to the ground separately. Damage can be impressive, with 2D6 Mega-Damage being inflicted per 100 feet (30.5 m) of tree. Aircraft and flying characters are especially at risk, as they can easily be knocked from the sky by a large tree, or a flurry of branches. Game Masters may want to assign damage to aircraft wings, and vulnerable parts of flying power armor and robots. Characters operating under magical flight can find themselves in serious peril, as they may be knocked unconscious by the impact of a tree or stray branch, and then crash to the ground. The immense size of these trees means that characters are at a -3 to dodge them as they are hurtling toward the ground.

71-80% Ice blocks: Temperature drops 10 degrees Fahrenheit and huge blocks of ice weighing 1D6x100 pounds (100 lbs equals 45 kg) come plummeting out of the sky. Their great weight, combined with the speed of their impact, inflicts a great amount of damage to anything in their path. Damage is 100 S.D.C. (or 1 M.D.) per 100 pounds (45 kg). Aircraft and flying characters are especially at risk, as they can easily be knocked from the sky by this hail of large boulders. Game Masters may want to assign damage to aircraft wings, and vulnerable parts of flying power armor and robots. Characters operating under magical flight can find themselves in serious peril, as they may be knocked unconscious by the impact of one of these rocks, and then crash to the ground uncontrollably. The number of ice blocks that will impact in a given area is 1D6 per 15 foot (4.6 m) radius. These blocks of ice will most likely shatter on impact with the ground, spraying an area of 50 feet (15.2 m) around them with ice slivers that deliver 1D6 S.D.C. to anyone in that radius. These slivers of ice are as sharp as a steel blade, and will pulverize most trees and ground cover. If nothing else, after the barrage is over, there is ample fresh water laying about. There is a 01-65% chance that the ice is free of impurities and safe to drink. The ice comes in many colors, regardless of whether it is potable or not, from a pure, crystalline blue, to a dirty, smoky gray, and even a pale yellow. Although, even if potable, there is an understood rule about not using yellow ice blocks as a supply of fresh water...

81-90% Sandstorm: It is as if a giant bucket of sand has been thrown into a huge fan. A vast, swirling cloud of sand scours the area, leaving nothing unscathed. The cloud causes minimal damage, 1D4 S.D.C. per melee, but it is thick and persistent, and obscures vision. Characters caught in the sandstorm must shield their eyes, or suffer triple damage, and be temporarily blinded from being hit in the eyes. All characters caught in the sandstorm will have visibility reduced to 5 feet (1.5 m), lose two melee actions, reduce Spd by 80%, and will be -3 on initiative. Additionally, unless the head or mouth is shielded, it is impossi-

ble to speak or cast magic spells and the roar of the storm means even shouting at the top of his lungs a character cannot be heard more than 15 feet (4.6 m) away. Radar, motion detectors, and other sensors are temporarily disabled, their screens filled with clutter. Blinded characters will suffer from an additional -10 to strike, parry and dodge. Small aircraft will be forced to reduce their speed by three fourths, visibility is reduced to 5 feet (1.5 m), effectively blinding them and making further flying suicidal! Aerial maneuvers are at -85%, and they suffer combat penalties of -3 on initiative and -6 to strike, parry and dodge. Flying characters will be affected by both the penalties for blindness and for aerial maneuvers, increasing their risk significantly. Their best course of action would be to land, and seek shelter immediately.

91-00% Scrap metal: Huge chunks of metal, as if a junkyard just exploded, with each piece weighing 2D6x100 pounds (100 lbs equals 45 kg), come plummeting out of the sky. Their great weight, combined with the speed of their impact, inflicts a great amount of damage to anything in their path. Damage is 1D6 M.D. per 100 pounds (45 kg). Aircraft and flying characters are especially at risk, as they can easily be knocked from the sky by this hail of large pieces of metal. Game Masters may want to assign damage to aircraft wings, and vulnerable parts of flying power armor and robots. Characters operating under magical flight can find themselves in serious peril, as they may be knocked unconscious by the impact of one of these rocks, and then crash to the ground uncontrollably. The number of pieces of scrap metal that will impact in a given area is 1D6 per 20 foot (6.1 m) radius. These pieces of metal will be in various states of oxidation, with some pieces being little more than large balls of rust that explode on impact, to like new, if mangled, sheets of metal. **G.M. Note:** This could be an interesting time to include pieces and parts of ships or other material from other settings such as Phase World, Mechanoids, or other Palladium role-playing game settings. A piece of scrap used to patch a blasted hole in a suit of power armor could have the insignia of the Nigelian Confederacy, or the Consortium of Civilized Worlds. You never know what might come raining down in this instance. Use your imagination.

18-22% Electromagnetic Storm/Interference: 01-90% chance that all unshielded electronic equipment will go absolutely haywire. Compasses spin in a circle, wristwatches stop, magnetic recording devices are wiped clean, computers are shut down with their memories being wiped clean, and radio broadcasts and reception are garbled and unintelligible, with their range reduced to one-third of normal. Shielded equipment is also affected, with reliability reduced by 25% with an effective range of one-half of normal. Shielded radios have half range, and their sound is garbled, but still reasonably intelligible. Shielded computers and other electronic controls will respond sluggishly, about half as fast as normal. Even bionic clocks and gyro-compasses will respond erratically and be temporarily unreliable. In all cases, these penalties disappear the moment the storm ends. Aside from erased memory banks, which could be a catastrophe, the equipment is fine.

23-26% Alien Lightning Bugs: These are golf-ball sized spheres of crackling energy that seem to have a life of their own. They zip around like crazy, giant fireflies. Anything they touch is zapped for 1D4 points of S.D.C. damage. Even Mega-Damage creatures and those in M.D.C. armor feel a disturbing jolt, although no damage is done to them. Clothes, cloth bags, rope and cloth equipment made from S.D.C. fabrics will burn. Trees and other forms of plant life will smolder, but will not catch fire.

27-29% Monsters from the Sky: Make up your own or use any of the creatures from **Rifts® Conversion Book One** or other **Rifts® World** or **Dimension Books.** Usually a solitary hunter or a mated pair, not an entire flock, though that does happen from time to time.

30-33% Monsters from the Earth: Make up your own or use any of the creatures from **Rifts® Conversion Book One** or other **Rifts® World** or **Dimension Books.** Usually a solitary hunter or a mated pair, not an army of them, though that does happen from time to time.

34-37% Hailstorm: While not as dramatic as the ice blocks above, a hailstorm is still a dangerous event with chunks of ice the size of grapefruits pelting the ground below. The storm causes 5D6 S.D.C. per melee round, or 100 S.D.C. per minute (four melees) of exposure. These hailstorms can last for just a few minutes, or can be up to an hour in length: 1D6x10 minutes. Aircraft and flying robots and power armor will get pelted fairly hard, but are in little real danger. Flying characters will definitely feel the impacts as the hail hits them, even if in armor. Their best bet is to land and seek shelter until the storm passes.

38-42% Blizzard: One minute the terrain is normal, the next it is under "white-out" conditions of a full force blizzard. Snow and wind buffet the characters at speeds over 50 mph (80 km), reducing visibility to a mere 8 feet (2.4 m)! Even shouting voices are drowned out, reducing such communication to a mere 8 feet (2.4 m) as well. The temperature drops dramatically, in an instant, with a wind chill making the temperature feel as much as 40-60 degrees Fahrenheit (22-33 degrees C) colder. These conditions incur the following penalties, in addition to any that may be incurred by flash frostbite: -60% to speed, reduce actions per melee round by two, all combat bonuses by half, and shooting at targets more than 8 feet (2.4 m) away is the same as shooting blind (no W.P. bonuses and -10 to strike). -90% to Land Navigation, plus radar and other sensors are operating at -50% accuracy, if not knocked out entirely. Traveling faster than 10% of one's maximum speed has a 01-80% chance of crashing into an obstacle, which can include trees, rocks, other companions, giant snowdrift, monster, or even falling into a pit, or off a cliff. The best course of action is to find shelter and wait the blizzard out. Typically, the storm will last for 1D6x10 minutes, which is still ample time for a serious cold weather related medical crisis to occur. See **Rifts® World Book Twenty: Canada** for more information on cold weather related topics.

43-45% Lethal Toxic Cloud/Fog: A deadly cloud or vapor suddenly covers the area. This can also manifest itself as an alien atmosphere contained in a set area by an impermeable dimensional envelope. Full environmental body armor, vehicles, or sealed compartments are the only safeguard from the cloud. It not only attacks the mucus membranes, such as the eyes, nose and lungs, but also the skin, so a gas mask/air filtration system alone is not protection enough. Characters must make a saving throw vs poison for every minute exposed. A failed roll indicates that 5D6 S.D.C. damage is inflicted on the character. A successful roll means only 1D6 S.D.C. damage is inflicted. Even Mega-Damage creatures will suffer 2D6 Mega-Damage on a failed roll per minute of exposure. Visibility is also reduced by

half while in the cloud. The cloud's dimensions are equal to 1D4 square miles (1.60-4 km²) and will last for 01-50% 4D6 minutes, 51-75% 1D6x10 minutes, or 76-00% 1D6 hours.

46-49% Space Warp: Suddenly, the landscape changes into a rolling thundercloud. Aircraft caught in the cloud cannot fly above it, nor can "up or down" be adequately established. Characters on the ground are in better shape, as they will have ground under their feet, however the atmosphere around them rolls with black clouds and misty shapes. All sensors and instruments go berserk, then go off-line, reading nothing. Visibility is reduced to 20 feet (6.09 m), although there doesn't seem to be anything in the area except for the characters and their vehicles. After 6D6 minutes, the storm will break, and the sky above will be clear and sunny, even if they had been out at night. It will feel as if only minutes have gone by, but in actuality, a minimum of 2D6 hours have passed!

50-53% Acid Rain: A burning rain pours from the sky, inflicting 1D4x10 S.D.C. to all organic substances and clothes. It inflicts 2D6 S.D.C. to wood and plastics, and 1D4 S.D.C. to metal, stone and glass per minute (four melee rounds) of exposure. Mega-Damage creatures and structures suffer no damage, though the rain does sting. Visibility is reduced to 100 feet (31.5 m), and there is a sulfurous stench to the air that stifles breathing. The rain lasts for 1D4x10 minutes, leaving a brown and tattered environment behind.

54-57% Dimensional Flux/The Void: One moment characters are traveling normally, the next moment they are shunted to a white, cloud-like limbo environment. Characters and vehicles will be floating in this luminescent void, and characters will find that all vehicles are "dead in the water," meaning that they have shut down all functions and cannot be restarted. Everything around them is a glowing white and wisps of clouds will float by on some ethereal wind. An occasional flash of light can be seen in the distance, but there is no indication that it is getting any closer, or drifting further away. After what seems to be 1D4 hours, the characters will be shunted back to where they were before being transported into this limbo, during which 2D4x10 hours have actually passed. **G.M. Note:** In the alternative, the characters can be warped to any dimension or alien environment that you may desire. This may be a way to send characters on adventures in other dimensions for a short period of time.

58-60% Desert Terrain: Suddenly the characters find themselves baking under the merciless sun in a desert. This desert can be composed of bleached tan sand, a hard, rocky terrain, or black volcanic sand that stretches from horizon to horizon. Waves of heat rise from the ground, distorting the air into scintillating mirages. The characters will experience an immediate rise in temperature to 1D4x10+90 degrees Fahrenheit (38-54+ degrees C) and the relative humidity drops to almost nothing. Sweat bakes off of them almost as fast as it forms. Unless characters are acclimated to such extremes of heat, they will tire rapidly, suffering from exhaustion in half of the normal exertion time. After 1D6 hours, the terrain shifts back to the original environment they were traveling.

61-64% Jungle Terrain: The terrain shifts into a dark, stifling, humid jungle, with a light fog clinging to the ground. The upper canopy is thick, blocking what light there seems to be, allowing only a few small beams to penetrate to the jungle floor. The trees are all tall, at least 60 feet (18.3 m), and most are 6-8 feet (1.8 to 2.4 m) in diameter. There is little undergrowth, as it is in perpetual twilight, but the darkness reduces visibility as if it were twilight. Nightvision works normally, and is superior to normal vision. The occasional bird call can be heard, along with a subtle sound of a waterfall off in the distance. There is a 01-45% chance of a random encounter with a jungle predator. Game Masters can use their imagination, but a big cat, dinosaur, giant snake, or some other type of animal is most appropriate. The jungle terrain will shift back to the original terrain the characters were traveling through after 3D6 hours.

65-66% Water Realm: One of the most frightening of the D-Shifts is the sudden shift to a watery environment! The characters suddenly find themselves floating in an endless void of water or some other liquid substance. To be kind, let's assume they are on the surface of the water and there is a breathable atmosphere. However, staying afloat and alive may be a problem, especially for characters in ground vehicles or wearing heavy, non-environmental body armor.

If appearing underwater, characters not in environmental body armor or vehicles with a sealed compartment will need to find some sort of protection and air supply soon, or they will drown. There seems to be a very slow current pulling the characters along in the murky water, and every so often a large, dark shape can be seen passing by, although nothing substantial forms. The temperature of the water is pleasant, but cold currents can sometimes be felt on unprotected skin, sending a slight chill through the character. The actual water pressure does not pose an immediate threat, although depending on the individual Game Master's wishes, it could quickly become a problem. Characters without any form of air supply can hold their breath for a time equivalent to their P.E. attribute in melee rounds. After that, they must make a saving throw each melee round vs coma/death. Characters that fail this saving throw will lose consciousness and begin taking 1D6 points of damage direct to Hit Points per melee round. After 6D6 minutes, the terrain will shift back to the original that they were traveling, although the characters will be soaking wet from the experience.

69-72% Alien Forest: Nothing overtly deadly or dangerous, just different – very different. This can be any type of forest composed of strange, alien trees, plant life and bugs. The sky may also be a different color. If the G.M. would like, toward the end of the D-Shift experience, the characters may be bothered or attacked by a carnivorous plant, a swarm of bugs, one or two giant bugs, or a monster. But before things get too out of hand, the landscape shifts again. Return to Rifts Earth or roll for a new environment on this table. Lasts 2D6x10 minutes.

73-76% Moonscape: One minute the travelers are passing over well scouted ground, and the next they are picking their way over a blasted and ruined landscape reminiscent of our moon. The air is tinged with the smell of smoke, a dull, strangely colored sky (red, green, yellow, etc.) provides illumination, and the ground is peppered with blast craters of various sizes and depths. There is not a living thing in sight, not even grass or plants of any kind, and the soil is dry and flaky to the touch. It crunches underneath, like dead leaves, and footprints left behind are crinkled into the earth. The air is breathable, but has a heavy, noxious feel to it, as though it is old and burnt. The landscape has an eerie, peaceful serenity to it, but such looks can be deceiving.

The ground and the air are contaminated by heavy amounts of radioactivity; fallout from some distant war, radioactive meteor shower, or whatever phenomenon produced this lifeless moonscape. Geiger counters and other radiation detection equipment will immediately register high levels of radiation, and contamination is an almost foregone conclusion. Exposure begins almost immediately, and it only requires ten minutes for armor and equipment to need decontamination treatment once out of the irradiating environment. After 10 minutes, characters exposed to the radiation without the benefit of environmental body armor or other form of protection will begin to suffer from radiation poisoning, and take 1D6 damage per minute of exposure (starts with S.D.C. points). Mega-Damage creatures don't suffer damage till after 30 minutes, but will also take damage; 1D6 M.D. damage per every five minutes of exposure.

After ten minutes of constant, unprotected exposure, characters have a 01-40% chance per ten minutes of contracting radiation sickness. There is no other saving throw applicable, unless a character is immune to the effects of radiation. Radiation sickness has the following early symptoms: nausea, headache, loss of appetite and vomiting. Eventually, an untreated victim will develop hair loss, ulceration of the skin, bone marrow depression, bloody diarrhea, lung fibrosis, premature thickening and hardening of the artery walls, and the possible development of a malignancy and eventual death. The victim will suffer 3D6 points of damage (regardless of whether they are an S.D.C. creature or M.D.C. creature) per day, and this damage does not recover until treatment is received. Further, reduce all bonuses and P.E. attribute by half, skill proficiencies by 10%, and reduce the number of melee actions by one. These penalties apply as long as the character is sick, and will linger for 3D4 days after the onset of treatment.

The moonscape will shift back to normal terrain after 1D6 hours, when decontamination treatment of all exposed weapons, armor and equipment will be necessary. Otherwise, they will continue to suffer daqmage. **Note:** In this case, all victims of radiation poisoning are treatable and should recover completely.

77-80% Alien Wonderland: A sudden dimensional shift brings the terrain of an alien forest filled with beautiful and exotic species of plants and birds like nothing they have ever seen before. The color of the leaves and bark is far from the familiar green and earthen tones, but can be instead vibrant, like flowers or even iridescent or metallic colors. The texture of the plants are smooth and slick, yet dry, like the scales of a snake, and the wood is soft, but with a certain elastic rigidity that enables them to grow tall into a pale, multi-hued sky. When cut, and the wood can be cut just as easily as Earth trees, the smell is unusual, almost like fresh, raw meat. Some species have a thick, viscous sap, while others leak a fluid with the consistency of water. The soil bears many of the colors of the trees, and perhaps the minerals contained within determine the colors of the trees. A fascinating opportunity for a scientist or character with an interest in botany, but otherwise uneventful unless the Game Master chooses to unleash something on the characters. This can be a forest predator or something less predictable like an alien type of Faerie Folk, or strange entity or an alien (a peaceful one in keeping with this setting). After 4D6x10 minutes in the alien forest, it reverts to Rifts Earth or roll again.

81-83% Night Realm: A realm of perpetual twilight and nightfall. There does not appear to be a daylight component to this dimension, and everything has adapted to living in perpetual dusk and night conditions. There are a vast number of stars, and any number of moons, the exact number of which and their phase varying on any given D-Shift of the terrain. Visibility is fair to poor, depending on the available moonlight, but during the short periods of dusk, the illumination is satisfactory for normal human vision. Nightvision, however, works very well here, and would certainly be a necessity for any native species. The minuscule plant life that exists is close to the ground, with large, fan-like leaves that span for several feet, taking advantage of surface area in order to capture the very little light that exists in this realm. The temperature is brisk and cold, with occasional gusts of wind that enhance the chill. It is an otherwise flat landscape, with a few rolling hills that cast unusually long shadows. In these shadows, large, shallow pools of water collect and freeze into "never shine" lakes; named so because the sun, and thus any warmth, never shines on them. Animal life is scarce, although it makes for a perfect setting for Shadow Beasts and other nocturnal creatures to make their home. If it weren't for the lack of prey, it would be paradise for a vampire, or even a colony of vampires.

84-86% Dinosaur Jungle: This could be Earth's distant past, a parallel dimension or an alien world, but big, nasty dinosaurs live here. Creatures can be the same as what is found in Dinosaur Swamp, different species of dinosaurs from a different time period (G.M.s, have fun) or dinosaur-like alien monsters. This place is a more hostile environment than Dinosaur Swamp, with predators, large and small, everywhere. After 2D6x10 minutes, the environment shifts back to the terrain the characters came from.

87-89% Subterranean: At first, the characters might believe that they had been shifted into a landscape with no sun, or a dense, all consuming void. Their first clue to their surroundings, provided that they don't have any currently active illumination, should be their echoes. They could find themselves in a small cavern, the floor and walls slick with water and glittering slightly from tiny flecks of minerals in the rocks. They could also find themselves in a vast, crystalline complex, with even the slightest light source amplified a thousand times, providing for a breathtaking and blinding view. The limits here are only the Game Master's imagination. Whether the characters are in a cave complex beneath the surface of some far-flung world, or possibly still on their own world is debatable, but their immediate situation finds them trapped under what could be miles of solid rock. Passages through the caves are entirely at the whim of nature, unless the characters have an Earth Warlock or Stone Master among them. They can also try blasting their way forward, and this may be necessary to effect any forward movement for large suits of power armor, robots, or even robust characters. Of course, this could also bring the rock ceiling down upon their heads, so any decisions must be weighed carefully. (See **Rifts® Aftermath**, page 13, for rules on dealing with confinement in enclosed spaces in the event of a cave-in resulting from normal tectonic activity, or that which is character induced.)

This environment doesn't necessarily have to be inhabited, though Worms of Taut, Earth Elementals, Vampires, or any

other variety of creatures could call these caverns home. After 3D6x10 minutes, the environment shifts back to the terrain the characters came from. This might be a blessing for any characters who may have certain fears about enclosed spaces, and any that developed a fear of enclosed spaces during their time underground.

90-93% Dead Zone: At first, this seems to be a twilight realm, similar to the Night Realm above. However, it is much more sinister, as the dimension itself, and the laws that govern it, are in a permanent state of decay. The sky is a dark, hazy gloom that hangs over the land, with the stars and the moon being fuzzy, as if they are out of focus. The ground is soft, and feels slightly moist to the touch. There is a faint stench of decomposition on the air, and all of the plants appear to be dead, with bark flaking off trees at the slightest touch. Where there is ground cover, instead of grass, there is a blanket of small mushrooms and fungi that give a slight pop and a hiss when stepped on. Occasionally, a bone, or piece of metal, plastic, or Mega-Damage ceramic pokes up from the ground, but will be little more than a remnant of scrap. It seems that even the most sturdy of artificial constructs can be broken down here. Therein lies the danger. While not immediately evident, any existing wounds stop healing the minute the characters are introduced to this world. It will begin to fester, and characters will be forced to make a saving throw vs disease at a 14 or higher or suffer the onset of infection. See the section entitled *Diseases, Toxins and Medicines of Dinosaur Swamp* earlier in this book for the effects of infection.

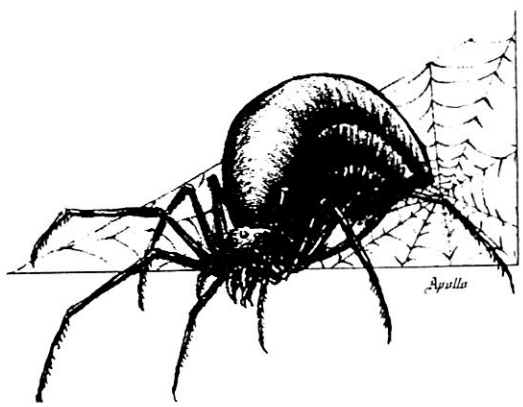
Characters not sealed away in an environmental suit or at least wearing a gas mask must roll to save vs disease at a 16 or higher. A failed roll means the individual becomes victim to an *alien fungal growth* around their mouth, nose, ears and any other mucus membranes. Fungus infected characters feel tired, dizzy, find breathing uncomfortable, and have a persistent, hacking cough. They will find that if they stop moving, and prop themselves up against something, or even better, lay down, they can breathe well and feel much better, reducing the effects below by half. The fungus inflicts the following penalties to infected characters: Reduce Spd by 40%, all skills are performed at -30%, -2 attacks per melee, -2 on initiative, and -2 to strike, parry and dodge. **Note:** Not moving spells death! Characters who lay down or are propped up and not moving around must make a save vs poison (16 or higher) every 30 minutes or lapse into a coma! Characters that perish will not shift back when the others return to their rightful dimension, they will have become permanent victims of the fungal colony.

Thankfully, the dimensional shift occurs again in only 3D6x10 minutes. Any spores or remaining fungal matter loses its potency outside of that dimension, leaving those infected with the equivalent of a minor cold (-1 on initiative, -10% on skill performance and reduce Spd by 10%) that is gone in 6D6 hours.

94-97% Radiance: This dimension is perhaps one of the most benign looking, but that doesn't mean that it doesn't pose a risk. The landscape consists of gently rolling hills, with a warm, bright white sky. The ground is covered with soft tufts of grass, and there are abundant trees, shrubs, and other forms of plant life. Among the trees are a variety of birds, and lemur-like creatures flit from one branch to another. It is peaceful and idyllic, except that everything has a certain, glaring glow to it. The grass is brightly phosphorescent, giving off a fuzzy white glow. The trees seem to have veins of light running through their trunks and out their branches, like some kind of organic fiber optics. Even the creatures in the trees seem to radiate with some inner light. All of this bright, vibrant light hurts the naked eyes of humans and most D-Bees, so sunglasses, polarized goggles, or other form of light dampening is necessary to see well. Otherwise the light and glare give characters a headache and impair vision. Sight is hampered and reaction time slowed. Penalties: -5% on skill performance, -3 on initiative, -2 to strike, parry, dodge, and all other combat bonuses. Plus range of vision is reduced by half. The terrain will D-Shift back after 1D4 hours.

98-00% Umbra: Diametrically opposite of Radiance is the dimension of Umbra. Rather than being a "dark" dimension like a Night Realm, it is actually a realm with juxtaposition between light and dark. The entire realm exists in opposites of light and dark that can be extremely unsettling for anyone shifted to this dimension. It is much like entering into the negative of a black and white photograph. Rather than having a sky lit by the sun, it has a period of perpetual darkness, "lit" by a black orb, where white light is cast by solid objects rather than shadows. Solid form objects exist as black voids, with features distinguished by lines and shapes of light contrasts, rather than dark contrasts. The actual experience is quite nauseating at first, but eventually characters can grow accustomed to this "negative image" they find themselves in. It is incredibly distracting, with depth perception radically adjusted, resulting in all skills being performed at -25%, and characters are -3 to strike, parry and dodge for the first hour in this environment. There is no saving throw against this initial shock, however, after the first hour, they are allowed to make a saving throw vs insanity at a 12 to regain their composure. Failure to make the saving throw means the effects linger for another hour, when they may make another saving throw to fight off the effects. It is still very difficult to read instrument gauges and control panels, and depth perception will still be slightly askew. This dimension is otherwise very similar, if not identical, to that of Rifts Earth, including the environment and any animals that may be encountered. Anything that they might encounter in their normal dimension can also be encountered in Umbra, including other groups of adventurers, explorers and bandits. The dimension will D-Shift back to normal in 2D6x10 minutes.

Note: Of course the G.M. may substitute his own weird or alien environments for any of those presented here.



Communities in Dinosaur Swamp

Char is not the only community in Dinosaur Swamp, it's just the largest and most infamous. Scattered throughout the southeast are tiny villages, small towns, settlements, barbarian tribes, nomadic hunters, Wilderness Scouts, Psi-Stalkers, wandering adventurers, and any number of individual homesteads and isolationists. What these people may lack in collective numbers, they make up for in determination and the pioneer spirit.

Not all of the local inhabitants are classified as barbarians, or live in the tribal societies, though at least 50% are barbarians. Many inhabitants of Dinosaur Swamp live off the land or eke out a living as best as they can as farmers, hunters, fishermen and scouts. They trade goods and services with neighbors, even if that neighbor is 100 miles (160 km) away, and with the occasional adventurer and explorer that passes nearby. They can be recent immigrants from the west or north, descendants of slaves who escaped from Atlantis, or the dimensionally displaced, as well as the many ancestors of humans who survived the Great Cataclysm – their people living in the region for generations.

While they may be a diverse collection of people, they all share the commonality of making Dinosaur Swamp their home. Much like early American Colonials, they are living in the heart of the frontier. Dangerous animals, dinosaurs, the weather, injury, physical and mental illness, hostile barbarians and any other host of dangers are daily concerns. They take things one day at a time, and most never go looking for trouble. Some people question whether living in Dinosaur Swamp is any more dangerous than living in the civilized Midwest, or anywhere else. They love their home and find things about Dinosaur Swamp that make living there worthwhile.

The Barbarian Tribes

No one knows exactly how many barbarian tribes there might be living in the vast wilderness. Neenok put their count at several dozen, but they could number in the low hundreds. A tribal population may consist of only one particular race, or welcome them all (about a 50/50 split). With such a wide range of social acceptance, a tribe's population may range from as few as 20 or 30 to as many as 2000, though most range from 100-600, with only some of the largest tribes numbering between one and two thousand.

Over the years, certain tribes have grown in prominence, while others have weakened, shrunk in number, and still others have even fallen into extinction. Tribes that have actually gone extinct in the past 20 years include the *Yellow Stingers* of Georgia who fell victim to a debilitating genetic mutation that sterilized a generation. Occasionally, rumors will tell of a lone barbarian or small group claiming to be a member of the Yellow Stingers tribe. If true, they are likely the last of their kind. Another dead tribe is the war-like *Bull Hounds* who once lived in the SteelTree Forest. Strong and proud people, they were decimated through a civil war. Their war was short, but they succeeded in wiping themselves out.

Presently, the three largest and most powerful of the tribes are all found in the Piedmont region of the Carolinas. They have the fortune of living in a relatively stable part of the region, close to Char, and aren't completely overrun like the dinosaur and monster prone regions deep in Georgia, Florida, and to a lesser extent, South Carolina. As with most of the tribes, their societies are centered on animal totems taken from their ancestral folklore. The tribe live in reasonably close proximity to one another and maintain an uneasy truce. They sometimes raid one another, resulting in small-scale skirmishes, but none of them have taken any serious steps toward open warfare. They all recognize the ruins of the Beltline and elevated highway structure that still stands in some places as neutral ground where they sometimes gather for trade and exchanges of information.

The Wolf Runners

The Wolf Runners are one of the more animalistic and primitive of the tribes. They are nomads who live entirely on the move during the warm spring and summer months, with no permanent dwellings, preferring to carry everything with them. They do, however, have several established gathering points throughout their territory where they migrate during the summer, and stay at a ruin between the old cities of Raleigh and Durham in the winter. The ruin was originally a shopping plaza that was buried by the Great Cataclysm, but has since been exposed after centuries of erosion.

The tribe worships a half-man, half-wolf totem, and their society is based around a staggered pack mentality. Each family is an individual unit, a den, with the dominant member, either male or female, leading them. The leader of the den, however, is still subservient to the overall leader of the entire tribe/pack. It is usually a den leader who makes initial contact with outsiders, while the leader of the tribe is responsible for major decisions, such as when to migrate and whether to expel a trespasser, and the overall welfare of his tribe.

Wolf Runners are near the bottom of the spectrum when it comes to technology. They do not use or understand most modern equipment, except for the occasional weapon and piece of armor, preferring to use SteelTrees, natural weapons and magic. They are fierce warriors good at deploying sophisticated group tactics when they fight. Although they may be armed with primitive weapons, they use them very effectively. Besides, sprinkled among the spears, war clubs and bows and arrows are a smattering of energy rifles and other tech gear. Wolf Runners are also excellent hunters and Wilderness Scouts who know how to take full advantage of their environment, misdirection, ambushes, traps and the use of poison to win the day.

Population Breakdown: 630 total: 45% exhibit prominent canine mutation characteristics; 10% are Dog Boys that have joined the tribe and are treated as equals.

Common Alignments: Unprincipled, Anarchist and Aberrant.

Typical O.C.C.s: 50% Wild Knives Barbarian Warriors, 10% Dinosaur Hunters, 10% Wilderness Scouts (various types), 15% Eco-Wizards, and 15% other.

Average Level of Experience: 1D4+4 for scouts and warrior types, 1D6 for Eco-Wizards, psychics and others.

Tribal Dress: Typically wear clothes that are various shades of gray and silver, and use teeth and claws in a lot of their jewelry and ornamentation. Their tribal emblem is a stylized bright red wolf's paw that they tattoo on themselves and emblazon on their clothes, shields and equipment.

The Rams

Whereas the Wolf Runners are nomadic warriors, the Rams are a settled collection of mystics and thinkers. They have a village along the shore of a large lake, just west of the saltwater marsh ruins of Raleigh. In their village, everyone speaks as an equal, and they have a high incidence of psionic abilities. The Rams are dedicated to the exploration of the mind and probing the depths of the future. However, while they are dedicated to exploring the mind, they do not neglect the body and are some of the fiercest fighters in the region. They routinely raid other, smaller tribes, taking what they want, and using their psionic powers for whatever advantage they can obtain. They typically stay clear of the Wolf Runners and the Devil Horde and the uneasy balance of power among these three groups has kept things low key.

The Rams base their society on a simple commune system where everyone has a job to perform, and everyone reaps the benefits of the tribe's overall success. Everyone is an equal, but there are three elected "Captains," as they call them, who serve as the top tribal organizers and coordinators. The Captains are the ones who settle most disputes, make the call for raids, and distribute food and booty among the population in a fair and equal manner.

Technologically, the Rams are a bit higher than most other local tribes, as they actually seek to manufacture their own goods, most notably SteelTree and Eco-Wizard items. They are a long way off from any sort of full-scale manufacturing, but are skilled craftspeople and actively seek to trade with outsiders, starting with adventurers and explorers.

Population Breakdown: 590 total. 90% Human, 10% other races.

Common Alignments: Unprincipled and Anarchist.

Typical O.C.C.: 10% are various types of psychics, 5% Mind Melters, 10% are Mystics, 10% are Eco-Wizards, 10% Vagabonds, 5% Wilderness Scouts (various), 5% Pathfinders, 5% Dinosaur Hunters, 35% Wild Knives Warriors and 5% other.

Tribal Dress: The Rams' style of dress is very practical, tunics and pants in shades of gray and black and green. Their emblem is the ram's horn on a sky blue background that they tattoo on themselves, embroider on their clothing, and paint on weapons and equipment.

The Devil Horde

While the Wolf Runners are nomadic warriors and the Rams are thinkers, the Devil Horde is the scourge of the land. They are a brutal, malicious and downright evil collection of barbarians who scour and pillage the lands north of Char. They are not dedicated to conquest, but rather survive as nomadic raiders, thieves and bushwhackers. They like the idea that people fear them and actively work at spreading terror. Thankfully, they are not interested in acquiring technology, but more than make up for it through their use of SteelTree weaponry and association with magic. They are one of the few tribes to include members who practice Necromancy and the art of the Shifter. This means some of them are joined with supernatural beings, granting them cheap and easy power with which to slay their enemies and contribute to their supremacy via brute strength and mystical power.

The Devil Horde is led by whomever happens to be the strongest or most cunning individual willing to grab the mantle of leadership for himself. Thus, turnover is constant, sometimes monthly, for these barbarians. If someone were to become strong enough to focus their collective power, the Devil Horde would become a true force to be reckoned with. Their constant infighting and unorganized nature are what help to prevent this tribe from gaining even more power under their banner.

The Horde currently occupies the shattered ruins of *Durham*, one of the points on the Triangle in the now coastal region of North Carolina. Their legends and mythologies tell them that it is their ancestral homeland, and they have struggled for generations with the Rams and other tribes to keep it.

Population Breakdown: 740 total. 85% human, 5% mutants, 10% other.

Common Alignments: Anarchist, Aberrant, and Miscreant.

Typical O.C.C.: 60% Wild Knives Barbarian Warriors, 5% Dinosaur Hunters, 3% Swamp Stompers, 4% Wilderness Scouts (various), 3% Vagabonds, 3% Bandits/Thieves, 12% Eco-Wizards, 5% Necromancers, 3% Shifters and 2% others.

Tribal Dress: They tend to favor dark, midnight blue and black garments, Eco-Wizard and SteelTree armor, skulls, bones, teeth and claws. Their symbol is the silhouette of a devil with a pitchfork.

Villages, Towns, & Settlements

With the notable exception of Char and certain barbarian villages, most population centers in Dinosaur Swamp are tiny to small, self-sufficient enclaves typically built around a single extended family, or group of families. The smallest have only 10 to 20 members, most range between 50-80, and the larger a few hundred. These small settlements may not actually fit the classification of a town, because they may not engage in trade or industry, nor offer anything in the way of regular services, much less have any form of administration or development. All try to be completely self-sufficient, though they will trade goods and services with other communities and trusted local figures such as Wilderness Scouts, hunters, trappers and others, even some barbarian tribes, or members of a tribe. The people within the community itself are very close and rush to help one another in times of need. These simple villages/towns will more often than not be enclosed compounds with a single guarded gate to keep out the occasional trespasser and predators, but might also be a sprawling community of farms and homesteads with a fort or fortified compound as the heart of town. The heart of town is where the church, meeting hall, saloon (if any), school (if any), trading post/general store, blacksmith, public well, lumbermill and sheriff/defender are all located, and all are likely to be inside a fort-like enclosure. The fort or enclosure is also where the residents can flee to and hole-up should the community fall under attack. Most dealings with outsiders will be done at or outside their fortified compound, with the occasional person allowed in, under escort, for medical treatment or some other service that cannot be rendered outside.

When it comes to trade, items fetching the highest value will be the ones that cannot be manufactured at home and which make life easier, safer or better. High on this list are weapons, ammunition for firearms, M.D. body armor, spare parts for just about anything, tools, portable energy generators, processed food, booze, candy, vehicles and local rumors and news. (Being so isolated, most locals don't care about the outside world, and don't see how anything happening with the CS has anything to do with them.) Items they may have to offer in trade include regional knowledge, a map (if you're lucky and/or *trustworthy*), fresh food (milk, cheese, bread, meat, fruit, jam, honey, etc.), purified water, moonshine, dinosaur bones, dinosaur hides, dinosaur teeth and claws, animal skins, leather goods, and holistic medicinal treatment. Chances are they're more equipped than most adventurers are to deal with the environmental dangers of the region, and characters should expect to pay a high price for their assistance and generosity. Once business is concluded, outsiders are usually encouraged to be on about their way, unless one of the locals or village elders have "cottoned" (taken a liking) to them. While many settlements operate under the principle of, *"I don't know you. You don't know me. You do us both a favor and keep on walking,"* they are good folk and enjoy time spent with newcomers they believe they can trust. On the other hand, the people in most of these wilderness communities take an instant and lasting dislike (hate even) to people who don't listen to them, treat them like bumpkins, or who try to tell them what do or how to be bigger, better, etc. Country folk despise outsiders who think they are smarter or better than them, or who ignore local customs and laws to do as they please. Such individuals and groups can expect a cold shoulder, a sudden disappearance of trade goods, exorbitant prices for available goods and services, snide remarks and harsh practical jokes at the outsider's expense. Should an outsider threaten or hurt a local, there will be hell to pay. And because the locals are smart, if the outsider and his friends are much more powerful than they, revenge will be subtle and may be delivered in their sleep or when they least expect it, or at the hand of another (manipulated by the townspeople).

Surprisingly, humans actually outnumber D-Bees by three to one in Dinosaur Swamp, and most settlements are predominantly populated by humans. Many D-Bees who come to the region keep to themselves and choose to live apart from each other. That having been said, life is so precious in this rugged wilderness that most folks accept all people of any race, color and creed.

Reclamation Towns

Reclamation Towns are communities built on the sites of pre-Rifts ruins. They are found scattered throughout Dinosaur Swamp, though mostly in the north and the mountains. The idea is that the ruins offer some immediate shelter and a foundation from which to build. For some folk, it also offers some sense of history and heritage. Ruins may also offer secrets and defenses, such as underground tunnels, bunkers or hiding places, as well as valuable relics and even usable pre-Rifts weapons, vehicles and technology, though the latter is a rarity. On the downside, ruins also attract squatters, treasure hunters, bandits and supernatural entities (drawn to the place by the imprinted emotions of the dead).

In Dinosaur Swamp, most communities range from a few hundred to about one thousand, seldom more. Reclamation Towns established on the ruins of the past tend to be among the larger communities (2D4x100+200) and often have 1D4 different communities, clans or tribes living within the same ruins, especially in the ruins of what were once large cities.

Fadetowns

A Fadetown is a village or town that appears, on all accounts, to be perfectly normal. Most are obviously poor communities of humans and/or D-Bees who toil as farmers, trappers and hunters, trying to survive in the harsh wilderness of Rifts Earth. What makes a "Fadetown" unique is that the town is part of a mysterious dimensional phenomenon that alters the fabric of reality and causes these towns to *fade* in and out of our reality.

There are so-called "Fadetowns" scattered throughout the planet, including the Magic Zone, the Yucatan Peninsula and *Dinosaur Swamp*. With the unstable dimensional fabric of the Appalachian Mountains along the old Carolinas and Georgia, and other spots within Dinosaur Swamp, it comes as no surprise that many settlements, especially within the mountains, are actually Fadetowns.

Exactly how or why certain places turn into these dimensional aberrations is unknown. They usually appear where ley lines are at their most numerous. Though all Fadetowns are located on a ley line, the act of fading in and out of reality is completely random and seems to have nothing to do with the ebb and flow of the line itself. As odd as it may seem to outsiders,

the people who live in Fadetowns are used to these strange occurrences and take them in stride.

Random Reality Phasing:

In the Appalachian Mountains of Dinosaur Swamp, reality fluctuation occurs once every 4D6 hours since the last one.

01-05% Entire Town Disappears! The whole place and every person, animal, building, structure and thing within the borders of the Fadetown vanishes as if they never existed. Reappears with the next dimensional flux, typically at the same location (but may appear anywhere on the ley line) where everything is normal until the next "Fade Out." To living beings in the town it is as if only a minute has passed. The only real problems are with crops and livestock who were not tended to while the town and its inhabitants were gone (unless they too faded out with the town). Likewise, residents or visitors away from town when it vanished may find themselves temporarily homeless or that the town has been teleported, for the time being, to someplace else along the ley line.

06-20% Literally a ghost town. The entire town, residents and all, "fade" out of sync with reality. Earth is the place of origin, so the people, animals, buildings, vehicles, and all else within the narrow geographic range of "town" appear as transparent, ghost-like apparitions. People can go about their business, eat and draw water from the community, but cannot leave town. Although they can see and hear everything in the physical plane, they cannot touch, speak to (no sound), or affect anything in it while out of phase. Only psionics can be used by the people in dimensional flux to communicate or attack people in the physical world and vice versa. **Note:** Those caught in the Fadetown when it goes into flux are stuck there until the next dimensional realignment or "fading." To those in town, everything is solid and seems normal, they just can't leave the confines of the town (as if an invisible barrier boxes them in), and everything outside the area of town seems semi-transparent, silent, and ghost-like to them.

21-36% Fades to a new location far from the last. This new location will always be along the ley line or an intersecting ley line. This frequent change of location is only a problem when the Fadetown is relocated near a rival, enemy, or hostile territory, or away from some natural resource (river, well, farmland, mine, etc.). The biggest problem this Fadetown has is establishing trade with its neighbors and travelling merchants. This is compensated for in part by having major storehouses and buying items in bulk when they have the opportunity. **Note:** A Fadetown never reappears on top of an existing community, although it may appear next to it or an adventurer's campsite.

37-52% Fades to a new location not far from the last. This new location will always be along the ley line or an intersecting ley line and will be no more than one mile (1.6 km) away from the last site.

53-68% Ghost Fade. 1D6+10% of the town's people fade into ghostly apparitions. They remain in this state until the next dimensional flux, but until then they cannot communicate with the physical world except through pantomime, sign language, mouthing words, or psionics. Although ghostly in appearance, they cannot walk through walls and must have somebody open a door for them to enter a room. Likewise, they would need somebody to flip the pages of a book, turn on a machine, etc. While a ghost, those affected do not require food, water, heat or shelter, nor much sleep, although many get bored and sleep a lot. As usual, they are confined to the borders of the town and can only interact with others who have been temporarily turned into ghost-like beings.

69-84% Population Fade. 6D6 percent of the town's population vanishes into thin air. No ghosts, no anything. They are just gone! They remain gone until the next dimensional flux and reappear in the exact place and condition that they were when they vanished. For those affected it seems as if only 10 seconds has passed, even though hours have passed in the real world. **G.M. Note:** It's your discretion whether or not some of the player group vanish when this happens.

85-00% Magic Fade. For some reason magic in all its forms fades or ebbs to low levels, as if being drained or channeled elsewhere. Magic spells and rituals are reduced by half – half damage, half duration, half range, but cost full P.P.E. to perform. Likewise, all P.P.E. reserves are half, and recovery of P.P.E. is done at half. Eco-Wizard and TW items, Rune weapons and other magic items do half damage and their other magical abilities are also reduced by half. P.P.E. cannot be drawn from the ley line during a magic fade (must go outside the town's borders, which are usually clearly marked at many Fadetowns).

Note: Not everything is bad about living in a Fadetown; when the entire town is "ghosted" they are impervious to disease, foul weather, monsters and invasion. The other dimensional anomalies are seldom dangerous, mostly inconvenient, and keep life interesting. Furthermore, there are some genuine benefits. Although Fadetowns are located on ley lines (and other places where the dimensional fabric is weak) they are never affected by Ley Line Storms (they skip over them), never have a random Rift appear in or very near town, and are never visited by Entities, Astral Travelers, ghosts or spirits of any kind.

Ash (Fadetown)

Estimated Population: 429 people, mostly farmers and unskilled laborers.

Originally the mountain metropolis of Asheville, the city has fallen into a wetched ruin of a Fadetown called Ash. The population lives under the domination of *Nero*, a fourth level, Fire Dragon Hatchling (Miscreant) who is both the town's mayor and defender/champion. Nero has pretty much claimed the town for his own, and though he can be haughty and bossy, and even downright mean, he vents most of his ire at outsiders, monsters and other threats against "his kingdom." Nero and the townspeople tend to view outsiders as trouble (for Nero, they represent a new challenge to his authority), but new people do join the community from time to time. Though the townspeople are predominantly good (50% various good alignments, 30% Anarchist), and they are not thrilled with their violent and belligerent mayor and protector, they do support him. Life has been better and safer since the dragon took roost three years ago, and in this hostile environment, he is the lesser of evils. Once, a group of explorers took it upon themselves to free Ash from the clutches of its evil dragon overlord, and incited the population into open rebellion. These adventurers were thoroughly defeated, and the population was punished severely for their transgressions. Ever since then, there has been an acceptance of their fate, and out-

siders are quite openly told to go away, or are turned over to Nero to be dealt with.

Bone (Fadetown)

Estimated Population: 240-290 people, mostly criminals, outlaws and unskilled laborers.

About 20 miles (32 km) from the town of Ash is Bone, a refuge for bandits, raiders and cutthroats. Bone is currently a vermin filled cesspool, overrun with bandits and thugs – outcasts who are even unwelcome in the filthy streets of Char. There is no central authority. The most powerful and aggressive gang at the time runs the show, with all others backing down to its will and paying 20% tribute in booty until someone refuses, gang war ensues and a new (or existing) gang rises triumphant to hold sway over the rest. Anyone is welcomed to Bone, provided they can hold their own and pay tribute to the ruling gang of the moment. Making enemies here can be a bad thing, especially if an old enemy's gang should rise to power in town. For the most part, Bone keeps their hands off the townspeople of Ash, though there are occasional minor altercations. The two towns regularly trade with one another. **Note:** Both Ash and Bone fade in and out at the same time.

Homesteaders

Something of a new phenomenon, the practice of homesteading has recently begun to grow in the aftermath of the Tolkeen War. Refugees have been known to flee around and through Coalition territory to make new lives for themselves. The wilderness of the southeast is one of those places because it is far from CS influence and seems to be full of promise. Unfortunately, only perhaps 50% of those who set out for Dinosaur Swamp ever reach their destination and fewer than 25% of those survive more than a year in the swamplands.

A homestead may be part of a larger community, or a stand-alone dwelling – a home. They are usually established by a family or family group (i.e., brothers and their respective families). Whether farmers (50%), ranchers/livestock (10%), hunters/trappers (15%), fishermen (10%) or other (including prospectors, builders, merchants, doctors, teachers, etc.), all homesteaders are pioneers with tenacious spirits. Most are fiercely independent and seek to make their own way in the world without having to answer to government, pay taxes, or fit into society. At least 60% are D-Bees and most are refugees of one kind or another. Average alignments are Scrupulous (30%), Unprincipled (30%) and Anarchist (30%). A homestead may be as small as two people (typically husband and wife) to a single family of 3-12, to a family clan of 12-32 (may also include close friends). The next nearest homestead may be a few miles away to 100 miles (160 km) away. The mountains, forests and swamps are full of homesteaders.

Psi-Stalkers

The Deep South is known for harboring large populations of nomadic, wild Psi-Stalkers.

Most roam the forests and lowlands of the Gulf Coast, *Alabama, Mississippi* and *Louisiana*, but the Atlantic Coast offers many unique challenges and entices hunting parties to cross into Dinosaur Swamp while hunting their quarry or to do a little exploring or dinosaur hunting. The wilderness of Dinosaur Swamp brings out their most primal instincts, almost as if it clears away the misty veneer of civilization from their eyes. Even those who are members of the Coalition Army find the wilderness of Dinosaur Swamp erodes away their military discipline and makes them more aggressive. Hunting is no longer a matter of duty to the CS, but rather a feeling that makes the Psi-Stalker feel alive and wild. This has caused the Coalition to reexamine the compliment of some of their long-range reconnaissance patrols to the east, relying less on Psi-Stalkers and Dog Boys and more on a mix of CS Rangers, CS Grunts and Psi-Stalkers.

The Psi-Stalker bond with animals is exceptionally strong with many of the creatures living in the southeast, however there is an exceptionally negative reaction between Psi-Stalkers and predatory dinosaurs, as if they were natural enemies. Most nomadic Psi-Stalkers in Dinosaur Swamp travel in family groups or hunting bands of about 1D6+2 members each, with the largest groups being twice that size (1D6+8). Many will be armed with local arms and equipment, although they aren't shy about the use of energy weapons and other high-tech gear. They absolutely love Eco-Wizard weapons and will pay top price for them.

Mutant Animals

The population of intelligent, humanoid, mutant animals in Dinosaur Swamp consists largely of Coalition Dog Boys who have gone feral and escaped CS genetic experiments. Most of the Dog Boys living in the region are the lone survivors of long-range reconnaissance patrols into the region who decided to stay rather than return to civilization. Many stay out of the shame that goes along with such failure, but others stay out of a reawakened instinct. The raw, primal environment of Dinosaur Swamp brings to the surface those animal instincts that the CS (and the Dog Boys) thought were suppressed. Thus, 10% of the Dog Boys brought to the region will go AWOL or renegade. However, since they are pack animals, they often find one another and form small bands that roam the wilderness. Others join human settlements or barbarian tribes where they often function as warriors and defenders; their sense of loyalty to hu-

mans as strong as ever. The Wolf Runner barbarian tribe accepts Dog Boys as equals. See **Rifts® World Book 13: Lone Star** for more information on Dog Boys and desertion/washout rates.

Coalition Spies & Scouts

The Coalition States have no formal or official presence in the southeast. They see the region as a savage land unsuitable for human habitation. They do send reconnaissance teams into the area to keep an eye on things, as well as teams of scientists/Expeditionary Forces escorted by a squad or company of Coalition Soldiers to study the dinosaurs and, sometimes, to find and retrieve important pre-Rifts artifacts, namely weapons and technology. To that end, a few *CS Spies* have been planted at Char, and at a few other communities, and posing as adventurers or Dinosaur Hunters. That having been said, there are fewer than a dozen spies and seldom more than one or two research teams in Dinosaur Swamp at any given time. There's just not that much the CS needs or want in this "horrid place of savages and monsters." **Note:** The CS knows nothing about the SteelTree Forest, though that may change with Char's increased exploitation of the wood. Nor is the CS concerned about Eco-Wizardry.

Splugorth of Atlantis

Splynncryth has no interest in Dinosaur Swamp except as a resource for capturing and extracting dinosaurs, mutants and barbarians for the gladiatorial arena and resale as slaves. His only concern about the area are the persistent rumors that True Atlanteans may be establishing hidden rebel camps from which to strike at him and Atlantis. Consequently, adventurers should not be surprised if they should run into a squad of Splugorth Slavers, Kittani warriors, Powerlords, or even Conservators, High Lords or the incidental Metztla looking for slaves or True Atlanteans. *Horune Pirates*, who regularly trade with the Splugorth, frequent the region on a much more regular basis, and trade with the locals as well as Atlantis. However, they seldom travel more than 50 to 100 miles (80 to 160 km) inland and don't take many chances even when hunting for slaves.

City of Char

"Our arrival in Char was at first a blessed relief. It was our final goal before entering the wilderness, and we had suffered much just in getting there. Up until this point we had weathered Dimensional Shifting, Coalition patrols, a nasty confrontation with the Necromancer Silus Skinwalker, and any number of natural barriers, including the Appalachian Mountains themselves! Char was our first taste of civilization since leaving the Midwest, and it was also our last chance to re-supply if the rumors were accurate. We had no trouble securing lodgings in what the inhabitants call the Burbs, as our group had too much equipment to stay in the Heart of the city. There were plenty of abandoned structures to choose from, and we finally decided on staying in an old train station. It afforded us plenty of room for the equipment, but was defensible enough should trouble come our way. Luckily, we chose good ground.

Char was not quite what I was expecting. We were attacked by no less than two street gangs, something I thought we had left behind in the cities to the west. Our camp was invaded by a pack of Tiger-Claw Raptors and one of those skin-shifting allosaurs, which to my surprise could mimic a bricked pattern just as easily as woodland foliage. On a positive note, we were treated fairly by most of the merchants, and came away with some excellent purchases both in price and in quality. Javelle, quoting an old vid, likened Char to a 'wretched hive of scum and villainy,' but to me it was just another day traveling the wilderness of the southeast. Instead of trees, there are buildings, and instead of predators threatening you with their teeth, the predators in Char simply smiled with theirs and hungrily eyed your wallet.

When we left Char, I was filled with a sense of relief just to leave. The city felt more primitive than some of the roughest mercenary camps I had seen. We were finally on our own, with nothing but the unknown in front of us. Despite all of my previous adventures, I was still anxious and delighted to be exploring. I knew there were dangers ahead, but nothing had prepared me for sights to come like the Horror Forest and the Time Holes. By the time we had stumbled upon the Jungle Castle, I was looking back fondly on the time we spent resting and re-supplying in Char."

– From Deearn Neenok's book, The Dinosaurian Swamp: Notes from the Field, Circa 87 P.A.

Estimated Population: 8450 permanent residents.

Racial Breakdown:

48% Human (Non-Mutant Barbarians).

25% Mutants/Barbarians.

18% D-Bees.

5% Mutant Animals.

4% Other.

Average Transient Population: 1900, mostly explorers, hunters, Wilderness Scouts and native tribal Barbarians.

Tech Level: Low to non-existent on average, however some individuals range up to High-Tech/Modern and Magic.

Surrounding Communities (100 mile/160 km radius): 2000, and that number may be an exaggeration. Exact numbers are hard to come by, and many are migratory. 65% human, Mutants and Barbarians with low-tech, natural weapons.

Located on the northern edge of the SteelTree Forest, the squalid city known as *Char* rests near the old border between the Carolinas. Before the Cataclysm, Char was once the city of Charlotte, North Carolina. It was a jewel of the south, sporting some of the tallest and most beautiful skyscrapers between Atlanta and Philadelphia. Charlotte was a leading world banking center, second only in financial importance in the American

Empire to New York City. It was the worldwide headquarters of several major banks and lending institutions, and was fast rising to eclipse Atlanta as the most powerful and important city in the south. Because of this level of prosperity, it was one of the first cities to incorporate the new, revolutionary Mega-Damage materials for non-military applications.

Many banks at the time appreciated the psychological confidence that their very companies rested atop the strongest man-made materials ever created, lending further support to their claims of solid investing and planning for the future. Many of these banks and other local companies had been in business for over 200 years, and were continuing to excel in their fields. Some even went as far as to use the new Mega-Damage materials in advertisements, claiming that their buildings and foundations had finally become as strong as their generations of service. It made for a very good sell and their investment in their buildings was indeed good for the future; unfortunately, the future wasn't what it was proclaimed to be.

The Cataclysm all but shattered the rest of the major cities of the Carolinas and throughout the southeast. The Triangle, the Triad, Columbia, Atlanta, all devastated and mostly ruined. Charlotte, by comparison, was spared the brunt of the damage through sheer luck alone, and the good fortune of Mega-Damage materials. With other buildings and skyscrapers collapsing around them, the major buildings of the city survived, if still severely damaged. Their exteriors and structural support members may have been built of nearly indestructible ultra-modern concrete and polymers, but the majority of their interior walls, electrical systems and plumbing were of the more mundane materials, still resulting in massive damage to property and people. Most of those who survived the initial days huddled inside the moderately safe skyscrapers perished later of disease, starvation, suicide, or any number of the host of dangers that the end of the world brings with it.

When the NEMA contingent of Lt. General Sawyer passed through the region, she took the remaining survivors with her. There were a few who refused, holding fast that they could hold their own in the ruins, but those who remained either eventually left the city for the wilderness in order to survive, or perished in the ruins of their shattered jewel of a city. Eventually, nature began to reclaim the countryside. City parks throughout the ruins began to grow, breaching the man-made barriers that had enclosed them. Animals began to nest in the ruins, and soon after, predators began to prowl the land. It was the best-preserved city, such as it was, in the southeast, but it had once again become home to the natural world.

However, this was not to last. Eventually, through word of mouth, Wilderness Scouts, barbarians and explorers began to tell tales of a ruined, burnt out city that still showed signs of habitability. Slowly, people, humans and D-Bees alike, began to gravitate to this ruin. Over time, the center of the city became home to squatters seeking shelter and explorers seeking a place to rest, and for scouts to gather and exchange ideas and goods.

Slowly, through time, Char has begun to develop into quite a large trading post. Not quite a city, but perhaps one day. There are clinics, weapon shops, places to acquire food and shelter, even an Operators' Guild. Each of these individually means little, as any village can have a healer, or repairman, but taken as a whole, Char is in the first stages of coming out of the Dark Ages, and could, in time, become the hub of the region. However, any such future is razor thin, as the city is still fragile and prone to violence, and no one is yet thinking in those terms. It is a market, a layover, and a melding of the wilderness and the barest threads of civilization. It doesn't take much looking to see that there is much more of the wilderness present than there is of civilization.

The Geography of Char. Char is broken up into three distinct sectors, or rings, around the ruins of the downtown center. The outermost ring is known as the Treeline. It is the point where the SteelTree forest begins to dwindle and intermix with native species of plant life. This part of the forest is thin, consisting mostly of small, immature trees. The burgeoning business of trading in SteelTree in Char is partly responsible for this thinning, but the area is also inter-cut with ancient roads, building foundations, and other ruins that prevent the trees from taking a solid hold. Given a few more centuries, these outermost ruins would continue to be consumed by the forest. But as the forest thins, the occasional ruin and rubble pile peaks through the ground, until there are more ruins than trees. These are mostly the remains of the suburbs, but there are occasionally ruined buildings larger than houses to be found. These are typically grocery stores, shops and the occasional shopping mall complex. They have all long since been looted, scavenged, and left to decay. A ruin in the Treeline that has four standing walls, much less a roof, is the exception, not the rule. Because it is the transition zone between the wilds and the city, the Treeline is home to many animalistic predators that have moved from the forest proper to richer hunting ground around Char. These predators, including many of the pack hunting dinosaurs and even supernatural creatures, will often prowl the streets at night looking for unsuspecting prey. It is also not unusual to see them prowling the streets further in toward the city's center.

The middle ring between the center of the city and the Treeline has become known as the Burbs. The use of the word here has little in common with the traditional use of the word in the Coalition States, but it could have been transplanted by a traveler or settler from there. Of course, it could also be a local use of the word that has been held over in the vocabulary. The Burbs is the sector of the city that has held off most of the natural reclamation of the forest around Char, but will be steadily consumed if the forest continues to grow, and the city is left to decay. The streets are still nominally paved in places, although they have seen the wear and tear of over 300 years of neglect and erosion. Some street markings are still visible, but most road signs, signals and light posts have since been scavenged, destroyed or simply rusted away. Most buildings are standing; some still whole, but gutted either by looting, fire or other elements. Many also show signs of battle, some recent, others decades or even centuries in the past. With no one to reclaim and repair them, these structures are testament to the violence that gripped the world in the days after the Cataclysm subsided. The Burbs is a veritable ghost town scarcely populated by anyone on a regular basis except gangs of City Rats, squatters and animal predators. Occasionally, a bandit group will hole up in a part of the ruins, using them as a headquarters, a place to hide, and often as a place to conduct business with associates. Adventurers in the region have been known to use the Burbs of Char as a place to rest and recover, although staying in this part of the city can be risky. There is the constant threat of being harassed by bandits, predators or even squatters looking for trouble.

The inner ring of the city is known as the Heart, and is in the shadow of the surviving buildings in the downtown district of the city. A veritable forest of ruined skyscrapers, it is also home to many of the citizens of Char. At the center of the Heart is the market, a sort of neutral ground where trade goes on between residents and outsiders just passing through. There is no formal law and order, it is very much a place where might makes right. Territory, whether that is a block of streets, a single building, or even a single room, belongs to whomever can hold it, and turf warfare is a daily menace, even in the tight confines of some of the remaining skyscrapers.

Life in Char

It is important to understand that Char is not exactly a city in the strictest sense. Nor is it a town, village or any sort of cooperative community in any fashion. There is no organized police force, nor is there any form of organized government. It is a collection of people who have come to live in close proximity to one another, and aside from any larger outside threat that may band them together, Char is ruled by personal protection alone. It is just as much survival of the fittest within the limits of Char as it is in the wilderness outside.

Because there is no organized rule, and no real sense of community, there are no services to speak of. Widespread running water and sewage removal is unheard of. Sickness and disease can run rampant among those without means to provide for themselves. Altruism is an all too alien word among the greater population. Because there are no laws, much less anyone to enforce them, disputes are often handled directly by the interested parties. There is no one to claim grievances to, no court of justice, only the occasional traveling Cyber-Knight or other crusader who will find their beliefs on justice are cold comfort to people who have lived a lifetime of survival for its own sake. To some, dispute resolution can be done over a bottle of whiskey and a conversation, while others resort to violence. While not exactly the Code of the West, many of the same principles apply.

Unfortunately for those simply trying to eke out an existence, they are often caught up in one aspect of civilization that seems to thrive in these conditions; turf wars. Living in the shadows of ruined civilization, Char has a significant number of City Rats roaming its streets and alleys. These frontier-town gangs often battle it out with one another for their own pieces of the city in bloody and indiscriminate wars. Some of these wars have been fought over stretches of ruins with no significant value other than that one side or another desires them. It is a display of power and territory, sometimes shaking the very foundation of the city. The very name of Char has as much to do with destruction caused by the worst of the gang wars as the destruction visited on the city by the Cataclysm. But, such is life in Char, and business does go on.

Despite the blatant lack of civilized laws in Char, there is one universally agreed upon mandate that has kept the mercantile downtown reasonably safe from widespread gang war and other plays of power. In the summer of 63 P.A., the Headstone Pact was agreed upon by the powers that be in Char at that time. Since then, aside from a few exceptions, it has been strictly abided by. Signed in a cemetery in the northern part of the Heart, those in attendance agreed that open violence would not be tolerated among the central square of Trade Street. Everyone has a vested interest in the continued success of the shops, because without them, no one would survive, and they would be forced to live in the wilds. As much as survival is a part of live in Char, despite its significant lack of community services, it is indeed more comfortable than life in the wilds.

The Headstone Pact does not prevent occasional battles among the merchants of Char. Political machinations still occur, with small scale, often silent wars erupting. With everyone looking out for their individual best interests, such conflicts are inevitable. Everything from the Operators' Guild squashing an outsider, to raw material conflicts between Body-Chop-Shops, to even inns competing over a large group of travelers that has come into the region. It isn't uncommon for a group of explorers to find themselves at the center of a conflict between merchants. In a region where trade and raw materials are not easy to come by, such conflicts are just another example of the laws of the wild supplanting the laws of civilization.

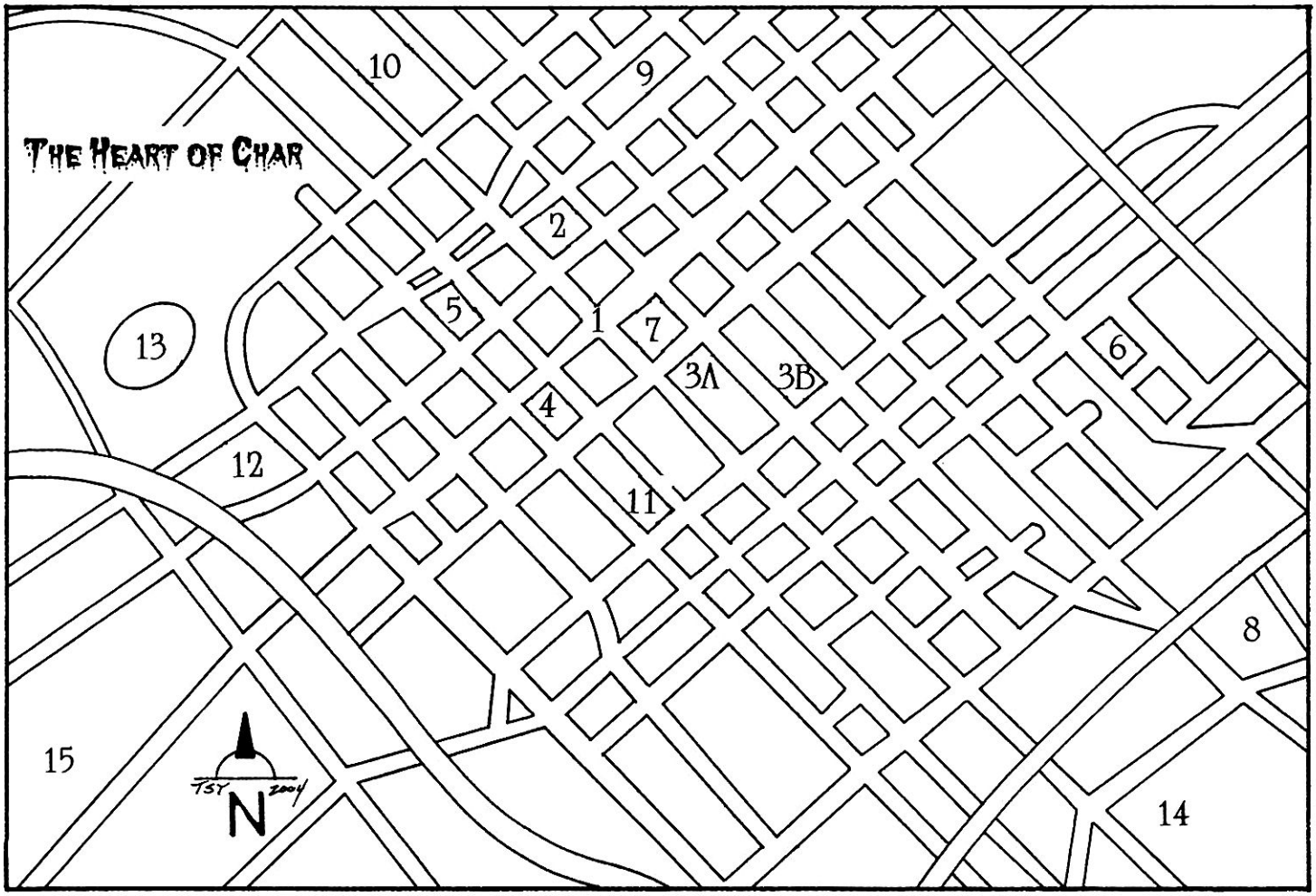
Notable Places in Char

Char is home to a diverse population of individuals, but it is first and foremost a large-scale trading post. It is the last bastion of civilization before entering the wilds of Dinosaur Swamp. It is where most explorer parties set out from, it is where the survivors return to, and it is the largest stockpile of raw materials in the region (much of it scavenged and salvaged from all across the southeast). Characters looking to stock up on E-Clips, ammunition, food, equipment and other supplies should do so here, as much of it is going to be rare, or impossible to find anywhere else in Dinosaur Swamp.

The average quality of goods is fair to good, with the occasional excellent/new piece of equipment turning up. There are no authorized dealerships for any of the major weapons manufacturers, although some rudimentary trade routes are starting to be established. The region is simply too undeveloped and underpopulated for the likes of Northern Gun, Wilk's, or any of the other large companies to set up shop. Most like-new equipment has been traded by an adventurer passing by, was stolen from them, or was scavenged off of their corpse. Almost everything for sale at the market of Char has a story of its own, and rarely is it fresh out of the box. As mentioned, cybernetics and robot parts are most often second hand at best, and inquires as to where such items came from are better left unasked.

Weapons and technology are not the only items for sale in the market at Char. Livestock, including the everyday hogs, sheep, pack animals, and the occasional cow are available, but the more exotic forms of life are for sale as well. Dinosaurs, however, are not often available as they are not seen as pets or desirable, and can't be domesticated. There are also several inns, but they are little more than flophouses with varying levels of class and security. Char is, in short, part flea market, part scrap yard, part truck stop and part trading post all rolled into one truly "bizarre bazaar."

1) Roma's: The only constant piece of real estate in the Heart is a place known as Roma's, although there are numerous small businesses offering services in the ruins around it. Once an open-air park owned by a large banking corporation before the Cataclysm, the plaza now belongs to Roma, a cyclopean



D-Bee of unknown origin. Roma's is a restaurant and watering hole. Covered by a huge canvas roof, like a circus tent without the walls, Roma's is the hub of Char, but only one of many establishments in the Heart. Anyone new to the region wishing to know how to find it is given the tongue in cheek answer that "all roads lead to Roma's." Located at the intersection of two of the largest and best-preserved roads in the city, this is a literal truth. It is a gathering place to exchange information, find entertainment, stay the night, quench a thirst or fill a belly; just don't look too closely at what's being served. Dangerous, sometimes rough, and home to the best and worst that Rifts Earth has to offer, it can be both exciting and frightening to belly up to the bar.

Situated in what was once a large, two-tier pedestrian square, it has a lower sunken level with a fountain, and an upper level where there used to be benches and other seating places. Despite being a semi-permanent establishment, Roma's is just as much of a slum as the streets surrounding it. The large canvas roof is held up by salvaged railroad ties driven into the brick paved plaza, and anchored by steel cables tied to stakes in the ground. The roof itself is a patchwork of various types of material, not just canvas, including clothes, blankets, sheets, and in some places what look like tanned skins. Skins of what is an entirely different matter altogether. There is no security to speak of, and in the winter, large barrels filled with burning trash are stationed outside, away from the flammable roof. Roma's is open 24 hours a day, so there is a small, often repaired and jury-rigged solar generator that powers the floodlights that provide illumination during the night, and the few electrical devices at the bar and grill. Most of the food that is prepared is done over an open flame, although there is an operational electric grill as well.

The bar and cooking surfaces are situated inside the old public fountain at the center of the plaza, one of the few remaining structures capable of actually producing running water. Granted, the water is clouded with dirt and other particulate matter, and is likely polluted, but it is still running water, and can be purified by the staff at the bar at the customer's request. The menu doesn't offer a lot of variety in terms of names, with things such as Meat Plate, Plant Stew, and Chance Encounter as the most common items available. Exactly what the Meat is can vary daily, but it is always fresh, and the Plant can mean anything from herbs to tree bark, and no one ever asks what, or who exactly, is taking the chance in the Chance Encounter plate. However, it is food, and the largest local place to get food that characters haven't had to kill and prepare for themselves.

Roma's does carry a wide selection of drinks, ranging from purified water to stronger spirits. Roma brews most of it herself, but some of the more common alcoholic drinks found in the Coalition territories do show up through trade. The house brew is known as "the Eye of the Hurricane," or often just "the Eye," and is a powerful ale brewed from the mash of an alien plant. It is quite strong going down, but pleasant tasting afterwards. Prices for items on the menu can vary, but most plates of food are a scant 5 credits per person, and drinks run anywhere from a credit a glass to as much as 20 credits a glass for the rare imports. Hard currency or applicable trade is accepted, but Universal Credits aren't worth the card they're stored on.

Roma's isn't just the literal center of town, it is also the center of information. Everyone comes through Roma's, whether they are locals or outsiders, and it is the best place for news both local and foreign. It is often a meeting place among Wilderness Scouts and those looking to hire local guides to take them into Dinosaur Swamp. It is also a sort of neutral ground among many of the gangs who come here to talk, threaten, or just blow off some steam. Roma has toyed with the idea of making it a more permanent structure, possibly even using SteelTree timbers, but for the moment is too busy running things to put more than thought into it.

At any given time, there are at least ten employees on staff, with a total number of about 50, making Roma the second largest employer in the market at Char. Most of her employees are humans, but there are also a significant number of mutants from the local barbarian populations. These are most likely outcasts, banished from their tribes, or even the occasional escaped slave. Roma seems to have a soft spot for these exiles, leading some to believe that she was either an exile from her own people, or even an escaped slave herself.

Roma Coqu: Roma is somewhat of a mystery among the inhabitants of Char. She was one of the original merchants to agree to the Headstone Pact, and had already been in business for as long as anyone could remember even then. No one currently living in Char can remember exactly when she opened her place, just that it has always been in the plaza. She has employed a lot of people in her time, and none of them ever learned anything about Roma other than she is a stickler for hard work. She rules her establishment with an iron fist, and does not put up with much nonsense. Whenever a fight breaks out, she is usually the first one in the thick of it to break it up. Roma cares little for who started it; just that she has finished it.

Physically, Roma is quite imposing, though her exact species is anyone's guess. She never talks about her past, where she is from, or even anything about her people. The one fact that everyone can agree on is that she is unique. Whatever her story is, she isn't telling.

Body Chop Shops

Perhaps the only places to receive and repair bionic and cybernetic implants in Dinosaur Swamp are the Body-Chop-Shops of Char. The exact number can fluctuate from time to time, with the average being three to four in business at any one time. Often times, a Cyber-Doc will travel to the region with a limited stockpile of goods, open up shop, sell what he has on hand, and then make the journey back across the Appalachians in order to acquire more products. As more and more undertake this kind of operation, word of Char will spread, and possibly bring in more outside merchants and travelers.

Currently, there are three operating Body-Chop-Shops within the downtown Heart of Char. One of them is a transitory outsider, while the other two are permanent shops. The permanent shops deal almost exclusively in the infamous "second hand" types of cyberware, while the transitory shop is still relatively new, and has only recently started to supplement his stockpiles with salvage of a very specific nature. These three shops are developing a fierce spirit of competition with one another, and it is not unusual for a client of one to be assaulted by hired toughs, or even known employees, of the others.

2) Lukias Cybernetics: Lukias is a Dwarven Cyber-Doc with incredibly deft hands and a mind for miniaturization. He first came to Char a decade ago, an escaped slave from Atlantis. He claims that in his home, some dimension now far removed, he was a jeweler of great renown. Captured and sold into slavery by a rival clan, he ended up in the slave market at Splynn, and was fortunate to have been bought for his skills, and not as a meal. As a slave, he was taught how to repair and augment cybernetics, something for which his previous life as a jeweler made him uniquely suited. Consequently, Lukias specializes in the science of delicate and fragile cybernetic enhancements such as eyes, ears and sensory implants. It is important to note that he does not deal in Bio-Systems, only artificial cybernetic enhancements. He is a master craftsman when it comes to repairing and installing them, and has even made significant improvements from time to time. Of particular note are his upgraded Multi-Optic Eyes. Lukias' modified multi-optics systems operate with an increased range and magnification power of 33% above standard specifications. His skill as a surgeon is equally impressive, with an almost intuitive understanding of how to incorporate mechanical constructs with living flesh.

His shop is located on Trade Street inside what was once, appropriately, a jewelry store. Prices are generally high, however, as materials are often in short supply. Most of his materials are, as usual, acquired from less than specific sources, but he does guarantee any work that he does. Not only are his works technologically impressive, they are also very pleasing aesthetically. He is as much an artist as he is an artisan, making beauty and function equally important. He has a high sense of pride in his craftsmanship, and has developed a good reputation by word of mouth. However, his reputation allows him to charge what he is worth, and he usually charges 50% more than the list price for any particular item. For example, a pair of his Multi-Optics Eyes cost 82,500 for one and 150,000 credits for the pair. Lukias also deals in jewelry and stones, preferring to be paid in that manner over most other forms of trade. Like the rest of the city, Universal Credit Cards are not accepted. He likes to incorporate jewels and precious metals into his work whenever possible, and a pair of eyes with amethyst crystals for irises, or a cyber-jack with gold trim is almost always going to be his work. Lukias is always looking to purchase spare parts, jewelry, precious metals and stones, and usually doesn't question their origin. With his education in Atlantis, the conditions in Char, and the isolation of the wilderness, Lukias has come to appreciate looking out for himself. He pays at least half of market value for working cybernetics, but only one-fifth market value for damaged pieces. One thing that he does not particularly like, but accepts, is "returned" merchandise. Because of his craftsmanship, he instantly knows his own work when it is brought back to him for resale by scavengers or Cyber-Snatchers.

3a and 3b) Pieces & Parts Augmentation: P&P, as it is known around Char, is a veritable scrap yard of cybernetics and bionics run by the twin Pierce brothers, Earl and Harley. It is the oldest and the largest of the Chop-Shops in Char, having been first opened by their father, Benjamin Pierce, over 30 years ago. The brothers both apprenticed under their father as Cyber-Docs, and continued the family business after he passed on during a plague outbreak a few years ago. Their shop actually fills two different buildings, with one being their storehouse and the

other being their actual operating facilities. Earl is more of the businessman, meeting with potential customers and suppliers, while Harley does the surgical procedures, what they call "product implantation." They are really more of a general practitioner in terms of services, offering everything from small-scale implants to full bionic conversions. Prices can vary dramatically and are based on an individual assessment depending on how many parts a customer actually brings in for implantation, and how many have to be purchased from them directly. P&P also buys scrap bionics, usually paying up to 10% of the market cost for damaged salvage, and one-third market value for bionics and cybernetics in good condition.

Because they are the oldest of the Chop-Shops, their facilities are some of the most advanced in the city, such as they are. The operating facilities were originally a restaurant of some sort, and actually have running water supplied by a cistern that collects rainwater on the roof. Their surgical facilities are clean, if not spotless, but pale in comparison to Lukias' level of sterilization. The Pierce brothers are quite jealous of Lukias, and constantly try and find ways of undermining him. They know they will never reach his level of craftsmanship, or take away any of his business, but nonetheless, they still despise him for it. In the past, they have hired individuals and small groups of City Rats to cause trouble for him, but most of the gangs know that Lukias is too valuable a commodity that they have their own uses for to permanently do him any harm. In the meantime, Pieces & Parts Augmentation continues to do the majority of bionics and cybernetics business in Char.

Temporary Body-Chop-Shops

Buyer beware are the watchwords among the temporary Chop-Shops. They usually set up shop just long enough to sell their current stock of merchandise, and then they uproot, making the journey back to the relative civilization of the 'Burbs of the Coalition States. Very few of them come out of a desire other than money, although some have recently come to experiment, seeking a place with ample subjects and away from the watching eyes of competition and others with sensitive moral objections. They rarely trade in used cyberware, but exceptions are made if the materials are in superb condition, or of unusual or rare construction. There's always the rumor of advanced robotics and bionics being salvaged from the depths of Dinosaur Swamp, and since nearly everyone passes through Char going in and out of the southern wilderness, it's the best place to see if these rumors are true.

4) Skullbald's Prosthetics: Skullbald is a recent addition to the market at Char, having set up shop only three months ago. Specializing in mechanical limbs, he is perhaps the person most directly in competition with the Pierce brothers of Pieces & Parts. He has a wide range of supplies, including bionic limbs and integral weapon systems, and even has state of the art capacity for growing and implanting Bio-System organic replacements. Every item in his inventory is brand new, almost literally out-of-the-box, so to speak, most of which have Coalition markings and identification serial numbers. Skullbald will happily remove any and all markings prior to installation for no extra charge. All of his surgical equipment looks to be Coalition military surplus, mostly new, although close inspection shows that they do have some general wear and tear. If pressed about how he came into possession of such a large amount of surplus, he responds with a casual "it fell off a truck" as his answer. Most people believe that he's either a Coalition infiltrator, or well connected with the Black Market. Some believe a little of both.

Because he deals in new merchandise, on the surface, he is not interested in purchasing salvage. However, he will let it be known, if asked, that he is interested in any Coalition salvage, whether it is bionics, cybernetics, robotics or even personal weapons and armor. He pays extremely well for such items, up to half of market value, and unlike everyone else, he does take Universal Credit Cards. Because he deals in most forms of Coalition equipment, he will occasionally have a few pieces for sale from time to time, but only small items like pistols, rifles, and spare parts, never larger items like power armor or robots.

Skullbald has recently taken to hiring locals interested in traveling to the west to accompany certain packages of his, and to return with other goods from his Black Market contacts in the Coalition States. He hopes that he can set up a permanent shop here in Char, and these initial courier trips will help him decide if it's worth it or to just sell his inventory and come back sometime next year.

Clinics

Sickness and disease probably claim more lives on Rifts Earth than all of the other hazards combined. Without proper treatment, such mundane things as animal bites, combat injuries, and even simple accidents can become fatal. Combine that with the particulars of the diseases that flourish in the forests and swamps of the region further south and the peoples of Char and the rest of Dinosaur Swamp face even worse conditions than those found in the squalor of the Chi-town 'Burbs. In the wilderness, life and death are most often determined by how well someone can administer aid to themselves, but at least in Char there are a few established clinics to provide aid and comfort. They aren't much, but they are better than nothing.

Char has seen several clinics open and close in the past decade. Most Body-Fixers who come to the region are simply overwhelmed by the conditions, and a few even die after being exposed to new and alien diseases by infected patients. Despite all of their medications and knowledge, there are some things that the best of physicians cannot guard against.

There are currently two clinics set up in Char, and they are by far the best of the bunch so far. One is a true humanitarian operation, while the other is run by a physician escaping his past, but who isn't seeking to atone for it. Instead, he is trying to find a way to recapture it, and return to his former glory.

5) The Greater Heart Clinic: Established by a local family, the Greater Heart Clinic, or GHC, is owned and staffed by the Ventrosas. A family of physicians with a tradition of healing they claim extends to before the Cataclysm, their ancestors were wandering staples of the east coast until they settled down in Char 30 years ago. Experienced with treating the wounds and illnesses of a variety of species, whether treating D-Bees or patients native to Earth, they are clearly the best-equipped, and most well rounded physicians in the region.

They have a well-stocked pharmacy, and have the capacity to manufacture most types of drugs. Most of their medicines are

processed from native sources, but they can manufacture more modern synthetics, at a much higher price because of the rarity of the materials. They keep a limited supply of Juicer medications in stock when they can get them, but their purchase always comes with a stern recommendation against using them.

The Ventrosas will treat anyone seeking aid, but expect to be paid in some way for their services. They are humanitarians, but have been hardened by generations of their family living in the wilderness. They accept trade or services, with several of their staff actually working off their bills as former patients. They have even apprenticed several teenagers to them who would have otherwise died of disease when they were young children, or accepted them as a form of indentured servants for treating other members of their families. Make no mistake; they are not treated as slaves, but as valued employees and often members of the family. Several wives and husbands of Ventrosa children were first former patients paying off their bills. Average cost of treatment ranges from a few credits for simple bandaging of a wound, to hundreds of thousands of credits for complex treatments. Such high costs are rare, but can accumulate, especially if treating a group of outside adventurers with rare and expensive drugs to fight off disease.

6) Stamm Med-Center: Whereas most Coalition deserters who come to the region try to conceal their past in an effort to put it behind them, Captain Jonathan Stamm is quite proud of his service in the Coalition States military. He will count off his numerous commendations on the slightest whim, will tell stories from his postings deep within the vampire infested Rio Grande region, and proudly proclaims that he didn't desert the Coalition, the Coalition deserted him. The son of citizens, Stamm enlisted in the military as soon as he was old enough, serving in border outposts throughout the Coalition States. Wounded in action, he studied medicine while he was at home recuperating, and finally rejoined the military where he was further educated as a field surgeon. Again, he was stationed at border outposts where he finally became chief medical officer of a unit near the Xiticix controlled lands of Minnesota. While there, he was disgraced by trumped-up charges brought on by a younger officer who wanted to move up through the ranks. Despite all evidence pointing to his innocence, the young officer's family was highly connected, and Captain Stamm was dishonorably discharged from the military. Stripped of his rank, pension and citizenship, in his disgrace, he had nowhere to go. The only place he could practice medicine was in the filth of the 'Burbs, and he had too much self-respect for that. Relying on his military experience in the borderlands, he traveled east until he came across Char.

As someone used to living in the semi-autonomous borderland outposts, and having mingled with, and even given medical treatment to, non-humans and the less fortunate before, he found an environment that he was quite comfortable in. He could sell his services as a physician to make a living, and perhaps collect valuable data on the region that he could use to get himself back into the good graces of the Coalition military. He does not want to rejoin in order to serve; he wants to rejoin so that he can exact his revenge on the officers who wronged him. If tending to the ills of non-human monsters will allow him to even the score, then that's a price he's willing to pay.

Stamm Meds is a one-man operation, as he hasn't found anyone that he trusts enough to hire on as an assistant. His prices are reasonable, and he takes only trade. This can be in the form of material goods, or in information about the region and the inhabitants. Many Wilderness Scouts in need of medical attention and supplies frequent Stamm's clinic because they always know something of value. He is actually on good terms with the Ventrosa family, and they usually refer most of the severe combat injuries and emergency trauma to him. He is gaining a very positive reputation among the inhabitants, although many are still wary because of the stories they have heard about the Coalition States. His bedside manner is a bit rough when it comes to non-humans, but he does treat their wounds as well as he would a human, so he is at least respected in that regard. Interestingly, he and Skullbald have become very fast and close friends.

Inns

A safe place to stay is one of the rarest of things in Dinosaur Swamp. Out in the wilds, a good night's sleep can be interrupted by any number of encounters, the weather may suddenly turn bad, and a reliable watch must always be set. Every sound is possible danger, and getting to sleep is one of the hardest tasks that an adventurer must accomplish. Staying asleep, knowing the dangers, is even harder still. Even with every precaution taken, sleeping outdoors is always taking a chance with one's life. As with everything, Char is safer, in some ways, than the wilderness around, and there are a few reliable places where adventurers can find a good night's sleep.

Sleeping in the outer sectors is often done out of the need for secrecy or privacy, but the Treeline and Burbs are no safer than sleeping out in the open forest. Predators roam the abandoned streets, some even nest in the buildings. It can be quite a surprise to find that the building next to the adventuring group's campsite is home to a ferocious pack of dinosaurs or some unnamed supernatural horror. Wild creatures aside, bandits, City Rats and others are always a danger, and some of the collapsed and ruined buildings can serve as death traps for anyone caught in them, prepared or not.

In the downtown Heart of Char there are two reasonably respected inns, such as they are, where outsiders passing through can find a safe place to rest before continuing on their journey. The Wayside is not the only boardinghouse/inn near the center of the city, but it is arguably the safest. Night's Rest is another inn, but is in a class of businesses that are known to be affiliated with, or even operated by, gangs of City Rats. In these "Ratholes," as they are called, all sorts of services can be found, ranging from dealing in stolen goods, drugs, prostitution and other activities typically classified as illegal. Sometimes adventurers and explorer parties actively seek out such places of business, while other times they just end up with the bad luck of picking the wrong place, and don't discover their mistake until it's too late.

7) Wayside Inn: Built atop the foundation of what actually was a hotel during pre-Rifts times, Wayside Inn is a 3-story, L-shaped building with a total of 25 rooms. At maximum capacity, the inn can comfortably house 60 people, but up to twice that number can be crammed in together. It hosts an open first floor complete with offices and a small conference room that is available for renting, a very small restaurant that serves questionable food, and of all things, a barbershop; the only one in town. Owned and staffed by the Meyers family, they are com-

mitted to ensuring the safety and comfort of their guests. The sheets are usually clean, and the level of sanitation is better than average for Char, although they do not have running water, and are dependent on retrieving it from a well they have dug outside.

Helping to ensure security, they have hired on a trio of retired Headhunters to patrol the building and keep the peace. They are the law under the roof of the inn, and anyone questioning their authority is asked nicely only once, after that they are forcibly removed from the premises. Arino (5th level), Kold (7th level) and Toole (6th level) may be retired, but they are still a force to be reckoned with. Experience has taught them that a show of force is sometimes all that is required, and they go out of their way to make it known that they are on guard, and ready to put a stop to any trouble. Most of the City Rats know to leave people staying at Wayside alone, at least until they are no longer on the property.

Prices are standard, 20 credits per person, per night and checkout is 11am the next day. Food from the restaurant is 8 credits a plate, but a better bet is to eat at Roma's. One thing Wayside isn't known for is the cooking. They have a laundry service, charging 5 credits per load, guaranteeing a 24 hour turn-around on all items dropped off by noon. Afternoon loads will be ready by 5pm the next day. A visit to the barbershop, operated by the grandfather of the family, Floyd, costs 10 credits, but the cost can go up for trims to customers like Dog Boys and other furry/hairier than human characters.

8) Night's Rest Inn: Less of an inn and more of a place for all things dark, Night's Rest is located as far from the downtown Heart as possible, while still being considered part of it. Owned and operated by the Concrete Vipers Gang, and located inside a ruined art museum, space at Night's Rest is purchased by the square foot, not by the room. All of the large open galleries are available for a place to sleep, but you have to share the floor with everyone else paying for space. It may be a room filled with strangers, but in a strange sense of City Rat logic, the more people there are around, the less likely it is that someone will be assaulted, robbed, or worse. While not true all of the time, it is still relatively safe to stay there. Most of the clientele aren't necessarily looking for a safe place to sleep anyway, they are usually more interested in the business deals they can cut, or the contacts that they can make.

There is no dedicated security, although many Concrete Vipers live in and loiter around the building, and they ensure nothing goes on without their knowledge and approval. Anyone caught going against them, or breaking the laws of their turf, will find themselves on the wrong end of a gang beating at best, a barrage of laser pistols at worst. The Concrete Vipers like to keep a strong hold on order at Night's Rest because it is more profitable for them to do so. Consequently, the place is starting to get a reputation for safety, provided potential guests can handle themselves among the other occupants.

The price for staying at Night's Rest can vary from time to time, but the average price for a human-sized space of floor runs 5 credits/night. There are no other amenities to speak of, and certainly nothing like at Wayside, but Night's Rest offers opportunity and contacts with people that Wayside doesn't.

Average Concrete Vipers Member Quickstats: Alignment: Anarchist. **Attributes:** I.Q. 10, M.E. 8, M.A. 10, P.S. 14, P.P. 8, P.E. 9, P.B. 12, Spd 20. **Disposition:** Cocky and boisterous, they are fiercely territorial. They are also always on the lookout to make some fast credits, and rarely turn down a business opportunity. **Description:** Typically dressed in grays and black, the colors of the streets and buildings around them. Their gang colors take the form of a red belt with a polished black buckle in the shape of a snake's head. **Experience Level:** 3rd level City Rat. **Skills of Note:** Hand to Hand: Basic, Streetwise 48%, Find Contraband, Weapons and Cybernetics 49%, W.P. Energy Pistol.

Livestock

Domesticated animals are something of a luxury in Dinosaur Swamp, even among the barbarian tribes. Livestock offer many benefits, but require a significant amount of investment in time and resources for them to be profitable. It isn't enough to simply pen an animal in and feed and water them from time to time. Their natural tendencies must be understood and accounted for. If they are comfortable in their surroundings, even if confined in domestic captivity, they will be healthier, and a much better resource than if they are treated haphazardly. Most tribes, and adventuring groups for that matter, use domesticated animals for labor and not for food. Food and other materials, such as horn, bone and leather, are acquired from hunting animals, not raising them. However, for a population the size of Char, and for the community to maintain the fragile cohesion that it does have, a renewable population of livestock is essential. They must be fed, sheltered, cared for and protected, and that's where the investment lies. The profits they yield are in food and raw materials for the markets and individual citizens. This isn't something that has been undertaken by a large number of people, and a barbarian from one of the eastern tribes has established a monopoly on the trade.

9) Bearcat's Stable: A lone refugee from a brutal series of tribal wars fought years ago to the east, his tribe scattered, Bearcat has found himself in a very profitable position simply by taking care of animals. As a Psi-Stalker he has a natural affinity for domesticated animals, and has capitalized on this talent when most others of his kind concentrate on their more predatory instincts. He still feels the call of the hunt, and has predatory urges that he must satisfy from time to time, but on most days he is content to tend to his animals, and sell them to locals and adventuring groups passing through. Make no mistake, Bearcat sees his herds and flocks as a resource. He doesn't attach any solid emotional ties to them, and he is not what some would call an animal lover. They are a commodity to him, and he trades them just as a weapons merchant would trade away a rifle.

He first started with small animals that he captured in the wilds, chickens, ducks and other birds, very small dinosaurs, and the occasional goat or sheep. He began to collect a breeding population of these animals, and as their populations grew, so did his profits. Eventually, his operation grew to the substantial size that it is today, and he began investing in his own success. He would trade for raw materials to construct larger pens, seeds, and other materials needed to grow feed for his diverse animal stocks. Some at first questioned why he wouldn't just sell the grain and other plants that he was growing, but when fresh meat, even in limited quantities, that didn't have to be hunted began to

enter into the diet of Char, all doubts ceased. If someone could afford to buy it, they did.

It is important to note that a large part of Char's success, as it is measured, over the past two decades has been due in large part to the easy availability of food provided by Bearcat's Stable. It isn't much, but it is enough to have made a significant difference. This has not been lost on the local City Rats and bandits that frequent the region. Whoever controls the livestock can, in theory, control part of the local population. It returns to the idea that food is power, and Bearcat has had to fight off the occasional attempt to take his business, burn his animal fodder, or even kill him.

While not educated in the traditional sense of the word, Bearcat has become, through experience, experimentation, hard work and a good bit of luck, the preeminent local wildlife expert. He is also the single largest employer of labor in Char. If someone can't pay their tab at Roma's, or doesn't have anything for trade, they are usually sent to Bearcat to make a few credits by using their backs. He deals mostly in either meat or milk producing animals, but does break the occasional riding animal or beast of burden. Prices can vary wildly depending on how many of a particular animal he has at any given time, and the single largest customer is Roma's, usually taking weekly shipments of various meats.

Birds: Geese: 100 Credits each. Provide meat, eggs, down feathers, and fat for cooking oils, soaps, and lotions.

Chickens: 75 Credits each. Provide meat and eggs.

Ducks: 65 Credits each. Provide meat, eggs, fat, and limited down feathers.

Mammals: Rabbit: 15 Credits each. Provide meat, pelts and an excellent source of fertilizer.

Sheep: 300 Credits each. Provide meat, milk, pelts, leather, wool, lanolin, a good source of fertilizer and occasional beasts of burden.

Goats: 250 Credits each. Provide meat, superior nutrient quality milk, leather, and occasional beasts of burden.

Pigs: 500 Credits each. Provide meat, an abundance of fats, hides, and intelligent enough to be beasts of burden or even guard animals.

Miniature Cattle: 1000 Credits each. Provide meat, milk, leather, hides, horn, bone and beasts of burden.

Beasts of Burden: Horses: 900 Credits each. Transportation and draft animals.

Mules: 750 Credits each. Transportation and draft animals, but eat less food and have less health problems than horses.

Companions & Pets: Dogs: 100 Credits each. Provide meat, excellent guard animals, sturdy companions, pack mentality.

Cats: 40 Credits each. Provide meat, rodent control, and companionship, independent minded.

Dinosaurs: Bearcat does not make it a policy to deal with dinosaurs much larger than 50 lbs (22.5 kg). They just aren't worth the risk.

Scampers: 300 Credits each. Provide meat, eggs, excellent source of leather, but dangerous and hard to control.

Others: Dinosaur eggs: Depending on the exact breed, anywhere from 1000–2000 credits.

Unusual or unique creatures: Varies, anything from snakes and other reptiles, to the occasional creature from the Rifts. Game Masters should use their imaginations, but Bearcat does not intentionally keep intelligent, sentient creatures as livestock.

Weapon Dealers

Next to food, weapons are perhaps the most sought after commodity in the southeast. Sometimes, weapons are more valuable than food, as with a weapon, food can then be more readily attained. The problem with weapons in Char is not necessarily in their availability. There are enough older weapons circulating to arm a significant part of the population, but when they break and need repair, sometimes there is no easy way of fixing them. With energy weapons, where does one get the necessary materials to create E-Clips, which are really nothing more than fancy batteries? If the focusing lens on a laser rifle becomes cracked or scratched beyond repair, salvage may be the only hope for a replacement. This becomes an even greater problem when dealing with the rare exotic weapons like those built by Triax or even the occasional Kittani weapon from Atlantis. So, even with an abundance of older weapons on the market, there is always going to be a demand for new weapons. Whether to replace a broken one, or simply for the prestige of carrying the latest model Wilk's, or Coalition surplus, someone has to try and bring in both spare parts and new weapons from wherever they can acquire them. That's where Chamberland and Viggo come in. Chamberland carries a general supply of modern weapons and armor, with many North American manufacturers represented, while Viggo specializes in propellant driven slug-throwers and other, mostly S.D.C. weaponry. He is also the sole known source that actually produces both cased and caseless ammunition in the region.

10) Chamberland's Arms and Armor: At first glance, the frail old man Chamberland does not look like the type to deal in arms and armor. That is a fact that he is quite proud of. He claims to have come to the region years ago with an expeditionary party, and decided in his old age that he wanted to retire here, and go into business for himself. Whether this is true or not, he has picked the right trade to go into, and apparently has numerous contacts and resources beyond most native inhabitants. What is known is that he maintains an extensive number of contacts to the west, and can guarantee reasonably reliable shipments of weapons and other parts with roughly 60% of his shipments actually arriving. Many believe that he is laying the groundwork now for an expansion of trade and communication with the lands to the west. Through his efforts, the first steps toward taming the wilderness may be under way. Chamberland is beginning to see Skullbald as an obstacle and possible competition, and has begun taking steps to curtail Skullbald's success with his couriers.

Chamberland's Arms and Armor is a partially restored department store just on the outskirts of the Heart. He has invested quite a bit of money into the building, going so far as to include a solar generator for lights, E-Clip recharging, and a modest security system. Aside from Roma's, his store is the most high-tech and advanced structure for hundreds of miles. Inside his guarded double doors are a wide variety of arms, armor and small repair facilities. He keeps three assistants on staff, mostly

for customer support and handling the orders for repairs. Chamberland himself deals with all of the business practices, but doesn't actually do any of the repairs, product demonstrating or other handling of the merchandise. He leaves that to his employees, but knows enough that he can spot poor workmanship upon inspection. He is honest out of necessity, as a gun merchant who sells a defective product usually ends up on the wrong end of it once it's been fixed.

Chamberland does not carry items that are for display. He sells what he has on hand. If you don't see it, he doesn't have it. It is important to note that he doesn't deal in robotics, bionics or other mechanized products. He deals only in personal weaponry, body armor, and other equipment and supplies. Common brands of items available include most weapons produced by Northern Gun, Wellington Industries and Wilk's, with a few crates of Coalition items from time to time. Triax weapons are less common, although boxes intended for the Coalition military or other large buyers have shown up on his shelves. Every so often, something exotic will come through, like Kittani, Horune, or even Phase World weapons, but they are usually damaged novelties. Body armor runs the same, with the basic Black Market types like the Huntsman and Gladiator common, but with surplus Dead Boy suits not unheard of, and everything else on a novelty basis. Basically, to help guide individual Game Masters, if a weapon or suit of armor is in the **Rifts® RPG** book, it will most likely be found at Chamberland's. Anything else is up to the Game Master, with other North American manufacturers being within reason, but anything more than one or two exotic types of weapons is going to be extremely out of the ordinary.

Chamberland also purchases scrap and salvage, as is typical of most shops in Char. He pays as little as he can get away with, and will do his best to cheat the seller if he can. As to his prices for new merchandise, he prefers to gouge the customer as much as possible. He may sell honest, working, reliable weapons, but the customer is going to pay for them. Prices are usually at least twice, sometimes three times, the going market price, and he rarely haggles down to 50% over market price. At 50% over market price he is barely making a profit, so he almost never settles for a deal that cheap. He prefers to deal in trade and services but can accept Universal Credits for purchases no greater than 50,000 credits. He has enough dealings in territory to the west that credits aren't entirely useless, as long as they aren't in large amounts.

11) Viggo's Firearms: Viggo has become known as an "Old World" craftsman, although the classical definition of the phrase is mostly lost on the inhabitants of Char. Born and raised in Char, as were his parents, he is one of the few locals with actual ancestral claims to the city going back several generations. He was given the title because he specializes in propellant driven S.D.C. weapons, the most common form of weaponry left over from the "old world" before the Cataclysm. In Dinosaur Swamp, the value of S.D.C. weapons has not been lost when it comes to hunting for food. Because subsistence living is so prominent in the region, a good .30 caliber rifle may mean the difference between survival and starvation. Viggo's Firearms fills a very important niche in the lives of the people who come to trade for goods at Char.

Viggo is also a craftsman in the most literal sense of the word. Every single weapon that he sells is either hand crafted in his workshop out of local materials, or restored salvage using only the finest replacement parts that he can obtain. His custom gun barrels are made of recycled scrap metal, his gun stocks are made of seasoned lumber, and nothing leaves his shop without passing through his capable hands. Mass production of weapons is not in his vocabulary, however the science of bullet making is by necessity mass-production and usually left to his three youngest apprentices.

Viggo's shop has a small stock of firearms available for immediate purchase, usually produced by his two oldest apprentices. These are typically bolt-action hunting rifles, pistols, and restored assault rifles. Prices are good for these ready-made weapons; typically starting at about 700 credits for pistols, 1000 credits for hunting rifles and 2000 credits for restored assault rifles. Ammunition runs typically 30 credits for a box of 50 pistol cartridges, 75 credits for a box of 50 hunting cartridges and 60 credits for a box of 100 assault rifle cartridges. He produces the assault rifle cartridges in such a significant volume that they have much less production cost per round than the other types. However, Viggo is not known for his restored and ready-made weapons, although their quality is spectacular. It is his specialty orders that make Viggo a known craftsman, and not just another arms merchant.

Hands down, a Viggo custom bolt-action rifle is the most accurate and reliable firearm in Dinosaur Swamp. Wilderness Scouts, particularly Game Hunters, love them. Much like the Hawkins muzzleloader of the early American Frontier, a Viggo rifle is becoming the hallmark of wilderness explorers. In addition to his bolt-action rifles, Viggo also produces custom handguns and shotguns, but they are not nearly as popular as his rifles. **Note:** See the **Weapons** section for more information on Viggo's custom firearms.

Unlike most merchants in Char, Viggo does not purchase random scrap and salvage, only recovered weapons that he thinks can be restored, or individual parts from weapons that are good only for their scrap value. He painstakingly scours the piles at Scraptown Salvage for suitable materials to build his weapons from, with only the best metals making the grade to be forged anew in his smithy. He and Chamberland have maintained an easy truce between themselves, as neither actually takes business from the other. Chamberland deals mostly in large volume heavy weaponry, while Viggo deals in small-scale custom work. They have even referred customers to one another on several occasions, but understand that should one begin to move in on the territory of the other, it could turn into a brutal merchant war.

Jeremiah Viggo Quickstats: Alignment: Unprincipled. **Attributes:** I.Q. 14, M.E. 10, M.A. 11, P.S. 15, P.P. 13, P.E. 12, P.B. 9, Spd 12. **Disposition:** Patient and deliberate, Viggo is very soft spoken despite his wild appearance. **Description:** A well-tanned, trim man with the leathery skin of someone who has worked for most of his life. He has a bushy black beard and a wild mane of jet-black hair that he keeps tucked under a leather skullcap when working. **Experience Level:** Technically a 7th level Operator, but really a weapons expert at the expense of other skills. **Skills of Note:** Weapons Engineer: 96%, Demolitions: 96%, Recognize Weapon Quality: 80%.

The Operators' Guild

One of the many advantages that Char has above other parts of the region is that it has the unique institute known as the Operators' Guild. Unlike the traveling Operators of the Domain of Man, the Operators in Char have organized themselves into a formalized society. Where there are the occasional Operators living in one village or another, or those who are more nomadic in their job, Char has a functioning group of Operators within the city limits. They are an important part of the city, enabling the community to maintain the standards of living that it has, making the difference between civilization and barbarism. Thanks to the Operators' Guild, Roma's is able to run lights and provide purified water upon request. The various Chop-Shops and clinics are also able to operate with their current level of service because there are several men and women available to keep a solar generator working, or rewire a room to provide overhead lighting. It is the ability to effect such simple and mundane tasks that makes the Operators' Guild much appreciated, and allows Char to function in the way that it does.

12) The Guild Temple: Located on the southeastern side of town, near the border of the Heart and the Burbs, is the Guild Temple. Outside, it is a large stone-faced structure that has obviously seen much reconstruction since it was originally a three-story bank before the Cataclysm. Inside, as the stories told by non-Operators go, it is an ultra-modern building complete with electricity, running hot and cold water, central heating and air-conditioning, and all the modern conveniences that the city once had before the Cataclysm. Whether this is true or not is a matter of some debate.

The front façade is faced with various stone blocks taken from ruined buildings from all around Char. It is a mosaic of different colors and types of stone, with each block having various arcane looking symbols etched onto it. Some of the symbols look like stylized hand tools, while others are forms of numbers and mathematical equations, while others still are almost incomprehensible combinations of some unknown alphabet. To an Operator, these are all symbols of their brotherhood, while to anyone else, they are gibberish. A non-Operator character may recognize some of the symbols through skills such as Basic Mathematics, and may consequently try to pass themselves off as an Operator. The problem then becomes that while they may recognize the symbols, they lack the necessary context in which the Operators know and use them, and thus shouldn't try to impersonate one of the Brotherhood. Punishment for such transgressions can range from a branding that denies service from other Operators, to extremes such as a beating, robbery or death. The Operators' Guild at Char is very protective of their secrets. It is the means of their survival and they do not suffer impostors lightly.

As a rule, the Operators in Char do not deny service to anyone who can pay, but they are forbidden from doing charity work by the rules of the Guild. They will accept trade in the form of salvage, weapons, equipment or precious metals and jewels, or manual servitude as payment for services rendered. They prefer to deal in trade goods, as they are always in search of raw materials from which to craft new equipment or manufacture replacement parts for existing equipment. The traded goods must be fair and of true value since the work performed will be of the highest quality. Anyone caught cheating an Operator will be punished by being branded with the mark that denies them the services of other Operators.

Because they are organized, they do not look favorably on traveling Operators working outside of the Guild in Char. When they hear that another Operator has come to town and is offering services, they will investigate the newcomer, and after verifying his credentials, politely extend an offer to join, even if on a temporary basis while in town. This usually means a donation of 30% of all profits to the Guild, but also allows for the benefits of being part of the greater community of the Guild. Anyone who refuses to join is then politely asked to leave town by sunrise on the next day. If they have not left, then the Guild takes a stronger hand against them, usually forcibly escorting them to the edge of town. The Guild doesn't like to resort to violence against a fellow Operator and will go to extreme measures not to harm them, or their tools, but will not be so kind to repeat offenders. The Guild is also quite obsessed with maintaining their position as the superior manufacturers of technology. They move to keep others, such as Techno-Wizards and other potential competitors, at a serious disadvantage.

Exact numbers are not known, but the Guild is reputed to have at least 40 members and twice that number of apprentices. At least half are usually traveling the region searching for salvage and lost technology, while the others are working in and around Char. Most of their time is spent on manufacturing replacement parts for vehicles and equipment. It isn't enough to know how to repair something; they also must have something to repair it with.

The current head of the Guild is a middle-aged Operator named Father Nicholas. He is the only member to have the honorific title of Father, the rest are known equally as Brothers and Sisters. He is only the second member to hold the title, with the founder of the Guild holding it until his death. Father Nicholas has since served as head of the Guild for 10 years, and has been slowly moving toward his more ambitious goals. Under his guidance, the Guild has taken on some of its strictest principles, denying services, and at times, hoarding salvaged technology. Char could be a much better place if the collected knowledge of the Operators' Guild was not held as tightly as it is. There is a small group of Operators within the Guild led by a woman named Sister Elizabeth who realize this, and are becoming aware of Father Nicholas' power hungry ambition, and want to see the Guild become a more open and altruistic society in the future. They are beginning to work from within to see this come to pass, and are trying to take on apprentices with a similar mindset. It may be a small start, but it is a start.

13) Scraptown Salvage: Owned and staffed by the Operators' Guild, Scraptown Salvage is located in the old sports stadium only a couple of blocks away from the Guild Temple. The largest structure still standing in the city, it is now an open-air scrap yard accessible to the public. It is primarily stocked with salvage that none of the specialty shops in the Heart of the city wanted to purchase or trade, so it was instead sold or traded to the Operators' Guild. Everything from large robot vehicle chassis to lengths of copper pipe and everything in between is available for sale, provided the buyer can find it. The inventory is arranged roughly by material components. Iron in one corner, copper in another, plastics near the center, stone and concrete to

the north, knickknacks in the service corridors, old tires in the parking lot, etc. If it might be worth something, it's assured to be found at Scraptown Salvage.

Managed by Lamont, an escaped CS mutant goat, he keeps a keen eye on who comes to browse the merchandise. Lamont was trained as a field mechanic by the Coalition to be sent into hostile territory to recover important vehicle components. He was treated quite horribly by his superiors, and finally made a break for freedom with the help of a pack of deserting Dog Boys. His training gained him the special respect of members of the Operators' Guild and he was allowed membership. It is important to note that Lamont is the only Brother who did not serve an apprenticeship under another Operator, and does not belong to the actual Operator class. He is treated as an equal and a Brother, but does not know all of the secrets of the Guild, and would not be accepted as an equal by other Operators outside of Char.

Beauty and worth is in the eye of the beholder, so prices for materials can vary wildly. If Lamont knows that a certain adventuring group needs a knee actuator for one of their robot suits, he's sure to be able to dig one up, but it will cost twice what he charged someone yesterday that was just looking to purchase the gear housing. The same goes for buying scrap and other salvage. If Lamont knows for sure that he may have a buyer for something, he'll pay as little as possible for it, but turn around and sell it for three times the average Black Market cost. He has gained an enormous amount of favor in Father Nicholas' eyes for his shrewd business practices, almost doubling the amount of material wealth that the Guild had just 5 years ago.

Because Scraptown is owned by the Operators' Guild, its members have complete and free access to any of the materials contained within. They can pick and choose from them at will for their own personal projects, but are expected to charge customers fair value for any pieces used in contracted repair jobs. This is one of the more enticing reasons for traveling Operators to join the Guild, even if only on a temporary basis. Sister Elizabeth and her small group of altruists have begun to take advantage of this open door policy of the Guild, taking parts for repair jobs, but not charging the customer for the parts, only the labor. This will most likely catch up with her at some point, and will be the first major shake-up of the Guild since its founding. The Guild is built on a principle of internal trust. Once that is found to be broken, it will have serious consequences on the Operators' Guild of Char. Provided that Elizabeth and her cohorts keep things small scale, that day is likely to be in the distant future.

Magic, SteelTree & TW Shops

Purchasing magic items in Char is something of a gamble. Native practitioners of magic will come through from time to time peddling charms, trinkets and weapons dependent on their own particular form of magic. These are very much buyer beware items for outsiders. Most locals stay away from sacrificial magic. For now, barbarian magic is still something of a novelty, not readily available in Char. That could change with time, and one of the City Rat gangs is becoming enthralled with it uses, so it could see a definite rise in the city in the near future.

Techno-Wizardry thrives in certain circles, and there is currently a monopoly on the trade in Char. Paradigm's shop concentrates mostly on survival gear that caters mainly to explorer groups and the few Wilderness Scouts that can use the equipment. Her Techno-Wizardry shop is completely overshadowed by the Operators' Guild. A strict and sometimes vicious rivalry has developed, with the Operators' Guild clearly on the winning side. She has already had to move her shop twice thanks to repeated firebombings by unknown assailants.

SteelTree forged weapons and materials, because of their special properties, are most often considered to be magical items, and Stump's shop gets grouped in with Paradigm and the transitory shamans. SteelTree is, unlike barbarian magic and some Techno-Wizardry, very dependable, and is developing a reputation for being a stout investment. They are made from a plentiful resource, and do not require any special skills or talents to make use of them, only to create them. Many of the local tribes and Wilderness Scouts love the material, and explorers are beginning to catch on.

14) Paradigm's Techno-Wizardry: Paradigm is an outcast from the Federation of Magic. She keeps her crimes to herself, but clearly has no love for Dunscon and the schemes of power that permeate the Federation. Her current shop is not in the Heart of the city; fears of another fire have forced her to take residence on the eastern border of the Burbs and the Heart in what was most probably a daycare facility. It is octagonal, with a large central room surrounded by a series of rooms like spokes on a wheel. She maintains several workshops in these rooms, and finds that this building has been her favorite so far.

Because of the Operators' Guild overshadowing her, she has not had much success in selling TW generators or even converted batteries, much less wholesale TW refits of machinery. They have managed to establish a complete monopoly on such items, even going as far as waging a miniature propaganda war against her. They have no problem with her selling Techno-Wizard devices that do not compete with them, but when there is a direct threat to any of their services, they take swift action against her, and sometimes her customers. This has led to many people avoiding her services entirely, although most outsiders aren't immediately aware of this merchant war, and they provide Paradigm with 80% of her business.

The one area where she excels in her trade is in the construction of TW survival gear. Everything from flares, to translators, shelters, breathing apparatus and even food and water items, Paradigm's is one-stop shopping for any and all magical survival equipment. Her prices are high, but since she's the only shop in town, most adventurers who desire her equipment are willing to pay the price. It is the one market that the Operators' Guild can't match, and most Techno-Wizards are just passing through, so she isn't facing much competition. Paradigm can construct most "public domain" TW devices, and keeps a few general items on hand for sale such as TW rifles, batteries, communications bands, etc. She does take special orders, but isn't guaranteed to have the necessary components immediately at hand and such orders can take weeks or months to complete.

15) Stump's SteelTree Forge and Wares: The first of its kind, Char is home to the only establishment dedicated to the manufacture and merchandising of SteelTree items. Stump is a barbarian blacksmith and carpenter who was driven out of his native lands far to the south during a short and brutal attack on his village by Splugorth Slavers. After coming to Char two

years ago, he realized that his skills with manipulating SteelTree were unique, and he began to trade small items for food and shelter. As word spread about his skills, he soon had enough capital to establish a small forge and carpentry shop in the Heart of the city on Trade Street.

In his tribe, skill with working SteelTree was a highly guarded secret known only to the Hammer, the ceremonial name for the smith who could forge metals strengthened over SteelTree coals, and his chosen apprentice. Since establishing his shop, Stump has taken on four apprentices. He has instructed some of them in the mundane art of smithing and carpentry, but they are used mostly for harvesting SteelTree from the forest for use in the shop.

The Operators' Guild has shown increasing interest in Stump now that he is starting to become successful. Before, he was just a novelty, but now they see him as a potential threat. The Guild has purchased several worked pieces for analysis, and members have been seen harvesting lumber of their own, but they have yet to be able to duplicate the process. They are of course capable of using the lumber for everyday uses as a building material, but want to unlock the secret of the coals for themselves.

As a practice, Stump's apprentices handle all of the routine construction of things such as bowls, pans, furniture and other everyday items. His oldest apprentice is allowed to craft a few weapons from time to time, but only under strict supervision. The apprentices also deal with most customers when it comes to selling everyday items. Stump, however, deals with customers wishing to purchase SteelTree forged weapons and other metal equipment. Ever since the Operators' Guild has shown such interest in it, he goes out of his way to charge outrageous prices to known members and anyone they hire to buy materials for them. Stump considers it a playful game, but considering the way the Guild has treated Paradigm, he knows that it could turn quite serious any day.

He is always happy to take a special order, and makes decent turn-around time on them, usually no more than a few days for simple items, but suits of armor can take a couple of weeks. Because he is getting more and more special orders in recent months, he has considered taking on a few more apprentices and possibly beginning his oldest two on their Masterpieces by teaching them how to use the SteelTree coals. He knows that they will likely leave him and open their own shops. It isn't that he is worried about competition from his apprentices, he is mostly worried about who they might eventually teach his secrets to. He knows it is inevitable, but still isn't prepared for that day to come.

Other Influences in the City

Mutant Animal Population: Of the total population of Char, nearly 400 of them are mutant animals. Not counting the D-Bees, the mutant animals are the single largest minority population in the city. They typically congregate into species specific clusters in the city, mostly living out near the Treeline. Of the mutant animal population, runaway and feral Dog Boys make up the majority. This is no surprise since the Coalition produces them in such vast numbers. Many of the deserters and runaways find themselves roaming the eastern wilderness, and eventually end up in Char. With their instinctive pack mentality, the Dog Boys have gathered into several groups and have laid claim to several blocks of the outlying ruins. They have no real desire to move further into the city, preferring to live on the border with the wilderness. There are the occasional outcasts that do live in the Heart of the city, but they are usually the maladjusted, injured or crippled that the pack has cast out, and live at the mercy of the inner city. They sometimes hire themselves out as guides, or even join gangs of City Rats. There is a small gang of outcast Dog Boys that roam the city, but their numbers are usually small thanks to constant infighting.

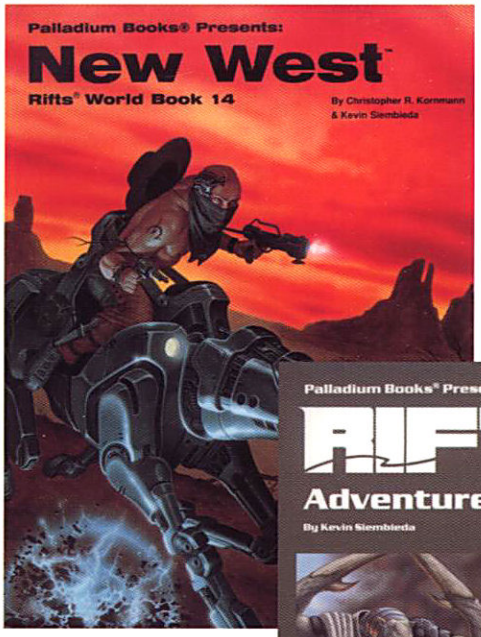
Other Coalition experiments that have escaped to live in Char are the occasional solitary Kill Cats and Mutant Bears, but they usually keep to themselves, living in the forest around the city and not the city ruins itself. The most notable mutant animal in town is the goat Lamont who runs Scraptown Salvage, but there are unconfirmed reports that a family of escaped Coalition Monkey Boys has recently joined the Operators' Guild. Interestingly enough, both Skullbald and Captain Stamm have been seen frequenting Scraptown Salvage lately, independently of course, and have been asking some rather indirect questions at Roma's concerning the rumor.

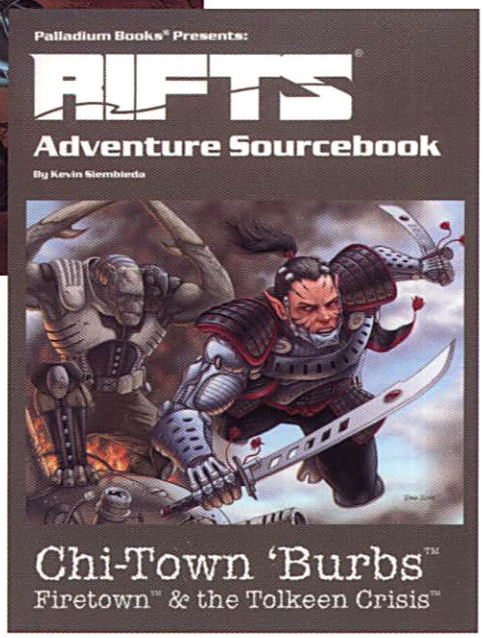
Local Bandits

The region around Char is known for its vast expanse of wilderness, but there are several tribal villages and homesteaders that live within 100 miles (160 km). Because of this, there are always going to be groups who instead of working for their survival, will prey on others and simply take what they want. Banditry is a fact of life on Rifts Earth, and it can take the form of villages attacking other villages, or even small nomadic groups that have staked out a territory of their own, passing through every so often demanding tribute. These groups may be locals or even adventuring and explorer parties who have decided to stay, taking advantage of whomever they can rather than continue further on into the wilderness. In the lawlessness of the region, who's to stop them?

The Concrete Vipers: The dominant gang in Char is the Concrete Vipers. They have a power base strong enough to maintain the Night's Rest and several other Rat Holes near the Heart of the city. They have a virtual monopoly in extortion and real estate, shaking down squatters in the Heart and the Burbs, and deal heavily in stolen merchandise. One of the oldest gangs and one of the most organized, they have held onto power for several years in spite of the fact that they have a notorious turnover rate for leaders. They are highly sophisticated, preferring to recruit new members who show real intelligence and cunning on the streets, valuing brains over brawn. This is not to say that they don't induct the occasional bruiser or two into their ranks, as they still respect muscle, but they don't like to rely on it entirely.

The Night's Rest is their most visible property, but they maintain their gang headquarters near Roma's on Trade Street. They are the only gang to do so, reflecting their status and power. No one has dared to confront them openly there, as even the City Rats mostly respect the Headstone Pact, but the Concrete Vipers have kept the other gangs from setting up any permanent positions in the center of the city through a series of silent hits on important figures. This has made them the most powerful, but also the most hated, and most targeted gang in the city.





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