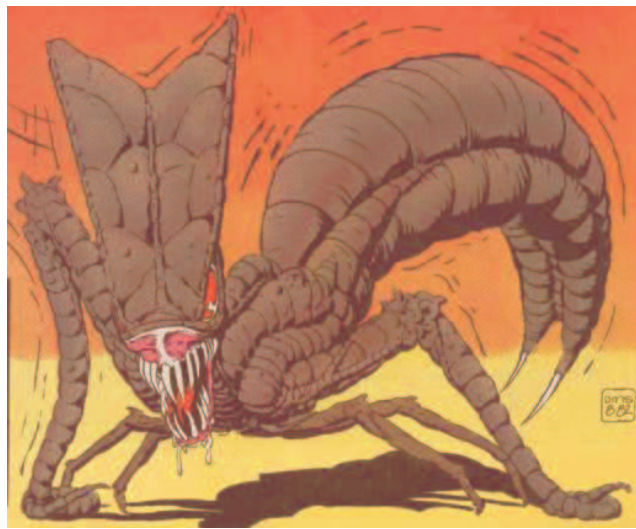# BUGHUNTERS

By Zamiel Al'Shaitan

"We're Space Marines. Some call us "bughunters", others call us "exterminators", but it isn't derogatory, no, quite the opposite. We're the best of the best. When there's an exomorph breakout on a colony, planet, or god forbid, on a ship, we're the ones they call. You see, flesh is cheap, 'tech is expensive. As long as we have a high lethality and low collateral damage, we stay alive and employed."

- Col. Mann, 314th Armored Marine Division (Deceased)

::GENRE INFORMATION::

This is a serious-toned genre for Risus: The Anything RPG by S. John Ross. The players take on the roles of Space Marines, who have the job of exterminating highly advanced, highly dangerous insectoid life, both on a ravaged Earth, as well as space colonies. The inspiration for this setting comes from a number of places, including the Alien* movies, Starship Troopers, my previous work on a BUGHUNTERS sourcebook for the RIFTS/Palladium system (never released) and a healthy dose of my own hatred for all things bug-like. This game will most likely have a rather high lethality rate, making Risus the perfect system - if a character dies, another character is only 2 minutes away.

I would like to thank Stacy Allston (again) for the "Property damage" section, which I borrowed and adapted from his "Risus Supers" supplement.

So strap on your combat armor, grab your plasma thrower, and go cook some bugs, Soldier!

::THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT::

The year is 2144, and the world is in ruin. Giant megacorporations have abused the planetary resources until life on Earth is near impossible. Large glass-domed cities populated by the wealthy and powerful trap air as well as keep out the toxic fumes of this now-barren wasteland.

Giant factories, hundreds of miles long, and sometimes miles high belch toxic gasses into the already doomed atmosphere, mutating the life that once flourished across the face of the planet. Strange, alien creatures have crawled from the slime pits and toxic runoff, heartier than anything seen before on the planet.

And so humanity reached out to the stars to find a new home. Beginning with the orbital colonies, man reached further and further into the blackness of space, encountering little trouble, other than their own fears.

Finally, what appeared to be a perfect home was found, great ships were built, and man colonized their first planet - but they were not alone. Giant insectoid life was soon encountered, and it was hostile. Standing 2 to 3 meters tall, they stormed into the colonies by foot and by wing, killing everything in their path. That's where you come in...

You are a Space Marine, trained and equipped by the New Earth Government to defend the colonies, destroy the bugs, and reclaim whatever remains.

::CHARACTER CREATION::

Characters are created as stated in the Risus: the Anything RPG handbook. 10 cliche dice, no more than 4 dice in a starting cliche. A character may as usual, gain an extra cliche die for taking a hook, and another for a suitable tale. No funky dice are used.

It is recommended, though not required that all PC's take the "Space Marine" cliche. Space Marines are the most likely to be in the field, however exobiologists, mechanics, and other non-combat personnel can easily be integrated.

::COMMON CLICHE::

Cliche common to this genre will be mostly military skills, other cliche may be taken (as usual) this is intended only as a helpful guide.

APC / Tank Driver
Driving APC's, using the weapons on said APC's, driving tanks, other large, relatively slow land-based craft.

Combat Engineer
Jury-rigging / building / replacing equipment from items found (or carried to) the field. Demolishing things found in the field. Hoping things you've jury-rigged work twice (without blowing up).

Communications Expert
Using scramblers, laser communications, figuring out and using alien / unfamiliar signaling technology, learning (very quickly) and speaking in strange languages.

Demolition Expert
Blowing things up. A specialist in the use of plastic explosives, fusion blocks, cutting lasers, and other tools of the trade.

Exobiologist
Poking around inside/around dead things, making hypothesis about the nature of said dead things. Attempting to find weak spots in living versions of said dead things.

Gunner
Specializing in firing the weapons onboard a vehicle. A gunner is required to fire the auxiliary weapons on drop ships, APC's and other such mobile combat machines.

Heavy Weapons Specialist
Includes using rocket launchers, plasma throwers, plasma cannons, railguns, and heavy machine guns.

Mechanic
Fixing the APC's, dropships, and other equipment 'the team' wrecks on a mission. Your best work is done in a garage, or at least when there aren't people shooting at you or bugs trying to eat your face off - you're not as quick as the Combat Engineer, but your repairs LAST.

Medic
Includes bandaging wounds, preventing blood loss, tourniqueting stumps from lost limbs, keeping Space Marines alive. The medic is everyone's best friend.

Pilot
Flying anything with wings, rockets, or any other means of aeronautical or space flight . Not getting your ass shot off while doing so. Firing weapons attached to said flying vehicle.

Sniper
Killing things at great distances with 1 shot.

Space Marine
Includes shooting things, marching, running, taking orders, getting shot and not dying off too quick, disobeying orders. Space Marines are trained in all manner of small arms, from the standard laser sidearm pistol, to the fully automatic pulse laser rifle, as well as the use of grenades.

::COMMON HOOKS::

Hooks common to this genre will be mostly mild psychological, or possibly physical limitations (due to war). All Space Marines are given mental evaluations regularly (to protect the mission) so the likelihood of a raving lunatic making it into, or staying in the Corps is unlikely.

Claustrophobia
The fear of enclosed spaces. Though this is most likely only a mild case, that can be overcome by willpower - most of the time.

Combat Psychosis
A character with combat psychosis may lose touch with reality in a combat situation. They can become incredibly unstable, possibly firing on friends and allies, or simply not acknowledging the combat at all. These characters rarely make it onto a second mission, either due to death, or post-mission evaluations.

Entomophobia
Entomophobia is the fear of insects. This not an uncommon fear, and can even be quite healthy in a Space Marine, as long as the urge is to destroy the bugs, rather than freeze...

Lost Limb(s)
This is a character that has lost one or more limbs due (most likely) to combat. They may or may not have bionic replacements, however feeling is not present in the limb.

Mania
Those suffering from mania ("Manics") are in a constant state of euphoria. They are constantly moving, talking, and in general unable to sit or stand still. Even in dire or solemn situations, they often cannot keep themselves from fidgeting, snickering, and otherwise being a nuisance.

::COMMON EQUIPMENT::

Though the "tools of the trade" are assumed to be carried, it is recommended to record the equipment carried on the character record sheet. Weapons are listed either as a cliche dice value, or as a bonus die value to the appropriate cliche.

Combat Armor
Combat armor is handled separate of the character, and must be breached before the character inside can be harmed. The first combat round the character loses, their armor is breached, but they are unhurt (assuming they are in a livable environment). Heavy combat armor is identical to combat armor, except it is bulkier, and as such imposes a -1 penalty to cliche rolls involving manual dexterity (including combat).
Combat Armor(1)
Heavy Combat Armor(2)

Communications Patch with Emergency Beacon
This is a cloth patch that is affixed to the combat armor, and contains a radio transmitter as well as a distress signal beacon. 2-way radio communication is provided, as well as a locator whenever the beacon is active.

Cutting Laser
This is a small, handheld laser wand, capable of cutting through the strongest of materials given enough time. It can be used as a weapon, but has a meager range of 1 foot, and is unwieldy as a weapon (-1 to cliche rolls to hit).
Cutting Laser(5)

Fusion Block
A fusion block is a large, unwieldy explosive package, roughly the size of a brick. They are used by placing them (often in groups) against a structure, or a hole drilled into a structure and then remote detonating. A fusion block cannot be effectively thrown as a weapon, it must be shaped and planted.
Fusion Block(6)

Grenades

Grenades used by the Space Marines come in 4 varieties, Smoke, High Explosive, Plasma, and Nuclear. Smoke grenades of various colors are used to obscure sight, mark landing zones, or signaling. High Explosive grenades are used for anti-personnel, plasma grenades are anti-vehicle weapons, and nuclear are anti-structure.

High Explosive Grenade(3), blast radius 5m.
Plasma Grenade(4), blast radius 10m.
Nuclear Grenade(5), blast radius 15m.

Heavy Machine Gun

This is a standard .50BMG. Though it is not as technologically advanced as some of the other weapons, it is a reliable and tested weapon. The Heavy Machine Gun has an amazing effective range of 2000 meters, and 200 shots to the chain.

Heavy Machine Gun(+0)

Jump Pack

This is a type of light jetpack that allows the character to jump approximately 20 meters in one bound, or a short-term flight. The nuclear power supply contained within it is sufficient for 100 leaps, or 2 minutes of continuous flight. All Space Marines are trained in the use of jump packs, as well as pilots.

Laser Pistol

This is the standard sidearm issued to anyone assigned to a Space Marine unit. It is relatively short-ranged (50 meters) and has 20 shots to the clip. Standard issue is 3 clips per weapon.

Laser Pistol (+0)

MedKit

A MedKit contains mundane items such as bandages, antiseptics and analgesics, as well as skin-knitters, dermal spray, and short-term advanced life support nanites. This is the minimum needed for a Medic to keep a critically injured team member alive, or to heal minor injuries.

Plasma Cannon
The plasma cannon is a large, bazooka-sized weapon that fires a ball of coherent plasma. Relatively short ranged for such a large weapon (100 meters) it causes immense damage to whatever it impacts. The plasma cannon gets 10 shots to a drum, 2 drums standard.
Plasma Cannon(+2)

Plasma Thrower
This heavy weapon is much like the 20th century flame-thrower, except it shoots a superheated jet of plasma. Two tanks of water are carried on the back, from which the hydrogen necessary is extracted via electrical current. A plasma thrower may be used to "sweep" a horde of incoming enemies, damaging them all, however it is NOT recommended for use in tight areas, as backflow can occur. The plasma thrower has a range of 15 meters and gets 20 shots to a tank, 2 tanks standard.
Plasma Thrower(+1)

Portable Tool Kit
For in-field repairs of equipment, it contains a cutting laser (see above) various wrenches, hammers, screwdrivers, soldering laser, diagnostic equipment, etc. This is the minimum needed for a combat engineer or a mechanic to perform their job effectively.

Pulse Laser Rifle
This is the most commonly encountered battlefield weapon. It is a rather large rifle, complete with computer targeting and tracking scope. It fires a rapid pulse laser, much like a standard machine gun fires bullets. Range is an impressive 500 meters, and payload is 30 shots per long clip. Standard issue is 2 long clips per weapon.
Pulse Laser Rifle(+1)

Railgun
The electromagnetic railgun (also commonly called a "boom gun") uses a series of powerful electromagnets to propel a shell at great velocities towards a target. The gun itself is approximately 2 meters long. Range is 500 meters with 50 shots to a cyclic clip. 2 clips are standard issue.
Railgun(+1)

Rocket Launcher

The rocket launcher is essentially a light rocket such as those carried on dropships, mounted inside a portable housing. It is a one-shot weapon, however it is highly accurate, has a long range, and a high damage potential. New Earth Government frowns upon the use of these except in dire situations, due to the amount of collateral damage they cause. Range 5 kilometers.
Rocket Launcher(6), blast radius 10m.

Sniping Laser

This is a high-energy pinpoint laser generator with a computer-compensated aiming recticle, thermal imaging, probable movement overlay, and a whole suite of other optical enhancements and targeting aides. The sniping laser has a range of 3000 meters.
Sniping Laser(+1)

::VEHICLES::

The vehicles in use by the Space Marines are the most technologically advanced ever created by the New Earth Government. Cutting edge composite armor is capable of withstanding tremendous abuse without so much as a dent, and their weapons are of much greater magnitude than those carried by personnel.

For game statistics, treat vehicles as separate characters. They have their own cliche and abilities. When conflict rolls for driving or gunning skills arise, use the driver/gunner's cliche scores, but all damage is done to the vehicle. If a vehicle is reduced to 0 cliche dice, it has become inoperable. Depending on the amount of damage, it may be repaired by as little as a combat engineer and a portable tool kit, but if damage is severe it may require a mechanic and a base station (or worse, be a total loss). Vehicles, being of larger scale and tougher materials, do not operate under the 6 dice cliche limitation.

APC (Armored Personnel Carrier)
The APC is the standard infantry-mover of the N.E.G. (New Earth Government). It has 6 large, solid wheels capable of crawling over the roughest of terrain, and is equipped with a heavy pulse cannon turret. The APC can carry a squad of 12 men in full combat armor and gear, or 24 in a very cramped fashion. A separate gunner is required to operate the turret.
Armored Personnel Carrier(6)
Heavy Pulse Laser Turret(+3) - Range 4000m, payload unlimited.

Attack Fighter
This is a VTOL-capable transatmospheric one-man fighter used for scouting a possible "hot zone" as well as for close air support and bombing runs. They are fast, nimble and in the right pilot's hands, quite deadly.
Attack Fighter(4)
Pulse Laser(+1)
Missile/Bomb Rack(+3) - Range [5km / NA], Payload [4 / 12].

Dropship

Dropships are used to land APC's and armored Space Marines. A single drop ship can carry 2 APC's/HAV's or 4 LAV's as well as 2 dozen additional Space Marines in full armor and gear. Dropships are equipped with 2 heavy pulse cannon batteries, as well as a tactical rocket launcher with 12 missiles. One gunner is required for each weapon system.

Dropship (12)
2x Heavy Pulse Laser Battery(+3) - Range 4000m, payload unlimited.
Tactical Rocket Launcher(6) - Range 5km, payload 12.

HAV (Heavy Assault Vehicle)

Nearly as large as an APC, the HAV is a four-man tank (driver and 3 gunners) with room for an additional 2 Space Marines on external platforms. This is a tracked vehicle, made to power through obstacles, rather than over. It carries the same laser batteries as the dropship, as well as a heavy electromagnetic railgun turret. Be warned, the personnel on the 2 external platforms are NOT protected by the vehicle's hull.

Heavy Assault Vehicle(8)
2x Heavy Pulse Laser Battery(+3) - Range 4000m, payload unlimited.
Heavy Electromagnetic Railgun(+2) - Range 1000m, payload 100.

LAV (Light Assault Vehicle)

This is a one-man tank, the driver operates the weapons system. It is a wheeled vehicle, but the tires are of the same synthetic material as the APC, making them highly resilient.

Light Assault Vehicle(5)
Heavy Electromagnetic Railgun(+2) - Range 1000m, payload 100.

Shuttle

The shuttle is a lightly armed and armored transport vessel capable of vertical take-off and landing. They are used to transport people and goods to supposed "safe zones". It is not intended as a combat vehicle, but a cargo/personnel vessel.

Shuttle(3)
Light Laser Battery(+0)

Space Freighter*

These are large vessels used for inter-system travel. They are fully autonomous cities, they synthesize their own foods, maintain their own artificial gravities, and carry hundreds of thousands of people, both combat and noncombat personnel. A typical freighter holds 1000 Dropships, as many as 2000 APC's, LAV's and HAV's, 250 Shuttles, and 500 Attack Fighters.

Space Freighter(100)

50x Heavy Pulse Laser Batteries(+3) - Range 4000m, payload unlimited.

25x Tactical Rocket Launcher(6) - Range 5km, payload 12.

"*Planet Killer*" *Antiplanetary bomb(50)* - Range 10,000km, Payload 2.

* These are not intended for PC usage ;-)

::PROPERTY DAMAGE::

Making a contest roll by a good margin implies the possibility of property damage. If the contest involved forces that can knock down a wall (such as fighting, exploding, using fusion blocks on jammed soda machines), use the leftover points to contest the materials of something nearby.

For instance, a Space Marine takes on a Soldier Bug. The Space Marine(4) fires his Pulse Laser Rifle(+1) and comes up a 20; the Soldier Bug only counters with a 7, leaving 13 leftover points. This 13 applies to an attack on nearby materials, such as bunkers, roads, walls, etc.

The GM creates such items on the spot. Some typical values might include:

- A laser-mining drill   (15 points)
- A nearby APC.   (40 points)
- A solar collector   (10 points)
- A space colony wall   (20 points)
- A tri-ethane refining station   (25 points)

Also consider that the values given in Risus for throwing things (tanks, motorcycles, etcetera) can serve as useful figures for smashing those same objects up really well.

Remember - "Flesh is Cheap, 'Tech is Expensive." - destroy too much valuable property and you may find yourself without a job, or even worse - on a "bug planet" without a ride home.

::THE "BUGS"::

The "bugs" commonly referred to by Space Marines are more appropriately known as "exomorphs" by the exobiologists and those that have never seen one up close. The most common types of bugs are listed here, though many more are likely (especially when the PC's grow too comfortable with them <g>). Bugs are capable of surviving in the vacuum of space, as they apparently do not need to breathe, however their only known means of reaching space is via transport bug or hitchhiking on a N.E.G. vessel..

Artillery Bug
Description: Artillery bugs are large (APC-sized) beetles. These giant bugs can fire a ball of bio-energy into space, acting much like a planetary defense weapon.
Cliche:
Artillery Bug(5)
Hook:
Artillery bugs are so large and slow moving, they cannot effectively target anything smaller than a dropship. They are completely unable to attack ground targets.

Grenadier
Description: Grenadier appear much like the artillery bugs above, and capable of spitting a massive ball of acid up to 500 meters distant. They bury themselves underground while waiting for an aggressor to come into range, effectively ambushing their opponents.
Cliche:
Grenadier Bug(5)
Hook:
Grenadier are unable to effectively attack an opponent that manages to land on their back.

Queen
Description: There is only one queen found per "bug planet", and they communicate via telepathy, controlling their massive societies. If the queen is killed, a new queen will emerge in a few months. Queens lay all the eggs, and maintain the order of a colony. When a queen dies, or is killed, their colony is thrown into turmoil they may lead to "rogue bugs" rampaging both on and off-world. Queen bugs are capable of spitting acid up to 50 meters distant. This is quite a reasonable range, as their brooding chambers are rarely larger than this.
Cliche:
Queen Bug[6]
Hook: The queen is so large she cannot effectively run from attackers, instead she must stand and fight (often to the death).

Soldier
Description: Standing an average of 2 meters tall, some are wasp-like, with large translucent wings and a barbed stinger, while others have great ant-like mandibles capable of tearing through armor.
Cliche:
Soldier Bug(2)
Hook:
None.

Transport
Description: The transport bug is an amazing evolutionary marvel. These are massive creatures, often growing in excess of 200 meters in length, who hold other bugs in their mouths, and hurl themselves into space. When they reach a new planet, or ship, they release their cargo to begin colonizing or assault.
Cliche:
Transport Bug[10]*
Hook: Transport bugs are unable to defend themselves, relying on their tough exoskeleton and their "passengers" to defend them.
* Due to their massive size they use vehicle rules, bypassing the 6-die cliche limit.

Worker
Description: Workers are approximately 1 meter long and appear in a variety of shapes. Some appear almost ladybug-like that tend to crops, and others are more reminiscent of dung beetles as they build mud structures for the colony.
Cliche:
Worker Bug(1)
Hook:
Will more likely run from combat than fight, unless cornered.

::CREDITS::

Risus: The Anything RPG by S. John Ross, without which this sourcebook would not exist, is located at:
http://www222.pair.com/sjohn/risus.htm

Stacy Allston's "Risus Supers" which I borrowed the property damage rules from, is located at:
http://www.angelfire.com/tx2/webgamer/supers.html

This work, and the other works for Risus by Zamiel Al'Shaitan can be found at:
http://lordzamiel.is.dreaming.org

The "BUGHUNTERS" logo on the cover page was created using the GIMP, from the cenobyte font. (Go Script-Fu!)

The fonts used in this document are Verdana, Spacedock Stencil, and Futurex Apocalypse. The latter two can be downloaded from Cumberland Fontworks at:
http://www222.pair.com/sjohn/fonts.htm

The graphic on the cover page is source unknown, unfortunately.

PDF Conversion by an amalgamation AFPL Ghostscript 7.04 and Redmon 1.7, this document was printed to RPT1: and lookit what happened!

Hi mom.