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Advanced
Dungeons & Dragons[®]
Accessory
Monstrous Arcana[™]

THE SEA DEVILS



BY SKIP WILLIAMS



Advanced Dungeons & Dragons® Monstrous Arcana™

A Sourcebook For the
ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Game

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THE SEA DEVILS

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Dismissed as a legend by some, regarded as no more than marine savages by others, the sahuagin care little for how other races perceive them. No matter the criticism leveled against them, they remain confident in their superiority. As we shall see, the sahuagin have good reason for confidence. They possess vigorous minds, agile bodies, and a host of abilities that most surface dwellers don't even suspect.

The book you hold is my attempt to part (at least a little) the veil of mystery that conceals the sahuagin from the rest of the mortal world. In this book, you shall learn something of their physical characteristics, their weapons, and their culture. I daresay that the information within might save your life should you ever encounter one of these fearsome creatures.

—Yunni Cuparicus

INTRODUCTION

THE ORIGINS OF THIS BOOK

My interest in the alien and altogether hostile sahuagin began one tropical evening aboard the *Ayoehl*, a smart and sturdy craft I hired for an expedition to the antipodes. There, I sought to collect certain rare sea creatures whose essences I required to complete my magical research.



After a long day examining the contents of our nets and applying some cantrips to help relieve a few minor annoyances, I lounged in the cabin with the ship's officers—recounting the day's events and enjoying a light repast. As dusk faded into night, I took my leave and returned to the deck, for I intended to run out more nets and catch a few of the ocean's nocturnal denizens.

A BOLT FROM THE SEA

No sooner had I stepped on deck when the ship's helmsman pitched silently forward, obviously dead. Two sailors passing time at the lee rail likewise crumpled. As the night breeze took hold of the unguided ship, sending it on an erratic course, I beheld no less than eight sets of silvery eyes appearing above the ship's rail. We were under attack! A crash below told me the officers in the cabin were already beset. I hastily recovered a small vial of water and a packet of sand from a pocket in my robe and prepared to summon some magical assistance, as at the moment only I stood on deck with our adversaries.

I drew a sharp breath as two of our attackers shouldered arbalests and took aim at me. The other six paid me no mind, moving instead to the hatches leading up from below, where they spread heavy nets to trap anyone trying to reach the deck. The arbalest missiles shot harmlessly by and buried themselves in the companionway behind me. I uttered a silent thanksgiving for the magical robe I wore—I was certain that its power to delude viewers about my actual position caused the deadly missiles to go astray—and completed my spell.

As the elemental creature I had summoned prepared to do battle with the boarders, the first confused sailors emerged from below, only to fall prey to the sahuagin's nets. My two enemies quickly surmised that I was directing the attacking water elemental and dropped their arbalests, charging toward me with fangs bared and claws outstretched. Fortunately, the elemental was a heartbeat quicker and intercepted my assailants before they reached me. I shudder to think of my fate if the monsters had reached me.

To my horror, two of the attackers dove back into the sea, dragging two crewmen trapped in nets behind

them. The sailors' wails of terror as they went over the side chill my blood even as I pen this account.

The twin abductions left the hatches clear momentarily; the remainder of the crew lost no time in gaining the deck and launching a counterattack. Cutlasses and talons flashed in the first glow of the rising moon. The ship's deck soon became slick with gore. Only three attackers remained after the furious melee; each of these dove overboard, clutching the body of a slain comrade.

I immediately sent my elemental to rescue the netted sailors. However, it could only recover one drowned body.

When Captain Chanter, the *Ayoehl's* master, emerged victorious from the scuffle in the cabin, he stoically assessed the carnage on the deck and uttered two words: "sea devils."

AFTERMATH

The good captain firmly rejected my suggestion that we pursue our attackers—I possessed no shortage of spells that could sustain a party under water—noting that we had survived the attack mostly through sheer good fortune. The captain, whose judgment I respected, suggested that I surely could find specimens elsewhere. He indicated the slain sea devil still remaining on deck and suggested that I might find it worthy of study. The notes and sketches I made in the following weeks formed the basis for this book's first chapter.

The attack aroused my curiosity about these cunning and audacious creatures. I concluded my research expeditiously and began collecting whatever lore I could about the sea devils. What I found was a morass of speculation and contradictions. Most scholars, it seems, were content to make guesses about the creatures and record them as fact.

One sage I encountered confidently told me that sea devils were no more than marine orcs. His proof: simply the observation that sahuagin plague the sea elves as orcs plague elves on land. The speculation ignores the

sea devils' remarkable intelligence, incredible swimming speed, virtually unlimited life span, and a host of other details. Indeed, it seems likely that the sea devils ultimately derive from the elven or human lines (orcs, too, might stem from the same line, but that remains a problem I leave for other scholars).

Frustrated by the dearth of written information, I outfitted a larger ship capable of supporting some first-hand observations of the sea devils and set sail once again. Alas, I found that sea devils are all but impossible to approach. When feeling bold, they attack. When not inclined to aggression, they make themselves scarce. In addition, sea devils have a knack for appearing wherever one does not expect (or wish) them to appear.

What you hold in your hands, then, is not the results of a single expedition, but rather the observations culled from two decades of marine adventures and augmented by numerous interviews with folks who have survived encounters with the sea devils.

Despite my disdainful note about speculation, I too have been forced to generalize from a few examples and present these generalizations as fact. Let the reader beware that the picture I have painted is one of the sahuagin as they appear to me. I have no doubt that my vision is clearer in this matter than theories offered by other, less informed, commentators. How my own shortcomings have tinted the portrait, however, only time can tell.

I offer my sincere thanks to the many brave and erudite folk who have made this work possible. First, to Captain Chanter, who's common sense and seamanship have undoubtedly saved me from many fatal predicaments; to Tiguran Maremynd and Ronassic of Sigil, two scholars who know the sea devils well enough to write about them with some authority; and to Duchess Yascha Nulhar, who led me to Innis McKenn, the only non-sahuagin I have ever met who actually became part of a sahuagin community.

Unto Her Grace, Duchess Yascha Nulhar:

Hail and well met.

I trust Your Grace continues to enjoy health and prosperity. I am happy to report that your prisoner, the pirate Innis McKenn, has proven a veritable fount of information about the sea devils—as you suggested he might. I can also report that he is, as you suspected, a lycanthrope of the type commonly called “wereshark.”

McKenn is as tight-lipped a knave as I have ever encountered, and I daresay he might not have divulged anything were it not for certain enchantments I laid upon him. Once my charm took effect, however, I had no difficulty recording hundreds of anecdotes about his life among the sea devils. It seems likely that the community where he resided lies comfortably far away and poses no real danger to your duchy. Nevertheless, it remains possible that a colony of sea devils might take up residence off our coast at some future time. If such an event occurs, Your Grace must spare no effort in defense.

I enclose a copy of my manuscript in the hopes that it might prove helpful in guarding against sahuagin raids. I am sure our seamen will find it immediately helpful.

As for McKenn's more recent activities, not even the charm I laid upon him could induce the fellow to speak much about himself. I can only conclude that the man has much to hide. While I freely acknowledge his contributions to my work, I cannot in good conscience recommend that Your Grace pardon him, for he is undoubtedly as ruthless as the sea devils among whom he once lived. He shall remain under guard here, at my tower, until such time as it pleases Your Grace to decide his fate.

—Yusni Cuparens,
Archimage

SAHUAGIN: WHAT THEY ARE

Nowhere in the world dwells a race as savage and degenerate as the devil men of the deep. Artless and unlettered, bereft of the fruits of society, the sahuagin live in continual fear of violent death. Only the equally voracious sharks can befriend them. Indeed, a sahuagin would seem to possess the worst characteristics of sharks and humans.

—Tiguran Maremrynd

Not all the observations Tiguran Maremrynd makes about sahuagin in the preceding quote are true. Nevertheless, sahuagin are—first and last—marine predators superbly adapted to a life of hunting under the sea. Because the sahuagin regard most surface dwellers as prey, few scholars have ever had a chance to discover the subtleties of sahuagin life.

SAHUAGIN AT A GLANCE

Also known as "Sea Devils" and the "Devil Men of the Deep," sahuagin are marine humanoids who dwell in coastal seas. Although found in temperate climes, they prefer fairly warm waters and do not permanently reside in places where the surface water temperature is less than 60 degrees Fahrenheit year round. In fact, their presence in high latitudes is almost always the result of warm currents.



Most sahuagin feature green coloration, darker along the back and lighter on the belly. Many have dark stripes, bands, or spots, but these tend to fade with age.

EXTERNAL ANATOMY

Chapter 1

Though the sahuagin body remains humanoid, it possesses many adaptations geared towards an undersea existence. Refer to the illustrations on pages 6 and 7 as you read on.

(1) **Snout:** Though sahuagin possess an acute sense of smell (see Chapter 3), their nostrils are quite small, as their noses play no part in respiration. Tiny pits in the creatures' snout enable them to sense prey in murky water (see Chapter 3).

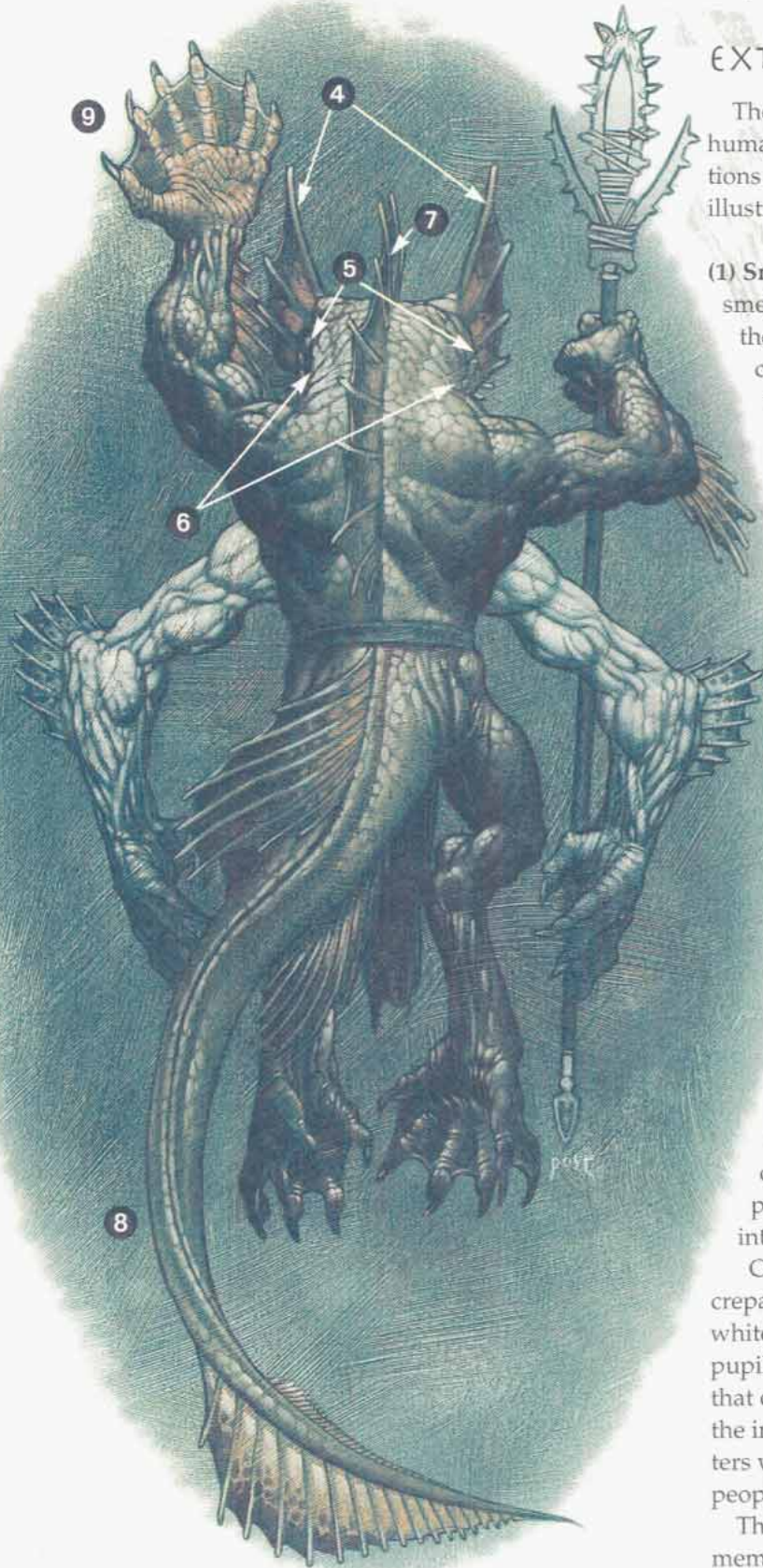
(2) **Teeth:** Sahuagin have two different kinds of teeth. Their main canines and incisors, rooted in the jaw, resemble the teeth of a great cat. Sahuagin also possess hundreds of smaller teeth loosely set in the skin covering the jaw. These razor-sharp teeth allow the creature to slash away great chunks of flesh from large prey and help it hold on to smaller prey. Sahuagin sometimes leave several of these loose teeth behind after delivering a bite.

Losing a tooth doesn't inconvenience a sahuagin one bit. New teeth constantly form along the inner jaw and work their way outward to replace the lost teeth. If a larger canine or incisor breaks, the damaged tooth falls out. A replacement tooth then takes root and rapidly grows to large size.

(3) **Eyes:** Surface dwellers who survive encounters with sahuagin often vividly recall staring into the creatures' bulging, glassy eyes. Many observers describe sahuagin eyes as pale and cold, like blue-white sea ice. Others insist sahuagin possess utterly black orbs that glitter with malign intelligence.

Close observation, however, easily explains this discrepancy. A sahuagin eye possesses a silvery sclera (a white, fibrous covering of tissue), a black iris, and a large pupil. In dim light, a sahuagin's pupil expands so much that only it and the surrounding iris are visible, giving the impression of unrelieved black. Since most encounters with sahuagin take place underwater or at night, people report seeing black-eyed sahuagin.

Though lidless, the sahuagin eye has a nictitating membrane that protects it from abrasions or bright light. The membrane is similar to an eyelid—except that it is



translucent and moves “up and back” instead of down. The sahuagin can see through this membrane, though not terribly well. When a sahuagin closes its membrane, its eyeballs look pale and milky.

A sahuagin’s eyes are very sensitive to light, and sahuagin venturing above the surface during daylight usually close their eyes to protect them from the sun. Hence, some people report sahuagin with pale, pupilless eyes.

(4) Anterior fins: Many surface dwellers mistake this pair of fins for ears. A sahuagin uses these fins to help keep its head level while swimming and to brake and maneuver underwater.

(5) Spiracle: This is another feature some viewers mistake for a hearing apparatus. The spiracle actually allows water to flow over the gills. Sahuagin also use their mouths to take in water.

(6) Gill covers: These hardened flaps of skin protect the gills underneath. When a sahuagin “inhales” underwater, its gill covers close. After water flows over the gills, the gill covers open, allowing the water to exit the sahuagin’s throat. Above water, a sahuagin closes its gill covers to help keep its gills moist.

The gill openings are as wide as a man’s hand and often provide excellent “handles” for people grappling with sahuagin. Unfortunately, the gill covers have edges as sharp as flint knives and almost as hard. The sharp edges can cleanly slice leather or flesh—inflicting deep cuts (1d2 points of damage) on anyone grabbing at the gills without metal or mail gauntlets.

(7) Dorsal fin: This long fin helps prevent the sahuagin from rolling over while swimming.

(8) Tail: A sahuagin’s muscular tail gives the creature greater speed and more maneuverability underwater than it could achieve with its webbed hands and feet alone. The tail’s side-to-side movements also help keep it going in a straight line.

A sahuagin can quickly swim backwards by using its tail in combination with its anterior fins and webbed hands.

(9) Hands: A sahuagin possesses six clawed and webbed digits. It can manipulate four of these digits—three “fingers” and a “thumb.” The remaining two digits, opposite the thumb, are fairly small and weak. The sahuagin extend these weak digits to create a larger “paddle” for swimming.

(10) Scales: A sahuagin’s large, bony scales provide it with excellent armor. After the creature dies, the scales lose their strength and resilience.

INTERNAL ANATOMY

Though fairly human on the outside, sahuagin more closely resemble fish on the inside. Sahuagin bones tend to be light, but flexible and tough—just like their scales. Refer to the diagram on page 9 as you read on.

(1) Nasal passage: Since sahuagin breathe through their gills, this area serves primarily as an olfactory organ.

(2) Brain: The sahuagin brain lies within a flat skull. Olfactory lobes on the underside connect directly to the nasal passages, allowing for an acute sense of smell. The centers for vision and hearing are highly developed as well. Despite the elaborate sensory apparatus, a greater portion of the sahuagin brain is dedicated to memory and reasoning—giving the sahuagin a formidable intellect. In general, the sahuagin brain is larger than a human, elf, or dwarf brain.

(3) Sound Chamber: Though sahuagin possess a larynx (see #7 below), this cavity serves as the primary organ of speech. Layers of cartilage and muscle form the cavity’s walls; by contracting the muscles, sahuagin can produce a rapid stream of clicks, pops, and thumps that other sahuagin can hear and understand. Surface dwellers cannot hear these high-pitched sounds, though the sounds carry for miles underwater.

The chamber’s acoustic qualities also catch and amplify sounds from the environment, increasing the sahuagin’s auditory acuity.

(4) Ears: Sahuagin ears have no external openings. Sounds reach the ears through the creature’s skull, sound chamber (see #3), and lateral lines (see #12).

The ears also serve as a sahuagin's organs of balance. Each ear has five fluid-filled canals lined with sensory hairs and delicate nerve endings. These nerve-lined canals allow the sahuagin to instantly know its vertical orientation and assess changes in its position and rate of acceleration. A sahuagin can assess this information at an incredibly fast rate. In fact, a sahuagin never experiences dizziness or disorientation, no matter how violent its movements.

(5) Esophagus: This is the sahuagin's throat. Most water taken in through the mouth flows out through the gills. The creature swallows the rest.

(6) Gills: A sahuagin breathes through eight gills, four on each side of the neck. The gills also excrete some of the salt absorbed from its seawater environment.

When sahuagin visit the surface, the gills draw oxygen from the air.

(7) Larynx: This mass of muscle and cartilage separates the trachea and air bladder (#8) from the esophagus (#5). Primitive vocal folds within the larynx allow sahuagin to speak the languages of surface dwellers. Compared to a native speaker, a sahuagin's voice sounds toneless and breathy because it has little control over its pitch.

(8) Trachea and Air Bladder: Though this structure resembles the windpipe and lungs of a surface dweller, it plays no role in respiration—even when a sahuagin visits the surface.

The trachea is a fairly rigid structure made from alternating rings of muscle and cartilage. The four-lobed

air bladder is a thin membrane threaded with muscles. By expanding and contracting its trachea and air bladder, a sahuagin controls its buoyancy.

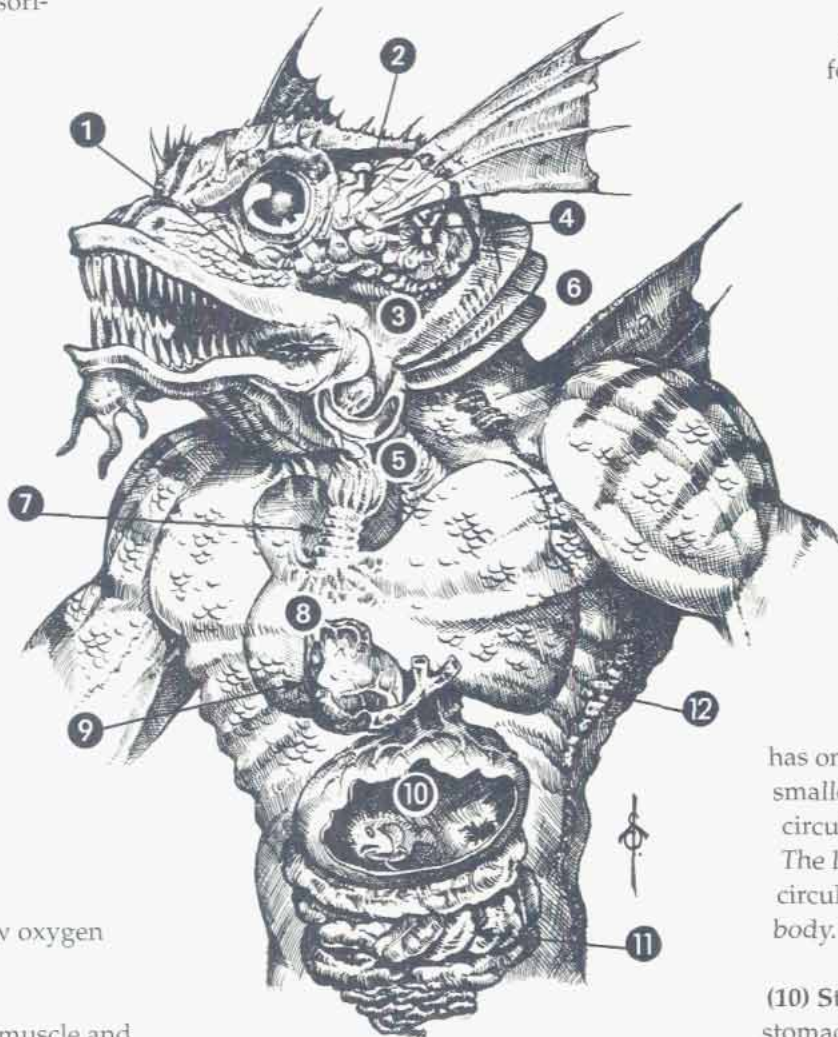
The sahuagin releases air from its air bladder when speaking a surface language and usually replaces it with a big gulp of air before returning to the sea. Because the air is stored inside the body for flotation only, the sahuagin can deeply inhale almost any inert gas—from smoke to methane—without ill effect. Airborne toxins, however, can still reach the sahuagin's bloodstream through the gills. Irritants can damage the air bladder, as well.

(9) Heart: The sahuagin heart has only two chambers. The smaller upper chamber circulates blood to the gills. The larger lower chamber circulates blood through the body.

(10) Stomach: The sahuagin stomach is a tough, puncture-resistant organ capable of handling whatever prey the creature wolfs down.

(11) Gut: This consists of a small and large intestine which complete the process of digestion and elimination begun in the stomach.

(12) Lateral Line: A sahuagin has two of these sensory organs, one running along each flank, from the neck to the hips. Each line is a fluid-filled canal packed with bundles of nerves and sensory hairs that detect vibration and movement in the water.



LIFE CYCLE AND VARIATIONS

Types of sahuagin? That they don't tolerate any differences. Sure there are males and females, little ones and big ones, priests and warriors. But that's about it. Some have four arms, but they're pretty rare. Some, it's said, look just like sea elves, but I never saw any sahuagin like that. Sure, a sahuagin bit badly enough by a wereshark or seawolf would get legs wither up, but he'd be crippled so badly his fellows probably wouldn't let him live. Most likely, they'd eat him before he can show any symptoms.

Then there're sharks that can turn into sahuagin. Sharkweres, they're called. They're about the only creatures living in the sea that hate all other life more than sahuagin do."
— Innis McKenna, wereshark

Sahuagin, as Innis McKenna notes, crave a certain uniformity in their race. Nevertheless, all sahuagin aren't exactly alike.

EGGS

An adult female sahuagin lays a single egg every six weeks. The egg has a vaguely rectangular shape, with a tough, leathery shell. It is about the same size and thickness as two human fists placed together knuckles to knuckles.

Sahuagin eggs fertilize internally and hatch after incubating only three months. Sahuagin collect their eggs in enclosed, easily defended spaces guarded by females and warriors. The sahuagin gather all eggs laid at about the same time so they'll hatch as a group. This promotes competition among the hatchlings and prevents the young from eating new eggs that are still incubating (see next section). A pheromone generated by the embryos keeps them from developing until several have been gathered together.

HATCHLINGS

Sahuagin are about 10 inches long at birth, regardless of gender. They attain adult size in six to eight weeks and eat prodigiously the whole time. The voracious hatchlings consume anything they can sink their teeth and claws into—including other hatchlings and unhatched eggs. Unwary females tending the newly emerged hatchlings often suffer nips, but the little creatures quickly learn to respect their elders.

Sahuagin not only allow cannibalism among hatchlings, they encourage it. Stronger hatchlings often kill and eat their weaker cousins. The surviving hatchlings also eat any eggs that fail to hatch quickly. About half the hatchlings in each brood die in the first three weeks after hatching, leaving only the fittest, most aggressive individuals. After three weeks, the adult sahuagin feed any surviving imperfect hatchlings to the sharks. Imperfect hatchlings include all youngsters with obvious deformities—such as missing fins—and those with less obvious defects—such as unusual coloration and weak or off-key vocalizations.

All hatchlings undergo rigorous training in the particulars of sahuagin language, culture, and hunting techniques. Death awaits any hatchlings that lag behind in their learning.

Hatchlings have pale-blue or green bellies shading to medium-green on the back and head. The darker portions of the hatchlings' bodies have spots, bands, or marbling that serves as camouflage. The exact pattern of markings varies (slightly) with the individual.

SAHUAGIN AGES AND SIZES

Status	Age*	Height/Weight
Hatchling	0-½	10"/2 lbs.
Warrior	½-30	5'10"/200 lbs.
Female	½+	5'8"/180 lbs.
Under Priestess	1-20	6'/200 lbs.
	20-40	6'2"/210 lbs.
	40-60	6'4"/215 lbs.
	60-80	6'6"/220 lbs.
Lieutenant/ Baronial Guard	30-70	6'4"/215 lbs.
Chieftain	70-150	6'8"/230 lbs.
Senior Priestess	80-100	6'7"/225 lbs.
	100-140	7'1"/235 lbs.
Baron	150-190	7'1"/240 lbs.
	190-280	7'6"/265 lbs.
Royal Under Priestess	140-350	7'6"/260 lbs.
High Priestess	350-440	7'11"/275 lbs.
Prince	280-350	8'4"/285 lbs.
Royal High Priestess	350-440	8'8"/295 lbs.
Royal Guard	350-440	8'9"/300 lbs.
King	600+	9'3"/320 lbs.

* In years

ADULTS

An adult male sahuagin stands roughly 6 feet tall and weighs about 200 pounds. Male sahuagin grow continuously—though older sahuagin grow at a slower rate (see above). Growth slows to an infinitesimal rate once a sahuagin reaches age 600. The creatures do remain vigorous, however, and are not subject to the physical or mental weaknesses that usually accompany great age.

As the male grows, his social status and responsibilities increase accordingly—provided he wins the duel required to assume the appropriate position (see Chapter 5); all such duels are fought to the death.

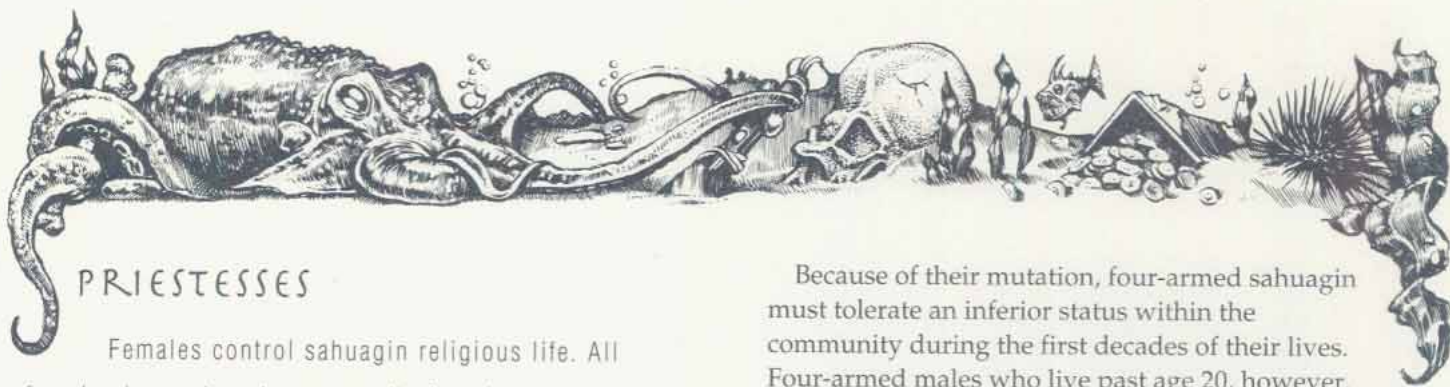
Females remain slightly smaller than males. The rigor of egg production saps energy from female sahuagin, and their growth all but stops once they reach adulthood. Nevertheless, surface dwellers find adult

female sahuagin indistinguishable from younger males. Breeding females have a maximum life span of about 200 years.

As a sahuagin grows, its coloration darkens to a deep green, greenish-black, or black. Most of its hatchling markings also disappear.

Chapter 2





PRIESTESSES

Females control sahuagin religious life. All females in a sahuagin community function as teachers and keepers of religious lore. Females who demonstrate outstanding intelligence can become priestesses.

After a five-year period of instruction, an aspiring priestess undergoes a potentially fatal ordeal (see Chapter 8). If she survives, the candidate becomes an under priestess. Advancement through the priestly ranks occurs through mortal combat—just as it does in the male political structure. Priestesses do not mate; therefore, they age and grow as do males.

Sages widely believe that the ritual ordeal sterilizes the priestesses. However, this is far from the truth. In actuality, a sahuagin priestess remains in breeding condition until about age 20. Her tail takes on a yellow color at that time, signaling the end of ovulation. (Her lack of breeding until that time results in irregular egg laying; the priestess ritually consumes any infertile eggs she lays). This yellow coloration gradually spreads over the priestesses's entire body, and she becomes wholly yellow by age 50. Most priestesses sport green spots, stripes or bands.

MUTANTS

Despite their habit of destroying imperfect hatchlings, the sahuagin sometimes allow two types of mutants to survive into adulthood. In both cases, practicality outweighs the traditional sahuagin abhorrence for deviation.

FOUR-ARMED SAHUAGIN

About one in every 216 hatchlings possesses four useable arms. The extra set of claws gives the mutant a decided edge when competing with other hatchlings for food and space. The sahuagin admire these mutants' fighting prowess and usually suffer them to live—provided they show no other defects (see the hatchlings section).

Because of their mutation, four-armed sahuagin must tolerate an inferior status within the community during the first decades of their lives. Four-armed males who live past age 20, however, rise fairly rapidly through the hierarchy, as their extra claws virtually assure them a victory in a duel with a two-armed sahuagin. Older sahuagin leaders, however, easily foresee challenges from their four-armed juniors and often contrive to eliminate them before they become a threat. Young (under age 20) four-armed males can expect to undertake many dangerous missions on behalf of their communities. In addition, these mutants must exhibit excruciatingly correct behavior to avoid fatal challenges from older males (see Chapter 8).

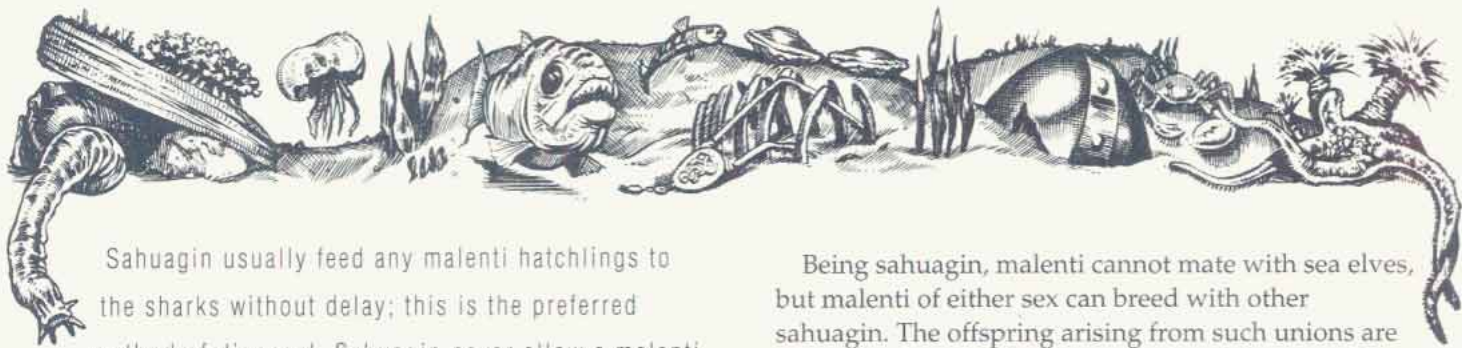
Four-armed females usually assimilate fairly comfortably once they reach adulthood, as they can hold their own in almost any dispute with their peers. Four-armed priestesses, however, encounter the same perils as their male counterparts.

Four-armed sahuagin have darker pigmentation than their fellows—usually black fading to blue-gray on their bellies. Four-armed priestesses are usually a tawny yellow with sharply defined black markings.

MALENTI

If a sahuagin community exists in a locale inhabited or visited frequently by sea elves, the community will exhibit a strange mutation: about one in every hundred sahuagin hatchlings will look exactly like a sea elf. These creatures, called malenti, have greenish-silver skin, green or deep-blue hair, and webbed hands and feet. Malenti do not possess scales, fins, or tails, and their features possess a delicate elven slant—including sparkling green eyes.

The malenti's lack of fins and tails causes them to swim at a slower rate than normal sahuagin. Malenti have tough bodies, however, resisting blows just as well as any sahuagin. In addition, their sensory capabilities are similar to other sahuagin. In combat, a malenti's webbed hands and feet hide retractable claws that can slash an opponent to ribbons. Furthermore, malenti possess powerful jaws that can deliver a vicious bite.



Sahuagin usually feed any malenti hatchlings to the sharks without delay; this is the preferred method of disposal. Sahuagin never allow a malenti born with four arms to survive. When several malenti hatch in the same year, however, the sahuagin usually allow at least one of them to mature. The creature serves as a scout and spy sent out to locate and infiltrate sea elf communities.

A malenti of either sex grows to a height of about 4 feet in six to eight weeks. At this point it is fully mature, though it resembles an adolescent sea elf. Over the next 20 years, it will grow another 1 to 2 feet. By age 21, a malenti's growth stops. A malenti's maximum life span is about 170 years.

Malenti have an ambiguous social status in sahuagin communities. Other sahuagin regard them as loathsome freaks. This attitude goes beyond the usual sahuagin contempt for mutants. Sahuagin do not have a more implacable enemy than the sea-elves. The mere thought that one of their own could resemble this hated racial enemy proves quite galling.

Despite their role as outcasts, however, malenti live privileged lives. A malenti becomes the ward of the community's chieftain or baron and receives his complete protection and support. The malenti spends all of its time in intense training and indoctrination. The malenti practices the arts of ambush, stealth, and assassination every day with the most skilled warriors in the community as its teachers. In addition, the local priestesses or elder females teach the malenti all the lore they know.

During their training, malenti learn to treasure their sahuagin heritage and to regard themselves as honored protectors of the sahuagin race. This training can last anywhere from a few months to 20 years, depending upon what mission the sahuagin leadership plans. A malenti that has endured 20 years of training can insinuate itself into a sea elf community and remain there for the rest of its life, performing espionage and sabotage. Malenti assigned to shorter missions require less training.

Being sahuagin, malenti cannot mate with sea elves, but malenti of either sex can breed with other sahuagin. The offspring arising from such unions are always malenti. In theory, malenti could eventually populate an entire sahuagin community. In practice, this never happens. Most sahuagin will not willingly mate with malenti. Even if they did, the sahuagin would swiftly eliminate any surplus malenti hatchlings. Whole communities of malenti do exist, but these rare communities owe their existence to malenti who have struck out on their own, usually after discovering their true status among sahuagin.

Many scholars believe the malenti represent a throwback to an earlier stage in sahuagin evolution. Triton historians are particularly fond of a theory that sahuagin are descendants of the drow, and they point to malenti as proof. The sahuagin have heard the triton theory, but none take it seriously. They regard the birth of a malenti as a divine warning that their hated enemies, the sea elves, lurk nearby.

As we shall see in Chapter 4, the sahuagin lived in the sea long before the strife that drove the drow underground. The true origins of the malenti begin with an ancient cabal of surface-dwelling wizards and priests who, for unexplained reasons, tried to create a sahuagin/sea elf hybrid. There is little information available about this group, but a few sea elf scholars know of them—as shown by this excerpt from Tigran Maremrynd's book, *At War With the Sea-Devils: A Survivor's Memoir*:

... as to any reputed blood tie between the devil men and my own fair race, one must pause to consider the horrible phenomenon of the changelings [malenti], devil men who come among us clothed in the flesh of sea elves. When my people discuss this unsettling topic at all, three theories are weighed on the scales of logic.

The first is that of parallel evolution between the devil men and our fair race. Simply put, this theory holds that, just as we sea elves left the forests of the surface to dwell under the waves, the drow sent colonists to the deeps. Hence, we are creatures who love warmth and light, and the sahnagin lurk in the nighted depths. . . .

The second theory posits that, through some malignant rite, the devil men's priestesses cloak their brethren in our forms. In this view, such changelings do not exist naturally.

The third theory is known only to our wizards. Long ago, when the world was young and humans were even less wise than today, many powerful spellcasters sought to blend the essences of sharks and elves to create a warrior race bent on conquering the realms beneath the sea. Though the humans never spawned a conquering race, they chronicled their efforts in *The Secrets of the Deep*, a tome that still exists in fragments today. The closing chapters of the book note that some of the cabal's subjects escaped into the depths of the sea. Ondonbtedly, these creatures met and bred with the sahnagin. Today, their strain resurfaces from time to time as changelings.

—Tiguran Maremrynd

Tiguran later debunks the first two theories in his book *Changelings: A True Menace*:

The triton theory that the sahnagin come from drow stock reflects a certain ignorance of dark elf physiology and customs, as one might expect of immigrants from the inner planes. One might start by noting that drow females are the stronger of the two dark elf sexes and that drow society is intensely matriarchal. If the sahnagin were marine offshoots of the drow, their males would not grow so much larger or live so much longer than their females.

As for the idea that the drow could (or would) spawn a society as patriarchal as the sahnagin—nobody with even a passing familiarity with drow would entertain the idea. Further, drow are among the world's most accomplished wizards. No offshoot of the drow race could be so ignorant and distrustful of magic as are the sahnagin.

As for the widespread belief among my fellow sea elves that no such race as the changelings [malenti] exists, I'm afraid that's just wishful thinking. I have examined several changelings at close range over a period of weeks. Even the most powerful divinations confirm that changelings are exactly what they seem: sea elf on the outside, but sahnagin through and through. An unsettling fact, but a fact nonetheless.

THE SECRETS OF THE DEEP

The Harmonium has banned this work in Sigil. Abridged versions, usually written in an archaic form of the human common tongue, are available under other titles—such as *A Cutter's Guide to Aquatic Adventuring*. These shorter versions dispense with accounts of the cabal's breeding experiments (though not every reference to them has been expunged) and concentrate on undersea lore.

Tiguran gives no useful information regarding *The Secrets of the Deep*, but Ronassic of Sigil is familiar with the work and quotes from it in his own treatise on marine civilization: *Ocean-dwelling Cultures: A Comparative Survey*. Ronassic, like Tiguran, dismisses the notion that the malenti provide evidence for any evolutionary connections between the sahuagin and the sea-elves. Instead, he offers a view on the origins of the malenti that would shock Tiguran:

Certain sea elf wizards entertain the theory that the malenti emerged from a race of shark/sea elf hybrids created at least two millennia ago by a cabal of surface dwellers. This theory does much to ease any fear that sea elves and devil men share a bond of blood. However, the sea elves' fervent desire to prove that they are not related to the sahuagin has led to some poor scholarship on their part.

*That the cabal existed is undoubtedly true. An account of their work, entitled *The Secrets of the Deep*, though rare, exists in various editions at Sigil's better booksellers—though seldom in complete form.*

As it happens, the oldest and most complete editions of this arcane book are written in the elf tongue, and one copy I have seen bears marginal notes written in elf script. A close reading of the book reveals that the cabal was not involved in creating a shark/sea elf hybrid at all, but rather, they wished to create a sahuagin/sea elf hybrid. The cabal's motivations seem obscure, but I suspect they wanted the elves to migrate to the sea, for the book seems to have been written during the great schism that drove the drow to the depths of the earth. A group of isolationist elves, it seems, preferred a life under the sea to any involvement in an internecine elven war. The timing of this peculiar event helps explain the triton's confusion about sahuagin origins.

The victims of the cabal's experiments actually spawned the malenti. The evidence suggests that sahuagin with elven traits escaped or were released, whereupon they returned to their communities and spawned a line of mutants. Exactly how many sahuagin carry this taint is impossible to say, but the mutation seems to remain dormant unless sea elves dwell nearby; sea elf pheromones in the water seem to trigger the alteration. In fact, a single sea elf venturing within a mile of a sahuagin community can cause malenti births. The sahuagin, though they seem to remain unaware of the truth, understand the significance of a malenti in their midst, and take the birth of the malenti as a sign that sea elves lurk nearby.

Clearly, Ronassic has more facts at his disposal than Tiguran, and offers the more reliable conclusion.

MALENTI BIRTHS

If a permanent sea elf community exists within 100 miles of a sahuagin lair, one in every 100 sahuagin births will result in a malenti mutation. The mutant births can continue until at least eight months after the sahuagin move out of range or eliminate the sea elves.

Even a single sea elf venturing within a mile of a sahuagin community can trigger the development of "malenti-ism." The effect lasts one day for every day (or portion of a day) the sea elf remains in range. If several sea elves venture near a sahuagin community, the effect lasts one day per member of the group. For example, if 10 sea elves approach a sahuagin town and remain in the vicinity for two days, the possibility of malenti births exists for the next 20 days. Any egg laid during the period has a 1-in-100 chance of developing into a malenti (a roll of "00" on d%).

For every 25 sea elves in a transient group, the DM should extend the effect's range an extra mile. For example, 50 sea elves can trigger malenti births if they come within three miles of a sahuagin community (1 base mile plus 2 miles for the number of sea elves).

Mainland surface dwellers seldom encounter anguiliians. This is fortunate, as individual anguiliians prove even more dangerous in combat than sahuagin warriors. Islanders and sailors, however, aren't so lucky.

People unfamiliar with true sahuagin often use the word "sahuagin" in reference to anguiliians. The confusion is natural, because anguiliians share many characteristics with sahuagin. The two races have a common language and a similar society. Anguiliians are slightly less intelligent than sahuagin, however, and tend to make less of their natural talents. Anguiliians neither build permanent settlements nor maintain a nobility. In addition, they have no priestesses. They do, however, share the sahuagin's loathing for wizards.

To surface dwellers, anguiliians have a downright bizarre appearance. People familiar with the sahuagin, however, can readily note some similarities between the races (refer to the accompanying illustration). While the sahuagin are generally humanoid, anguiliians resemble eels. Note the long, whip-like body and small head. The anguiliian's large eyes bear the unmistakable stamp of the sahuagin, as do the broad "ear-like" fins on each side of the head. An anguiliian's mouth is a muscular aperture lined with sharp teeth, though, not at all like a sahuagin's toothy jaws.

Both races have arms and legs, but anguiliians possess only rudimentary limbs. The fleshy arms end in grasping pincers that can hold tools or weapons, but usually serve as weapons themselves. The pincers can crush shell or bone and slice through flesh as readily as any dagger. An anguiliian's short legs make it less agile on land than a sahuagin, but the feet are nearly identical, possessing the same arrangement of six webbed toes ending in sharp claws.

ANGUILIANS

Anguiliians, near cousins to the sahuagin, dwell in the remote depths of the sea far from any continental shore.

Created at about the same time as the sahuagin (see above), the anguiliians represent one half of an experiment aimed at creating a race of evil humanoids to menace the marine environment. The sahuagin represent the other, more successful, half of the experiment.

Internally, an anguiliian has the same general layout of organs as a sahuagin (see page 9), but its skeleton is cartilaginous rather than bony. An anguiliian's flexible skeleton and muscular body allow it to withstand water pressure at extreme depth more readily than a sahuagin.



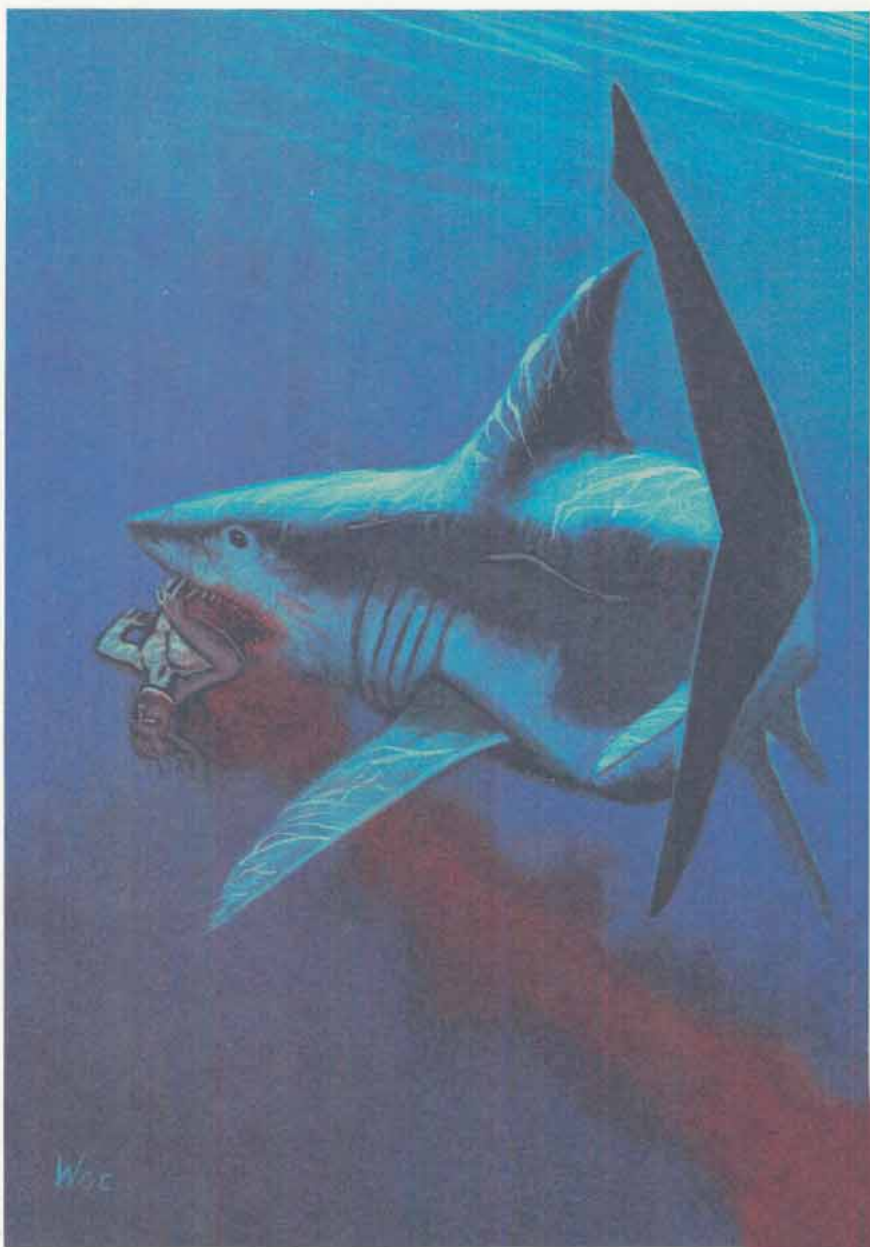
Furthermore, anguiliians can slither through any space large enough to admit their heads.

Unlike sahuagin, anguiliians dwell in the open sea and move about all the time. They generally spend their days swimming lazily in the dark, cold depths.

There is little contact between the anguiliians and the sahuagin—though the two races occasionally conduct trade. The anguiliians glean manufactured goods from shipwrecks lost in the ocean's stygian depths, and they barter with the sahuagin for items—such as sahuagin nets and poisons. The aggressive sahuagin probably would have driven their cousins from the sea long ago, but the anguiliians live in areas uninhabitable to sahuagin. Besides, sahuagin dislike the taste of anguilian flesh.

LYCANTHROPES AND ANTHELIONS

Sahuagin are somewhat susceptible to the curse of lycanthropy. However, they cannot contract any form of lycanthropy whose were-form lives on land. For example, there are no sahuagin werebears or werewolves. Sahuagin can, however, become sea-wolves or weresharks. As the quote from Innis McKenn at the opening of this chapter points out, though, sahuagin wounded badly enough to contract lycanthropy usually face death at the claws of their fellows—for the sahuagin usually slay and consume cripples. If the wounded sahuagin survives the immediate aftermath of the battle, chances are it will survive long enough for the curse to manifest itself.



WERESHARKS

Encounters between weresharks and sahuagin occur fairly often, as the two races inhabit warm waters. When a sahuagin community first encounters a wereshark, it tries to capture the creature or drive it away. If the sahuagin succeed in capturing the creature, they generally keep it prisoner.

The wereshark becomes the centerpiece of entertainment in the sahuagin community, as the sea devils stage frequent gladiatorial combats between the wereshark and any other captives. If the wereshark can survive two or three years of this "celebrity" status, the sahuagin adopt it into their community, treating it as a particularly intelligent shark. However, the creature never achieves the status of an adult, and the sahuagin regard it as nothing more than an unusual pet.

A sahuagin community and a group of weresharks often skirmish for months with neither side gaining an advantage. In these situations, the wereshark and the sahuagin leadership usually agree to a loose alliance. The weresharks receive free access to the sahuagin's territory in return for the

weresharks' services as guards and long-range scouts. Weresharks and sahuagin often cooperate

in attacks on ships and coastal towns.

When sahuagin warriors challenge

a wereshark,

many in-

evitably re-

ceive wounds and risk contracting lycanthropy. A male sahuagin commoner who becomes a wereshark enjoys a new status. He becomes the henchman of the community's baron and receives his complete protection and support, like a malenti. Unlike a malenti, however, the sahuagin regard the wereshark as a person gifted with the favor of

SEAWOLVES

Encounters between sahuagin and seawolves are rare because seawolves do not frequent the warm waters where sahuagin dwell. Any sahuagin unlucky enough to become a seawolf has one chance for survival—fleeing the community for a life of solitude.

Once a sahuagin becomes a seawolf, its fellows regard it as a dangerous oddity. If they suspect they have a lycanthrope in their midst, they carefully lay plans to trap and kill the beast; there is no question of finding a cure for the victim. If the community cannot kill the seawolf immediately, they net the creature and hold it underwater. Being an air breather, the seawolf must either remain in seawolf form and drown, or it must revert to sahuagin form, whereupon the others slay it with normal weapons.

Should the sahuagin seawolf escape, it will eventually migrate to cooler waters and join a seawolf pack. This form of lycanthropy shortens the sahuagin's life; the creature usually dies in about 75 years.

SAHUAGIN LYCANTHROPES

In normal AD&D® campaigns, sahuagin remain immune to all types of lycanthropy except those based on sea creatures. In the demiplane of Ravenloft®, where dark powers prevail, sahuagin might contract any form of lycanthropy—see *Van Richten's Guide to Werebeasts* for details. All sahuagin werebeasts—except weresharks—become outcasts.

While in animal form, a sahuagin werebeast looks and acts just like any other werebeast of its type. If the lycanthrope has a hybrid form, however, the hybrid has fins on its head and back, as well as webbed hands and feet.

While lycanthropy does not normally decrease the victim's natural life span, the curse profoundly disrupts the sahuagin life cycle. An adult sahuagin stops growing when it contracts lycanthropy. In the rare case of a hatchling lycanthrope, the creature matures normally, but usually suffers from stunted growth. "The favor of Sekolah has its price," say the sahuagin.

Sekolah, the sahuagin patron deity (see Chapter 4); the wereshark's sahuagin peers give it a wide birth during the full moon, and often take care to supply the wereshark with prey to hunt during its monthly rampages.

Female sahuagin weresharks receive the same treatment as males, but they no longer mate. If the female is a priestess, she leaves the priestly hierarchy and becomes a henchmen of the local baron.

Sahuagin leaders who become weresharks generally resign their positions and serve as envoys for their immediate superiors. Should a sahuagin king contract wereshark lycanthropy, however, he receives veneration from his subjects in addition to the strict obedience he normally enjoys.

Sahuagin weresharks suffer shortened life spans—just as sahuagin seawolves; the creatures generally live another 200 years once lycanthropy sets in.

SHARKWERES

The powerful sharkwere, or nawidnehr, is a huge shark that can assume almost any humanoid form (see page 96). One would think these creatures would naturally ally themselves with sahuagin, but the chaotic evil nawidnehrs prey on anything—including the Lawful sahuagin.

While sharkweres usually assume sahuagin form to more readily prey on sahuagin, the creatures sometimes use the form of the devil men to confuse enemies or to make use of a sahuagin's physical traits. For example, sharkweres often find that a sahuagin's clawed hands and feet allow it to scale the sides

of a ship easily. If the creature does not possess weapons, it may also claw and bite as a sahuagin before retreating into the sea. Characters foolish enough to pursue the creature might be shocked to find a huge shark awaiting them under the waves.

ABILITIES AND LIMITATIONS

INTELLIGENCE

The typical sahuagin has more raw brain power than the typical human. Philosophers may argue that there is no such thing as a “typical” human, but there certainly is such a thing as a typical sahuagin (in fact, their society weeds out atypical individuals). On the whole, sahuagin are more intelligent than humans.

Sahuagin have an easier time memorizing facts, recalling memories, formulating plans, and drawing correct conclusions from incomplete data than do humans. They also make fewer mistakes or bad decisions and cannot be misdirected or fooled as easily as humans.

Chapters 4, 5, and 7 explore the ramifications of sahuagin intelligence more fully.

MOVEMENT

Water is the sahuagin’s element. They can glide effortlessly through the sea, or knife through the water at a speed that rivals a swift horse. A sea devil can swim straight up at full speed and can descend at an even faster rate. Sahuagin routinely dive to depths of 1,500 feet or more, and they can withstand pressures at twice that depth.

A sahuagin swimming to the surface at full speed can leap clear of the water, gaining enough height to grasp the deck rail of a small ship. Even when a sahuagin can’t leap high enough to reach a ship’s deck, its clawed hands and feet allow it to climb the ship’s wooden sides. Finally, a sahuagin can swim almost 50 miles a day without seriously exerting itself.

If a sahuagin loses consciousness—or dies—its body sinks like a stone because its air bladders (see Chapter 1) involuntarily collapse. This protects the creature from scavengers or enemies on the surface.

Let me tell you, sahuagin can do just about anything they want to in the water. They’re some of the fastest swimmers in the ocean, and they can stop or turn on a silver piece. They have a wicked little flip maneuver they use that can disembowel a man with a rake from their clawed feet, and they use the same trick to actually hurl darts and other weapons through the water. Ever try to toss anything underwater? It’s a stunt a land dweller just can’t manage without help from a spell. They can also toss those hook-studded acts of theirs a good way with just a flick of the wrist; they’re better at it than sea elves.

I’ve heard some pretty tall tales about how well sahuagin see. Some folks who fancy themselves knowledgeable say a devil man can see for miles. That’s hogwash, of course, but sahuagin can see extremely well. A devil man walking quietly behind a rock can count the buttons on your tunic before you even know he’s there—that holds true on land at night just as well as in the water.

Some lubbers will also tell you a sahuagin can hear an ear splash a mile away. I don’t know about that, but I’ve known sahuagin to eavesdrop on a conversation held on a ship’s deck from ten fathoms below her keel.

Oh, there’s lots more. Sahuagin got noses like bloodhounds and a knack for finding living objects in the deep past work.

—Jimmie McKeen, *Wormshark*

A sea devil maneuvers in the water as easily as a human moves on land—except that water allows it movement in three dimensions. Unlike a human swimmer, a sahuagin suffers no ability reductions for long-distance swimming (see the *Player's Handbook*, Chapter 14 and *Of Ships and the Sea* for more details). Their normal swimming speed is 24 (240 yards per round), giving sahuagin a daily movement of 48 miles.

As noted in Chapter 1, sahuagin have air bladders that give them control over their buoyancy. During the course of a normal, horizontal move, they can ascend or descend up to 40 feet with no loss of speed. They can also swim straight up at full speed and straight down at a rate of 36.

If a sahuagin has at least 100 feet to build up speed, it can shoot vertically out of the water and leap high enough to grasp objects up to 10 feet overhead.

Out of the water, a sahuagin can climb vertical surfaces at a speed of 6—as long as the surface allows some purchase for its claws. Any surface with cracks or ledges qualifies, as do soft surfaces such as wood or earth where the sahuagin can dig in with its claws.

A motionless sahuagin can rise toward the surface at up to 40 feet a round by inflating its air bladders. A sahuagin's air bladders automatically collapse if the creature is rendered unconscious or killed, causing the sea devil to sink at a rate of 40 feet each round.

PHYSICAL ATTACKS

Surface dwellers might not appreciate sahuagin intellect, but most respect their fighting prowess.

NATURAL ARMOR AND WEAPONS

A sahuagin, with its scaly body, resists attack as well as a human clad in chain mail. What most opponents find more impressive, however, is the sahuagin's array of natural weaponry. A sahuagin's bite proves as deadly as any dagger thrust, and its clawed hands can inflict terrible wounds as well. When swimming, a sahuagin can kick with its clawed feet, each as formidable as the creature's bite. Surface dwellers often foolishly pursue groups of unarmed sahuagin into the sea after seemingly besting the creatures in melee combat. These surface dwellers usually die as a result of the sahuagin's ability to deliver five attacks at once.

Sahuagin make full use of their superb swimming abilities in combat. Their sheer speed often allows them to make a surprise attack and disappear into the gloom of the depths before their opponents can react.

When fighting underwater, a sahuagin can use a tumbling maneuver in which the creature flips over in a forward somersault, flailing with its feet as it turns head over heels.

MELEE WEAPONS

Sahuagin employ metal spears, tridents, and daggers when they can get them. Artists often depict them using stone weapons. However, sahuagin use these primitive weapons only when they cannot get anything better.

A sahuagin wielding a trident often shoves the weapon's tines deeply into his opponent's flesh, holding the creature at bay until it can shake itself loose (see page 23 for details).

Sahuagin can also use two melee weapons without penalty, as long as one weapon is size S (drow possess a similar ability, which might also have contributed to the tritons' erroneous theory about sahuagin origins). A sahuagin armed with one or two weapons can still claw or kick with its free hands and feet. Four-armed sahuagin cannot wield more than two melee weapons at once, but they can claw or kick with all their free hands and feet.

MISSILE WEAPONS

Sahuagin have an uncanny ability to hurl missiles underwater. They do so by performing the flip maneuver described in the preceding section on natural weapons. The maneuver generates enough leverage to throw a dart or javelin with deadly force (albeit at a limited range) despite water resistance.

The sahuagin crossbow, which can propel a missile through the water farther than most submerged surface dwellers can see, is a far deadlier weapon. Despite its power, the sahuagin crossbow cannot fire a missile underwater at a target on the surface (or vice versa).

NETS

The sahuagin throw their favorite weapon, the net, with a sidearm or whiplike motion in melee. Unlike the nets used by surface dwellers, sahuagin nets inflict damage. The true danger posed by the net, however, stems from its ability to snare opponents and render them helpless (see page 24 for more details).

POISON

Surface scholars have widely assumed that sahuagin, who usually eat any slain foes, eschew poison, as the venom would taint the meat. The sea elves—as shown by the following excerpt—know better:

... as to the speculation that the devil men's cannibalistic habits preclude any use of poison on their part, I myself have fallen victim to a poisoned missile from a sahuagin warrior's crossbow. Only the timely intervention of a cleric saved me from its effects.

Poison comes in three general varieties: ingested, contact, and insinuated. Clearly one cannot safely eat the carcass of a creature who has succumbed to an ingested poison; upon ingesting the flesh one might fall ill as well. Clearly also, a contact poison would prove dangerous underwater, as it would tend to diffuse and poison the surrounding area. Insinuated poison, however, poses no threat to anyone who might consume a victim's carcass. Insinuated agents enter the bloodstream directly and attack the victim's nervous system, leaving the flesh untainted. Sahuagin primarily use this type of venom.

In battle, sahuagin use a paralyzing venom that renders the victim helpless. It acts very quickly and, although the shock can slay a youngster outright, sturdier individuals can survive the effect if the sahuagin don't consume them in the meantime. The sahuagin also employ a deadly but slow-acting venom for hunting—though I have not experienced or observed its use first hand.

I know not how the sahuagin concoct their poisons, though it seems likely they find an air-filled workspace helpful. The venom itself is a waxy substance applied to weapons before battle. A single hit on a victim depletes the poison; sahuagin seldom carry a reserve supply with them. Whether this is because the venom is rare, or simply because they do not wish a supply to fall into enemy hands, I cannot say. In any case, the venom deteriorates rapidly when exposed to air, and the devil men seldom use it when they venture onto land

— *Tíguran Maremrynd*

(See Chapter 7 for more information on the poisons used by sahuagin).

GAME NOTES

The sahuagin have developed two kinds of venom for their weapons (see Chapter 7 for a complete description). The first type of poison is a paralytic venom which the sahuagin use in battle. A hit from a weapon treated with this toxin requires the victim to save vs. poison. If successful, the victim immediately suffers 5 points of damage. If the save fails, the victim immediately suffers 10 points of damage and loses consciousness in 1d3 rounds. The victim remains unconscious for 2d6 hours. A *slow poison* or *neutralize poison* spell, cast on the victim before loss of consciousness, prevents unconsciousness. These spells do not, however, negate damage.

The second poison is a deadly venom which the sahuagin use for hunting—especially when tracking large prey. However, they will not hesitate to use this poison on enemies if the need arises. Creatures struck with this venom must make a saving throw vs. poison with a -2 penalty. If the saving throw is successful, the venom has no effect. If the saving throw fails, the victim dies in a matter of minutes or hours—depending on its size. Death occurs in 2d4 minutes for man-sized and smaller victims. Large victims succumb in 2d4 turns, and huge or gargantuan victims die in 2d4 hours.

Any successful hit with a poisoned weapon removes the venom from the weapon—even if the opponent's saving throw succeeds. The sahuagin must reapply the venom to a weapon before it can deliver another poisoned wound.

RULES FOR SAHUAGIN COMBAT ABILITIES

A sahuagin armed with weapons enjoys a number of special abilities that depend on the particular weapon. This section contains rules for using these special abilities in play. See Chapter 7 for more information on sahuagin equipment.

TRIDENTS

A sahuagin armed with a trident can use the weapon to hold an opponent at bay. If the trident hits, the sahuagin can opt to hold the weapon in place instead of making further attacks. In this case, the weapon remains lodged in the stabbed opponent until that opponent wins an opposed Dexterity roll (see sidebar for further details on opposed ability rolls) against the sahuagin.

Note that the sahuagin adds the defender's Armor Class to its own Dexterity score for purposes of the opposed roll. When determining a pinned defender's Armor Class, the DM should include adjustments for armor and magical protection (such as a *ring of protection* +1) only. A roll of 20 fails regardless of the adjusted Dexterity score*.

While the trident remains lodged in the opponent, the sahuagin cannot perform any actions other than keeping the trident in place or keeping the opponent trapped in a net (see using nets and tridents together). The opponent, in turn, cannot attack the sahuagin wielding the trident, cast spells, use magical items, or perform any task that requires concentration. In addition, pinned opponents lose all defensive benefits from Dexterity and shields. The trident effectively immobilizes the defender unless it is two size classes larger than the sahuagin or weighs more than twice the attacking creature. If the creature is not immobilized, it can move about, dragging the sahuagin along with it.

The opponent suffers 1d6 points of damage each round the trident stays lodged in it, plus any damage modifier from the sahuagin's Strength score. If the opponent dislodges the trident with a successful opposed Dexterity roll, it can move away or attack the sahuagin.

OPPOSED ABILITY ROLLS

An opponent trapped in a net or impaled on a trident can try to escape during its normal place in the initiative order. Each combatant rolls a d20 and compares the result to the tested ability (Strength for nets; Dexterity for tridents).

- Any number equal to or less than the ability score indicates success.
- A roll of 20 is an automatic failure.
- If both creatures fail, the sahuagin's opponent remains trapped.
- If the sahuagin succeeds and the opponent fails, the opponent remains trapped.
- If the opponent succeeds and the sahuagin fails, the opponent gets free.

- If both the opponent and the sahuagin succeed, compare the opposed rolls. The creature with the highest successful number wins the roll. If the opponent has the higher number, he gets free. If the sahuagin has the higher number, the opponent remains trapped. If the die roll results in a tie the opponent also remains trapped.

If the sahuagin has a Strength score of 20 or more, it receives a bonus to its opposed roll when using a net (see page 39). Remember that a natural roll of 20 always fails. If the sahuagin and its opponent succeed in their ability rolls, apply the Strength bonus to the sahuagin's die roll when comparing both ability rolls.

NETS

A sahuagin can use a net as a melee weapon or fling it up to 10 yards. An attack with a net against a human-sized or smaller target must hit Armor Class 10 modified by the targets' Dexterity score and magical protection (if any). Note that the type of armor worn by the target has no effect on whether or not the net entraps him. A hit is automatic against a sleeping or helpless opponent. A successful attack traps and immobilizes any unarmored target. If the net misses, the sahuagin can recover it and attack again the next round.

Opponents wearing armor (of any kind), and creatures possessing a natural Armor Class of at least 5, have a chance to shake off the net. This feat, however, requires a minimum Strength score* of at least 16. A trapped opponent escapes the net if it makes a successful opposed Strength roll against the sahuagin wielding the net.

Multiple sahuagin can, however, work together to hold a net over a trapped opponent. The opponent suffers a -1 penalty to its Strength (for purposes of the opposed ability roll) for each extra sahuagin; characters with exceptional Strength lose a full point.

Usually, two sahuagin work together with a normal-sized net. These nets are about eight feet in diameter, sufficient to trap a single human-sized creature. Sahuagin sometimes use much larger nets against more sizable foes or groups of smaller foes. These nets require at least one sahuagin per size class of the target beyond medium size. For example, it takes two sahuagin to wield a net large enough to trap a large creature, three to trap a huge creature, and so on. Because these larger nets are unwieldy, even for sahuagin, the target can avoid entrapment by making a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon. If the net misses, it takes all the sahuagin wielding it two rounds to recover and prepare it for another attack.

Thrusting or piercing (type P) or bludgeoning (type B) weapons do not harm the net. Thus, sahuagin use daggers, tridents, and spears to stab at creatures tangled in their nets. Slashing weapons (type S) inflict their normal damage on nets. A typical net has 25 hit points (see Chapter 7 for more details). DMs should note that sahuagin claws are slashing weapons and will damage the net as well as an opponent trapped within it. DMs should consider sahuagin bites, on the other hand, as piercing weapons.

Trapped creatures lose all benefits from shield or Dexterity and cannot move, fight, cast spells, or take any other action except to try and free themselves. Furthermore, any Dexterity checks made by entangled opponents suffer a -4 penalty, and all attackers receive a

AN EXAMPLE OF SAHUAGIN COMBAT

Ceth, a warrior with a Strength score of 17 and a Dexterity of 16, battles a four-armed sahuagin prince. In keeping with his watery surroundings, Ceth wears *bracers of defense*, *Armor Class 2*, which allow him to evade the first attack from the prince's net.

During the second round of combat, Ceth wins initiative and wounds the prince. Then the prince attacks, casting his net over Ceth and simultaneously pinning the warrior with a trident.

During the third round, the prince wins initiative, and Ceth suffers 1d6+8 points of damage from the trident and the prince's Strength score. Fortunately for Ceth, the prince cannot make any attacks this round because he's holding the warrior at bay with his trident.

Now it is Ceth's turn to

act. The warrior cannot move or attack until he shakes off the net. Unfortunately, Ceth cannot get free of the net until he rids himself of the trident, so he attempts an opposed ability roll.

Ceth rolls a 12 on a 1d20 for his opposed ability check. Since his Dexterity is 16, the warrior succeeds. The prince has a Dexterity rating of 12, plus 2 points for Ceth's armor class (see the Trident section on the previous page) for a total of 14. The prince rolls a 10, also good enough to succeed. However, Ceth's opposed ability roll was higher, so the warrior dislodges the trident.

Ceth can now try to shake off the net. He rolls a 4 and makes his opposed Strength check. However, the prince, whose Strength score is 20, rolls a 3. Unfortunately for Ceth, the prince gains a +1 bonus to his opposed Strength rolls due to his high Strength rating (see

+4 attack bonus when assaulting trapped opponents. In addition, sahuagin nets contain hundreds of tiny hooks which inflict 1d4 points of damage plus the sahuagin's strength bonus (if any) each round to opponents not protected by metal armor.

Any character trapped in a net sinks at a rate of 10 feet each round. If the trapped character carries more than 30 pounds of armor and equipment, he sinks 40 feet every round. Sahuagin can, however, prevent the trapped character from sinking without any special effort. If a sahuagin takes no other action beyond keeping the creature wrapped in the net, it can drag a human-sized victim over land at the rate of 15 feet each round, or swim at half speed with the tangled victim in tow. A sahuagin swimming straight down while towing a netted opponent moves at a rate 36.

Each attempt to break free from a sahuagin net takes an entire round. A successful escape from a net inflicts 2d6 points of damage on the net. If the escaping creature possesses any Strength-based damage bonuses, it applies to the damage inflicted on the net.

Sahuagin also can wield their barbed nets in melee. These nets inflict 1d4 points of damage plus the wielder's Strength-based damage bonus (if any). These nets disarm opponents on a natural attack roll of 20.

Using Nets and Tridents Together

Sahuagin cannot throw a net over a foe impaled on a trident unless the net is big enough to cover both combatants. They can, however, impale a netted creature with their tridents. The trapped creature must then dislodge the trident before attempting to shake off the net. Note that the trapped creature can make both attempts in the same round, but cannot perform any other actions.

Escaping by sheer force

An opponent trapped in a net or impaled on a trident can attempt a bend bars roll to tear loose the net *or* trident (not both). An opponent can only make one such roll in a single round. If the roll succeeds, the opponent suffers 3d4 points of damage as it tears the barbs and tines out of its flesh.

page 39), so his actual number is a 4. Ceth remains trapped in the net because of the tie. Ceth is not wearing metal armor, and at the end of this round (his first full round in the net) he suffers 1d4+8 points of damage from the barbed net.

On the next round, the prince wins initiative and jabs Ceth with the trident again (for 1d6+8 points of damage), forcing the warrior to deal with the trident before shaking off the net. Ceth wins the opposed Dexterity roll and dislodges the trident. The warrior then attempts to free himself from the net; he rolls a 17 for his opposed Strength roll and succeeds. The prince rolls a 20 and fails (natural 20s always fail). Ceth shakes off the net, causing it 2d6 points of damage plus 1 point for his Strength score of 17. The warrior's double escape ends his actions for the round, and the fight continues.

* If a creature has no Dexterity rating, its Dexterity score equals its land movement rate or 1/2 its flying or swimming movement rate—whichever is higher. Thus, a Sahuagin has a Dexterity rating of 12.

If the subability rules from *PLAYER'S OPTION™: Skills & Powers* are in play, the DM should assign sahuagin Aim scores of 12 and Balance scores of 16 (they effectively have a racial bonus of +4 to Balance).

** To determine the Strength rating for a creature without ability scores, give the creature a base score of 3 ½ points per size category (Tiny = 3, Small = 7, Medium = 10, Large = 14, Huge = 17, Gargantuan = 21) plus 1 point per Hit Die. For example, a merrow (4 HD, size Large) has a Strength score of 18 (14 points for its size plus 4 points for its Hit

SENSES

The sahuagin's extraordinary senses help make them masters of their undersea environment. Sahuagin see, hear, smell, and even feel the sea around them in ways surface dwellers cannot hope to match.

SIGHT

Sahuagin can pierce the gloom of the depths at least three times as well as humans or demihumans. The sahuagin eye not only gathers more light than a surface dweller's but also retains its focusing ability under increasing pressure. In addition, the visual cortex in the sahuagin brain can identify submerged objects easily and correct for distortions caused by refraction. (See Chapter 5 in *Of Ships and the Sea* for more details on impediments to underwater vision).

The tables on the opposite page give the general ranges of sahuagin vision underwater. As a rough comparison, humans and demihumans can see only about one-third the distances given on the tables, and their vision deteriorates three times as rapidly with depth. See *Of Ships and the Sea* for details.

The sahuagin eye remains equally efficient above water—especially at night. Sahuagin night vision is about twice as acute as human night vision. While their daylight surface vision is roughly equal to the human norm, sahuagin avoid light when they can (see the Limitations section on page 35 for more details). To determine the range of sahuagin vision on the surface, see Table 62 in the *Player's Handbook* and make the following modifications:

- Double all ranges—except the detail column—under the conditions of *fog* (all types), *night* (both types) and *twilight* conditions.
- Reduce the ranges in the *clear sky* condition by half to allow for the sahuagin's sensitivity to light.

HEARING

Compared to a surface dweller, a sahuagin's underwater hearing is phenomenal—though they do not quite have the auditory acuity attributed to them by scholars.

Sahuagin have several advantages over surface dwellers when it comes to detecting underwater sounds. First, their lack of external ears eliminates the “white noise” experienced by a human. Second, their hearing apparatus actually extends over most of their bodies, thanks to organs called lateral lines (see Chapter 1). Third, their brains have a superior ability to process auditory information. Sahuagin detect underwater sounds more readily than surface dwellers and are more apt to identify a particular sound.

Surprisingly, sahuagin do not exhibit any particular sensitivity to sonic attacks. Though their ears are acute, layers of bone and muscle shield them from intense shocks.

When visiting the surface, however, a sahuagin's hearing proves decidedly inferior to a human's. The creature's hearing remains tuned to the denser medium of water—leaving it somewhat hard of hearing. A sahuagin on the surface hears about as well as a human with his hands loosely cupped over his ears. Under such conditions, a sahuagin can hear most sounds but has trouble identifying soft or distant ones. A sahuagin also has difficulty pinpointing the source of a sound above water.

The table on page 28 gives the general limits to sahuagin hearing underwater. By comparison, humans and demihumans can detect and identify sounds at about one-tenth of the ranges noted on the table.

Sahuagin Vision—Clear Water

Surface Condition	Movement	Spotted	Type	ID	Detail
Clear Day	300	250	200	125	10
Overcast	250	150	125	75	10
Stormy	150	100	75	50	5
Moonlit Night	100	75	50	25	5
Moonless Night	75	50	25	10	10'

Sahuagin Vision—Turbid Water

Surface Condition	Movement	Spotted	Type	ID	Detail
Clear Day	240	180	120	60	10
Overcast	120	90	60	30	10
Stormy	60	45	30	15	5
Moonlit Night	45	30	15	5**	—
Moonless Night	30	15	10'	5**	—

Sahuagin Vision—Murky Water

Surface Condition	Movement	Spotted	Type	ID	Detail
Clear Day	100	50	30	15	5
Overcast	75	30	15	10	10'
Stormy	50	15	10	5**	5'
Moonlit Night	25	10	5*	5**	—
Moonless Night	10	5	5*	5**	—

Notes:

Unless otherwise noted, all ranges are in yards.

*A sahuagin's ability to spot or identify creatures at this range actually depends more on its non-visual senses than on sight.

Clear Water refers to a body of water generally free of heavy silt, algae, or other visual impediments. It is the default classification for the sea.

Depth Modifier: A sahuagin's depth modifies its total range of vision, because there is less ambient light at greater depths. For every 150 feet of depth below the surface, move the surface condition down one slot. For example, a sahuagin goes for a swim on a Clear Day. Normally, he can spot movement up to 300 yards away. However, he decides to investigate a shipwreck 310 feet below him. Because he has moved to a depth below 300 feet, he can see as if he were swimming in *Clear Water* on a Stormy day, and can only spot movement up to 150 yards away.

Once a sahuagin moves beyond a depth of 750 feet—or suffers a depth modifier that would move him beyond Moonless Night—he sees as if he were swimming on a Moonless Night in *turbid water*. If the sahuagin moves down another 100 feet, he is unable to see at all.

Turbid Water refers to water that contains a moderate amount of silt, algae, swirling sands, seaweed, or other visual impediments. It is the default classification for fresh water.

Depth Modifier: For every 100 feet of depth below the surface, move the surface condition down one slot. For example, a sahuagin swimming at a depth of 120 feet on an Overcast day in *turbid water* would actually see as if he were swimming on a Stormy day.

If a sahuagin moves down to a depth beyond 500 feet—or suffers a depth modifier that moves him beyond the Moonless Night surface condition—he is unable to see.

Murky Water refers to water that contains excessive amounts of algae, seaweed, mud, or other visual impediments. This is the default classification of swamps, lagoons, and stagnant bodies of water.

Depth Modifier: For every 30 feet of depth below the surface, move the surface condition down one slot. Thus, a sahuagin swimming 65 feet below the dark surface of a lagoon during a Storm would actually see as if he were traveling during a Moonless Night.

If a character moves down beyond a depth of 150 feet—or suffers a depth modifier that moves him beyond the Moonless Night surface condition—he is unable to see.

Clear Day is the equivalent of bright sunshine and a cloudless sky.

Overcast surface conditions contain heavy cloud cover, light rain, light to medium fog, or any other meteorological phenomenon that blocks sunlight from penetrating the surface.

Stormy surface conditions are the equivalent of heavy rain, heavy fog, gale force winds, blizzards, and other heavy storms. Not only do these dangerous weather conditions block sunlight, but they also stir up sediment and other underwater debris that clouds vision.

Moonlit Night refers to clear nighttime surface conditions that allow moonlight to shine into the water.

Moonless Night refers to cloudy nighttime surface conditions that effectively block all moonlight and starlight from illuminating the water.

Movement is the maximum distance at which sahuagin can spot motion underwater. Note that the sahuagin cannot discern anything about the creature (ie, what type of creature or the size of the creature) at this distance.

Spotted is the maximum distance at which sahuagin can detect the presence of a stationary figure. Again, they cannot discern further information about the figure at this distance.

Type is the maximum distance at which sahuagin can note the general classification (fish-like, humanoid, square) of the spotted figure or object.

ID is the maximum distance at which sahuagin can identify an object or figure. At this distance sahuagin can note the exact race or species of a humanoid figure.

Detail is the maximum distance at which sahuagin can see actions—including those as surreptitious as pick-pocketing—emotions, and individual physical features.

Sahuagin Hearing

Noise	Hearing Range (Yards)
Natural	4,000
Moderate	7,000
Heavy	11,000
Cataclysmic	40,000
Speech	150
Simple	75
Complex	50
Surface Activity	1,500
Moderate	2,000
Heavy	4,000
Underwater Activity	2,000
Moderate	3,500
Heavy	7,000

Notes

In all cases except for speech, the number listed is the maximum range a sahuagin can hear a particular sound and recognize it for what it is. A sahuagin can note the sound at up to twice the listed range, but not know for sure what it is. Speech is a special case, see below.

Natural noise refers to natural phenomena that occur above or below the surface of water—such as the pounding of surf, or a steady rainfall.

Moderate natural phenomena include heavy surf, mud slides, peals of thunder, and large objects falling into the water.

Heavy natural phenomena includes small sea-quakes, underwater eruptions, and other major geological events.

Cataclysmic events include major sea-quakes, large underwater eruptions, and any other geological phenomenon that threatens an entire ecosystem.

Speech refers to a variety of sounds produced with the intent of communicating with another creature. This category includes verbal speech—such as that used by human, demihuman, and humanoid creatures—as well as the pure-sound languages (clicks, whistles, buzzes) employed by whales, dolphins, and a host of smaller marine creatures.

The numbers given under the general *speech* category refer to the maximum distance at which a sahuagin can recognize specific sounds as speech. The creature cannot understand what is being said, but knows someone is talking.

Simple speech refers to one or two-word phrases or simple ideas—such as “go up”, “danger”, and “flee”. A sahuagin can eavesdrop and understand such speech at the listed range if it knows the language being used.

Complex speech refers to anything more complex than Simple speech. Whole sentences or concepts such as “swim 50 feet up and investigate that coral reef” are examples of Complex speech. A sahuagin within the listed range can understand such speech

Sahuagin—and most other intelligent marine creatures—have verbal and auditory capabilities far beyond what surface dwellers enjoy. If two sahuagin speak, increase all ranges by a factor of 10. That is, a sahuagin can recognize its own language as “speech” from up to 1,500 yards away, and two sahuagin can have a complex conversation at a range of 500 yards.

Note that sahuagin deepsong (see page 33) has an even greater range.

Surface Activity refers to man-made sounds produced by activity above the surface of water—such as the sounds made by rowing a boat, loud conversation (yelling orders, for example), sailing a ship, and fishing.

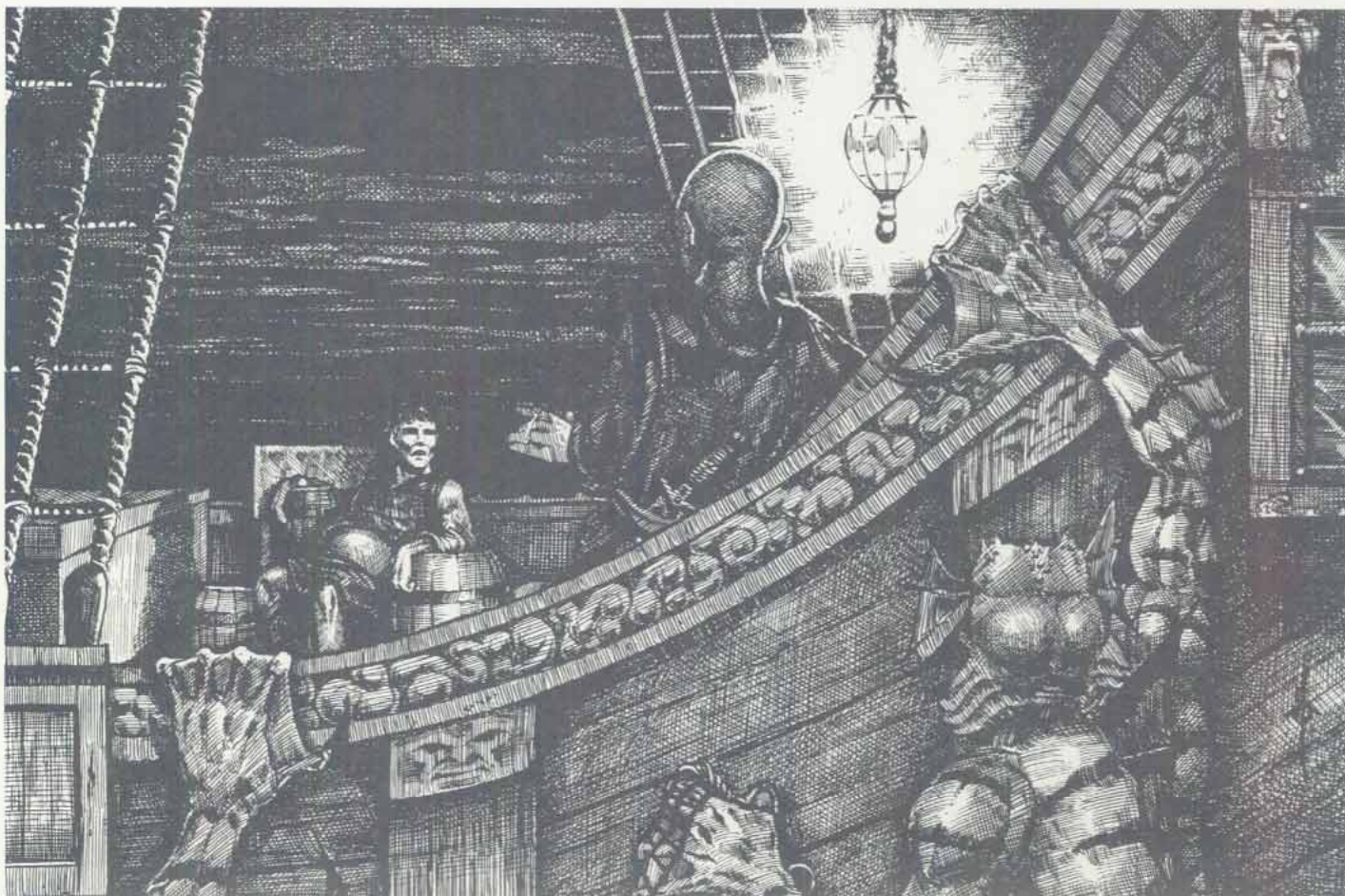
Moderate surface activity refers to the sounds produced by a man-sized or smaller creature jumping or falling into the water, the sounds of a person swimming, and the sounds made by a person running across the bottom deck of a ship.

Heavy surface activity refers to surface combat, dropping anchor, and construction.

Underwater Activity refers to those sounds produced by undersea creatures in their own environment—such as the normal clicks, whistles, and buzzes made by small sea creatures.

Moderate underwater activity includes the use of tools underwater, the sounds produced by medium to huge marine creatures, and the sounds of combat with non-metallic weapons.

Heavy underwater activity includes combat with surface weapons, spell effects, and underwater construction.



SMELL

A sahuagin's olfactory sense can detect the smell of blood in the water from as much as a mile away. This sense is so acute that a sahuagin can track a lightly wounded creature from that distance. At closer ranges, a sahuagin's nose helps it sniff out opponents or prey it cannot see or hear.

Fortunately for adventurers, the scent of blood doesn't travel as quickly as sound underwater and it may take upwards of an hour for the scent of blood to reach any sea devils in the vicinity. Quick bandaging usually prevents sea devils from tracking a wounded adventurer. However, blood from a severe wound or a slain creature inevitably comes to the sahuagin's notice if they lurk nearby. Prudent adventurers will leave the area before the sahuagin come to investigate.

The sahuagin's sense of smell is even more acute on land; in fact, it rivals that of the finest bloodhound.

Sahuagin also possess the ability to sense weak electrical fields. Networks of sensory pits located in their snouts can literally detect the neural activities of most higher animals. This, combined with their acute sense of smell and their ability to sense vibrations through their lateral lines, allows them to unerringly track prey or enemies underwater—at least at close range. Even in the thickest murk or darkest night, sahuagin can sense other creatures and attack them as readily as a human could in daylight.

If the optional critical hit rules from the *Combat & Tactics* book are in play, sahuagin ignore all grazed and struck effects.

Although sahuagin tolerate environmental heat well, they have no special resistance to heat or fire damage. In fact, sea devils prove especially susceptible to damage from any kind of magical fire (see the Limitations section on page 35 for more details).

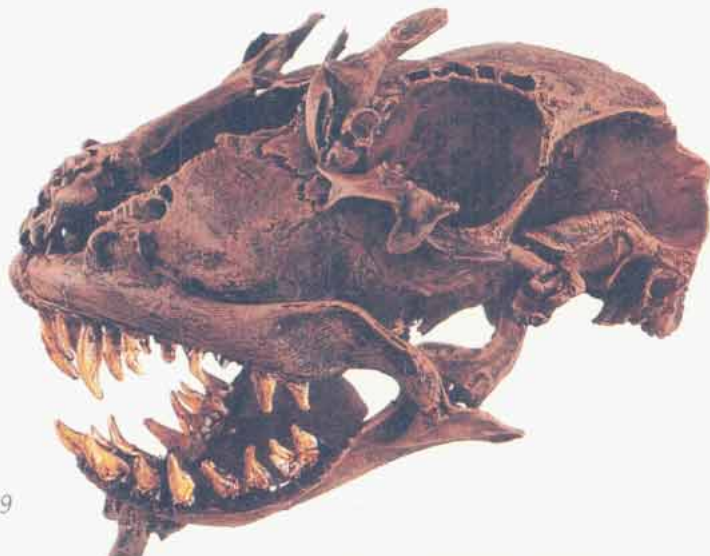
For example, sahuagin function quite well in the intense heat generated near a deep sea thermal vent—even though the hot water might induce heat stroke in humans who spend too much time in the vicinity. However, a fireball spell (perhaps cast in the confines of an *airy water* sphere) could devastate the creatures.

In any campaign, a sahuagin should possess the Direction Sense nonweapon proficiency from the *Player's Handbook*. When underwater and within 50 miles of its lair, any use of the proficiency or trait automatically succeeds. When above water or farther way from home, the proficiency functions normally (a typical sahuagin's proficiency score is 15).

OTHER SENSES

Sahuagin enjoy a sense of taste on par with human capabilities. Their sense of touch, however, is inferior to the human norm, as their clawed digits and scaly skin prevent detailed tactile impressions. Sahuagin dislike cold, but have a high degree of tolerance for heat (not fire) and pain.

As noted in Chapter 1, sea devils have extraordinary senses of balance and never become dizzy or disoriented as a result of violent motion. Their superior equilibrium and intimate knowledge of the sea also gives them an unerring sense of direction, at least underwater.



DETECTING INVISIBLE CREATURES

A sahuagin can effectively detect invisible creatures underwater in a 30-foot radius. This ability negates the effects of invisibility and poor visibility on melee attacks in most cases—though penalties from light-induced blindness still apply (see the Limitations section on page 35 for more details). In addition, sahuagin ignore movement and saving throw penalties for poor visibility (see Table 72 in the *DUNGEON MASTER*® Guide for more details).

This power loses its effectiveness against creatures without working central nervous systems—such as undead, oozes, slimes, jellies, and golems. If the sahuagin cannot see these creatures, it suffers a –2 penalty to attack rolls.

A sahuagin's ability to detect vibration and neural activity makes it very hard to fool with illusions of any kind when cast underwater. Once a sahuagin comes within 30 feet of any illusory creature, it automatically gains a saving throw. If successful, the sahuagin immediately detects the illusion. If the saving throw fails, the sahuagin repeats the attempt each round until it detects the illusion. This ability is automatic; the sahuagin need not suspect the existence of an illusion for it to work. Note that sahuagin have only a normal chance to notice illusions at ranges greater than 30 feet if they have a reason to suspect one.

BLOOD FRENZY

Few surface dwellers have witnessed the predatory abandon of a sahuagin blood frenzy. Like their companions, the sharks, sahuagin can fall prey to an uncontrollable urge to kill when swimming in water tainted with too much blood. Sahuagin in the throes of a blood frenzy never retreat and may start fighting with each other once all their foes have been slain. Though extremely frightening and horrific, a blood frenzy can work to the advantage of the sahuagin abandon their usual cunning tactics and fight like mindless beasts.

Curiously, it seems to be the presence of sahuagin blood that triggers the frenzy. Adventurers who dump blood and offal into the sea in the hopes of triggering a frenzy may attract every roaming shark in the vicinity, but it won't affect the sea devils one whit.

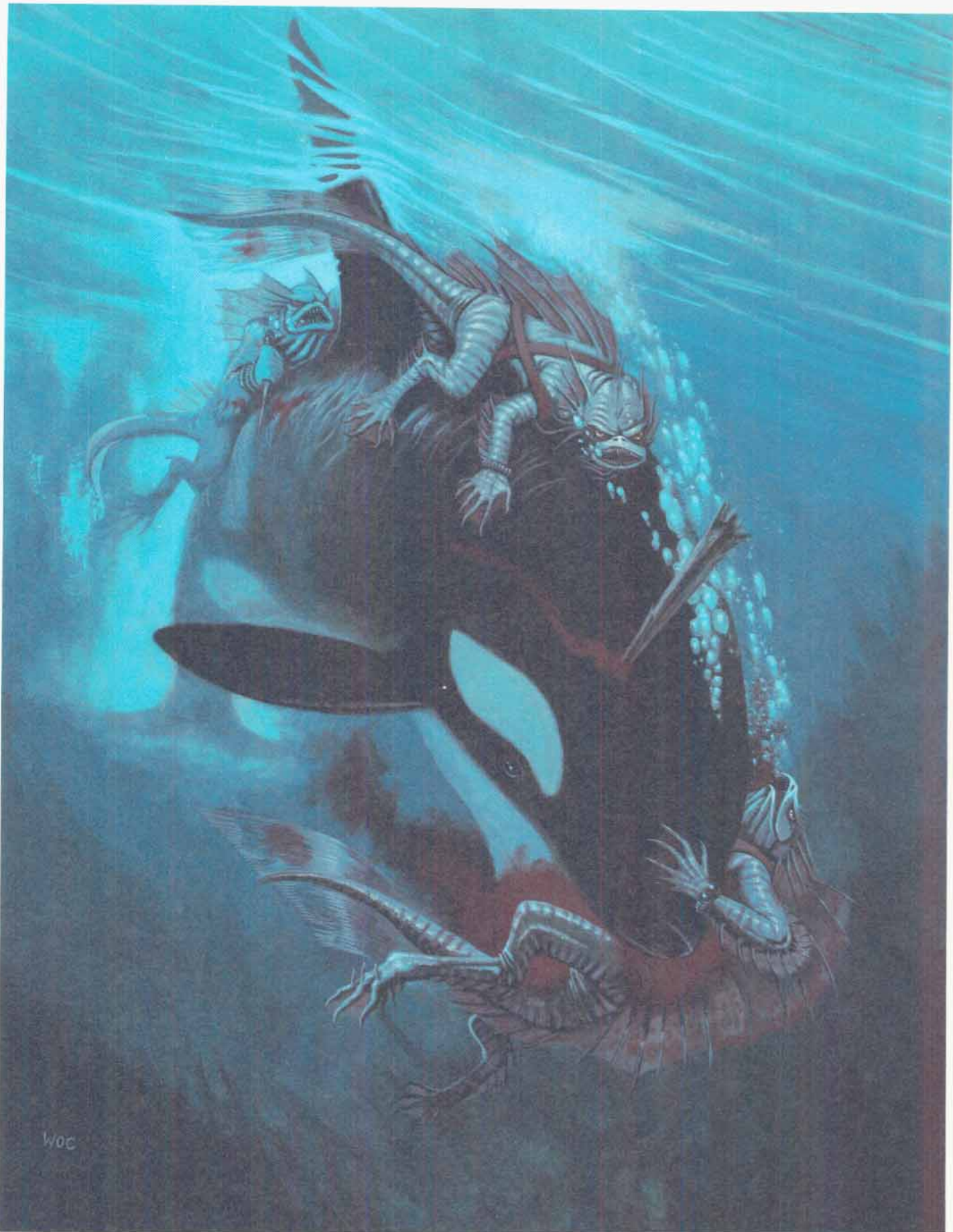
A blood frenzy can occur whenever a group of sahuagin fighters fail a morale check (see Chapter 9 in the *DUNGEON MASTER* Guide for more information) during an underwater combat in which sahuagin blood has been spilled. If the group's morale fails, the DM should roll a saving throw vs. paralysis for the most powerful surviving sahuagin. If the saving throw succeeds, that sahuagin leads the group in an orderly retreat from the scene. If the saving throw fails, the most powerful sahuagin succumbs to the blood-rage of a frenzy, and all other sahuagin present follow suit.

A sahuagin in a blood frenzy does not gain any special combat advantages. However, frenzied sahuagin are immune to magical charm and fear effects. In addition, they do not need to make further morale checks. Frenzied sea devils usually attack their closest foes. However, if a magical effect caused the original morale check, at least some sahuagins attack the being who created the effect.

The sahuagin continue attacking until they or their foes are slain. If the sea devils prevail, the most powerful survivor can attempt another saving throw vs. paralysis. Success ends the blood frenzy. If the saving throw fails, the frenzy continues and the sea devils attack each other. Each time the sahuagin slay one of their own, the most powerful survivor can attempt another saving throw to end the frenzy. Should the sea devils kill all but one of their number, the final survivor can attempt a saving throw to recover from the frenzy. If that saving throw fails, the survivor goes in search of a new opponent and attacks the first creature it meets. If the lone sahuagin slays the creature, it can attempt a new saving throw to end its frenzied state.

If the saving throw fails it must repeat the process.

Sahuagin fighting out of the water are not subject to blood frenzy.



SHARK CONTROL

Sahuagin possess an innate ability to communicate with sharks. This communication is fairly simple, as sharks have limited intelligence. Sahuagin can communicate concepts such as “food,” “danger,” and “enemy.” These concepts allow devil men and sharks to fight in a coordinated manner, participate in “reconnaissance” missions, and guard an area against encroachment.



Sahuagin can communicate with sharks at ranges up to 50 yards. However, sharks are not immediately friendly toward sahuagin, and the two species occasionally prey on each other. If a sahuagin has no immediate hostile intentions toward a shark, however, the sea devil has a chance to befriend it. Sahuagin cannot befriend hostile sharks or sharks under another sahuagin's control. This ability only works on normal sharks with animal intelligence.

To befriend a shark, a sahuagin must approach—unarmed and in a friendly manner—within 25 yards of the creature. The shark gets a saving throw vs. rod, staff, or wand to avoid the effect. However, the shark suffers a -1 penalty to its saving throw for every three full Hit Dice of the sahuagin. For example, a shark attacked by a royal guard or king (9 HD) suffers a -3 penalty, while one attacked by a sahuagin warrior (2 HD) does not suffer a penalty.

If the shark's saving throw succeeds, it either flees the area (1 to 4 on a d6) or attacks the sahuagin trying to befriend it (5 or 6 on a d6). A sahuagin can try to befriend a particular shark only once a day. In addition, sahuagin can befriend only one shark at any given time.

If the shark's saving throw fails, it becomes friendly to the sahuagin. Thereafter, the sahuagin can release the shark or bring it back to its home community. After a day in the community, the shark attaches itself to the group as a whole and obeys commands from anyone in it. If a community keeps more than eight sharks, there is a non-cumulative 10% chance per week that one of the extra sharks goes berserk and attacks anything nearby. As a result, the sahuagin seldom bring more than eight sharks into a community for any appreciable length of time.

Note that large sahuagin towns or cities consist of neighborhoods containing 20 to 80 sea devils. Each neighborhood can keep up to eight sharks; the sahuagin carefully watch the neighborhood sharks to see that they remain separated.

If not introduced to the community, a befriended shark obeys commands only from the sahuagin who befriended it. This effect ends if the commanding sahuagin dies, befriends another shark, leaves the water, or moves out of the 50-yard communication range.

COMMUNICATION

The sahuagin language consists of thumps, ticks, pings, and whistles generated by an organ inside their skulls (see pages 6–7). Many sounds of the sahuagin language are pitched too high for humans and their ilk to hear. Thus, though most surface dwellers can recognize the sahuagin tongue as speech when they hear it, they possess insufficient auditory abilities to actually understand it. The sahuagin language carries well underwater, allowing complex communications at considerable distances (see page 28).

DEEPSONG

Sahuagin can exchange information over enormous distances through a communal vocalization known as deepsong. Creating deepsong requires considerable preparation and leaves the participants temporarily exhausted. The sahuagin seldom use it except when they are sure of their own security throughout the process. Because of its limits, deepsong proves unsuitable as a means of spreading an alarm; the sea devils usually dispatch swimmers to accomplish this task. Once begun, however, deepsong can reach for miles, allowing for quick communications between widely scattered communities. Thus, deepsong is an ideal medium for spreading news of a victory or calling the sea devils together for raiding or war.

Deepsong requires the combined efforts of at least one sahuagin priestess and one sahuagin noble of baron status or higher, plus a chorus of lesser sea devils. After resting at least half a day, the sahuagin group together and begin a haunting song that booms through the deeps, carrying whatever message the singers care to send.

The singers decide what types of creatures they will contact through the deepsong. Only those creatures can understand the message contained in the deepsong. Other creatures simply note the song as an unsettling murmur with an unidentifiable source. Creatures familiar with the sea devils can identify the murmur for what it is, but cannot discern its message.

To prepare for deepsong, all the singers must rest for at least 12 hours. They can engage in light activity, such as conversation, but cannot travel long distances, fight, or cast spells. After the rest period, the singers must agree on a message, usually dictated by the senior noble

in the group. Once begun, the directing priestess and noble determine the radius of the deepsong.

Deepsong Director's Status*	Radius	Singers**
Baron/ Senior Priestess	50-100 Miles	20
Prince/ High Priestess	500-750 Miles	100
King/ Royal High Priestess	1,500+ Miles	500

* If a priestess or noble of lesser status fills the director's role, reduce the deepsong's radius by half.

** These can be sahuagin of any type. Reduce the deepsong's radius by half if less than the required number of singers is available. If the number of singers drops to the number required for the next lowest level, use that radius instead. For example, if a king leads a group of 101 to 499 singers, the deepsong's radius is 750-1,500 miles. If only 100 singers are available, the radius falls to 500-750 miles.

*A tongues spell enables the caster to comprehend the sahuagin tongue and communicate with sea devils within a limited range. If the caster does not employ magical aid to increase his ability to hear underwater, he must be within five feet of a sahuagin to understand its speech via a tongues spell. If the caster has the benefit of a free action spell, helm of underwater action, or similar device that aids general underwater functioning (see *Of Ships and the Sea*), a tongues spell allows him to understand sahuagin speech at a range of 10 yards.*

In either case, by virtue of their superior hearing, sahuagin can understand the caster's speech from up to 500 yards away.

The singers must sing their message nine times to create the effect. After the song ends, each singer must rest one hour for each hour spent singing, or a minimum of one hour in any case. If forced to fight before fully rested, exhausted sahuagin suffer a -4 penalty to all attack rolls, saving throws, and ability checks. These penalties last until the sea devils complete their required rest.

Once a deepsong begins, the singers cannot change their message except by stopping and preparing another deepsong. Time spent recovering from one deepsong does not count toward preparations for the next one.



LIMITATIONS

Though powerful, the sea devils can hardly claim invincibility. A determined and wisely conceived effort can defeat the sahuagin—even in their undersea home. Foes who understand the sahuagin's weaknesses can expect to prevail given a reasonable force of arms and a modicum of good fortune.

LIGHT SENSITIVITY

Bright light harms sahuagin eyes, and the creatures never voluntarily expose themselves to full sunlight. They usually spend the daylight hours at least 100 feet below the surface of the sea, where they find comfort in the gloom. If forced to the surface during a clear day, they stumble about with half-closed eyes and seek to return to the depths at the earliest possible moment.

Magical light is the sahuagin's bane; the sudden flare of a *continual light* spell has saved many a party of surface dwellers from becoming a meal for the sea devils. Other light-producing magical effects prove equally useful.

FRESH WATER SENSITIVITY

Sahuagin find fresh water distasteful and avoid it when they can. Merely tossing a pail of rain water on a sahuagin has no real effect, other than to make the creature angry—the effect is similar to what one might expect from a human suddenly doused with a bucket of dirty dishwater on a hot day.

Still, sea devils generally avoid fresh water when they can. Adventurers equipped with spells such as *purify food and drink* or *potions of sweetwater* can sometimes force attacking sea devils to retreat.

Abrupt exposure to actual sunlight blinds a sahuagin for one full round. Blindness causes a -4 penalty to a sahuagin's attack rolls, saving throws involving evasion or dodging, and Armor Class. Blindness also reduces the creatures' movement by one-half.

Sahuagin recover from this initial blindness in one round. However, these creatures can move only at two-thirds their normal rate while exposed to sunlight. Sahuagin will seek to escape the sun as soon as the opportunity presents itself.

Merely being within the area of bright magical light—such as that generated by a *continual light* spell or its equivalent—blinds a sahuagin for one round, as noted above. After the blindness passes, however, the creature suffers no further impediments and does not feel compelled to escape—though it will do so unless it has some motivation to stay in the area. Less intense sources of magical light, such as a *light* spell or its equivalent, blind a sahuagin only if the sea devil fails a saving throw vs. death magic (note the saving throw penalty below).

Sahuagin suffer a -2 saving throw penalty against any light-based attack—such as the sunburst effect from a *wand of illumination*, a *color spray* spell, or a *light* spell cast directly on its eyes. Note that a *light* or *continual light* spell cast directly on a sahuagin's eyes blinds the creature for as long as the spell lasts, not just for one round.

Fairly weak sources of magical light, such as the light shed by an enchanted sword, have no appreciable effect on a sahuagin. Repeated use of bright light has no additional effect on a sahuagin unless the creature has been exposed to darkness or very dim light (such as twilight) for at least five minutes between exposures.

For example, characters defending a ship from a night assault by sahuagin couldn't keep their foes blinded by using several different *continual light* spells on successive rounds. However, they could loose one *continual light* spell, allow normal darkness to fall over the ship for five minutes, and then blind the sahuagin again with another spell.

Any combat penalties caused by light-induced blindness apply even when a sahuagin could normally use its power to detect invisible opponents underwater. Light not only harms a sahuagin's eyes; it also causes disorientation.

Riverside communities do not usually need to fear an attack by sahuagin swimming upstream from the sea.

SUSCEPTIBILITY TO MAGICAL FIRE

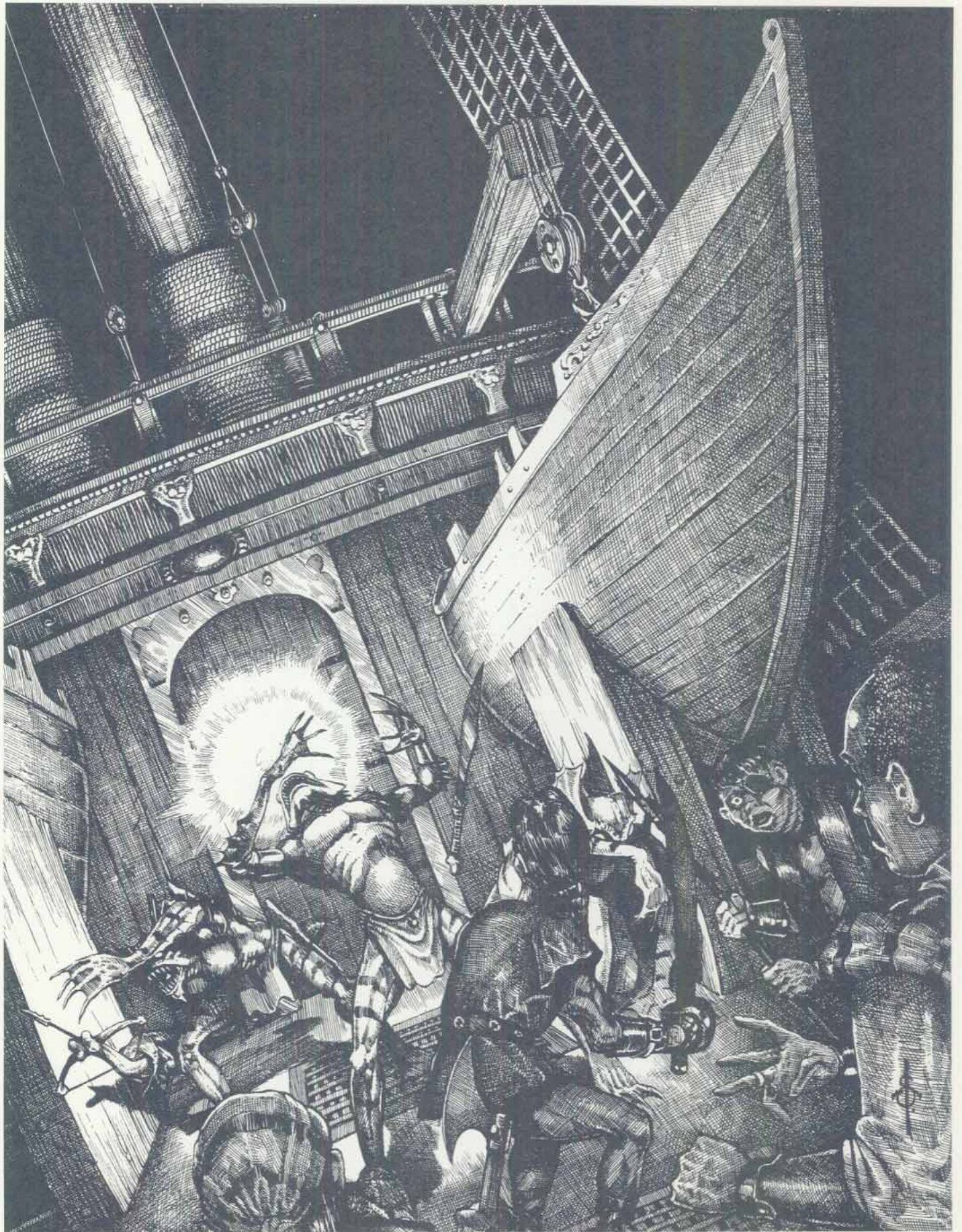
Though well adapted to tropical heat, magical flame mercilessly scorches sahuagin flesh; their fluid-filled tissues shrivel quickly when exposed to the searing heat of a *fireball* spell.

Sahuagin suffer a -2 penalty to saving throws vs. all forms of magical fire. They also receive an additional point of damage per die of damage from these attacks. A *flame tongue* sword has a $+3$ bonus when used against sahuagin, but only when flaming. Note that the sword's flame does not function underwater.

LAND ACTIVITY

Sea devils become much less formidable when they leave their ocean home. In most cases, they lose the use of their powerful kick attacks (though a sahuagin attacking a foe from a higher elevation might find kicking easier than biting). In addition, they lose their ability to detect unseen foes at short range, and they find themselves exposed to potentially devastating fire-based attacks.

Sahuagin cannot function out of water indefinitely, and their forays on the surface usu-



ally remain limited to the span of a single evening. Any number of factors contribute to these limitations, but chief among them are the sahuagin's lack of lungs and their general adaptation to underwater life. A sahuagin's gills can extract oxygen from water, but only while they remain damp. Inevitably, a sea devil's gills dry out, forcing them to return to the sea. Even when a sahuagin manages to keep its gills wet (most carry bladders of seawater along on land trips, just for this purpose), a sea devil is accustomed to the extra buoyancy supplied by the sea. Though a sea devil has more than enough natural strength to support its bulk, the unaccustomed strain eventually exhausts the creature.

Sahuagin cannot abide fresh water. Unexpected immersion in a small amount of fresh water forces a sahuagin to make a saving throw vs. poison. If successful, the creature shrugs off the effect. If the saving throw fails, the sea devil immediately retreats and will not reenter the fresh water area. Sahuagin must be completely immersed in the water to experience this effect.

A sahuagin can deliberately expose itself to a natural body of fresh water, but must attempt a saving throw the moment it enters. If the saving throw fails, the creature immediately leaves and will not try to enter that body of fresh water again for at least a day. Even if the saving throw succeeds, the creature must attempt a new saving throw (with a +1 bonus) every turn thereafter. If any subsequent saving throw fails, the creature must swim back to saltwater by the fastest possible route. If this happens at night, a sahuagin will rush to the surface and walk back to the sea if it can get there in less than an hour. While forced to remain in fresh water, a sahuagin fights and makes saving throws as a creature with only half its Hit Dice and suffers a -4 penalty to all ability checks.

Note: Uncorking a *potion of sweetwater* under the sea creates a globe of fresh water with a 30-foot radius. A *purify food and drink* spell cast on seawater renders the water around a single sahuagin fresh, but only if the caster is at least 6th level. For every 6 levels beyond the minimum (that is, at 12th-level, 18th-level, and so on), the caster can effect another sahuagin, but only if all the targets occupy the same 10-foot cube.

In the open sea, a volume of water purified by magic remains pure enough to deter sahuagin for 3d4 rounds. If a creature purifies the water through the use of a *potion of sweetwater*, the DM should count any 1s rolled on the dice as 2s (for a minimum duration of 6 rounds).

FEAR OF MAGIC

Many surface scholars have reported that sahuagin have an almost paralyzing fear of magic. Unfortunately, this is untrue; if the mere casting of a spell could paralyze a sea devil with fear, many wizards and priests who venture beneath the waves might have a better chance at surviving.

Nevertheless, sahuagin imagine that any foe with magical abilities—including spell-like abilities and magical items that produce spell-like effects—poses the greatest possible threat. They always respond to a perceived magical attack in some fashion, directing their most potent attacks against magic-wielding foes and paying scant attention to opponents using only physical methods.

Clever parties can exploit this behavior in many ways. One such way is to use magic to draw the sea devil's attention away from somewhere else. Another is to launch magical attacks from two different directions, thus prompting the sahuagin to split up and attack each source of magic.

A sahuagin can remain out of the water for four hours without penalty. If it cannot return to water within that time, the sea devil must immediately roll a saving throw vs. poison. If successful, the sea devil functions normally. However, it must repeat this saving throw every turn thereafter.

If the save fails, sahuagin suffer weakness from pain and asphyxiation. These weakened sahuagin suffer a -2 penalty to all attack rolls, saving throws, and ability checks. They must also repeat the saving throw every turn. Should a weakened sahuagin fail its saving throw a second time, it loses consciousness and remains unconscious until returned to the water. An unconscious sea devil dies if not returned to the water within four hours.

After returning to the water, a weakened sea devil immediately regains full strength. An unconscious sea devil regains consciousness immediately when immersed in water, but remains weak, as noted above, for one hour.

In any case, a sea devil who has ventured onto the surface must spend at least as much time underwater as it did exposed to air before venturing to the surface again. If it does not do so, treat all trips to the surfaces as a single visit.

For example, a sahuagin scout spends an hour and half investigating a coastal village before returning to the sea. After only a half hour in the water, it joins an attack on that village. The scout must attempt his first saving throw against weakness after only two and a half hours because he did not spend enough time underwater to fully recover from his first trip.

Because the limit to sahuagin endurance on the surface arises from both dryness and gravity, merely inducing dryness through *cantrips*, *transmute water to dust* spells, or mundane means—such as flinging dry sand over a sea devil—has no appreciable effect on the creature.

ANGUILLIANS

Anguillians possess the same general range of powers and limitations as sahuagin. However, they are not subject to blood frenzy and do not fear magic.

Anguillians can withstand even greater pressures than sahuagin, and often dive to depths of 2,400 feet or more.

MALENTI

Malenti have slightly less mobility in the water than their fellow sahuagin; their base swimming speed is 18. Malenti eyes allow them to see as far as other sahuagin, but they have no sensitivity to light. In addition, these creatures are not susceptible to fire.

Malenti can track unseen creatures just as other sahuagin, but their elven faces lack sensory pits and can only detect invisible creatures within a 15-foot radius. Thus, all malenti suffer a -2 attack penalty against all types of unseen opponents. Some malenti (about one in four) can note and locate any sea elf within 120 feet, no matter how well hidden or disguised (these malenti can attack unseen sea elves without penalty).

Malenti do experience blood frenzy, but only when fighting alongside other sahuagin. In addition, malenti can survive on land much more easily than other sahuagin; they can remain there for days rather than hours (see Chapter 2 in *The Complete Book of Elves* for details).

Malenti can also acquire a character class—just as an elf (though it seems unlikely that the mutant would receive training as a wizard in the sahuagin community where it was born).

An adult malenti has 2+2 Hit Dice, regardless of gender; a malenti with a character class retains its two Hit Dice, gaining additional Hit Dice appropriate to its class upon reaching third level and beyond.



SAHUAGIN QUICK REFERENCE

Sahuagin	Hit Dice	Size ¹	Strength ²	Claw Damage ³	Bite Damage	Combat Bonuses ⁴	Base THACO ⁵	XP Value ⁶
Hatchling	1/2	T	4	1/1	1	—	20	7
Warrior	2+2	M	14	1d2/1d4	1d4	—	19	175
Female	2	M	12	1d2/1d4	1d4	—	19	175
Under Priestess ⁷	2+2 (2)	M	14	1d2/1d4	1d4	—	19	270
	3+3 (3)	M	15	1d2/1d4	1d4	—	17	420
	4+4 (4)	M	15	1d2/1d4	1d4	—	15	650
Lieutenant/ Baronial Guard	3+3	M	16	1d2/1d4	1d4	0/+1	17	270
Chieftain	4+4	M	17	1d2/1d4	1d4	+1/+1	15	420
Senior Priestess ⁷	5+5 (5)	M	17	1d2/1d4	1d4	+1/+1	15	2,000
Baron	6+6	L	19	1d3/1d6	1d6	+3/+7	13	975
Royal Under ⁷ Priestess	7+7 (7)	L	19	1d3/1d6	1d6	+3/+7	13	3,000
High Priestess ⁷	8+8 (8)	L	20 (1)	1d4/1d8	1d8	+3/+8	11	4,000/6,000
Prince	8+8	L	20 (1)	1d4/1d8	1d8	+3/+8	11	2,000/4,000
Royal High ⁷ Priestess	9+9 (9)	L	21 (2)	1d4/1d8	1d8	+4/+9	11	5,000/7,000
Royal Guard	9+9	L	21 (2)	1d6/1d10	1d10	+4/+9	11	3,000/5,000
King	10+10	L	22 (3)	1d8/1d12	1d12	+4/+10	9	4,000/6,000

Notes

1. Size category from the MONSTROUS MANUAL™ tome.
2. Effective Strength score. The number in parentheses applies as a bonus to the opposed roll when the sahuagin has an opponent trapped in a net, see page 23.
3. The number before the slash is the damage rating for the sahuagin's hands; the number after the slash is for the feet.

4. The number before the slash is the creature's attack bonus. The number after the slash is the creature's damage bonus. The damage bonus doesn't apply to claw or bite attacks.
5. Does not include attack bonus from Strength.
6. The number after the slash is the experience value for a four-armed individual. There is no increase for four-armed individuals of 7+7 hit dice or less.
7. The number in parentheses indicates the creature's priest level.

HISTORY

*As the gods smote that wicked land, and
its savage people saw their doom come
upon them, they sailed at their fate. . .
And the people threw down their idols
and satisfied their anger with killings;
master slew slave, brother slew brother,
and streams of blood ran down the
blackened streets to the sea—where a new
god waited.*

*And the most wicked among the killers
saluted the god and went back to their
murders. . . and the god was pleased,
and buoyed them up as the waves broke
over their shattered temple. And the god
sang to them of a new life born of the sea
— Anon*

ORIGINS

It appears certain that no single, magical event gave rise to the sea devils. At least, sages have not clearly identified such an event. No power claims the title of the sahuagin's creator, and the devil men do not recognize one—though their voracious god, Sekolah, has clearly played a role in ensuring their spread to worlds throughout the Prime Material Plane.

If the sahuagin lack a magical origin, they must therefore be a product of gradual biological change and adaptation. The arguments for such a conclusion are many and varied, but Ronassic of Sigil offers one of the most succinct:

Many sages and scholars seem quite willing to speak on the history of the sahuagin—though seldom decisively or in great detail. Most agree that the sahuagin began as land dwellers who took to the sea. A fragment from an ancient elven manuscript, quoted above, is widely believed to be the earliest account of the creation of the sahuagin. The astute reader will note, however, that this tale might account for the origins of a nation of pirates just as easily as the creation of a new race. Still, legends of floods permeate many cultures, and the notion that the sahuagin arose from some wicked tribe of humans or elves who took to the sea to escape a great cataclysm fires many imaginations. True details of sahuagin history remain equally sketchy, but some researchers have uncovered a few interesting facts.

The sahuagin undoubtedly are an ancient race, older, almost certainly, even than the elves. In fact, the sea elves found the sahuagin already hunting in the depths when they first ventured beneath the waves. It may be that the first meeting between the sea devils and sea elves was a reunion of sorts.

Many a sage speculates that sahuagin and elves are but branches of the same family tree—a charge the sea elves hotly deny.

That the sea devils descend ultimately from terrestrial ancestors is obvious, as they could not have acquired their humanoid forms anywhere else. However, the fact that the sea devils took to the sea—transporting their society along with them—as the result of some great catastrophe seems unlikely.

Let us pause to consider the sahuagin capacity for memory, because it bears strongly on the subject of sahuagin origins. An individual sahuagin's memory seems astounding, at least by human standards. As a race, their ability to collect

and preserve lore and information is nothing short of phenomenal. Each individual sahuagin intimately knows every species of plant and animal living in its commu-

nity's home territory, and can recall to the minute exactly where and when it last saw one of those creatures. Any group of sahuagin hunters can readily form a plan for locating their prey based on their collective knowledge of the creatures' diets, daily and seasonal habits, and the prevailing local conditions. What an individual sahuagin doesn't know, he can find out by asking the right neighbor.

Besides their sharp memories, the sea devils also possess a highly developed literary tradition. In fact, their priestesses keep a great store of knowledge—in the form of rather curious books [see Chapter 7 for more information about sahuagin books]—that spans the ages. What the collective efforts of a sahuagin community cannot recall can be found in these books.

I make this long detour through the terrain of sahuagin memory to make one point: There is not even a single tale, anecdote, or recollection of a life spent on the surface anywhere in the sahuagin memory. Surely an exodus into the sea would have produced some record, legend, or myth.

In addition, the sahuagin language remains largely devoid of terms which describe even common terrestrial features. For example, the sea devils have a word for fresh water, but none for lake, marsh, or river. They have a word for sea mountains, but none for hills or mountains on land. To a sahuagin, land is simply an unpleasant place—occupied by ugly barbarians—where they occasionally hunt. In short, the entire history of the sahuagin is a marine history, which does not possess a single episode of permanent or extended residence on land.

—Ronassic

Obviously, the lack of any sahuagin tales about a surface life suddenly threatened by catastrophe proves nothing; perhaps such tales really exist and merely remain unknown to surface scholars. Still, the lack of this kind of lore is highly suggestive. In addition, the physical evidence corroborates Ronassic's conclusions that the sahuagin developed through a gradual process of adaption.

For example, the sahuagin larynx remains quite similar to a human or elf larynx. This organ is conspicuously absent from fish and other marine species. In addition, a sea devil's air bladder, which clearly resembles a lung, does not play any part in respiration. Sea elves, however, do have functional lungs. Since the sea elves' migration to the sea was fairly abrupt, differences in sea elf and sahuagin physiology are quite significant.

So, whence came the sahuagin? Most likely they descended from coast dwellers who derived their living and primary means of defense from the sea. It also seems likely that the sahuagin and the elves share a common ancestor—though elven scholars dispute the claim.

I have difficulty comprehending the persistent claim that the devil men bear some blood relationship to the elves. Truly, the devil men are everything that elves are not. In the foremost, the sea devils embody evil incarnate, a decidedly unelven trait (true, our dark brethren are evil, too, but theirs is an evil of an entirely different sort). Unlike an elf, a sea devil has no desire for fulfillment or happiness (the drow at least show some hedonism—albeit of an unwholesome kind); indeed the sahuagin joy of slaughter most closely resembles the joy a dwarf feels for backbreaking work. Nor do the devil men possess any special resistance to magic that affects the mind. Finally, even the name "devil men" implies an offshoot of humanity

—Tiguran Maremynd

Tiguran's passionate denial overlooks several obvious similarities between sahuagin and elves: long life span, acute sight and hearing, the propensity for song, keen intelligence, and lifestyles based on a harmonious relationship with the environment. Tiguran's closing remark seems particularly ill-considered and undoubtedly reflects the otherwise excellent scholar's emotional state when writing the quoted passage. Though names often have power, "devil men" is nothing but a popular label for the sahuagin—based partially on the creatures' humanoid forms, rapacious demeanor, and their worship of the fiendish Sekolah. It no more indicates the sahuagin's biological origins than the name "forest men" indicates the origins of the elves. The term "devil men" simply represents the subjective perceptions of other species, not objective fact.

In any case, my theory proposes a common ancestor between elves and sahuagin, not a close blood relationship. Alas, no collector of antiquities has recovered even the smallest artifact of a terrestrial "proto-sahuagin" culture. One hopes, however, that such artifacts will eventually come to light.

In fairness, Tiguran and his elf colleagues could be quite correct. Until conclusive evidence comes to light, reasonable scholars must admit the possibility that the sahuagin have human roots. Perhaps the yearning many humans have for the sea represents some primordial regret for an ancestor's decision to move inland instead of into the depths.

MYTHS

Ronassic of Sigil tells us that sahuagin origin myths prove remarkably similar from world to world. One such myth runs thusly:

Sekolah, exalted in the hunt, had gone forth to seek worthy prey and soon came upon a behemoth of the deep. Tides ebbed and flowed as they battled. Finally, Sekolah emerged victorious, and the Great Shark found joy in his wounds, in the taste of flesh (so recently alive), and the smell of glory in his nostrils.

Except for the sea and his prey, however, the world was empty, and when Sekolah sang the song of victory, all the creatures in the sea—from lowly worm to mighty kraken—covered in fear.

As the mighty Sekolah swam and sang his song of triumph, he came upon the Great Void [a deep abyss or chasm in the sea floor] where the notes of his singing resounded and echoed so that Sekolah sang to himself, in many voices at one time. In the fullness of time, a new voice joined the echoing chorus and a vast shell arose from the chasm on a pillar of frothing bubbles. Sekolah watched intently as the shell opened and tiny sahuagin swam out, growing as they swarmed about Sekolah, whose joy had called them forth. Soon, the sahuagin swam all through the sea and exulted with Sekolah when he sang his song of the hunt.

—Sahuagin Myth

This version contains all of the various tales' basic elements: the god, Sekolah, swimming alone; the song that calls the sahuagin from the depths; the god's joy at seeing the sahuagin. Some versions of the tale include a verse in which the god seizes the shell in his mouth and furiously swims through the ocean, scattering the sahuagin everywhere.

The reader will note that the tale does not credit Sekolah with creating the sahuagin race, only with calling them up from the depths. It seems likely that an avatar of the god (see sidebar, opposite page) discovered the sahuagin during a foray onto the Prime Material Plane and admired them for a ferocity that matched his own. The episode in which the deity scatters the sahuagin throughout the sea probably refers to an effort by Sekolah to seed primeval seas on many worlds with his adopted folk.

Though Sekolah grants spells to sahuagin priestesses (see Chapter 8), he gives the sahuagin little other aid. Both he and the sahuagin value self-sufficiency. Sekolah dispatches his avatars to fight alongside the sahuagin only when a victory seems assured. In fact, the sahuagin accept the avatar's appearance as a sign of victory. The sahuagin gratefully sacrifice the choicest victims to the avatar after the battle.

DEVELOPMENT

Other sahuagin lore tells us that the sea devils were once fully nomadic hunters with little interest in visiting the land. They followed this lifestyle for millennia, hunting their prey and pausing in one place long enough for the females to lay their eggs and produce a brood of hatchlings that were expected to keep up when the tribe moved on.

As we shall see in Chapter 5, the hunt still plays a central role in sahuagin culture. It is also useful to note that the sahuagin's nearest relatives, the anguillians, remain fully nomadic; they never even pause to breed as do the sahuagin.

With the rise of civilizations on land and the appearance of surface-dwelling seafarers, the sahuagin perceived a challenge to their mastery of the sea and a new source of prey. Here, the sahuagin thought, were creatures worthy of hunting—denizens of a strange and potentially fatal world of blinding light and desiccating open air who could work metal and shape stone.

The sahuagin quickly mastered the art of stone working for themselves and built towns of their own to serve as secure bases for raids on the surface and on other sea dwellers. Most other aspects of sahuagin life also depend on their villages, as detailed in the next chapter.

SEKOLAH

This voracious deity rules over the realm of Sheyruushk, in Stygia (a layer of Baator). Even the baatezu respect his indomitable ferocity and give him a wide berth.

The sahuagin worship Sekolah as a personification of uncaring viciousness and brutality—qualities they admire. They credit Sekolah for granting them the gift of fertility, which allows them to pursue their goals of plunder, dominion, and racial purity without fearing for their continued existence.

The uncaring Sekolah leaves his priestesses free to form temporary pacts with other evil gods, so long as the sahuagin continue to venerate him. To appease their god, sahuagin priestesses offer a steady stream of sacrifices—usually in the form of gems and jewelry—to Sekolah.

Sekolah's avatars take the form of massive great white sharks. The deity most frequently sends them forth to

satisfy its bloodlust, seeking out gargantuan sea creatures as prey. At times, Sekolah summons his sahuagin to join him on wild marine hunts.

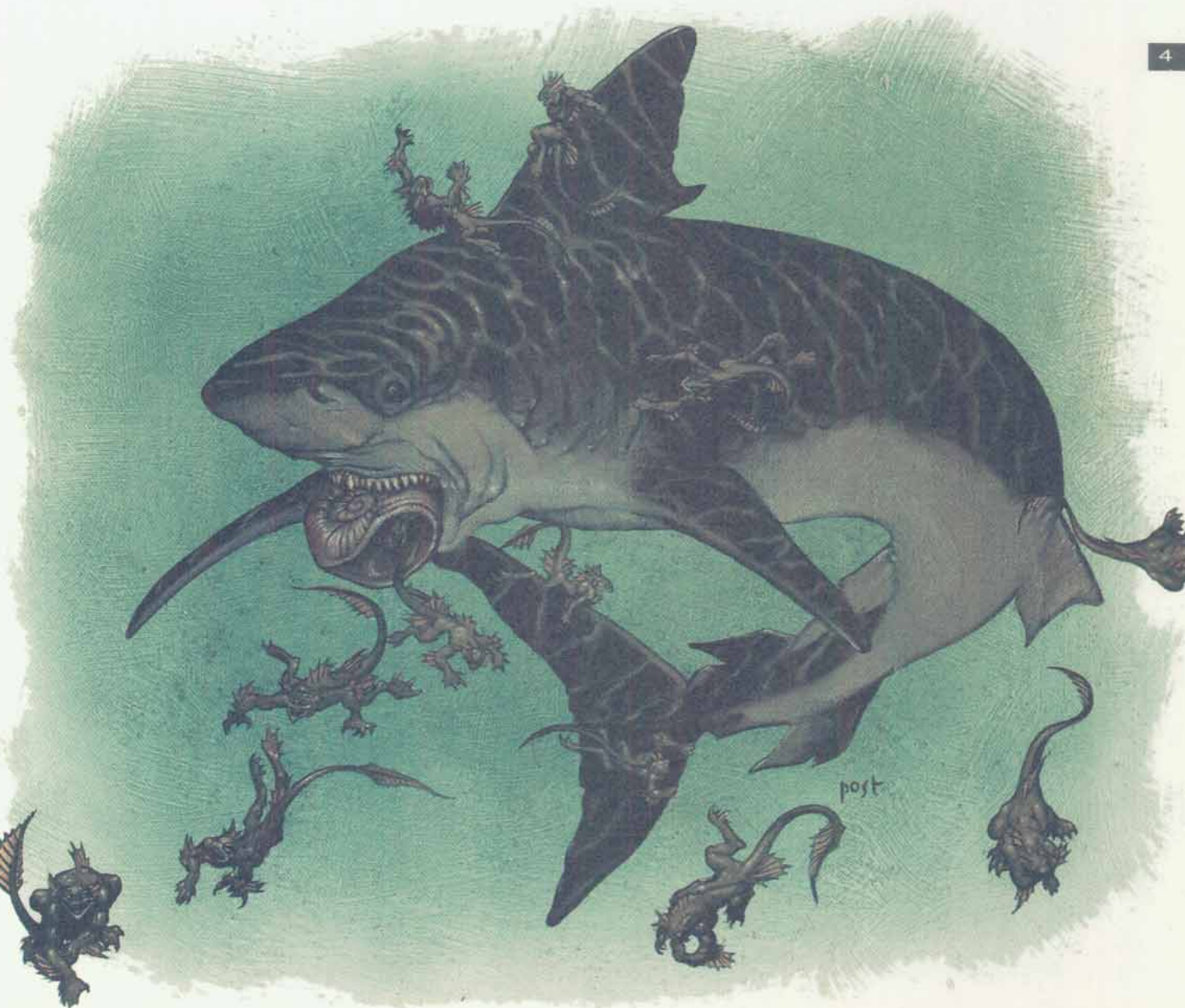
Sekolah's rivalry with Demogorgon, the deity of the *ixitxachitl*, helps fuel hostilities between the sea devils and the intelligent rays—though hostilities would doubtless rage between these two evil races in any case.

Sekolah's Avatar: AC -3; MV Sw 36; HD 18; hp 144; THACO 3; #AT 2; Dmg 3d10+7/3d10+7 (bite/bite); SA swallow whole, cause fear; SD immunities, *stoneskin*, MR 30%; SZ G (35' long); ML Fearless (21); Int 17; AL LE; XP 21,000.

Notes: SA—The avatar swallows man-sized and smaller creatures whole on an attack roll of 16 or better. Swallowed victims suffer 2d10 points of acid damage each round. A swallowed creature can escape if it has natural claws or a cutting weapon. The victim can wield natural claws or small-sized slashing (type S) weapons normally against the creature's internal Armor Class of 0. Larger weapons, however, inflict only one point of damage per attack, plus any modifier for enchantment. No other damage bonuses apply. The victim escapes after inflicting 35 points of damage. Only one half of this damage total actually applies against the avatar's hit points.

The avatar sheds fear in a five-foot radius. Affected creatures must save vs. spell or flee for 2d8 rounds. Sahuagin are not affected.

SD—The avatar is immune to all forms of strength drain, fear, or pacification—such as a *symbol of persuasion*. In addition, the avatar ignores all illusions; the avatar can cast *stoneskin* three times a day as an 18th-level caster.



PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIETY

Savages? Maybe. It depends on what you mean by the term. Sahuagin have a civilization, make no mistake about that. The sea devils have rulers, cities, books, medicine, money, and all the other trappings. In fact, they regard land dwellers as backward, ineffectual, superstitious fools.

If you mean to say that sahuagin are not like you — you're right. Sea devils aren't just people with fins, that's for sure.

If you mean to say sahuagin are vicious, merciless and bloodthirsty, you're right, but you don't know the half of it.

—Jimi McKenna, wereshark

INSIDE THE SAHUAGIN MIND

"Do thy worst thee perfidious reprobates; thou of venomous hearts and knavish minds. Speak' st nae to me of peace; dost thou make peace with the sharks? Away with thy serpents' tongues. I should rather bleach to death in the hateful sun than endure one more platitude. And think' st thou nae that I shall tell thee where my comrades lie. Neither thy fire, nor thy lies, nor thy clumsy tortures shall weaken my courage nor stain my honor. But know thou this, worm, the warriors of my people shall come again, and if thou hast passed away, then it shall be thy sprats who fall before us, for thou art fleeting like the flame and we are eternal, like the sea."


—captive Sahuagin

An observer recorded the preceding quote after a sahuagin raid in which several sea devils were cut off from the ocean and trapped on the beach just before dawn. Knowing that the speaker faced blindness followed by a slow death, one might marvel at its bravado. Certainly, a human or demihuman would have at least considered carrying a message from his captors to his superiors. Not so the sahuagin, who, being unconscionably cruel to their prisoners, expect the same of their captors. Note also the creature's pride in its own species and its disdain for its captors—though the disdain, as we shall see, must have been feigned. Nevertheless, the creature showed amazing self control.

Sahuagin invariably seem phlegmatic when caught at a disadvantage, but their outward calm hides a much more choleric nature. In fact, sahuagin in their own element prove aggressive, confident, and shrewd.

BELIEFS

The sahuagin drive for conformity produces a race of individuals with surprisingly similar views. Ask any sahuagin which truths are most important and you'll likely get the following list of aphorisms, in descending order of importance:



It would be a mistake to think of the sahuagin as uncultured brutes who lead simple lives. Indeed, that prejudice seldom proves true of any intelligent species. Sahuagin live by a code of ritualized behavior developed over the millennia. To the sahuagin, the code's intricacies are obvious, and need no justification or explanation.

Unfortunately, the belief that sahuagin survival depends on the ruthless eradication of anything that is not "sahuagin" remains an essential part of the code. The best a surface dweller can hope to accomplish through negotiation with the sea devils is an uneasy—and temporary—truce.



Self-sufficiency and obedience are the greatest qualities.

The sahuagin not only believe in the primacy of these two virtues, but they also believe themselves to possess more self-sufficiency and obedience than any other living creatures. Sahuagin also think that they are the greatest mortal race in the history of creation—though they probably won't tell you so because it's patently obvious (to them).

There's a place for everyone and everyone should remain in his place.

The casual observer might conclude that sahuagin have an essentially lawless society in which the most powerful individuals rule capriciously and strictly for their own benefit. The truth lies in the opposite direction. A sahuagin regards itself as an expendable part of the group, inferior to its race as a whole but superior to the rest of the cosmos by virtue of its membership in the group. This view might seem at odds with the sahuagin's respect for self-sufficiency, but the two are tightly intertwined. An individual sahuagin must look after itself to avoid dragging down the whole group. Remember, sahuagin pride themselves on their ability to survive as a race with minimal outside help.

The sea devils' sense of order extends to the larger cosmos as well. In broad terms, they fit living things into three broad categories: "sahuagin," "enemy," and "food." A sahuagin's reaction to another being depends on its classification. Sahuagin protect and rely upon other "sahuagin," fight their "enemies," and eat "food."

Sahuagin apply these classifications without reservation and have little room in their communities for creatures that physically differ from themselves—hence their distaste for peace shown so eloquently in the opening quote. Simply put, if a creature is not food or enemy, then it must be sahuagin.

Success equals virtue.

This is a variation on the might-is-right theme so many surface-dwelling tyrants embrace. This belief un-

derlies the sahuagin's reliance on duels to settle arguments (see page 54). However, it goes beyond a cultural acceptance of bullying and extends to everything the sahuagin do. For example, this belief justifies the sahuagin practice of raiding the surface. If the raid is successful and provides the community with plunder, the sahuagin consider it a virtuous act. A raid that fails, on the other hand, in no way impugns the practice of raiding (see next example).

The success-equals-virtue adage might seem at odds with the sahuagin's sense of place in the social order. The skeptical observer might very well ask how a sahuagin could ever bring itself to challenge a superior when it also believes it should remain in its place. The answer, in short, is that it is every sahuagin's place to challenge superiors who prove inadequate and peers who behave improperly. Of course these challenges must proceed according to a very strict format. Sahuagin do not believe that the ends justifies the means—at least not when it comes to dealings with other sahuagin.

Only the inadequate fail.

If success equals virtue, it stands to reason that the unsuccessful lack virtue. In sahuagin society, these two concepts do not mirror each other quite so exactly. For example, a sahuagin leader who orders a raid that fails suffers some embarrassment, but less so than the warriors involved in the raid. In planning future raids, all concerned parties work to remedy whatever inadequacy caused the initial failure. Should this same leader order a series of disastrous raids, his subordinates might choose to depose him through a legitimate challenge (see the Challenges section). Should the challenge fail, the community would conclude that the challenger was inadequate for the task.

Likewise, the sahuagin believe they exist amid plenty. In their minds, anyone who has ability can prosper; there are no unfortunate beings—just inadequate ones.

The sahuagin quoted at this section's opening must have felt inadequate when captured by inferior beings. Still, conscious of its own place in the cosmos, it showed plenty of arrogance and a determination not to sink further into ignominy.



Meat is meat.

This underscores the sahuagin's ruthless practicality. A hungry sahuagin eats whatever it can get and cannot comprehend human and demihuman squeamishness when it comes to food. Though sahuagin cannibalism indicates a lack of sentimentality, it ultimately arises from the sea devils' sense of categorical order. When a fellow sahuagin dies, it ceases to be "sahuagin" and becomes "food."

The adage also illustrates an aspect of sahuagin culture few surface dwellers even suspect—an absolute insistence on food sharing. When sahuagin hunt, which is often, everyone involved gets a share of the kill. It may take the combined efforts of a dozen adults to take a large animal—such as a whale or giant squid. Making equal shares available not only ensures that everyone has enough to eat, it also reinforces the power of the group over the individual.

Food sharing also ensures the survival of villages, towns, and cities—where far-ranging hunters deliver their catches regularly. Even in the ocean, intensive hunting in a settlement's immediate neighborhood would quickly deplete local resources and force the group to abandon the site.

Despite its pride, a sahuagin never refuses an offer of food from another sahuagin; the sharing of food indicates a victory for the whole community. Such gifts also demand reciprocal gifts in the future; "meat is meat," whether offered by a superior or a subordinate.



IN A NAME?

Truth is what sahuagin remember.

This esoteric statement usually leaves surface dwellers confused. The adage reveals how the sahuagin decide what is factual and what is not. As creatures with agile minds and keen senses, they remain confident in their own capacities to interpret reality. What is most real to sahuagin is what they can see, hear, smell, feel, taste or touch. Sahuagin give less credence to the speculative or to the abstract.

This is not to say that sahuagin do not believe in things invisible to their senses. Sahuagin memory is powerful, and an individual sea devil knows that what it remembers sensing was real. By extension, the sea devil also knows that what its neighbors remember sensing must also be real. A skeptical human, upon hearing a detailed account of a remote event, might ask if the speaker was present because he believes actual experience is the true measure of accuracy. A skeptical sahuagin, by contrast, merely asks if a sahuagin was present.

In addition, sahuagin do not scorn intuitive thinking. If an elder sahuagin thinks sea elves or other prey live in a certain area, most sahuagin readily agree that the speculation could be true—though they don't really believe it until a sahuagin actually reconnoiters the locale.

The sahuagin's confidence in their own racial memory leads them to regard almost any memory as a reality. By and large, they find no distinction between myth, legend, and reality. A myth or legend, after all, is a memory played out again and again. Barring refutations based on their own senses, the sahuagin regard their own myths as literal truths once witnessed by living sahuagin.

This confidence, however, does not make them particularly vulnerable to mass delusions. Should a sahuagin have a bizarre experience, its fellows will tend to accept its perceptions as genuine. If the details contradict their own experiences, however, they reserve judgment until they can get more information.

Because surface dwellers cannot duplicate the sahuagin language without magical aid (see Chapter 3), they often use their own native languages to speak about the sahuagin. The name "sahuagin" (saa-WHO-ah-gen, pronounced with a hard "g") is a merman word which translates to "insatiable hunters" or "tireless ravagers." The term is strikingly similar to the name which the sahuagin use for themselves—though this sahuagin term literally means "we who eat."

The name "malenti" is a word from the sea elf dialect of the elf language; it means "changeling." The literal meaning of the sahuagin term for malenti is "ugly one." The sahuagin use this term only when discussing the malenti among normal members of the race, never when addressing a malenti.

The term sahuagin use to address each other roughly translates to "comrade," while the terms used by surface dwellers for the sahuagin nobility (chieftain, baron, etc.) are familiar titles from the common tongue. These terms have no meaning to sahuagin. When addressing or referring to a superior, a sahuagin uses a phrase meaning "honored one." When addressing or referring to a superior's superior, a sahuagin says "more honored one," "most honored one," or "exalted one" depending on the subject's status relative to the speaker. For example, a common sahuagin addressing his king would say "exalted one."

The sahuagin term for priestess literally means "favored one," and sahuagin use it to refer to any junior priestess. A senior priestess is "more favored one" or "most favored one" depending on her position in the hierarchy relative to the speaker's own station. A commoner calls the high priestess of the kingdom "sacred one," while the king himself merely would call the same priestess "favored one."

"Anguillian" is a term coined by scholars. It comes from the human common tongue and refers to the anguillians' eel-like shapes. The mermen, like many other coast dwellers, have little contact with the anguillians and remain unaware of the race's connection to the sahuagin. The merman word for anguillian is "heumixumlis," which literally means "eel man from the deep."



Life in the fairly stable world of the depths, where change is gradual (if it happens at all), reinforces the sahuagin concept of an ordered universe in which they occupy the central role. Sahuagin seldom experience natural disasters—such as drought, floods, fires, or storms (wind and rain might lash the surface, but all remains calm in the depths)—hence their belief that they live in a world of plenty.

To a sahuagin, the “world” is that portion of the ocean extending from the surface down to a depth of about 2,000 feet (their diving limit). The sahuagin world view holds that the areas beyond these two boundaries are not just remote parts of the planet, but different worlds altogether.

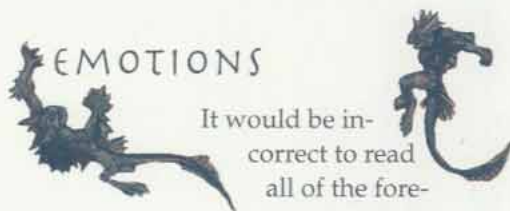
The sea devils regard the surface as an unreal, hellish place with searing light, extremes of heat and cold, and constraining gravity. They think of the surface in much the same way primes would think of the Plane of Elemental Fire or the Abyss—an exotic, fundamentally dangerous alternate reality peopled with weird creatures. The brave might venture into that world for a short time and return enriched, but it remains unpleasant to visit and too deadly to colonize. Nevertheless, the sea devils return to the land again and again, seeking to plunder and extend their influence as far as possible.

Sahuagin regard the extreme depths as the primordial void where time ceases to flow. According to sahuagin lore, anyone or anything returning there is crushed and then transformed into primordial matter

which may return to the world in a new form. Thus, those who sink into the depths cease to be sahuagin. This attitude might explain why the sahuagin tolerate the anguilians. The sahuagin think of them as a mystical folk who freely pass between the physical world of the ocean and the unreal world of the depths.

The sahuagin believe the region under the ocean floor to be just another aspect of the world of the utter depths. A sea volcano, to the sahuagin mind, is an upwelling of primordial matter from the depths.

Above all, the sahuagin believe that they are the only truly cultured race in their world. Other marine races may be more numerous, but that, say the sahuagin, is just a function of the world’s plenty. In particular, they regard surface dwellers as misshapen, unreal beings deformed by their hostile environment.



It would be incorrect to read all of the foregoing and conclude that the sea devils lack emotion. Sahuagin feel anger, fear, happiness, love, hate, disgust, and sadness—just like humans and demihumans. Sahuagin simply turn those emotions to different ends and set their relative values differently than you or I. They also exhibit a greater control over the outward manifestations of their emotions. This is a function of their generally superior intelligence.

Sahuagin are masters at controlling anger. For example, young sahuagin quickly

learn to contain any feelings of anger that involve their peers. They either allow their anger to dissipate or internalize it, building a long-standing resentment that will give them courage during a formal challenge (see page 54). By contrast, their carefully fostered contempt for their enemies leads them to unleash their anger in battle against their foes.

Sahuagin despise cowards and keep their own fears under tight rein. However, in dangerous situations, their suppressed fears can overwhelm them—as evidenced by their susceptibility to blood frenzies. Magically induced fear, however, causes the sahuagin to flee rather than frenzy—which suggests that a sahuagin’s fear must have some time to build before a frenzy occurs.

One doesn’t normally think of the sea devils as happy creatures. Nevertheless, they can feel contentment and pleasure, particularly after a hunt or other successful venture. For a sahuagin, happiness is a temporary shift in mood, not a permanent state of mind.

Sahuagin love is fiercely strong. However, they do not direct it toward any specific individual, but rather toward their species as a whole.

The sea devils’ capacity for hate is legendary, though they usually reserve it for rivals before a challenge, their enemies—especially the sea elves—and for magic wielders (especially wizards).

Sadness, too, has a place in the sahuagin mind—though outsiders never see it. For example, sahuagin ruminate over their failures. A sea devil who has suf-

ferred some sort of failure withdraws for a time, avoiding its peers, until it can engineer some sort of success to restore its standing.

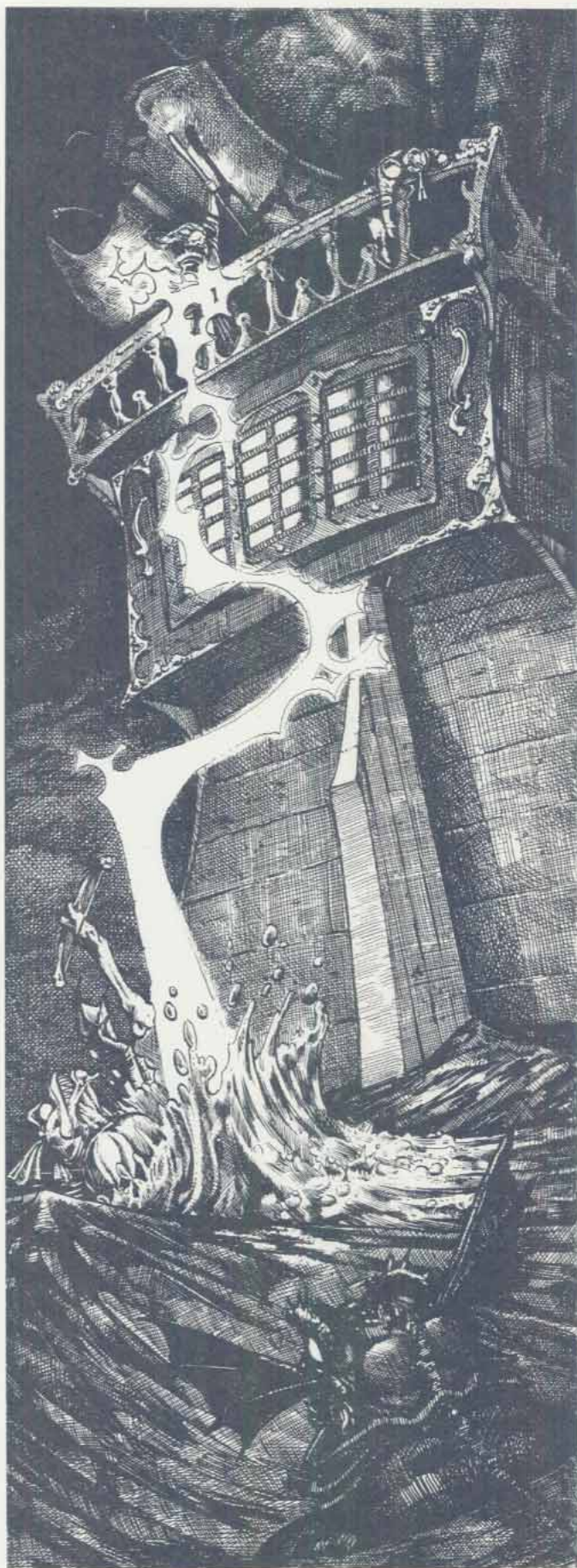
WHY SAHUAGIN HATE MAGIC

Scholars are often at a loss to explain how the sahuagin, who have a priestly class, can possess such fear and loathing for spell casters of all types. Part of the sahuagin's distaste for magic is simply superstition. As a people who live close to their environment, they respect natural forces. For example, they know that nothing can turn back the tides. They also understand tidal cycles and know that tides are basically harmless, natural events. Supernatural events, on the other hand, prove neither benign nor predictable. The sahuagin regard environmental catastrophes—such as volcanic eruptions and sea quakes—as supernatural events whose origins lie in the primordial depths. The sea devils know magic is a manifestation of supernatural power, and as such they automatically treat it—and anyone who can wield it—with suspicion.

Being a practical, battle-hardened species, the sahuagin know that people who wield magical power prove dangerously unpredictable in battle. After all, one cannot tell exactly what damage a magical effect will cause. Such magic could miraculously heal an injured foe, who will fight on even though honorably defeated. It could also bring a lethal electrical shock or painfully bright light. Thus, the sahuagin know that enemy spellcasters pose a terrible threat, and they seek to eliminate such threats with fanatical intensity.

Finally, sea devils can tolerate magical power in the hands of their priestesses, as these females receive their powers through the favor of their patron deity, Sekolah. No sahuagin disdains the gifts of Sekolah. Other magic wielders, however, must receive their powers elsewhere. In fact, these outsider spellcasters might be in league with other deities (Sekolah's enemies, every one).

So, the sahuagin hatred of magic springs from superstition, practicality, and a degree of religious fervor. Surprisingly, sahuagin do not show any great reluctance to wield captured magical items if they can discern how such devices work. They regard these items and the power they bestow as justly earned booty; magic seems much less frightening in sahuagin hands.



SOCIETY

The sahuagin have developed a highly structured, yet surprisingly flexible, society geared toward maintaining a strong race.

The sahuagin's basic social unit is the village, which usually contains 70-80 breeding females along with their eggs and young. About five times as many adult males call the village home, but only 50 stay in the village at any one time. The remainder roam the surrounding territory and hunt for food. Most villages also contain a small group of priestesses (usually from two to five). In addition, each village has an aristocracy, which wields all the political power.

Each village-dwelling sahuagin works to support the community. The village females primarily concern themselves with tending the eggs and raising the young. The males function as hunters, gatherers, and guards.

Each village also keeps several tamed sharks—usually about five.

POLITICS

Sahuagin are oligarchic; an elite group of senior males direct the commoners' activities. A baron and his nine powerful male bodyguards oversee each village. The village females remain under the baron's direct authority, but the

males divide themselves into bands of about 50 warriors, each under the command of a chieftain (see the chart located on page 52). One band acts as a military garrison for the village. The remaining bands hunt and scout over the baron's territory—an area about 50 miles across.

Because only one band resides in a village at any given time, observers have seriously under-reported the sahuagin's numbers. One might come upon a village with only 50 or so warriors in it. However, five or six-times that number of warriors may lurk within a day's swim of the settlement.

Sahuagin princes rule an area consisting of about 20 villages. These princes live in towns twice the size of a typical sahuagin village; these towns often contain a number of sharks—usually about twelve—that help guard the area. In addition, each prince has nine powerful bodyguards, as well as a high priestess and four assistants to serve him.

All the princes in an area report to a single king. A sahuagin king occupies a city with about 6,000 inhabitants—including the kingdom's high priestess and her assistants, numerous guards, varied artisans, and concubines. Note that kings never have more than nine princes under them.

A sahuagin kingdom generally covers an entire seacoast, with villages and towns at least 100 miles apart. The royal city lies under deep water in some remote location.



SAHUAGIN BANDS

The duty of each sahuagin band changes about every two months, according to the dictates of the local prince or baron. For example, a baron might send the 50 sahuagin currently on garrison duty to patrol the surrounding area, while recalling a hunting band and placing them on garrison duty.

Every two years, all the local barons and princes meet to exchange bands and females. The elite (barons, chieftains, guards, lieutenants, and priestesses) return to their original communities. The ruling sahuagin do, however, reassign about half the commoners to new villages.

This continual mixing prevents individual bands from forming separate identities and reinforces the sahuagin's dedication to their race as a whole. It also assures a level of racial conformity unknown on the surface. Unlike surface dwellers, who often feel out of place when moving into a new home, sahuagin adapt to these changes of scene very quickly. One sahuagin village is very like another, at least in ways that sahuagin find significant.

This mixing also assures that all sahuagin older than 15 or 20 years have met almost all of their existing peers in the whole kingdom. Given the sea devils' superior memory, most adults can recall several salient details about their acquaintances. This makes it difficult to infiltrate any given sahuagin village, as the infiltrators often reveal themselves when asked to recall a detail about a sahuagin from a distant settlement.

RANK AND PRECEDENCE

Among sahuagin, pure physical power determines rank. As a male ages and amasses more physical power, he is eligible to advance to higher rank in the sahuagin hierarchy. This advancement cannot take place unless circumstances create a vacancy in the hierarchy.

Relationships between sahuagin ranks remain essentially feudal. The elite dispense justice to, and receive tribute from, their subordinates. Likewise, the nobles derive military power from the ranks of their subordinates and often exercise that power against enemies too powerful for their subordinates to face on their own.

A sahuagin defers to all other sahuagin of higher rank in almost every matter. The sea devils, however, do not tolerate indiscriminate killing among themselves, so commoners need not fear summary executions—as long as they behave themselves. Likewise, a sahuagin can expect deference from all sahuagin of lesser rank. Sahuagin of the highest rank receive first choice of food, treasure, and (usually) mates.

Sahuagin hatchlings form the lowest rung of society, as they possess the least physical power. After literally

clawing their way out of the nursery, they quickly learn to obey their elders.

Breeding females, aspiring priestesses, and young males (age 30 and under) form the next, and largest, social layer. Most sahuagin never advance beyond this rank. Biology restrains the breeding females, as they never grow large enough to challenge their superiors. Most males, on the other hand, either die before age 30 or perish while fighting their way through the lower levels of the hierarchy.

Sahuagin priestesses represent a separate hierarchy paralleling the male one. Under priestesses rank above commoners but below lieutenants and baronial guards. Senior priestesses outrank everyone in their villages except the barons. Officially, the priestesses act as advisors to the nobility and as the spiritual counselors and protectors of their communities. In practice, their superior status gives them considerable political clout.

For example, a priestess might decide it is time to rebuild the local shrine to Sekolah. If the baron disagrees, the priestess can order the village commoners to do her bidding, thereby circumventing the baron's power. Actions like this, however, occasionally prompt nobles to remove priestesses who have grown "too big for their fins."

Attaining a Higher Rank

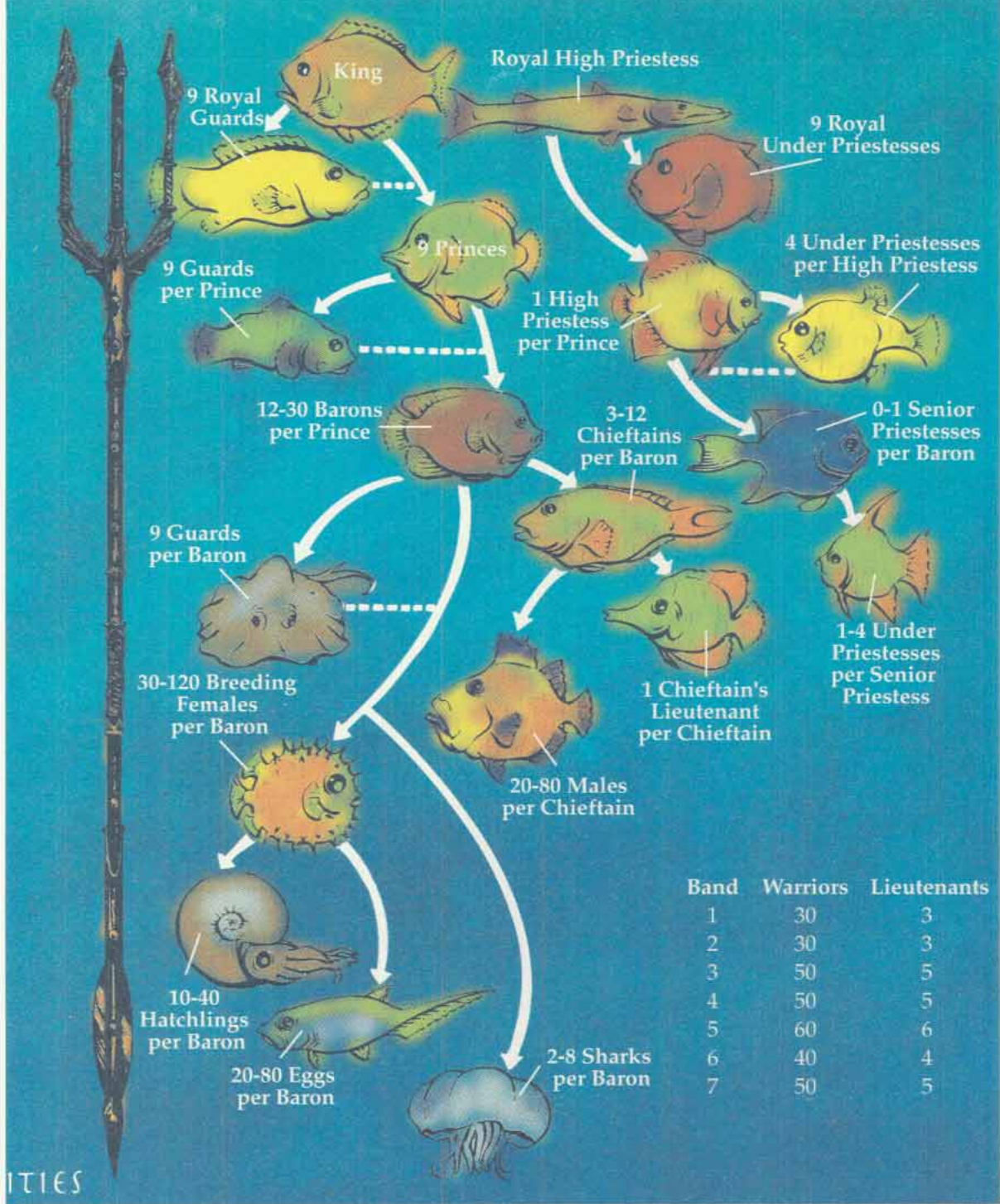
In most cases, a sahuagin must seek out a higher-ranking sahuagin and defeat it in a duel to the death (see Challenges). It is not possible to "skip" a step in the hierarchy. That is, a common warrior cannot challenge the village baron; he must challenge a lieutenant or baronial guard for his position. Likewise, the male and priestess hierarchies remain completely separate; the senior priestess cannot challenge her baron, only her high priestess.

Duels do not always prove necessary for advancement. A position in the hierarchy might already exist through the advancement of a higher-ranking sahuagin, the death of a higher-ranking sahuagin—whether accidental or war-related—or through expansion. For example, if the population is booming, the local baron might allow one of his lieutenants to form a new band, automatically elevating the lucky sahuagin to a chieftain. This doesn't happen very often, as it creates a future rival for the baron. The formation of a new political entity always requires consent from the next level on the chain of command. For example, only a prince can authorize the formation of a new village.

Once a sahuagin attains the age and power required to advance a step in the hierarchy, it has an obligation to seek advancement through a challenge. Failure to do so

is taken as a sign of cowardice and ultimately leads to banishment or execution for the timid sea devil.

Challenges between common warriors and lieutenants or baronial guards occur most often, as every male who turns 30 seeks advancement to that level. Shrewd chieftains and barons often contrive to let their oldest lieutenants and guards bear the brunt of such challenges, thus delaying future challenges to their own positions.



COMMUNITIES

Each village has one baron, nine guards, and $3d4 \times 10$ females. In addition, there are $1d4 \times 10$ hatchlings of both sexes and $2d4 \times 10$ unhatched eggs.

For each group of 10 females, there is one one band of $2d4 \times 10$ warriors. Each band has one chieftain and one lieutenant for every 10 warriors.

For every 10 females, there is a cumulative 10% chance for a senior priestess and $1d4$ assistants. If there are 100 or more females, priestesses are automatically present. The senior priestess will always be 5th level, and her assistant will be 1st-4th level.

The DM rolls percentile dice and gets a 66, indicating the presence of a senior priestess.

The DM rolls $1d4$ to see how many assistants she has (the result is 3). Then the DM rolls $1d4$ three times to determine the levels of each of the assistant priestesses (the result is 1, 3, and 2).

In addition, the DM rolls $2d4$ to determine the number of sharks in the villages (the result is 5).

Finally, the DM rolls $2d10+10$ to determine how many barons serve the local prince (the result is 14). For example, the village of Neahgataa has, in addition to Baron Neahgataa and his retinue, 70 breeding females, 30 hatchlings, 70 eggs, and seven bands of warriors. The bands break down as shown above.

SAHUAGIN FASHION

Sahuagin have little need for clothing—though they usually wear aprons or loincloths. They favor cloth looted from the surface, but also weave coarse cloth from native materials. Most sahuagin wear belts and harnesses for holding tools and weapons. In addition, adults usually use a few mesh bags to carry food and other small items.

Sahuagin also favor bracelets, armbands, and torcs for jewelry—though they seldom wear anything that could provide a handhold for an enemy. The sahuagin design their clothing and equipment to break away if pulled or twisted.

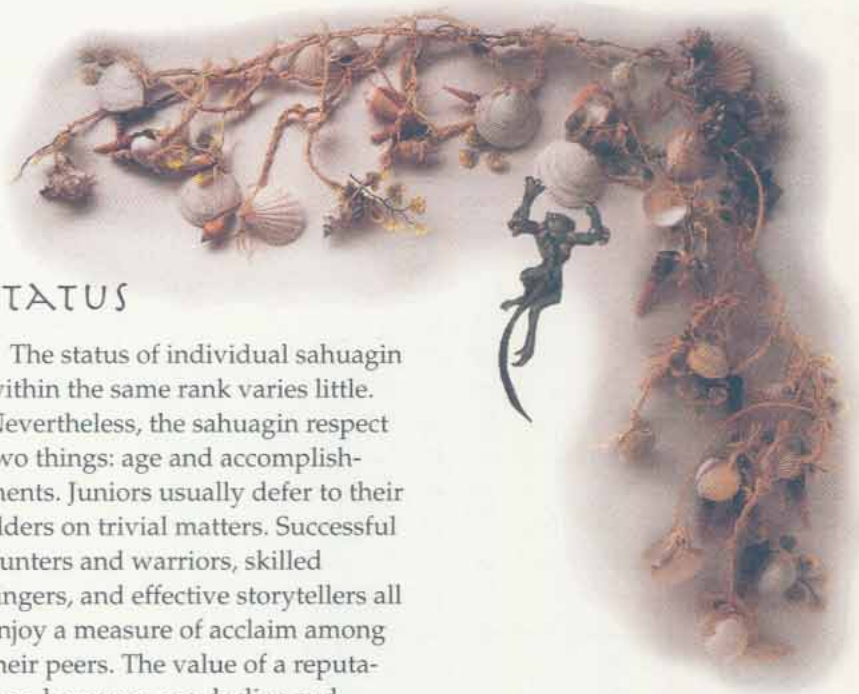


STATUS

The status of individual sahuagin within the same rank varies little. Nevertheless, the sahuagin respect two things: age and accomplishments. Juniors usually defer to their elders on trivial matters. Successful hunters and warriors, skilled singers, and effective storytellers all enjoy a measure of acclaim among their peers. The value of a reputation, however, can decline suddenly when a commoner moves to a new band or a new village, where the sea devil's new peers have not yet witnessed its skill. Remember, the sea devils' memories are long, but direct experience counts most.

The accumulation of wealth is a more certain route to high status. All sahuagin collect pearls and coral, which they fashion into jewelry. The sea devils value jewelry not only for its beauty, but also for the effort and acumen required to obtain it. The more bejeweled a sahuagin becomes, the higher its status.

Sahuagin nobles demand a steady tribute of material wealth from their subjects—though the bulk of this passes up the chain of command to the king or to the priestesses. The former either hoards the wealth or redistributes it among his most loyal and useful subjects. Priestesses, however, sacrifice most of the treasure to Sekolah and sometimes draw on their nobles' treasuries to maintain this ritual.



SAHUAGIN TREASURE

To reflect the sahuagin penchant for collecting trinkets, assign individual sea devils type R treasure instead of type N as noted in the *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM*® tome. Lair treasures remain unchanged, except that a prince's lair contains twice the listed amount. A kingdom's royal city would hold a vast treasure rivaling any dragon hoard (excluding, of course, items destroyed by sea water).

Most gems obtained from a sahuagin cache will consist of small pearls or pieces of coral with a base value of 100 gp. Sahuagin favor art objects made from coral (or ivory) set with pearls or other gems. These objects are usually worth between 100-600 gp.



Despite their vicious nature, sahuagin do not argue among themselves (this is an important characteristic for a race equipped with enough natural weaponry to inflict fatal wounds during a minor scuffle). Most sahuagin have similar views on important subjects. Life in the sea provides ample opportunities for distance between those individuals with seriously conflicting viewpoints. Still, arguments arise over such things as the ownership of tools, weapons, and status items. Points of etiquette, and the availability of mates also causes some friction in a sahuagin community.

Sea devils have exactly two methods of settling arguments: arbitration by a sahuagin of superior rank, or a challenge.

Arbitration

If the contending sahuagin cannot reach an agreement and do not wish to fight, they seek out a superior and explain their respective cases. (Note that refusing to join a delegation seeking arbitration is grounds for a challenge). Any sea devil of greater rank than the antagonists can serve as an arbitrator. The sea devils do not recognize peers with superior status as arbitrators, but such a peer can help settle a dispute before arbitration becomes necessary.

The arbitrator, upon hearing both sides of the dispute, renders an immediate decision. Most judgments resolve the issue in favor of one side or the other. However, the arbitrator might require the rivals to fight a challenge. In addition, if the arbitrator is a baron (or higher), he might order the execution or banishment of one or both opponents—especially if the aggrieved parties are commoners.

Arbitration occurs most often between young adult males and older females, as their nearly equal ranks do not allow for easy resolution of arguments. Even the ruthless sahuagin realize the folly of allowing young males to slay breeding females in combat.

Arbitration also becomes necessary if neither opponent in a dispute can gain the upper hand in a non-lethal challenge.

Challenges

Sahuagin prefer to challenge their sahuagin adversaries as a means of settling any dispute, as a successful challenge undeniably proves the winner's virtue. The sea devils have few rules governing challenges. Every sahuagin has the right to challenge any other sahuagin. However, the relative difference in sahuagin rank precludes certain types of challenge.

For example, a warrior can accuse his king of cowardice and challenge him. If the warrior wins, his accusation must be true. However, that same warrior cannot challenge the king for his throne because it is clear that a warrior isn't fit to rule—though a king who suffers defeat at the hands of a warrior will quickly receive a challenge from his nearest rival.

Sahuagin must fight their challenges before the entire community; they forbid private duels, as such conflicts deprive the community of great entertainment and leave room to doubt the validity of the battle. In addition, a sahuagin cannot withdraw or refuse a challenge once it is issued.

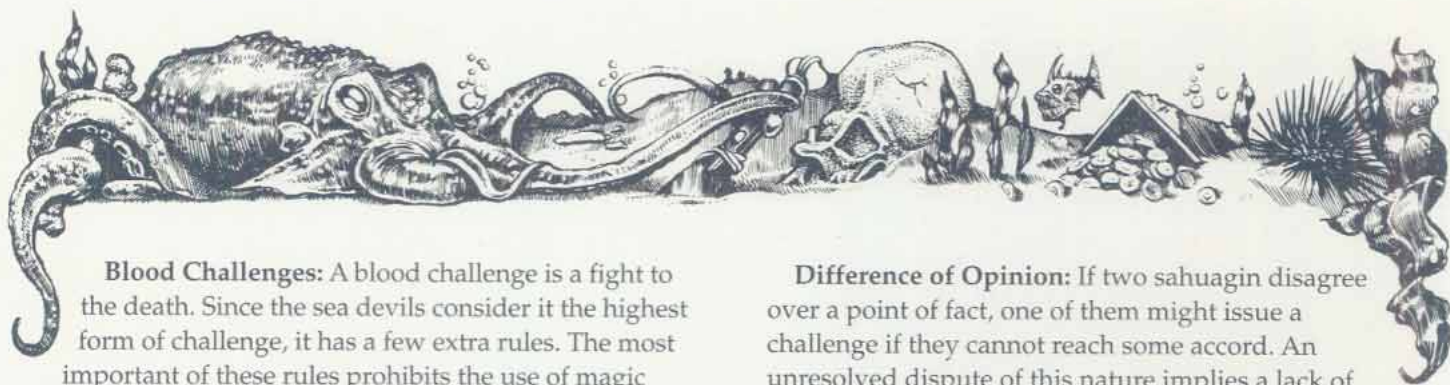
Before beginning the actual challenge, both sides recite their respective grievances for the benefit of the community. By the time a conflict reaches the challenge stage, however, most sahuagin will be well aware of the details.

Challenges that involve sahuagin of equal ranks need not be lethal. In fact, the challenge can take any form agreed upon by the opponents or assigned by the arbitrator. Such challenges might include a hunting competition (to see which opponent can seize the largest prey in the shortest amount of time), a race through an underwater labyrinth, or any other feat of skill.

The most common form of non-lethal challenge involves a series of physical poses and vocalizations. The opponents agree on what words and poses they can use during the challenge (or an arbitrator assigns them). The elder sahuagin then strikes a pose and makes an utterance. His opponent must successfully duplicate the pose and utterance, then immediately assume another. The first sahuagin then duplicates the two actions and adds a third. The challenge continues with the sequence of actions growing ever longer. If at any time a sahuagin fails to duplicate the sequence or employs a gesture or vocalization not on the list, it loses. This challenge tests the opponents' physical grace and memory. A prolonged challenge begins to look like a mock battle, with the opponents swirling about as they shift poses.







Blood Challenges: A blood challenge is a fight to the death. Since the sea devils consider it the highest form of challenge, it has a few extra rules. The most important of these rules prohibits the use of magic and weapons during the challenge. Sahuagin can use only their fangs and claws in combat with each other, as they value personal strength and scorn any assistance that might allow the truly weak to triumph over the truly powerful. Of course, this means that the rare, four-armed sahuagin have a tremendous advantage during a blood challenge. This is why wise leaders send their four-armed subordinates on various dangerous missions.

Only healthy sahuagin can fight in blood challenges. This practice discourages blood challenges motivated by opportunity rather than true conflict. For example, a cunning warrior might want to challenge a wounded rival or superior, hoping to catch his opponent in a time of temporary weakness.

Because they are beings with great self control, a single insult or disagreement seldom results in a challenge—unless the dispute is especially grave. Usually, one of the sea devils involved in a conflict yields, but remembers the incident. This sahuagin will offer a cutting gibe or some harmless challenge at a future date.

For example, if a warrior requires a specific tool (owned by another warrior) to complete a task, he might argue with the second warrior over the tool. The sahuagin who doesn't require the tool might give up his claim of ownership, only to challenge his rival to a storytelling contest—with the tool as a prize—on another day. If the argument continues to escalate, the pair might eventually engage in a blood challenge. The reasons for each minor challenge are included in the prelude to the blood challenge.

Reasons for a Blood Challenge

While every sahuagin has a right to issue challenges, the sea devils have a traditional set of rules for what justifies a challenge. Indeed, an unjustified challenge might leave the challenger open to scorn and ridicule—assuming the sea devil survives the challenge. The following situations make blood challenges inevitable:

Difference of Opinion: If two sahuagin disagree over a point of fact, one of them might issue a challenge if they cannot reach some accord. An unresolved dispute of this nature implies a lack of honesty or a failing memory in one or both opponents. Failure to resolve the dispute inevitably leads to an accusation of weakness against one of the rivals.

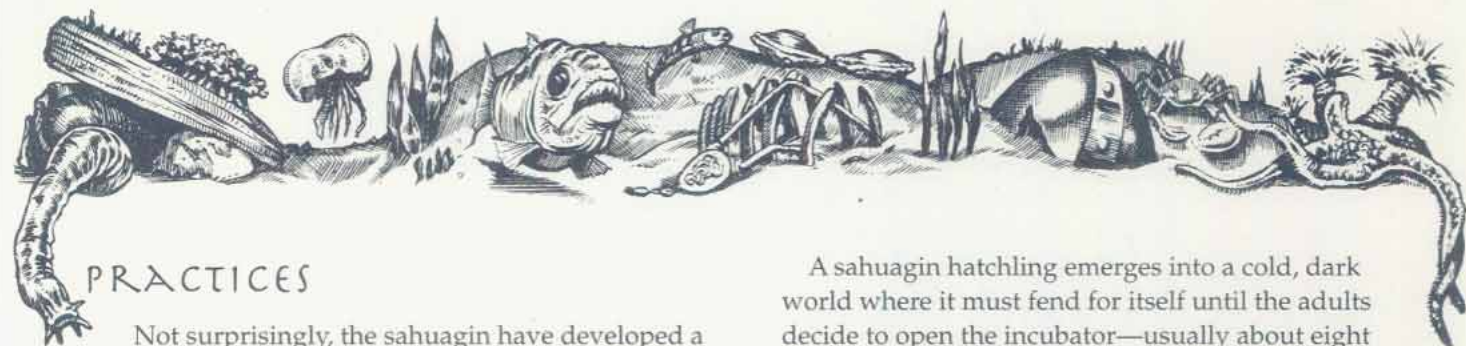
A difference of philosophical opinion can also justify a challenge if the opponents cannot agree. The sea devils do not tolerate dissidents, and any individual whose views stand out too much becomes a target.

Property Dispute: A sahuagin noble theoretically owns everything his subordinates possess. Individuals, however, remain responsible for their own equipment and dwellings. Unfortunately, the sahuagin penchant for collecting jewelry, pearls, and spoils of war sometimes leads to resentment—especially if one sea devil has lost a valuable item and another has picked it up.

Accusation of Weakness: Sea devils expect their peers to be bold and effectual. Should a sahuagin's companions find it wanting, the suspected individual must prove itself in a battle. The only acceptable response to an accusation of weakness is a blood challenge. An accusation of cowardice proves equally grave—though if the accused can reasonably claim magical compulsion, it may receive arbitration.

Accusation of Impropriety: Any failure to observe a ritual, share food, or perform an assigned task brings a charge of impropriety. Acts of disrespect toward Sekolah or a sea devil's superiors also count as impropriety. Sahuagin prove unforgiving when it comes to improper behavior. Once a sahuagin makes such an accusation, the central issue becomes whether the alleged behavior occurred, not whether the act was accidental or premeditated.

A sahuagin who kills a great white shark, for example, is guilty of sacrilege (because these animals are the symbol of Sekolah). To the sea devils, it makes no difference if the offender killed the shark by mistake. Again, the sahuagin make exceptions if a magical compulsion was at work.



PRACTICES

Not surprisingly, the sahuagin have developed a number of rituals and practices indicative of their unique social identity.

Breeding

One might expect the sea devils to employ a system in which the dominant males monopolize breeding rights. However, the exact opposite is true. While the elite males all maintain numerous concubines—the higher the male's rank the more numerous the concubines—the adults in each village have access to the widest possible variety of mates. Some females might serve as the baron's concubine for a few months, only to return to the general population for a time. Male-female partnerships throughout each village shift with each rotation of the bands. They also shift as village populations rotate every few years.

This continual reshuffling of mates seems wanton to surface dwellers, but it actually prevents the formation of distinct blood lines that would threaten the race's uniformity. It is but another example of the sea devils' ruthless and unsentimental natures.

When a breeding pair (or a male and his concubines) remain together, these sahuagin form a self-sustaining economic unit. The male provides food and protection, while the female (or females) sees to his domestic needs.

Child Rearing

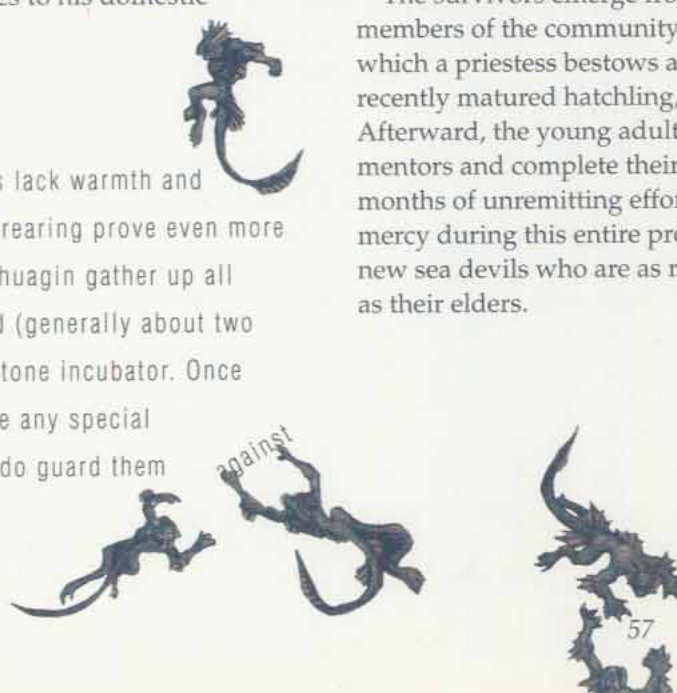
If sahuagin breeding practices lack warmth and intimacy, their methods of child rearing prove even more disagreeable and wicked. The sahuagin gather up all eggs laid during the same period (generally about two weeks), and seal them inside a stone incubator. Once sealed, these eggs do not receive any special attention—though the sahuagin do guard them against

A sahuagin hatchling emerges into a cold, dark world where it must fend for itself until the adults decide to open the incubator—usually about eight weeks after sealing it. During the interim, the only food available to the hatchlings comes in the form of other hatchlings and any unhatched eggs inside the incubator. Between the time the first few hatchlings emerge and the scheduled opening of the incubator, the adults remain well aware of their offspring's plight, as their sensitive ears can detect their cries.

The hatchlings' first non-cannibalistic meal comes when the adults make a small opening in the incubator and introduce a few freshly caught fish. The surviving hatchlings must then battle for their share of the food. The adults ritually open the incubator and extract the hatchlings one by one after the swarm of young sahuagin satiate themselves on the fish. The community's priestesses and elder females inspect each survivor for defects and feed any below-par hatchlings to the sharks. The sea devils mark the occasion with prayers to Sekolah that proclaim their ruthlessness and their worthiness to be his chosen.

For the next six months, the hatchlings live under prison-like conditions. The youngsters endure an endless series of potentially deadly tests and undergo rigorous indoctrination at the same time. During this period, the hatchlings learn basic hunting, fighting, and social skills.

The survivors emerge from this training as adult-sized members of the community. A public ceremony, during which a priestess bestows a personal name upon each recently matured hatchling, marks their coming of age. Afterward, the young adults report to teams of older mentors and complete their training after another six months of unremitting effort. The sea devils show no mercy during this entire process. The result is a brood of new sea devils who are as ruthless, haughty, and deadly as their elders.



Common Rituals

All societies develop certain modes of behavior that help define relationships and add some predictability to social life. Whereas surface dwellers might perform these rituals without thinking, the sea devils view them with intense solemnity; to a sahuagin, there is no such thing as a casual greeting. Their attention to ritual detail is a very practical matter in a society where fights to the death arise from a failure to follow tradition. Some of the most commonly performed daily rituals are described below:



"Welcome, comrade, to the hunting grounds of Neahgatau. It is Kalexis, warrior of Aahlequah, who speaks."

"Ch'lect, warrior of Xipah, answers. It is well that I have come to the waters that have seen the humiliation of the locathah. I come from Nunvuht."

Greeting: Despite their strong sense of group identity, every meeting between sea devils is ripe with the potential for conflict. A single missed gesture might imply that the offender does not respect its peer or is deliberately goading its comrade in answer to a previous slight.

When two equals meet, it is customary for both to look away, as eye contact could signify that one sea devil is sizing up the other. When sea devils of unequal ranks meet, the subordinate looks its superior in the eye and then swims upward, allowing the superior to swim underneath. The subordinate then looks away while the superior watches. If this proves impractical, the subordinate stands still with its hands on its chest and its eyes averted while the superior passes.

If the sea devils are unknown to each other, the native

sahuagin stops and tells the newcomer its location and follows with its own name and band affiliation. The newcomer then responds with its own name, affiliation, and home community, as well as some relevant detail about the history of its own territory or last location. The exchange serves to establish the visitor's credentials.

Entering a Building: Unless forced into haste by some danger, a sahuagin pauses near a structure it is about to enter and grooms itself by rubbing its fins with sand or seaweed. The gesture is similar to a surface dweller wip-

ing his feet. Once finished, the sea devil quickly rushes into the building's entrance tunnel (see Chapter 7) and announces himself. This announcement prevents the sea devils inside the building from attacking the visitor.

Eating: By surface standards, table manners do not exist among the Sahuagin. Sea devils tear into their food like hungry sharks, wolfing down great chunks of flesh and swallowing without chewing. This mode of eating suits them, as their teeth are designed for cutting and tearing, not grinding. The sea devils have no respect for fussy eaters. They equate a voracious appetite with a strong individual. According to sahuagin philosophy, the strong should grab as much bounty as they can in the shortest amount of time.



FOOD AND HUNTING

Beginning a Task: A sahuagin always starts a new project by announcing its intentions to the community. This ritual proves that the sea devil does not entertain the possibility of failure. Furthermore, the ritual explains the sahuagin's activities to its neighbors and superiors.

Ending a Task: Whenever a sea devil completes a task, it makes an announcement to the community.

Telling a Story: Though the sahuagin have books, they tell all their stories from memory. A sahuagin may consult a book to learn a new story, but he or she can never read aloud in public. Every story begins with an announcement of its general subject matter and its point of origin. Once the speaker finishes the story, he or she repeats the opening information. Noting the story's source helps emphasize its veracity, while repeating its subject matter allows other storytellers to choose different stories during a long session of storytelling.

OTHER NOTES

Although these observable rituals tell us much about the sahuagin, a brief examination of those rites omitted from sahuagin culture offers the careful scholar another insight into the psychology of the sea devils. For example, they observe no regular holidays. Public celebrations happen when the local prince or baron deems them necessary; this often occurs after prompting from the priestesses.

Because sahuagin survive by hunting, one would expect them to have rituals which assure the success of the hunt, as well as rituals that offer thanks for Sekolah's bounty. This is not the case, however. Sahuagin believe that failure arises from inadequacy; thus, they believe that success during the hunt depends entirely on their own prowess. Similarly, the sea devils do not believe that anything is ever given to them; they earn their survival through demonstratable physical and mental superiority. Thus, "giving thanks" is irrelevant.

Sahuagin derive all their sustenance from their prey and take their hunting very seriously. Sahuagin hunting parties can range in size from a single pair of sea devils to an entire band—depending on their location and intended prey. A couple of warriors on garrison duty might swim off to spear a few fish when they have a spare moment. On the other hand, a band patrolling the inky darkness 1,500 feet beneath the surface might hunt as a unit, forming a living net that sweeps the water.

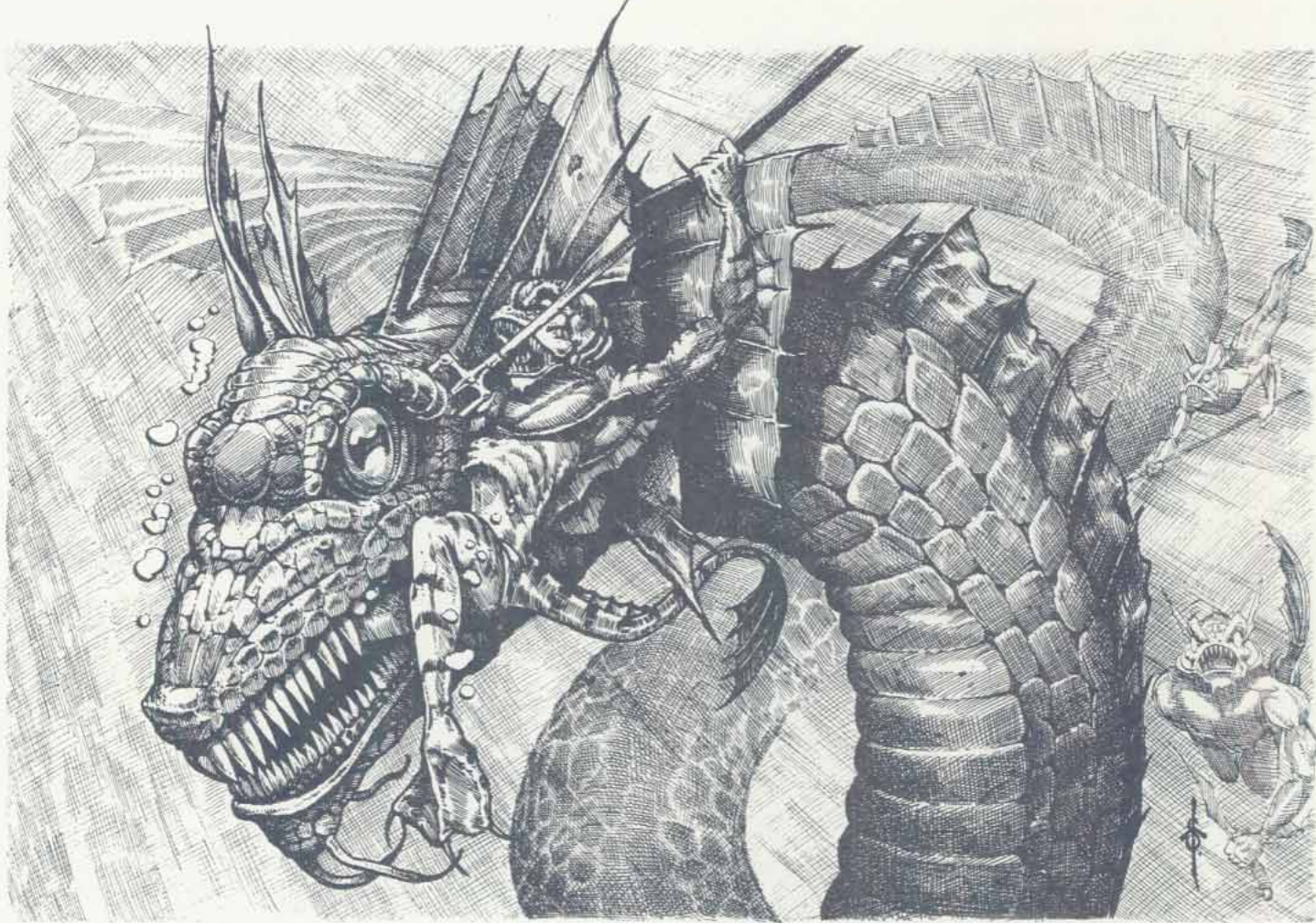
A hunt always begins with at least a brief discussion of the prey and its location. After the pre-hunt discussion, each hunter proclaims its intention to successfully conclude the hunt, just as they would when beginning any other task (see Rituals).

When the group makes a kill, the hunters either share it among themselves or rush the catch back to their home village. Before eating the catch, the participating hunters relate the story of the hunt; each individual describes his role in the hunt and repeats his original goals and intentions. This ritual is a variation on the one the sahuagin perform at the close of any task.

Hunting is an effort all sahuagin eagerly undertake. Not only does a successful hunt bring great honor, but it also allows the hunters to eat what they have caught—a luxury not always possible to females and other villagers. Hunters prefer prey killed by biting or spearing over prey caught in nets.

Since their watery environment makes food preservation impractical, sea devils store netted food in a prison cell or empty dwelling. The sahuagin can then kill the prey at their leisure. Sahuagin also utilize mesh bags filled with mollusks—usually clams or mussels—as "trail rations." The shelled creatures can survive in the bags for extended periods; hungry sahuagin simply pry the shells open with their claws and slurp up the creature for a snack.

Sea devils hunt just about everything that swims through the ocean, skims its surface, or crawls along the bottom. However, sahuagin do not actively hunt great white sharks, giant sharks, and other sahuagin. Their taboo against the random killing of other sahuagin bars them from hunting each other—though they do occasionally eat the flesh of other sahuagin (see Funeral Rites). The sea devils regard great white sharks and



giants sharks as creatures of Sekolah and hence "sahuagin." This prohibition does not, however, prevent sea devils from hunting other species of sharks and ray. Actually, the sahuagin relish shark hunting because a victory over such dangerous creatures brings honor to the hunter.

The Wild Hunt: Sekolah, the god of the sea devils (see page 43), periodically sends his avatars forth to hunt on the Prime Material Plane. There is a possibility that any sahuagin viewing the avatar speeding through the water will succumb to awe and join the hunt. Awed sahuagin send out booming cries that resemble the baying of hounds. The avatar and its pack of hunters seek prey for days, stopping only when they run down some powerful creature. In the meantime, the pack attacks anything it encounters.

SEKOLAH'S PACK

When sahuagin view Sekolah on the hunt, the highest ranked (or eldest) sea devil present must attempt a saving throw vs. paralysis. If the saving throw fails, the entire group and its companion sharks joins the avatar. The sea devils cast aside their weapons and enter a state akin to blood frenzy—though they do not attack each other or their sharks in the avatar's presence.

While accompanying the avatar, the sea devils move at a speed of 36. The pack's vocalizations are audible up to a mile away. In addition, the pack attacks any creature of at least size S and continues to hunt until it locates prey of at least 15 Hit Dice. Sekolah's Pack always fights to the death.

Once the hunt ends, the avatar abandons its companion sharks and sahuagin. These creatures must now find their way home as best they can. Because of the power of the avatar, members of the pack feel no fatigue from their exertions. However, they must depend on their own endurance once the avatar departs.



RAIDS

Raiding is an activity second only to hunting in importance to the sahuagin. In fact, a sahuagin community will attack any colony of intelligent creatures located in or near its territory. The sea devils raid for food, slaves (the sahuagin consume these poor creatures once their lives have ended), and manufactured goods—such as metal tools and weapons.

A typical raiding party consists of an entire band of warriors along with its chieftain and his lieutenants. The majority of the community's priests accompany the warriors. If the raid seems likely to produce considerable booty, the baron and his guards will also participate.

During a land raid, the sahuagin warriors push forward while their leaders and priestesses provide support with missiles and spells. These raids invariably take place on overcast or moonless nights; the sea devils time the raids so that they can slip back into the ocean before dawn.

Though stories about sea devils capturing surface dwellers abound, this seldom happens. In fact, the sahuagin mostly raid for treasure and metal. Since air breathing prisoners would quickly drown when brought into the water, the sahuagin prefer to collect corpses instead of live captives.

No matter where a raid occurs, sahuagin always collect their wounded and their dead (if at all possible) before withdrawing. Sahuagin never return to their communities after a raid. Instead, they scatter and lie low in well-concealed dwellings prepared in advance (these also serve as shelters for hunting parties). The sahuagin ritually kill any badly wounded sea devil unable to maintain a fast swimming pace. Once the creatures are sure that pursuit isn't forthcoming, small groups of unwounded sahuagin return to their homes. Wounded sea devils remain behind until fully healed. This denies their enemies any opportunity to track the sahuagin by blood scent and relieves the community of the burden of caring for the wounded.

As with a hunt, the sahuagin begin a raid by discussing their objectives and their individual plans of action. Once the warriors return, the whole community remains on alert until the last of the stragglers arrive. If any wounded sea devils fail to return, small scouting parties fan out to determine their fates. Once the

sahuagin account for all warriors, they relate the tale of the raid and state their accomplishments during the attack. This signals the official end of the raid.

COMMERCE

Despite their predisposition for violence, the sahuagin occasionally find it profitable to engage in trade. Their commerce is strictly limited to other sahuagin and occasionally extended to worthy outsiders—such as weresharks and anguillians.

Sahuagin commonly buy and sell status items, usually jewelry or materials for making jewelry, such as pearls, gems, and rare coral. Less frequently, the sahuagin buy weapons and manufactured goods. However, sahuagin never buy and sell food. Rather, the sea devils share their food; any sahuagin caught hoarding food is guilty of an impropriety (see page 56).

Sahuagin handle most transactions through a system of barter. However, sahuagin nobles also distribute coral-and-pearl bars as rewards to their subordinates. These serve as currency—especially in towns and royal cities.

FUNERAL RITES

Most surface dwellers associate cannibalism with sahuagin mourning rituals, as the sea devils usually eat their dead. To a sea devil, however, being eaten by one's comrades is a fitting end. Every sahuagin lives to serve its race; providing sustenance for its community represents a sahuagin's final service.

Sahuagin also believe that consuming a dead sahuagin ("meat") releases its essence and binds it to the community; thus, a small part of the corpse will forever remain "sahuagin." No sahuagin wishes to die alone and decompose or become food for its enemies.

Sahuagin funerals are not solemn affairs, as the sea devils eat their food quickly. The overall mood does vary, however. If the deceased perished in a challenge, the mood remains festive, as the diners salute the victor's triumph (the defeated is all but forgotten). If death occurred through an accident or battle, a more subdued mood characterizes the funeral. Each sea devil pauses to recall the deeds of his comrade.

Sea Devils do not eat aspiring priestesses killed during their ordeals, as they regard the deceased as someone

rejected by Sekolah. In any case, the ingested poison consumed by the aspirant renders her flesh inedible.

SACRIFICES

Any significant event in the life of a sahuagin community requires a sacrifice to Sekolah. These events include the hatching of eggs, major hunts and raids, important challenges, and major gladiatorial combats. Sacrifices for these events include imperfect hatchlings, captives, and items of wealth.

The sea devils feed living sacrifices to the community's sharks, and they cast material goods into the depths of the sea. Unlike many races who perform sacrifices in order to insure success or gain aid, the sea devils usually offer sacrifices to demonstrate their worthiness and to prove their mindfulness of Sekolah's presence.

In addition, priestesses can simply declare the need for a sacrifice, even though no great event has come to pass. It isn't clear if the priestesses are responding to some omen known only to them, or if they merely wish to assert their own authority (the latter is most likely the case).

OUTCASTS

In rare cases, a sea devil might choose to flee its community. Usually the sahuagin in question has a change of heart while waiting to resolve a challenge, or it has committed some challengeable offense. More rarely, a sea devil might feel it can no longer help support its community due to injury or illness.

In either case, the sea devil permanently leaves its home territory. When the community of sahuagin notices its absence, they quickly declare the individual an outcast and vow to slay the fugitive should he or she ever return. In some cases, a hunting party might pursue the outcast—especially if it has refused a challenge or committed an offense. If captured, the sea devils torture the fugitive to death and discard the body, declaring it unfit for consumption.

Malenti often flee their communities as they enter the last decades of their lives. In some cases, outcasts form their own independent communities. Normal sahuagin actively seek out these blasphemous communities and do their utmost to destroy them.

ENTERTAINMENT

Like most thinking creatures, sahuagin crave the occasional diversion. Sahuagin prefer entertainments that challenge their minds or satisfy their rapacious natures. Common entertainments include:

Gladiatorial Combats: Sahuagin love to watch creatures fighting. They especially enjoy pitting a large number of small creatures against a single, more powerful opponent. This arrangement creates ample carnage. In addition, any victory of the weaker creatures over the larger creature confirms the sahuagin belief in group power.

Maze games: Sahuagin like to enhance gladiatorial displays by constructing labyrinths in the arena. This forces the opponents to navigate through the maze before they can fight. Innis McKenn describes one unusual variation in which two air breathers were placed at opposite ends of a labyrinth containing a magical elixir that bestowed the ability to breathe water. The real entertainment for the sea devils came when one contestant seized the bottle containing the draught and vainly tried to uncork and imbibe it (drinking any kind of beverage underwater is nearly impossible).

Story Telling: The sea devils always appreciate the efforts of a good storyteller. Unfortunately, captives do not find this helpful, as the sahuagin's requirements for good storytelling include a mastery of the sahuagin language, a vast knowledge of traditional sahuagin lore, and the ability to recite an extremely long tale (several hours in length) from memory. Sahuagin stories always contain huge amounts of seemingly insignificant details which often bear on the outcome. A prisoner trying to mollify his sahuagin captors with a rousing tale might buy a few extra minutes of life, but in the end, the sea devils will respond with derision.

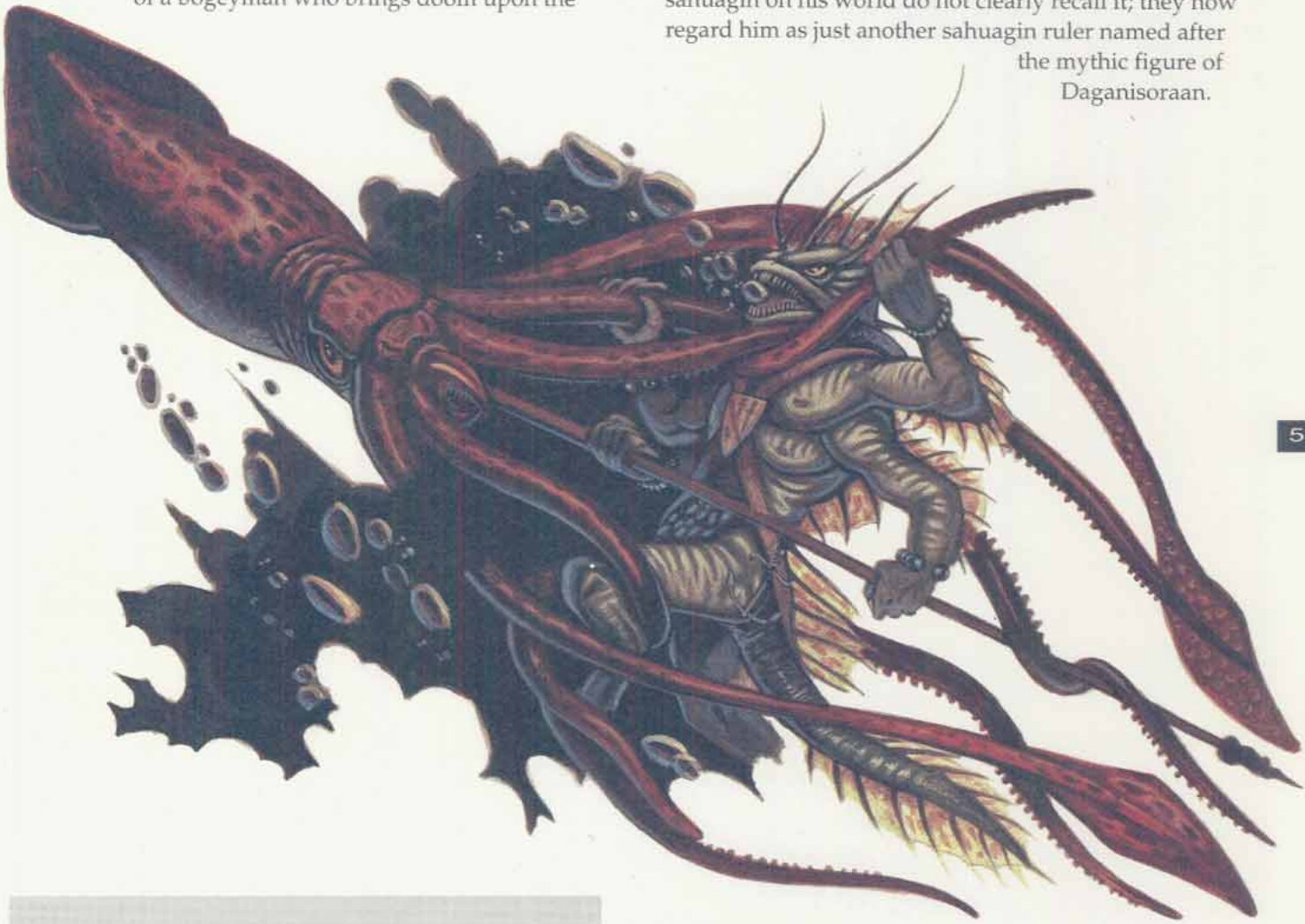
Choral Singing: Lone sea devils frequently join together to sing wordless harmonies improvised on the spot. Separate groups repeat distorted versions of the notes in an attempt to recreate the echoing song of Sekolah from their origin myth.

Daganisoraan

This character appears in many sahuagin tales as both a villain and a hero. In a few tales, he plays the role of a bogeyman who brings doom upon the

foolish or unwary. As stated earlier, the sea devils believe in the literal truth of all their tales (see Beliefs). In this case, however, their belief is justified, as Daganisoraan actually exists. This mythic figure was once a powerful four-armed king who ruled for centuries. Ultimately bored with ruling, Daganisoraan exiled himself and set out on an independent life (which accounts for his chaotic alignment). The creature is now some 2,000 years old and has grown to immense size.

Daganisoraan's actual rule was so long ago even the sahuagin on his world do not clearly recall it; they now regard him as just another sahuagin ruler named after the mythic figure of Daganisoraan.



Daganisoraan: AC 0; MV 9, Sw 36; HD 20+20; hp 160; THACO -1; #AT 7; Dmg 1d12/1d12/1d12/1d12/2d10/2d10 /2d10 (claw/claw/claw/claw/bite/rake/rake); SA sahuagin abilities (see Chapter 3) SW bright light harms eyes; susceptibility to fire; SZ G (30' 6" tall); ML Fearless (20); Int Genius (18); AL CE; XP 16,000

Notes: SW—The first time an opponent uses a magical effect that produces bright light—such as a *continual light* spell—the creature is blinded for one round. Daganisoraan suffers a -2 penalty on saving throws vs. all light-based attacks; in addition, he has a -2 saving throw penalty vs. magical fire and suffers one extra point per die of magical fire damage.

The creature spends most of the time snoozing in a hidden cavern deep beneath the sea, emerging every decade or so to hunt creatures such as kraken, sharkweres, and whales. After a few months of activity, he goes back to sleep.

A SAHUAGIN VILLAGE

What are sahuagin villages like? You'd be surprised. They build little stone huts with hidden entrances dug in the sea floor. All their buildings are pretty much alike, just stone domes. You'd think sahuagin would lay everything out in nice, neat rows, but that ain't so. They scatter everything around so it looks like natural rocks. . . .
—Jervis McKenna, wereshark

The village of Neahgataa, mentioned briefly in the previous chapter, is detailed here. Though sahuagin communities vary according to the size of their populations and the local terrain, most contain all the features described here.

The village rests on a rocky sea bottom under about 600 feet of clear water. The water temperature in the village is only about 65 degrees Fahrenheit, which feels pretty chilly to humans. Even on the sunniest day, blue twilight hangs over the village, fading to pitch black at night—perfect conditions for sahuagin.

The village is home to about 400 sea devils—including 310 adult males and 70 breeding females. The bulk of the males spend most of their time hunting in the waters beyond the village. Only about 60 males are currently in residence.

In addition to the sahuagin listed for each area, 10 warriors, led by a lieutenant, patrol the village's outskirts (use the statistics from area 2). Ten more warriors rest in their homes, and the village's females go about their daily business in various locations.

THE BARON'S PRESERVE

Baron Neahgataa and his household have exclusive use of the baron's preserve. The preserve functions not only as the seat of political power, but also the focal point of the village's defense.

1. BARON'S RESIDENCE

The baron and his retinue of guards and concubines lives here. The complex also serves as the village's citadel. In case of a determined attack, any survivors can withdraw here for a last stand.

The three smaller domes to the west house the baron's 10 concubines. The baron himself dwells in the large dome along with his guards. The interior has three levels. The baron's personal quarters and treasury lie at the top. The next level down contains the baronial throne and audience chamber, where the baron holds court. Crystal windows allow a view of the amphitheater (area 6) from this level. The lowest level serves as a guard barracks.

Like all the buildings in the village, the baron's complex has entrances that lie hidden in the surrounding sea floor. Each entrance leads to a three-dimensional labyrinth of tunnels that eventually connects to the domes' interiors. Two entrances lie hidden under the rocks to the west. Two others lie in the cliff faces to the south and east.

Baffles and other traps guard each of these secret entrances (see Chapter 7 for details). In addition, the baron has placed several giant clams in the labyrinth. Anyone blundering up a blind alley in the labyrinth must make a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon or trap a limb in a clam. Killing a clam generates enough noise and blood scent to alert everyone in the complex.

The Baron: Baron Neahgataa is an extremely ferocious sahuagin noble. A four-armed specimen, the baron spent the first 30 years of his life enduring taunts and potentially deadly tricks from his superiors. He lost no time in establishing himself as a preeminent hunter and warrior—often leading groups far afield to slay squid and kraken. As a chieftain, he engineered a successful assault on a colony of sea elves and succeeded not only in wiping out the elves, but also in engineering the deaths of the malenti spies used to infiltrate the colony.

Neahgataa is 265 years old, making him one of the more powerful barons in the area. His four arms and great size have left him fairly secure from challenges in recent decades. The lack of any serious threat to his personal safety has made him feel bored, and he looks forward to challenging a prince for his position in a few years. Mindful of the lessons of his youth, Neahgataa has concluded a secret deal with his own prince, assuring the prince that the baron will challenge some other opponent for advancement. Currently, the prince and the baron are making a quiet survey of all the kingdom's princes, searching for the best opponent. Neahgataa is not necessarily looking for an easy victory, but rather a rich principedom.

In the meantime, Neahgataa has concluded a successful campaign against a local colony of locathah. The effort has depleted the village's population somewhat, but it has done a great deal to improve Neahgataa's status among the barons. Neahgataa's seven chieftains—still flushed with victory from the war—are already flexing their muscles, getting ready to fight for the baron's place when he relinquishes his hold on the village.

Baron Neahgataa: AC 5; MV 12, Sw 24; HD 7+7; hp 49; THACO 13 (10 with trident); #AT 4 or 7; Dmg 1d8+10/1d3/1d3/1d6/1d6/1d6 (two-handed trident +2 and Strength bonus/claw/claw/bite/rake/rake) or 1d3/1d3/1d3/1d3/1d6/1d6/1d6 (claw/claw/claw/claw/bite/rake/rake); SA pin; SW bright light harms eyes, susceptible to magical fire; SZ L (7'6" tall); ML Steady (12); Int High (14); AL LE; XP 1,400.

Notes: SA—The baron can use his trident to pin opponents; the baron has an effective strength score of 19.

SW—The first time an opponent uses a magical effect that produces bright light—such as a *continual light* spell—he is blinded for one round; the baron suffers a -2 penalty on saving throws vs. light-

based attacks; he also saves at -2 vs. magical fire and suffers an extra point per die of magical fire damage.

Baronial Guards (9): AC 5; MV 12, Sw 24; HD 3+3; hp 18 each; THACO 17; #AT 1 or 5; Dmg 1d8+1 and poison (heavy crossbow) or 1d6+1/1d2/1d4/1d4/1d4 (trident/claw/bite/rake/rake); SA poisoned crossbow bolts, nets; SW bright light harms eyes, susceptibility to magical fire; SZ M (6' tall); ML Steady (12); Int High (14); AL LE; XP 270 each.

Notes: SA—Sahuagin can use their nets and tridents to pin and trap opponents (see Chapter 3 for details); the guards have five nets among them and an effective strength score of 17; the poison on their crossbow bolts causes paralysis (see Chapter 3).

SW—See notes under Baron Neahgataa.

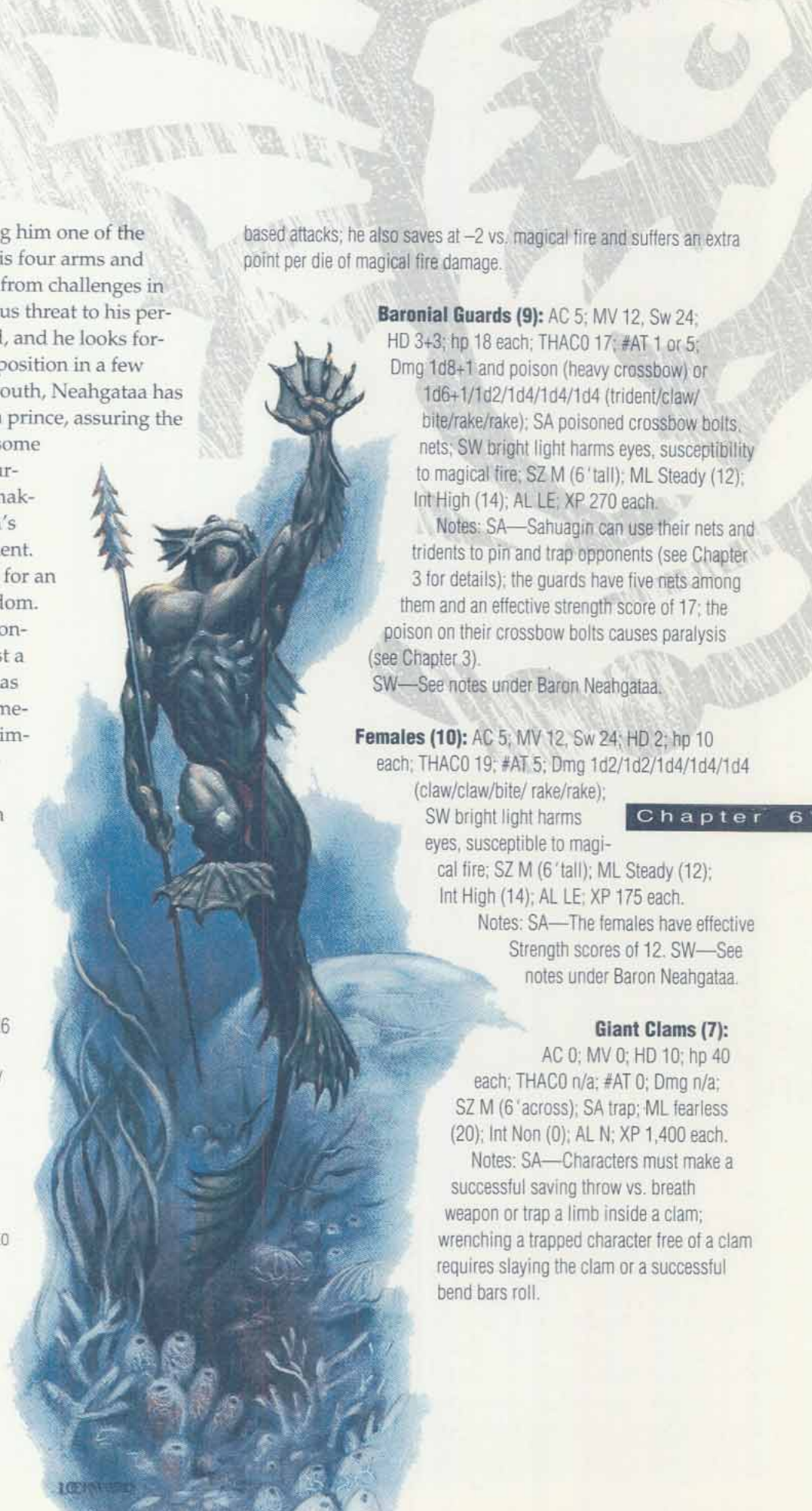
Females (10): AC 5; MV 12, Sw 24; HD 2; hp 10 each; THACO 19; #AT 5; Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d4/1d4/1d4 (claw/claw/bite/rake/rake); SW bright light harms eyes, susceptible to magical fire; SZ M (6' tall); ML Steady (12); Int High (14); AL LE; XP 175 each.

Notes: SA—The females have effective Strength scores of 12. SW—See notes under Baron Neahgataa.

Giant Clams (7):

AC 0; MV 0; HD 10; hp 40 each; THACO n/a; #AT 0; Dmg n/a; SZ M (6' across); SA trap; ML fearless (20); Int Non (0); AL N; XP 1,400 each.

Notes: SA—Characters must make a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon or trap a limb inside a clam; wrenching a trapped character free of a clam requires slaying the clam or a successful bend bars roll.





2. GUARD TOWER

This 60-foot structure has a domed gallery at the top. Alert sentries under a lieutenant's command occupy the gallery around the clock and constantly scan the surrounding waters. If they spot trouble, one of the sentries blows on a conch shell, creating a low-frequency thrum audible throughout the village.

The tower is hollow below the gallery, and a hole in the gallery floor allows access to the interior. Pegs and shelves within the interior of the tower hold all manner of weapons—including tridents, nets, crossbows, daggers, ink bombs and poison (see Chapter 7). This store

serves as a central armory for the village—though each warrior also sees to his own supply of weapons. Two attendants maintain the weapons and keep watch on the guards 60 feet above. If they see anyone fighting or blowing on a conch, they blow a second conch.

To help conceal the tower from enemies swimming overhead, the sahuagin have draped the exterior with old nets interwoven with bits of living seaweed, shells, and dead coral. From a distance, the tower looks like a spire of natural rock.

Sahuagin Warriors (12): AC 5; MV 12, Sw 24; HD 2+2; hp 12 each; THACO 19; #AT 1 or 5; Dmg 1d8+1 and poison (heavy crossbow)



or 1d2/1d2/1d4/1d4/1d4 (claw/claw/bite/rake/ rake); SA poisoned crossbow bolts, nets; SW bright light harms eyes, susceptibility to magical fire; SZ M (6' tall); ML Steady (12); Int High (13-14); AL LE; XP 175 each.

Notes: SA—Sahuagin can use their nets to trap opponents (see Chapter 3 for details); the guards have six nets among them and an effective Strength score of 14; the poison on their crossbow bolts causes paralysis (see Chapter 3).

SW—The first time an opponent uses a magical effect that produces bright light—such as a *continual light* spell—all sahuagin in the area of effect are blinded for one round; sahuagin suffer a -2 penalty on saving throws vs. light-based attacks; they also save at -2 vs. magical fire and suffer an extra point per die of magical fire damage.

Lieutenant: AC 5; MV 12, Sw 24; HD 3+3; hp 18 each; THACO 17; #AT 1 or 5; Dmg 1d8+1 and poison (heavy crossbow) or 1d6+1/1d2/1d4/1d4/1d4 (trident/claw/bite/rake/rake); SA poisoned crossbow bolts, pin; SW bright light harms eyes, susceptibility to magical fire; SZ M (6' tall); ML Steady (12); Int High (14); AL LE; XP 270 each.

Notes: SA—The Lieutenant can pin opponents with his trident (see Chapter 3 for details); he has an effective Strength score of 17 and the poison on his crossbow bolts causes paralysis (see Chapter 3).

SW—See notes under sahuagin warriors on this page.

3. GARDENS

Although this area seems like a natural complex of seaweed, corals, and rock formations, the sahuagin have actually collected dozens of boulders and artfully arranged them around the area's natural rock formations. In addition, they have transplanted several varieties of seaweed and coral, and have stocked the area with a wide variety of sponges, sea anemones, sea cucumbers and other invertebrates. Many types of fish—attracted to the area's bounty—naturally gravitate here, creating a sort of preserve for exotic species.

The baron and his entourage use the gardens for relaxing swims and the occasional impromptu hunt. Because of the wide variety of food available here, the village sharks also frequent the gardens.

Sharks (5): AC 6; MV Sw 24; HD 8; hp 40 each; THACO 13; #AT 1; Dmg 3d4; SZ L (9' long); ML Steady (12); Int Animal (1); AL N; XP 650 each.

4. CATCH NET

Dense forests of seaweed ring the whole village, and the sahuagin regularly hunt among these weeds. To this end, they have strung miles of thin, sturdy nets in circles around the village—carefully concealing them among the weeds. The sahuagin feed the netted prey to their hatchlings, sharks, and prisoners. The nets also serve to trap enemies who might try to creep up on the village through the foliage.



PUBLIC TERRACE

This area contains various structures essential to the communal life of the sahuagin.

5. NURSERY

All the village's hatchlings dwell here under the watchful eyes of senior females and under priestesses. Five adult females and one of the priestesses watch this area at all hours. The females keep the hatchlings grouped together by age, with each age group occupying a separate dome. At various hours of the day, the females instruct the hatchlings in the fine art of proper sahuagin behavior (see Chapter 5 for details). Schools of hatchlings swarm about the domes, each eager to outdo the others.

Hatchlings (30): AC 5; MV 12, Sw 24; HD 1; hp 1 (x7), 2 (x3), 3 (x6), 4 (x5), 5 (x4), 6 (x5); THACO 20; #AT 5; Dmg 1/1/1/1/1 (claw/claw/bite/rake/rake); SW bright light harms eyes, susceptible to magical fire; SZ S (6" to 3'tall); ML Steady (12); Int High (14); AL LE; XP 15 each.

Notes: SW—See notes under Females below.

Females (5): AC 5; MV 12, Sw 24; HD 2; hp 10 each; THACO 19; #AT 5; Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d4/1d4/1d4 (claw/claw/bite/rake/rake); SW bright light harms eyes, susceptible to magical fire; SZ M (6'tall); ML Steady (12); Int High (14); AL LE; XP 175 each.

Notes: SA—The females have effective Strength scores of 12.

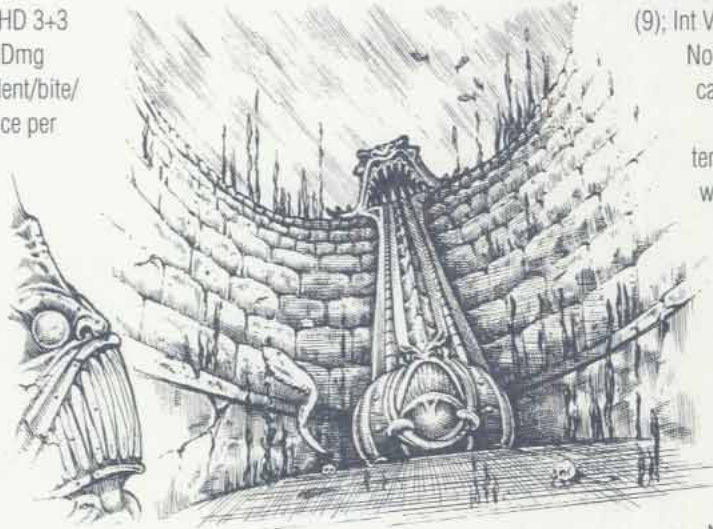
SW—The first time an opponent uses a magical effect that produces bright light—

such as a *continual light* spell—all sahuagin in the area of effect are blinded for one round; sahuagin suffer a -2 penalty on saving throws vs. light-based attacks; they also save at -2 vs. magical fire and suffer an extra point per die of magical fire damage.

Priestess: AC 5; MV 12, Sw 24; HD 3+3 (Cl 3); hp 18; THACO 15; #AT 4 or 5; Dmg 1d8+1/1d4/1d4/1d4 (two-handed trident/bite/rake/rake); SA spells, *charm shark* once per day, pin; SW bright light harms eyes, susceptible to magical fire; SZ M (6' tall); ML Steady (12); Int High (14); AL LE; XP 420.

Notes: SA—The priestess can pin opponents with her trident (see Chapter 3 for details); she has an effective Strength score of 15. SW—See notes under Females above.

Spells: 1st—*bless*, *cause fear*, *curse*, *darkness*; 2nd—*aid*.



6. AMPHITHEATER

Five hundred sahuagin can crowd into this structure to witness formal challenges, gladiatorial games, or public rituals. The main floor consists of multicolored tiles cut from coral. The sahuagin have arranged the tiles in swirls of light and dark colors.

The sahuagin keep the amphitheater covered with an immense net whenever it is empty. The net's strong mesh is multicolored, with bits of live seaweed woven in. It serves primarily to camouflage the amphitheater. However, when prisoners fight in the amphitheater, the sahuagin prop the net up on sturdy poles, allowing the net to cover the structure like a circus tent. This prevents prisoners from escaping.

6a. Props: This pile of poles, stone blocks, wooden beams, and other objects allows the sahuagin to construct obstacle courses and mazes for combatants. A camouflage net usually covers the pile.

7. PRISON

These structures house the sahuagin's captives. The main exit leads out through the guardhouse (area 8), making escape difficult.

The sahuagin have 20 locathah imprisoned in the two eastern domes. They occasionally remove small groups of three or four individuals for work details—such as collecting fish trapped in the catch net (area 4)—but for the most part the sahuagin keep the prisoners locked up. Most prisoners will serve as fighting partners for the

hatchlings, and the rest will eventually face a captive giant octopus, currently held in the west dome.

Locathah (20): AC 6; MV 1, Sw 12; HD 2; hp 4 each; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg grapple; SZ M (5' tall); ML Average (9); Int Very (11–12); AL N; XP Nil.

Notes: Since locathah lack claws, they cannot inflict damage without the use of a weapon. Weaponless locathah attempt to grapple opponents (see the wrestling rules in the Combat chapter of the *Player's Handbook* for more details).

Giant Octopus: AC 7; MV 3, Sw 12; HD 8, hp 36; THACO 13; #AT 7; Dmg 1d4(x6)/2d6; SA constriction; SZ L (10' across); ML Elite (13); Int Animal (1); AL N; XP 2,000.

Notes: SA—If an octopus makes a successful attack roll with its tentacle, it automatically constricts its opponent for 2d4 points of damage each round until the arm is severed.

8. GUARDHOUSE

Nine warriors charged with supervising the prisoners in area 7 remain here at all times. A twisting tunnel leads from each prison dome to this one. Three more tunnels lead from the guardhouse to the sea. Two of these exit to the east and west, right near the guardhouse, and the third opens near the amphitheater. The sea devils keep the latter blocked with boulders unless they intend to lead prisoners out that way.

Heavy bronze gratings at each end of the tunnels leading from the prison domes keep the captives inside. Stone wedges hold the gratings in place. Determined prisoners could probably work them loose, but the resulting noise would alert the guards. Once in the tunnels, prisoners would have to navigate through the darkness and avoid several sets of baffles and traps (see Chapter 7) before emerging in the guardhouse.

The guards are well supplied with weapons, and have an alarm conch just like the ones used in the guard tower (area 2).

Sahuagin Warriors (9): AC 5; MV 12, Sw 24; HD 2+2; hp 12 each; THACO 19; #AT 5; Dmg 1d6+1 and poison/1d2/1d4/1d4/1d4 (trident/claw/bite/rake/rake); SA poisoned tridents, nets, pin; SW bright light harms eyes, susceptible to magical fire; SZ M (6' tall); ML Steady (12); Int High (13–14); AL LE; XP 175 each.

Notes: SA—Sahuagin can use their nets and tridents to pin and trap opponents (see Chapter 3 for details); the warriors have nine nets

among them and an effective Strength score of 14; the poison on their tridents causes paralysis (see Chapter 3).

SW—The first time an opponent uses a magical effect that produces bright light—such as a *continual light* spell—all sahuagin in the area of effect are blinded for one round; sahuagin suffer a –2 penalty on saving throws vs. light-based attacks; they also save at –2 vs. magical fire and suffer an extra point per die of magical fire damage.

WORSHIP AND WORK AREA

Village life revolves around this area, much as it does around a marketplace in a surface town. Here the sahuagin gather to perform their communal chores, to exchange boasts and gossip, and to venerate their bloodthirsty god, Sekolah.

9. SHRINE TO SEKOLAH

The shrine consists of a coral-tile pavement similar to the one in the amphitheater (area 6). A 1-inch thick mother-of-pearl slab, about 15 feet in diameter,

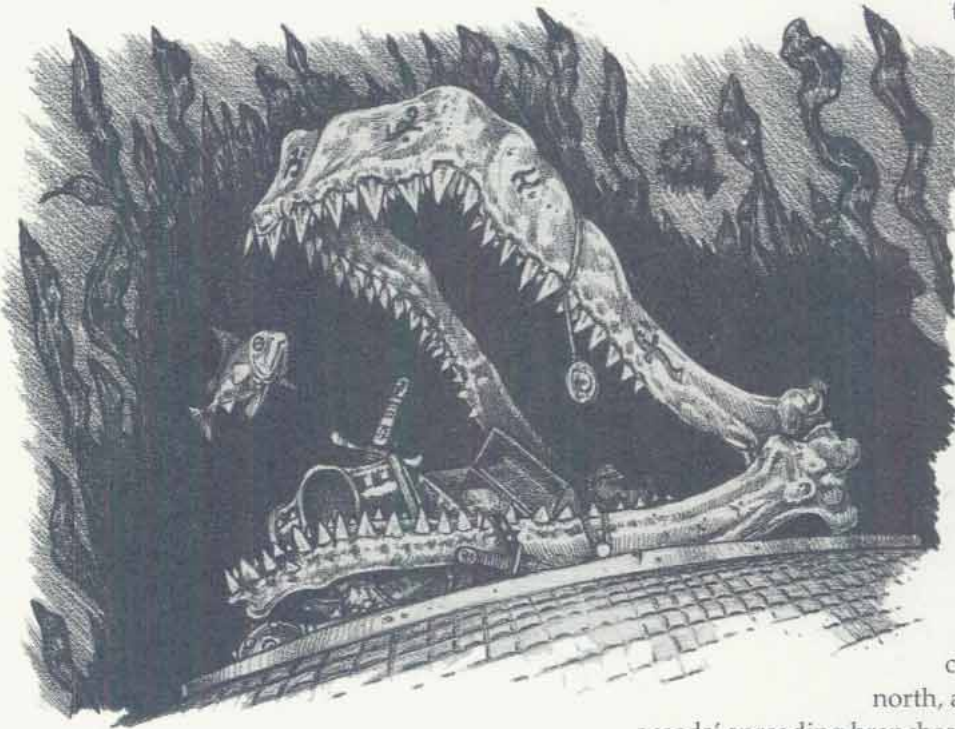
lies at the western end of the pavement; the slab was taken from a gargantuan oyster. A massive pair of shark jaws, some 10 feet wide and almost as tall, lie gaping atop the slab and serve as an idol. The priestesses have heaped shells, weapons, armor, gems, and bones inside the jaws. A ramp concealed in the heap makes anything placed atop it tumble down through a shaft that leads to the canyon (area 18). When the priestesses make sacrifices to Sekolah, the offerings fall into the canyon's depths, where tidal forces soon cover them with silt and carry the whole mass into the remote depths of the sea.

The sahuagin have planted a thick curtain of seaweed around the west, north, and east sides of the shrine. The

weeds' spreading branches obscure the view from above, but the gap in the south assures that ceremonies held here can take place in full view of any spectators.

The mother-of-pearl slab is worth at least 15,000 gp, but it weighs about nine tons and cracks easily if mishandled. The jaws themselves have no commercial value. The pile of debris within the jaws contains 2,000 gp worth of assorted gems and jewelry, as well as a *helm of underwater action*. It takes one turn to sort out the valuable items from the junk.

The most junior priestess of the village constantly labors over this area, pruning the seaweed, keeping the pavement free of silt, and completing any other small chores. A band of slaves from the prison (area 7) performs the really strenuous work, however. The priestess is not pleased with the assign-



ment, as she did not expect to become a custodian once she became a priestess. She spends her hours alternately flirting with passing warriors and longing to accompany them on a raid (she was still in training during the war on the locathah and missed all the action). The priestess carries six poisoned darts and a conch shell like the one in the guard tower (area 2).

Priestess: AC 5; MV 12, Sw 24; HD 2 (Cl 1); hp 9; THACO 19; #AT 2 or 4; Dmg 1d4 and poison/1d4 and poison (dart/dart) or 1d8+1/1d4/1d4/1d4 (two-handed trident/bite/rake/rake); SA *charm shark* once per day, poisoned darts, pin, spells; SW bright light harms eyes, susceptible to magical fire; SZ M (6' tall); ML Steady (12); Int High (14); AL LE; XP 420.

Notes: SA—The priestess can pin opponents with her trident (see Chapter 3 for details); she has an effective Strength score of 12; poison on darts causes paralysis (see Chapter 3 for details).

SW—The first time an opponent uses a magical effect that produces bright light—such as a *continual light* spell—the priestess is blinded for one round; she suffers a -2 penalty on saving throws vs. light-based attacks; she also saves at -2 vs. magical fire and suffers an extra point per die of magical fire damage.

Spells (3): 1st—*cause fear, command, darkness*.

10. PRIESTESSES' QUARTERS

All the village priestesses reside in this three-level dome. The first level contains a shrine to Sekolah used by the clerics to cast divination spells and perform private rites. The shrine consists of a round coral bowl about 3 feet wide and 1 foot deep. A 5-foot ivory carving of a white shark hovers over the bowl. The carving is hollow and contains air, making it buoyant enough to float. The priestesses keep it in place with a thin, nearly invisible tether. The bowl itself weighs about 200 pounds and is worth 1,000 gp. The shark carving weighs about 75 pounds and is worth 2,000 gp.

The second level contains quarters for the four priestesses. Two of the under priestesses have been described elsewhere (see areas 5 and 9).

The top level of the dome contains the village's collection of books; these books detail the settlement's history and preserve bits and pieces of sahuagin literature.

The senior priestess and one assistant usually remain on the first level throughout the day, keeping an eye on the shrine, incubator, and net-making area (areas 9, 11, and 12) through crystal windows. In the event of an alarm, all the priestesses gather outside their dwelling and await the arrival of warriors who can guard the shrine and the building. Once the warriors arrive, the senior priestess leaves one assistant behind (usually the one with 3+3 Hit Dice) and goes to join the baron. She sends the remaining priestess to one of the guard tow-

ers (area 2 and 17), depending on the location of the threat.

The Senior Priestess: Jarriatt, the village's ranking priestess, is only 85 years old and likely to remain in the village for quite some time. She serves as the baron's sometime consort and likes this arrangement. She knows she won't be going with Baron Neahgataa when he moves on, no matter what the result of his challenge, and she isn't particularly fond of any of the chieftains currently vying to replace him. She's already had several arguments with Haadaas, the chieftain currently in charge of the garrison, and doesn't look forward to serving under him in any capacity. Jarriatt would be scandalized if she learned of the baron's collusion with the prince regarding the baron's upcoming challenge.

These days, Jarriatt keeps busy composing a book (see Chapter 7) about the recent war with the locathah in which she fought alongside the baron.

Jarriatt: AC 5; MV 12, Sw 24; HD 5+5 (Cl 5); hp 35; THACO 15; #AT 2 or 4; Dmg 1d4+1 and poison/1d4+1 and poison (dart/dart) or 1d8+1/1d4/1d4/1d4 (two-handed trident/bite/rake/rake); SA *charm shark* once per day, *cause fear* (as 4th-level wizard spell *fear*) once per day, pin, poisoned darts, spells; SW bright light harms eyes, susceptible to magical fire; SZ M (6'7" tall); ML Steady (12); Int High (14); AL LE; XP 2,000.

Notes: SA—Jarriatt can pin opponents with her trident; she has an effective Strength score of 17; the poison on her darts causes paralysis (see Chapter 3 for details). SW—See notes for priestess in Area 9 for details

Spells: 1st—*bless, cause fear, curse, darkness, sanctuary*; 2nd—*aid, charm person or mammal, silence 15-foot radius*; 3rd—*summon insects, prayer, dispel magic*.

Under priestess: AC 5; MV 12, Sw 24; HD 2+2 (Cl 2); hp 11; THACO 19; #AT 2 or 4; Dmg 1d4 and poison/1d4 and poison (dart/dart) or 1d8+1/1d4/1d4/1d4 (two-handed trident/bite/rake/rake); SA *charm shark* once per day, pin, poisoned darts, spells; SW bright light harms eyes, susceptible to magical fire; SZ M (6' tall); ML Steady (12); Int High (14); AL LE; XP 420.

Notes: SA—The Under priestess can pin opponents with her trident; she has an effective Strength score of 14; the poison on her darts causes paralysis (see Chapter 3 for details). SW—See notes for priestess in area 9 for details.

Spells (4): 1st—*cause fear, command, darkness* (x2).

11. INCUBATORS

The sahuagin have 10 of these small structures scattered about the village (communities with larger populations will have more incubators). About every two weeks, the sahuagin gather up all the fertilized eggs and

seal them inside an incubator. At any given time, five incubators will be in use. The remainder lie sealed and empty. Intruders breaking into an incubator are almost as likely to find it empty as they are to find eggs or hatchlings inside.

Once sealed, an incubator proves as sturdy as any stone fortress; it has no openings except for a few tiny vents that allow seawater to circulate through the eggs. To get inside, an enemy would have to smash through 2-foot thick masonry, or carefully pry it apart. Each incubator stands hidden among rocks, mounds of silt, and seaweed; characters can identify these objects as structures at ranges of 30 feet or less.

The sahuagin keep a constant vigil over the incubator, no matter its contents or location. These creatures swiftly attack anything that threatens an incubator.

12. NET-MAKING AREA

Hardly a day passes in this area without some activity. The sahuagin use this area to manufacture and repair their nets. Eight sturdy posts carved from rock stand to the north. When the sahuagin wish to braid a rope or weave a net, they tie one end to a post and hold the material taut while they work. A skein of rope requires only one post, but a huge net might use all eight.

Two flat boulders lie south of the posts. The sahuagin use these to help process their raw materials into fibers. They pound a strand of kelp, for example, to extract the fibers. They then roll and twist the individual fibers into yarn on the other boulder.

One of the strangest sights in the village, at least to newcomers, exists to the south of the boulders. Many air-filled

bladders of various size and shapes stand tethered here like a flight of barrage balloons. The sahuagin use these bladders to help them lift heavy weights in much the same way surface dwellers would use pulleys or cranes.

LOWER VILLAGE

This area once served as a semi-permanent campsite for the sahuagin settlers who founded the village. Now, it contains some of the settlement's oldest homes. The village chieftains and their lieutenants have residences here. Sahuagin find it most convenient if individuals of similar rank live together; the arrangement allows commoners to go about their business without undue harassment from their superiors.

13. QUARRY

All the stone for the village buildings originally came from this area. Because their buildings suffer no appreciable environmental damage, the sahuagin have little need to cut new stone—though they occasionally chip loose a piece or two for use in the amphitheater. The innumerable cracks and crevices left behind from the stone cutting provide ample footholds for deep water sponges and corals. In fact, the village elite have begun converting this area into a second garden for their own pleasure. The growth also serves to disguise the quarry's artificial nature.

14. MUSSEL BEDS

Long rows of fine sand piled about 18 inches high serve as storage areas for the village's emergency food supply. The sahuagin collect all kinds of clams, mussels, and other sedentary creatures and plant them in this area. Most



creatures burrow into the sand and take up permanent residence. A layer of hard rock below the sand keeps the creatures from burrowing too deeply, however, and the sea devils can retrieve them easily in time of need. The proximity of high-ranking sahuagin discourages indiscriminate snacking.

The loosely piled sand quickly rises in a murky cloud if disturbed, which makes this area a favorite defensive spot. If the sahuagin can lure their foes here, they can easily kick up a blinding cloud of silt, which does not hamper their fighting abilities at all (see Chapter 3 for more details).



15. COMMUNAL ROCKS

These smooth boulders exist everywhere in the village. They chiefly serve to distract enemies who might be searching for incubators (area 11). Secondly, these rocks function as places to rest and socialize—much like park benches in a surface community.

16. RESIDENCES

All the homes in the village consist of 10-foot domes made from limestone blocks fitted together without mortar. Note that all sahuagin dwellings are identical—though the materials vary with the locale.

16a. Haadaas, the chieftain of the band currently assigned to garrison duty, lives here; his five lieutenants live nearby. Each male has his own dwelling where he lives with two or three females. The remaining four dwellings stand empty. When the time comes for the band to leave the village and roam the surrounding territory, the next band will move in.

The sahuagin do not consider the empty dwellings wasted space. They use the unoccupied buildings to house visitors and, occasionally, to store goods or live prey (when the prison overflows). Empty buildings also make it harder for enemies to accurately assess the sahuagin's numbers or stage effective surprise attacks.

The Chieftain: Haadaas commands one of the larger bands based in the village; he earned himself a reputation for being a cunning warrior after leading his troops to several victories in the war against the locathah. His band suffered very few casualties despite their victories. Though he relished the bloodshed—as would any self-respecting sahuagin—he regards the locathah as unworthy adversaries, little better than vermin.

Haadaas considers himself too young to seriously contend for the baron's title (he is only 110 years old), but fears Jarriatt might try to maneuver him into a challenge anyway. Lately, he and the senior priestess have argued over what Haadaas feels are Jarriatt's intrusions on his authority as garrison commander. The priestess has commandeered warriors several times and set them to work finding the materials she needs to complete her book. Not only do these actions seem like slights to Haadaas, but they also pose a risk to the village's security. Haadaas feels Jarriatt should have enlisted warriors from some of the roving bands to collect what she needs.

Haadaas knows about the baron's agreement with the prince, but has yet to discover an effective means of putting the knowledge to use against Jarriatt. He has no idea that the priestess fears he might become the next baron.

Haadaas: AC 5; MV 12, Sw 24; HD 4+4; hp 24; THACO 15 (14 with trident; #AT 1 or 4; Dmg 1d8+1 and poison; 1d8+2/1d4/1d4/1d4 (two-handed trident and Strength bonus/bite/rake/rake); SA poisoned crossbow bolts, pin; SW bright light harms eyes, susceptible to magical fire;

SZ M (6'8" tall); ML Steady (12); Int High (14); AL LE; XP 420

Notes: SA—The chieftain can use his trident to pin opponents (see Chapter 3 for details); he has an effective Strength score of 17 and the poison on his trident causes paralysis (see Chapter 3).

SW—The first time an opponent uses a magical effect that produces bright light—such as a *continual light* spell—Haadaas is blinded for one round; he suffers a -2 penalty on saving throws vs. light-based attacks; he also saves at -2 vs. magical fire and suffers an extra point per die of magical fire damage.

UPPER VILLAGE

This section houses the bulk of the village's commoners. Each warrior occupies one of the dwellings. However, the majority of the dwellings stand empty most of the time, as the occupants remain busy elsewhere.

17. SECONDARY GUARD TOWER

This tower is nearly identical to the guard tower (area 2), except that it is only 40 feet high and has only nine warriors guarding it.

18. CANYON

This deep cleft in the ocean floor has rocky sides and an irregular bottom. Its depth varies, but averages 3,000 feet. The cleft channels tidal currents; tide-

water rushes through several times a day, bringing nutrient-rich water to the village.

The cleft's deep, dark waters provide an escape route for the sea devils should they ever abandon the village in a hurry. The fleeing sahuagin can simply dive into the canyon, swimming to their maximum depth of 2,000 feet, where few enemies can follow. There they swim to safety, using the perpetual darkness of the depths to cover their movements. To discourage enemies from attacking through the canyon, the sahuagin have placed a series of catch nets (similar to the one at area 4) in the canyon. These require constant repair, as the currents quickly destroy them.

The sahuagin can predict the daily flow of currents. They dump their trash in the canyon just before the tide rushes out, which carries the trash to the deep sea. Sahuagin sacrifices (see area 9) occur on a similar schedule. Enterprising adventurers who search the cleft for valuable items aren't likely to find much.

TECHNOLOGY & ARCHITECTURE

Few surface dwellers realize that the sahuagin are great builders and tinkerers. Hundreds of fathoms of dark water conceal the vast cities of stone which are the sea devils' greatest creations. Other marvels of sahuagin creativity—such as their weapons—are more familiar to air breathers, though few people appreciate them during a hostile encounter.

—Bonassio of Sigil

Many a land-bound sage will patiently tell you that the sahuagin, lacking fire, do not (and cannot) possess a technologically advanced culture. The claim is, perhaps, understandable, but it also proves quite foolish. The sahuagin certainly do not create many sophisticated devices, but this is largely because of their abundance of natural ability. Though simple, sahuagin technology represents ingenuity at its best. For example, the sea devils have created a variety of tools and weapons enabling them to successfully wage war with the surface world.

TECHNOLOGY

Sahuagin inventions reveal a thorough understanding and mastery of their native environment. The sea devils know, for example, which marine plants and animals provide the best raw materials, and they tailor their hunting so as to procure what they need in the shortest possible time. The sahuagin also demonstrate equal proficiency with stone and metal. Their level of skill in these areas often amazes surface dwellers.

WEAPONS

Chapter 7

Being warlike, the sahuagin have paid special attention to weapons—even though they boast formidable natural weaponry (see Chapter 3). Their choice of weapons reflects a certain subtlety, as they prefer entrapping and immobilizing an opponent rather than killing it outright.

Nets

Sahuagin weave their nets from a combination of tough fiber extracted from seaweed and sinew from various marine animals. Most of these nets serve as personal weapons and are about eight feet in diameter, with fairly course mesh openings roughly two inches across.

The sahuagin weave several hundred tiny bone or metal hooks into each combat net. These needle-sharp hooks sink into exposed flesh, making escape all but impossible for unarmored targets. Small stone or shell weights attached to the net's edges help give the net extra momentum when thrown and assure that the net closes quickly around a target.

A 30-foot chord attached to the net allows the wielder to recover the net easily if it misses its target, and helps the wielder to draw the net tightly



SAHUAGIN NETS IN PLAY

If exposed to magical attack, a sahuagin net makes item saving throws as rope (see **Table 29: Item Saving Throws** in the DMG). Like their creators, sahuagin nets suffer a -2 penalty on all saving throws against magical fire.

Procedures for using sahuagin nets in combat appear in Chapter 3. Stationary nets work as follows:

A stationary net is effectively invisible at any range greater than 10 feet—though divination spells such as *find traps* and *detect snares and pits* reveal them sooner. Characters moving toward a net can spot it with a successful saving throw vs. spell. Racial and magical bonuses do not apply (except for *stones of good luck*). However, wisdom bonuses do apply to the saving throw. If characters approach the net at their full movement rate (or at any speed greater than 6), they suffer a -4 saving throw penalty. Characters cautiously moving through an area containing a stationary net (moving at half their movement rate or any speed below 6) gain a $+2$ saving throw bonus. Visibility of less than 10 feet negates the possibility of a saving throw.

If only part of a group approaching a net makes its saving throw, those who fail blunder into the net—unless a character who made a successful saving throw stops the unlucky characters.

Characters blundering into stationary nets remain trapped; they cannot move, fight, cast spells, or take any other action until they make either a successful saving throw vs. petrification with a -4 penalty, or a successful bend bars rolls. Other characters cannot help untangle a trapped creature, but a successful bend bars roll adds 2 to the trapped creature's next attempt at freedom.

Any creature can damage the net using a weapon, provided the creature can wield the weapon effectively while underwater (see Chapter 9). A standard net can withstand 25 points of damage before unraveling. Each 10-foot section of a larger net can withstand 25 points of damage. Destroying one section of a large net leaves a hole but does not otherwise harm it.

around an opponent once the weapon strikes.

The sahuagin also make larger nets to entrap large opponents or whole groups of foes. In addition, they employ stationary nets made from fine, strong material. When concealed among seaweed or very dark water, a stationary net can easily trap the unwary.

Tridents

A sahuagin trident has a wooden or bone haft 6 to 9 feet long. A metal (or sometimes bone) head with three barbed prongs tops the haft. The final third of the shaft (opposite the head) is flat and broader than the rest of the shaft. This helps keep the weapon steady when a sahuagin throws it underwater.

Spears

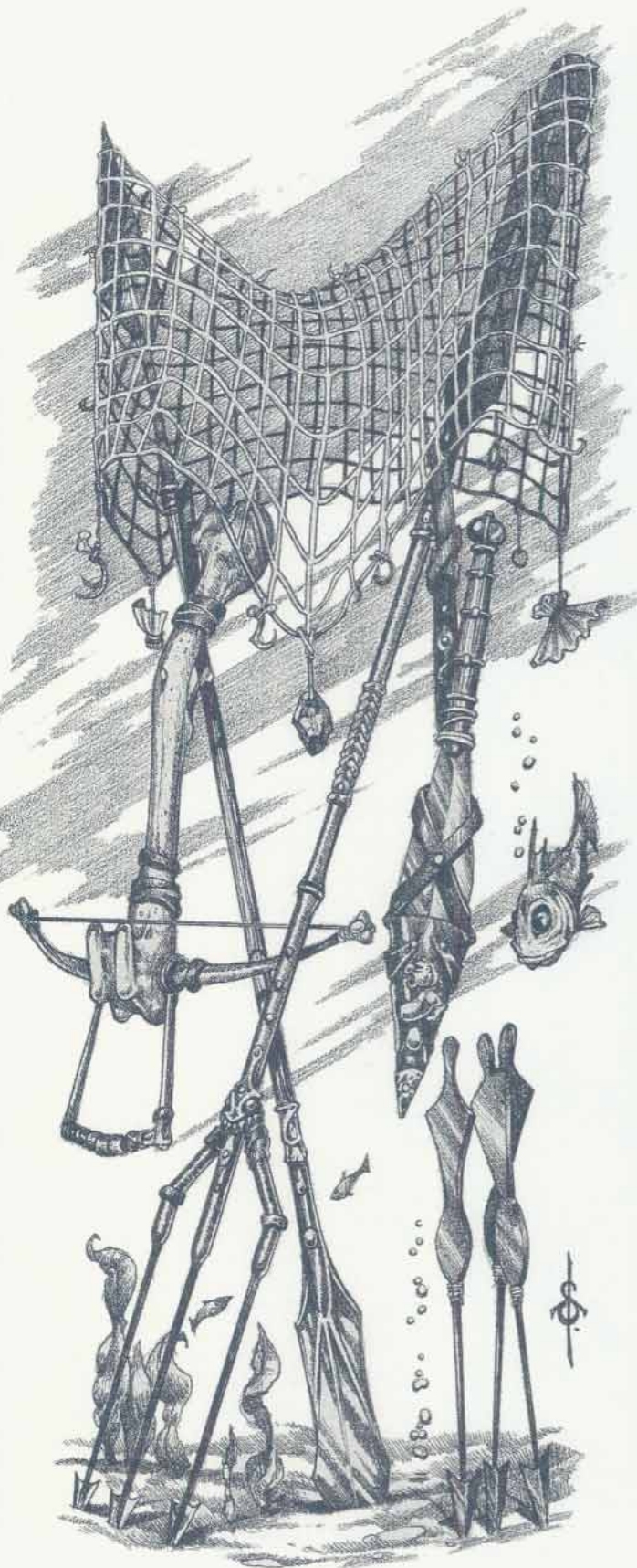
Sea devils usually don't bother making spears, as they prefer tridents instead. However, sahuagin will gather up and employ any spears they take from slain or captured foes. Frequently, they take captured spear heads and mount them on shafts with flattened ends (as described under tridents).

Daggers

Sahuagin often carry at least one dagger to improve their damage potential in melee (not even a sahuagin can hurl a dagger underwater). Sahuagin daggers usually have exceptionally long grips to accommodate their webbed, six-fingered hands.

Crossbows

The sahuagin crossbow is comparable to a normal heavy crossbow in terms of size, weight, and power. It consists of a bone or wooden stock with a bow constructed from several layers of sinew and flexible whalebone. A surface dweller must laboriously cock his heavy crossbow with a built-in cranequin or windlass. A sahuagin crossbow, however, possesses a large stirrup for a sea devil's feet. The creature cocks the weapon with a motion similar to a human rowing a boat: it pushes with its feet and simultaneously pulls with its arms. The creature maintains its position with its tail.



Underwater, this technique allows sea devils to operate their crossbows with the equivalent speed of a surface (light) crossbow. Above water, however, a sahuagin crossbow has the speed of a human heavy crossbow.

Sahuagin quarrels have fairly slender heads and shafts. Instead of feathers, the quarrels have rigid fins with trailing tips. This design helps the missile slice through the water; it proves just as effective in air.

Javelins

A sahuagin javelin has a flattened haft, but otherwise resembles its surface counterpart; it is effectively a lightweight spear.

Darts

A sahuagin dart is about the size of a regular arrow. It has a flattened shaft and rigid fins. The sea devils often prefer these darts for hunting or raiding, as they are much less cumbersome than javelins or crossbows and allow for a better rate of fire.

A sahuagin hurling darts on the surface can fire them as quickly as any land dweller; however, its rate of fire diminishes (See Chapter 9 for details). This is still quite a feat, as surface dwellers can't manage darts underwater at all.

STONE AND BONE WEAPONS

Though stone and bone prove resistant to the corrosive effects of salt water, the sahuagin dislike using them because they tend to break in combat. Whenever a stone or bone weapon inflicts maximum damage in combat, the DM should roll a 1d6. On a roll of 1, the weapon breaks. Note that this applies to tridents and spears with bone or stone heads, but not to such weapons with bone hafts.

OTHER DEVICES

Weapons aren't the only implements developed by the sahuagin. Here is a sampling of some of the more notable items and techniques the sea devils employ on an everyday basis.

Containers and Harnesses

Sea devils use mesh bags to store and carry objects. These bags consist of the same materials used in sahuagin nets, and allow them to quickly locate a needed object. In addition, these mesh containers collapse when empty, making them easy to carry. In fact, hunting or raiding sahuagin simply twist their mesh bags into bulky ropes and wrap them around their limbs like a scarves or sashes. Many witnesses have reported sahuagin using harnesses to carry equipment, but few surface dwellers appreciate the efficiency of these harnesses.

A sahuagin's large dorsal fin, which runs from the base of the neck down to the hips, prevents the creature from wearing backpacks, belts, and other equipment favored by surface dwellers. Instead, a sea devil wears a pair of straps that loop over the shoulders and run down the back, parallel to the dorsal fin. The straps cross under the groin and loop over the hips, where they attach to themselves with a pair of hooks. From the hips, the straps cross over the chest and hook to themselves again at the shoulders.

Sea devils often wear half collars that cross over the back of the neck to tie the straps together and keep them from slipping off the shoulders. Some sahuagin also add a half-belt across the front of the waist. If the sea devil must carry a particularly heavy load, it wears a yoke made of bone, wood, or leather instead of a collar.

Typically, a sea devil attaches two



long, thin mesh bags to its back and carries a few items tucked under the straps on its chest and hips. The arrangement reduces drag when the creature swims. If the sea devil must carry more equipment than the basic arrangement allows, it adds mesh bags at its hips.

When sahuagin carry bulky objects, they usually place them in mesh bags with handles that allow two or more sea devils to tow the bag through the water.

Ink Bombs

Sea devils often take advantage of their ability to sense foes in murky conditions by tossing down a few ink bombs. Each bomb consists of a fist-sized bladder filled with octopus or squid ink. The sea devil punctures the bladder with a tooth or claw and squeezes, creating a spherical cloud of ink about 10 feet across. The cloud reduces visibility within its confines to zero, and completely obscures all light sources. In calm water, the cloud persists for five rounds.

Mantas

A manta is an oblong barge used by the sahuagin to move long distances in a hurry. The name "manta" is a human term that refers to the craft's flat, dark silhouette visible from the surface. The sea devils call these craft "fliers."

A typical manta is about 75 feet wide at its broadest point and some 200 feet long. The craft tapers to only a few inches at the bow and stern. A manta consists of wood salvaged from shipwrecks or scavenged from shore. The craft can travel either on the surface or underwater. The craft is not extremely buoyant—though it will rise slowly to the surface if not tethered in place. When moving, the sahuagin can keep the craft sub-

merged by pointing its nose down a bit.

A manta's underside bristles with short, T-shaped "benches" where sea devils (or their slaves) push the craft along. The upper side contains three to five long poles with wide slots beneath it. When the craft is underwater, the sahuagin grasp the benches and push it along.

On the surface, sahuagin straddle the benches and use wooden paddles to move the craft, thrusting the paddles down through the slots to reach the water. Other sahuagin push from underneath and from the raft's sides.

Only about two-thirds of a manta's crew actually propels the craft at any given time (the complement for a typical manta is about 600). The remainder just ride along. By working in shifts, the sahuagin can easily cover 200 or more miles a day without exhausting themselves.

MANTA MOVEMENT

A group of sahuagin can push a manta 240 miles in a day. The group can push hard and extend the movement to 360 miles a day. However, this action requires a Constitution check (see the forced march rules found in Chapter 14 of the *Player's Handbook* for more details). The

sea devils have a Constitution score of 14 for purposes of this check.

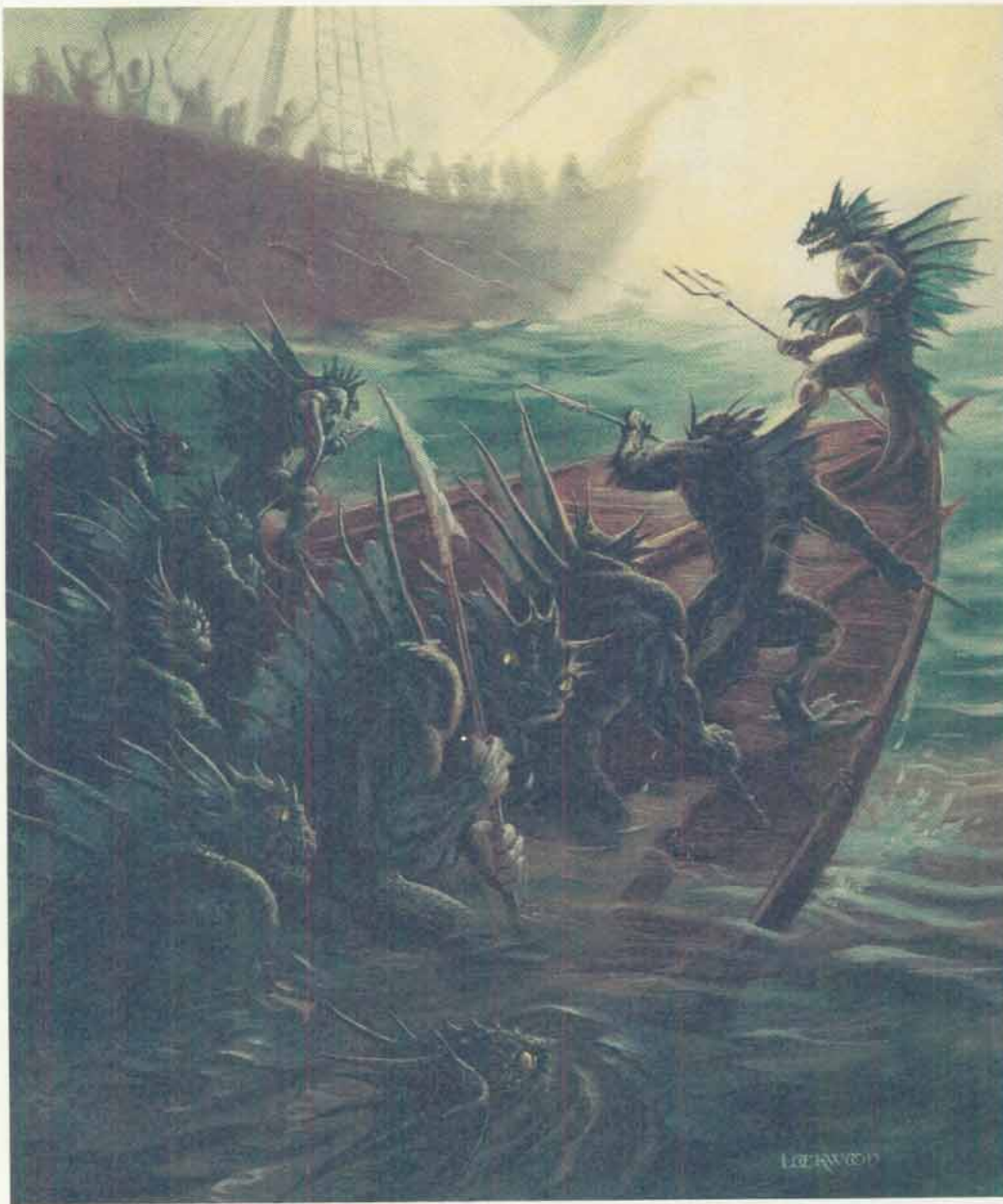
A manta's normal maximum speed—both above and below the water's surface—is 24. However, the sahuagin can move the manta at an extended rate of 36 on the surface of the water. The sahuagin can sustain this extended

speed for one hour before they must make a Constitution check. If the check succeeds, the crew can continue to move at high speed. Otherwise, it must drop to normal speed (24) and suffer a -1 penalty to all attack rolls until they rest for a full day.

The crew must make a second Constitution check (with a -1 penalty) at the conclusion of their second hour of high speed movement. Again, success means it can continue moving at high speed. Failure indicates that it

must drop to normal speed and suffer a -2 penalty to all attack rolls until they rest.

For each subsequent hour of fast movement, the sahuagin suffer an additional -1 penalty to their Constitution check. Furthermore, the tired sahuagin suffer an additional -1 cumulative penalty to all attack rolls once they stop moving. After five hours of fast movement, for example, the crew would suffer a -4 penalty to their Constitution check and a -4 penalty to their attack rolls.



Poisons

The sahuagin employ two kinds of venom for their weapons. They use the first type of venom in battle, as its paralytic effect helps them capture slaves. The second type of venom is quite deadly, and the sahuagin use it primarily in hunting. The sea devils concoct both types of poison from the venom-bearing organs of several toxic sea creatures. They place these organs in a bladder filled with organic oils harvested from other marine life. After the contents of the bladder ferment for a time, the

sahuagin extract a waxy substance suitable for treating weapons (See Chapter 3 for the game effect of each poison type).

Once applied, the venom remains potent for about one hour, or until the weapon strikes a creature. When exposed to air, the wax dries and flakes off in five minutes.

A normal bladder holds enough poison to treat 10 weapons and, if stored in fresh seawater, preserves the potency of the poison for about one month. The poison inside a bladder dries in a day if the bladder is exposed to air.



Metal Working

Most people don't think of sahuagin as metal smiths, but these marine creatures possess all the skills necessary to work metal. Sahuagin build their forges in air-filled spaces inside royal cities. Thus, the king possesses a monopoly on metalwork; commoners and nobles may not set up their own forges.

Most sahuagin blacksmiths are malenti, as these mutants possess greater tolerance for the open air. Malenti

smiths represent some of their kings' most valuable subjects. However, the population doubly spurns such creatures for being mutants who work in the heat, smoke, and flame of the forge.

Generally, though, the sea devils rely on plunder for metal and fuel; they have little inclination for mining and generally limit themselves to reworking captured weapons and tools to suit their tastes.

Preservative Grease

Sahuagin appreciate the virtues of steel; they admire its superior strength and hardness. Unfortunately, steel corrodes rapidly in salt water. To preserve their steel weapons and implements, the sea devils have developed a magical grease that protects all types of metal from corrosion.

Only royal high priestesses can create this magical grease. A single application can protect a normal steel weapon or implement for months.

Healing Ointment

Royal high priestesses blend an herbal ointment that heals wounds. Sahuagin find the mixture detestable, and they only consent to use it when preparing for a blood challenge, or in cases of extreme need. Surprisingly, the ointment irritates surface dwellers and sea mammals; these creatures do not gain any benefit from the ointment.

Glow Lamps

Sahuagin cities generally lie at least 1,000 feet below the ocean surface—a depth too great for sunlight to penetrate. Furthermore, most sahuagin dwellings have no windows, so the interiors of these residences remain pitch black even during the day.

Despite their ability to function in the dark, sahuagin prefer to see what they're doing. To this end, they collect luminous sea creatures and extract their light-producing organs to create dimly glowing lamps. Each such lamp consists of a translucent bladder filled with luminous gel. The sea devils use these bladders to light their dwellings and to create lighted pathways that wind through their cities. If the sea devils wish to douse a light, they simply wrap the bladder in seaweed.

Glow lamps give off very faint light. In fact, sahuagin cannot see the light from a glow lamp at distances greater than 100 yards.

Writing

Most surface dwellers wouldn't recognize a sahuagin book if they found it, as the sea devils write by stringing bits of stone and shell on knotted thongs. The sahuagin then attach the thongs to a ring of bone or sinew. Each individual thong roughly corresponds to a paragraph on a printed page. Particularly long books might contain several rings joined together.

The sizes, shapes, and sequence of knots, stones, and shells, represent sounds in the sahuagin language. The sahuagin can read the sequences visually or by touch. In addition, the shells and stone of the book make a clicking sound when moved; this sound resembles sahuagin speech. In fact, a sahuagin can learn a book's title and subject simply by shaking the bundle and listening to the sound. The sahuagin call their books "singing bundles."

Interestingly enough, most sahuagin don't know how to read. Rather, these creatures depend on their remarkable memories. However, each village usually contains a collection of books that preserve lore in the event that individuals with certain critical knowledge die or transfer to another community.

When sahuagin priestesses create scrolls, they "write" them in the sahuagin style.





Stone Working

The sea devils' favorite building material is stone, as it is all but impervious to the effects of sea water. Sahuagin work almost any kind of stone, depending on what location of their community. For example, the village of Neahgataa, described in the previous chapter, is built from local limestone.

The sahuagin dislike hauling stone long distances, as it increases the chances that an enemy might discover their building site. In addition, the sea devils find it hard to guard teams of slaves that haul stone over a distance. Usually, the sahuagin won't start a major construction project unless a quarry with suitable stone lies nearby.

Sahuagin quarrying techniques are similar to those used on the surface. Slaves chisel holes and grooves into the rock face so that they can easily split the rock with wedges or pry bars.

Sahuagin stoneworking hammers look quite different from their surface counterparts. For fine work, the sahuagin simply use a heavy stone shaped to fit the sea devil's (or their slave's) hand. This reduces water resistance, as there is no handle. Consequently, the head of a sahuagin hammer weighs more than than head of a surface hammer. However, water buoyancy assists the toiling sahuagin or slave in lifting the hammer.

For heavy work, the sea devils use large cylinders of hard stone with eyes at the top for securing ropes. The sahuagin attach the cylinders to large, air-filled bladders which help lift the stone. Once raised, the sahuagin release the stones, which crash against the the target area. Additional ropes manned by slaves keep the bladders from floating away.

SAHUAGIN ITEMS IN PLAY

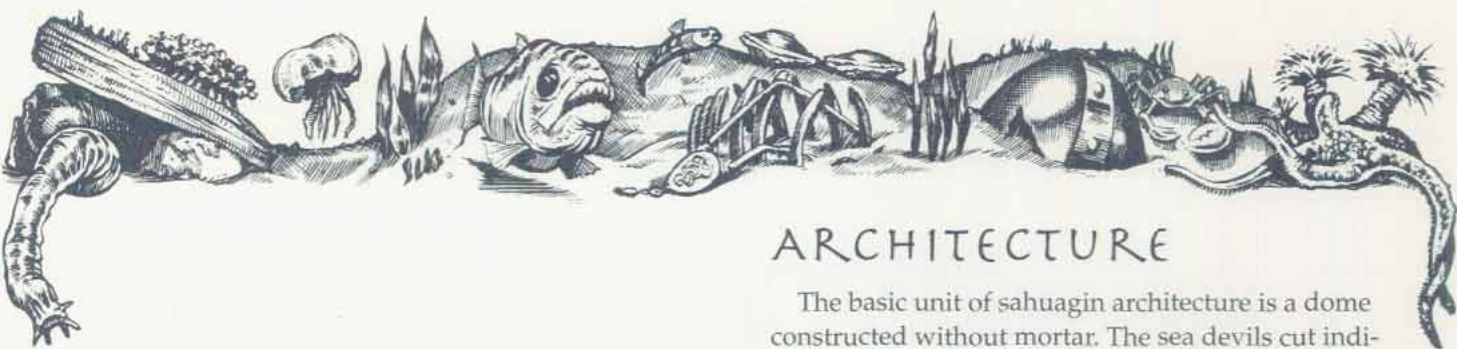
Here are the game details for some items described in this chapter:

Preservative Grease: Sahuagin priestesses create this material from whale oil and other substances gathered from the sea. They store the grease in large snail shells. Each shell holds enough grease to coat 12 medium-sized weapons or metal implements. Each grease treatment protects the weapon for one month. Metal coated with the grease remains invulnerable to normal environmental corrosion—including immersion in sea water. The coated item also gains a +2 item saving throw *vs.* all forms of corrosive attacks—including acid and the corrosive ability of rust monsters.

XP Value: 500 GP Value: 1,000

Healing Ointment: This foul-smelling unguent generally duplicates the powers of *Keoghtom's ointment*. A single application, swallowed or rubbed into a wound, cures disease, neutralizes poison, or heals 1d4+8 points of damage. Only one effect can occur per application. The individual applying the ointment chooses the effect.

The ointment works on fish, reptiles, and mollusks only. Mammalian and avian creatures find the ointment irritating. In fact, if rubbed into a wound, the ointment creates a burning rash that imposes a -1



ARCHITECTURE

The basic unit of sahuagin architecture is a dome constructed without mortar. The sea devils cut individual blocks into interlocking shapes that make the dome impossible to pull apart. Sahuagin incubators, designed for easy disassembly, are an exception.

Many surface dwellers seem surprised that the sea devils bother to build structures with roofs. After all, the sea devils do not need to protect themselves from the surrounding elements. Overhead cover, however, is important to the sahuagin because they live in a three-dimensional world. If they lived in open-topped buildings, their enemies could swoop down and attack anytime.

A SAHUAGIN DWELLING

The map on the opposite page shows a typical sahuagin dwelling, which consists of a stone dome about 10 feet in diameter. Two hidden entrances lead to a three-dimensional labyrinth that eventually meanders inside the structure.

The dome has no windows, but the entire building possesses small channels that allow water to circulate through the enclosed space. Even with a water “ventilation” system, the oxygen levels inside the dome will deplete after a few weeks. Fortunately, individual dwellings remain unoccupied most of the time, leaving plenty of opportunity for fresh seawater to replace the stale water.

The dome’s exterior is made from local stone; the sea devils usually allow native seaweed to grow around the dwelling, and they also allow silt to drift over the structure. Both elements provide concealment while blending harmoniously with the surroundings; the arrangement serves the sahuagins’ aesthetic sense and defensive needs.

The sea devils tile the interior of their dwellings with slabs of coral. They prefer a dark color for the floor and a lighter color for the dome itself. Often the ceiling color is fairly dark near the floor, gradually lightening toward the top. The arrangement probably reflects light conditions in the open sea.

penalty to all attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws for eight hours. A *neutralize poison* spell negates the effect.

If taken internally, the ointment causes avians or mammals to collapse. The victim must attempt a saving throw vs. poison. Failure indicates that the imbiber loses consciousness immediately and dies 2d4 rounds later unless a *neutralize poison* spell is applied before death occurs. Even if the saving throw succeeds, the imbiber suffers a -2 penalty to all attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws for eight hours. A *neutralize poison* spell negates the effect.
XP Value: 500 GP Value: 5,000

Books and Scrolls: A *comprehend languages* spell can decipher a sahuagin book—though the contents of any such book are likely to be of interest only to sahuagin. Most books contain detailed histories of military victories or long-winded accounts of sahuagin myths.

Most sahuagin scrolls are clerical and, therefore, useable by priests only. Non-sahuagin must use a combination of *read magic* and *comprehend languages* to decipher the scrolls. Thus, most surface priests will need a wizard’s assistance.

The sahuagin create both spell scrolls and protection scrolls. *Protection from fire* is a popular clerical scroll, as the sahuagin suffer from a severe susceptibility to magical fire.

Furnishings

Sahuagin dwellings usually contain a few carved stone cylinders that serve as chairs; the seats are contoured for comfort and sport grooves toward the back that accommodate sahuagin tails.

Sahuagin beds consist of kelp strands whose roots have been woven into heavy mats; this technique keeps the kelp anchored in place. The sahuagin conceal themselves in the kelp when sleeping and change the kelp strands every few months.

The dome's ceiling also sports hooks for hanging weapons and tools. A glow lamp usually completes the decor.

Defenses

The labyrinth guarding every sahuagin building delays invaders, as they usually cannot negotiate the twists, turns, and dead ends very quickly. To make labyrinths even more difficult to traverse, the sea devils sprinkle them with baffles and traps.

A sahuagin baffle consists of a barred gate, made from metal or bone, whose two halves come together in a

point facing toward the exit of the labyrinth; each half is usually about 5 feet long. Unintelligent creatures pushing against the gate push the halves closed. The correct way to open a baffle is to pull the two halves outward. The sea devils have mastered the fine art of flinging open the halves and swimming through at full

speed, but surface dwellers usually have some difficulty handling them.

The sea devils can lock their baffles by placing hooked bars near the gates' hinges. Most baffles have a set of interior flanges for this purpose. Man-sized creatures do not have the arm length necessary to reach and lift the bar from the outside. Conversely, the arms of larger creatures are too thick to reach between the bars. The locking bars are always quite heavy; they're



usually made of metal or stone and weigh 40 to 60 pounds. This makes it impossible to hook the bar and lift it clear with a weapon or pole. Of course, this method of locking requires a sahuagin to lock itself behind the baffle, as not even a sahuagin can set the bar in place from the outside.



DEFENSES IN PLAY

Baffles open automatically for sahuagin, but other creatures must attempt standard open doors rolls. The only ways to open a locked baffle from the outside are: lift the bar somehow (*telekinesis* and *unseen servant* spells are quite useful for this), use a *knock* spell, destroy the baffle by cutting, or wrench it open with a *bend bars* roll. Most of these methods make enough noise to alert any sahuagin inside the building. Baffles with sharp edges inflict 1d3 points of damage on characters trying to open them; metal armor negates this damage.

Dead fall traps usually involve a heavy weight studded with spikes which the sahuagin conceal in the labyrinth's ceiling. If a character triggers a dead fall, he must make a saving throw vs. breath weapon. Failure indicates that the victim suffers 2d4 points of damage and remains trapped under the block until freed with a successful *bend bars* roll. If the saving throw succeeds, the victim merely suffers 1d6 points of damage.

Jaw traps usually lie concealed in the walls—though sometimes the sahuagin plant them in the floor and ceiling. Jaw traps close around a victim when triggered, trapping the creature. The jaws inflict 2d8 points of damage and hold the creature fast until it is freed with a *knock* spell or a *bend bars* roll. Any failed attempt to free the creature inflicts another 1d8 points of damage on the victim, as the jaws shift position.

Any of these traps can contain poison. Remember, however, that sahuagin poisons remains effective only for one hour after application. Therefore, traps will not contain poison unless the sea devils expect trouble.

Most labyrinths also feature a few traps tucked in out-of-the way places. Sahuagin do not place traps in frequently-used passages, as they might accidentally trip one. Common sorts of traps include sets of false baffles with razor-sharp (and sometimes poisoned) edges, dead falls, and spring-loaded devices that resemble sharks' jaws.

LARGER BUILDINGS

Important sahuagin buildings include nobles' residences and public edifices—such as arenas and shrines. The dwelling of a noble usually follows the same plan as those of common dwellings, only on a larger scale. Particularly large domes are split into two or more levels, with stone floors supported by arches. Sea devils have no need for stairs, and simply leave holes in the ceilings to swim through.

Most sea devil communities contain at least one tower. The sahuagin use these structures to give their sentries an overhead view of the community and to provide a visible rallying point in defensive battles. Towers guarding royal cities often soar hundreds of feet above the sea floor—a height greater than similar structures seen on land. These lofty towers have guard platforms at many different heights.

Larger sahuagin communities also contain a few air-filled spaces used to keep air-breathing prisoners and provide manufacturing space for metalwork and other efforts more easily conducted under surface conditions. In such spaces, the sea devils employ doors carved from single slabs of stone instead of baffles.

Sahuagin also make use of water-filled caves. In fact, most of their cities contain extensive cave complexes. The sea devils usually augment natural caves with miles of convoluted tunnels carved by slave labor.

Sahuagin shrines are always built on the open sea floor. They usually feature a pavement made from stone or coral slabs and some sort of altar and idol for sacrifices (see Chapter 6 for an example).

No sahuagin community is complete without an arena of some kind. The sea devils build their arenas in natural amphitheatres when they can find them. However, they construct bowl-shaped arenas when they cannot find naturally occurring structures. Large communities might sport several arenas, and a kingdom's royal city always includes at least one air-filled arena.

SAHUAGIN PRIESTESSES

"Dark Ones, Daughters of Sekolah, call them what you will, sahuagin priestesses are as cold as the almost limitless depths of the abyss—and as deadly. Now I'm not one to flee at the first sign of danger, but those creatures can make even the deadliest predator feel like helpless prey."
—Jarris McKenna, wereshark

- At 1st level, a priestess can *charm shark* once a day. This power functions just like the 2nd-level priest spell *charm person or mammal*, except that only sharks and similar cartilaginous fish—such as skates and rays—of no more than semi-intelligence (Int 2-4) are subject to this ability.
- At 1st level, the priestess can participate in a deep-song.
- At 4th level, a priestess can *cause fear* once per day. This power functions as the 4th-level wizard spell *fear*.

WARNING

The following section details the powers and abilities of sahuagin priestesses—including brand new spells usable only by sahuagin. These dark servants of Sekolah should remain mysterious in order to increase their effectiveness as foes of the player characters. If you are not a Dungeon Master please **stop** reading now; players will only spoil their enjoyment of sahuagin-centered adventures by reading further.

Sekolah, the sahuagin patron deity, accepts only the brightest, strongest, and most ruthless sahuagin females into his service. Indeed, several generations might pass before a community generates a suitable candidate.

PRIESTESS ABILITIES

When memorizing spells, sahuagin priestesses have major access to the spheres of all, combat, divination, healing (reversed only), protection, and war (described in the *Tome of Magic*); they have minor access to the animal, charm, guardian, and necromantic spheres.

The majority of sahuagin priestesses have Wisdom scores of 14 or 15, giving them bonus 1st- and 2nd-level spells.

Priestesses have no power over the undead, but they enjoy a host of other granted powers:

- At 7th level, a priestess can radiate *fear* once per day. The power works just like the reversed form of the 4th-level priest spell *cloak of bravery*.
- At 9th level, a priestess can, once per day, invoke the power of Sekolah to resist physical attacks. She can use this power on herself or bestow the resistance on another as though casting the 4th-level wizard spell *stoneskin*.

All granted powers are cumulative, so a 9th-level sahuagin priestess can use *charm shark*, *fear*, *cloak of fear*, and *stoneskin* once a day in addition to her normal spells. These abilities require no verbal, somatic, or material components. Furthermore, opponents cannot disrupt these abilities in combat as they can normal spells.

Granted powers have initiative modifiers of +3. Any abilities that have variables based on the caster's level function at the priestess's level.

Note: the information presented here replaces and updates the information on Sekolah's priests given in *Monster Mythology*.

BECOMING A PRIESTESS

A community's priestess or senior females take charge of the screening and training of aspiring priestesses. Once an aspirant completes her training, she must venture out alone in search of a particular species of toxic marine creature, which sahuagin call "Sekolah's executioner." Once she retrieves the creature, the aspirant presents it to her mentors, who confirm its species and evaluate its condition and size. If they reject it, the aspirant must seek out another one. Once the aspirant presents a suitable creature, she must consume it in a public ceremony. If the creature's toxic flesh does not kill the aspirant, she immediately becomes a priestess imbued with divine powers. If she dies, the sahuagin cast away her body along with the community's other trash.

THE PRIESTESSES' ORDEAL

The creature consumed by the aspirant is a toxic sea cucumber (a sausage-shaped marine invertebrate related to starfish) about 10 inches long. Only healthy, fully grown specimens are acceptable for the ritual. Consuming the creature subjects the aspirant to an ingested poison. Immediately upon eating the creature, the aspirant is struck by several convulsions that render her helpless for 2d4 rounds. The sea devils call this the "rapture of Sekolah." At the end of this period, the aspirant must make a saving throw vs. poison. Failure brings death. If the saving throw succeeds, however, the aspirant stops convulsing—though she remains delirious and unable to move or act for another 1d4 rounds. During this latter period, the power of Sekolah touches the aspirant and transforms her into a priestess.

The sea cucumber used in the ritual is exceedingly rare and its toxin is potent only if it is eaten alive. The creature merely provides a type G ingested poison if killed before it is eaten (see *DMG*, Chapter 9).

SAHUAGIN PRIEST SPELLS

Sahuagin priestesses employ standard priest spells. Many of these spells, however, take variant forms in keeping with the sahuagin's watery environment. Note that powers do not make these altered spells available to land-dwellers who venture underwater. However,

powers whose portfolios include the sea might grant these spells to their priests, if the priests are members of marine races. Priests who receive variant forms of spells do not also receive the standard forms of the spells. In either case, the DM might allow priests to acquire the variant spells through research and meditation.

Unless otherwise noted, spell variants do not work above water. The following spells either have variant forms that sahuagin priestesses use, or require special handling when used underwater:

† Spell from the *Tome of Magic*.
‡ Sahuagin variant spell.

Atonement: Sahuagin priestesses seldom use this spell. Any sahuagin who inadvertently commits a transgression serious enough to merit an *atonement* suffers execution (see Chapter 5). Sahuagin acting under magical compulsions can sometimes save themselves through an *atonement* and a suitable quest.

Barkskin†: Upon receiving this spell, a sahuagin enjoys its normal Armor Class rating or the Armor Class bestowed by the spell, whichever is better. The sahuagin still receives the saving throw bonus associated with the spell. In addition, a sahuagin's fins become very sharp and its scales become slick through the application of this spell. These defenses give it a 25% chance to evade any form of entanglement—such as a *net*, *web* spell, or *rope of entanglement*—or any attack that would swallow the sahuagin whole. The sahuagin can make only one such evasion attempt per round.

Caltrops†‡: This spell creates a magical reef that damages military units crossing the bottom as noted in the spell description. When the "cavalry" version is cast in shallow (20 feet or less) water, it forces ships entering the area to make successful seaworthiness checks or run aground.

Charm Person or Mammal†: A sahuagin priestess can use this spell to charm persons, as defined in the spell description in the *Player's Handbook*. Note that any caster can influence sahuagin, sea elves, tritons, and mermen with this spell—though seaelves are 90% resistant. However, sahuagin can influence all types of sharks, skates, and rays—including weresharks, sharkweres, and ixitxachitl.

Darkness/Continual Darkness†: Sekolah makes these spells available to his priestesses. Note that only the reversed forms are available. Sahuagin can cast these spells either under or above water. They require no

material components other than their unholy symbols—which are not consumed in casting.

Detect Snares & Pits: This spell detects traps involving entanglement or snaring—including nets and hooks.

Flame Strike‡: A sahuagin priestess casting this spell calls forth a shaft of scalding heat. The spell remains effective both under and above water.

Gravity Variation‡: Military units composed of creatures too heavy to swim suffer full effects from this spell when used underwater. The sahuagin do not use it much, except to effectively reduce slopes or cliffs protecting coastal towns.

Illusory Artillery††: This spell creates a vision of a huge, weighted net falling on the affected military unit.

Insect Plague‡: The spell summons a swarm of small crustaceans. Otherwise it functions as per its description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Magic Font‡: A sahuagin priestess can use this spell with any suitably costly icon or altar dedicated to Sekolah. A cloud forms over the unholy object, and the spell reveals a vision in its depths.

Magical Stone: This spell works normally above water. Underwater, a sahuagin priestess can hurl the stones 20 yards.

Magical Vestment‡: This spell grants sahuagin priestesses the following Armor Classes:

Level	Armor Class
5-7	4
8-10	3
11+	2

Reflecting Pool‡: This spell works in any naturally occurring ring or bowl, provided its size doesn't exceed the spell's limit. The vision revealed by the spell appears as a flat plane within the ring or atop the bowl.

Repel Insects‡: This spell hedges out small crustaceans and giant crustaceans whose Hit Dice do not exceed the spell's limit.

Shillelagh‡: To use this spell, a sahuagin priestess must have a short spear with giant shark's tooth for a head.

Spiritual Hammer‡: A sahuagin priestess uses this spell to enchant a shark-tooth dart.

Spiritual Wrath†: This spell is available to sahuagin priestesses through the use of the *uplift* spell, but for all practical purposes, sahuagin find it impossible to use.

Strengthen Water Creature: Sekolah makes this spell and its reverse available to his priestesses; see *Of Ships and the Sea* for the spell description. Sahuagin priestesses can cast this spell or its reverse above or

below the water. The material component is a small bladder full of squid or octopus ink, which the caster squirts in the recipient's direction.

Time spent under this spell's influence does not count against a sahuagin's four-hour limit when visiting the surface. In addition, this spell grants a +1 bonus to a sahuagin's saving throws when resisting the effects of fresh water (see Chapter 3).

Summon Insects‡: This spell summons swarms of small crustaceans to harry the target. The swarm attacks until either the spell duration ends, the target leaves the water, or the creatures are driven off by intense heat or electrical discharge.

Tanglefoot††: This spell creates eddies and swirls that impede swimming units in an area 100 yards square by 100 feet high per caster level.

Wyvern Watch‡: This spell creates a ghostly sting ray that attacks intruders.

Sahuagin Scrolls

Sahuagin priestesses of 7th level or higher can create scrolls useable by priests. Most surface dwellers, however, wouldn't recognize a sahuagin scroll, as sahuagin writing employs knotted and woven cords in lieu of quill, ink, and paper (see Chapter 7).

Sahuagin Potions

Only the kingdom's royal high priestess, a 9th-level priestess, can brew potions. See Chapter 7 for some creations unique to the sahuagin.



NEW SAHUAGIN PRIEST SPELLS

Sahuagin priestesses have developed a few spells of their own over the millennia. However, they jealously guard all knowledge of these spells.



Gloom

(Alteration; Level 2)



Sphere: Combat

Range: Touch

Duration: 2 rounds +1 round/level

Area of Effect: 20-foot radius

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 4

Saving Throw: Special

Gloom is essentially an underwater version of the *obscurement* spell, adapted for sahuagin preferences. The spell clouds the water in a 40-foot diameter globe centered on the spell's recipient, which can be a creature, object, or point in space. Unwilling creatures receive a saving throw vs. spell to negate the effect. Placing the spell on a mobile creature or object creates a mobile effect.

Within the globe of cloudy water, visibility falls to 2d4 feet for most creatures. Sahuagin, however, can see twice as far (4d4 feet). All light sources—including magical sources such as *continual light*—dim within the area of effect. A light source's radius remains unaffected, but the light becomes highly diffused, equaling the brightness of a half moon. (A *light* or *continual light* spell cast on a creature's eyes, however, still blinds the creature if it fails its saving throw).

Within the globe, all saving throws vs. light-based attacks receive a +2 bonus (this negates the sahuagin's racial penalty against light attacks). If the attack does not allow a saving throw, creatures within the globe still resist the effect on a roll of 18 or higher on 1d20; any magical saving throw adjustments still apply to the roll.

Above water, this spell creates a cloud of acrid smoke. The spell's duration halves above the surface (round fractions down), and even a slight breeze disperses it in a single round.

Murk

(Alteration; Level 4)



Sphere: Combat

Range: 20 yards

Duration: 2 turns

Area of Effect: 60-foot radius

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 6

Saving Throw: Special

A more powerful version of the *gloom* spell, *murk* fills the water in a 120-foot diameter globe with inky silt. The globe's center rests on the recipient, which can be a creature, object, or point in space. Unwilling creatures receive a saving throw vs. spell to negate the effect. Placing the spell on a mobile creature or object creates a mobile effect.

Sahuagin can see 4d4 feet within the globe, while all other creatures can see 2d4 feet. The globe blankets all light sources within its area of effect, reducing their intensity to that of a firefly. *Light* or *continual light* spells cast on a creature's eyes cease to affect the creature while it remains within the globe. Other light-based attacks have a 50% chance to fail. If a light attack actually penetrates the globe's influence, all targets receive a +4 bonus on their saving throws against the attack—even sahuagin. If the light attack fails, it remains briefly visible as a dim flash, like lightning flickering in the depths of a cloud.

When cast above water, *murk* creates a rain of rancid slime mixed with thick fog that fills a 120-foot diameter globe. Watertight barriers block the effect, but the globe instantly expands to fill any open area. The globe extinguishes small fires—such as torches, candles, and cooking fires within its confines. Large fires and fire-based attacks have a 25% chance of failing. Permanent magical fires flare up again when the globe passes. Targets of a successful fire-based attack gain a +4 saving throw bonus against the attack while in the globe's area of effect.

Surfaces touched by the globe remain coated with a film of slime and grit after the globe passes. A strong wind, bright sun, or desert heat reduces the spell's duration by half.

Crush of the Depths

(Alteration; Level 4)



Sphere: Combat

Range: 20 yards

Duration: Instantaneous

Area of Effect: 20-foot cube

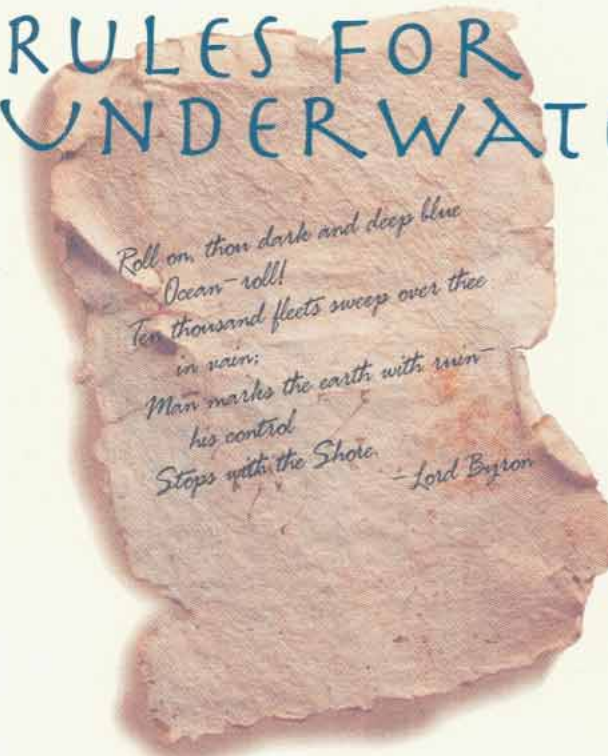
Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 6

Saving Throw: Neg.

Crush of the depths momentarily increases the air or water pressure within its area of effect. Everything within the area experiences a pressure of 1,000 pounds per square inch (equivalent to that found at more than 2,000 feet beneath sea). All creatures in the area of effect must attempt a saving throw vs. spell. Creatures that fail their saving throw are unable to perform any action more complex than normal movement or speech for 1d4 rounds. During this time the affected creatures suffer a -4 penalty to all saving throws. Furthermore, attacks made on the afflicted creatures gain a +4 attack roll bonus. Creatures unable to dive to a depth of 2,000 feet suffer 2d4 points of damage if they fail their saving throws. This spell has no appreciable effects when cast at depths greater than 1,500 feet.

RULES FOR UNDERWATER ADVENTURES



Roll on, thou dark and deep blue
Ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee
in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—
his control
Stops with the Shore. —Lord Byron

This chapter contains basic information for conducting underwater adventures. A more detailed version of these rules appears in *Of Ships and the Sea*. Readers seeking more information should look there.

BREATHING

For most campaigns, magic is the key to underwater breathing. Characters can use magic spells and devices—from *potions of water breathing* to *airy water* spells—which enable them to adventure in an underwater environment.

In situations where magic spells and items are not readily available, Dungeon Masters can offer “naturally” occurring plants—such as oxygen-supplying seaweeds and kelps, minerals, or other items—as a way of solving the underwater breathing dilemma.

TYPES OF BREATHING

Magical items and spells enable characters to survive underwater through a variety of eldritch methods. In turn, each of these methods function differently. There are three general categories of magical breathing: *conversion*,

transformation, and *adaptation*. Each method offers characters a different set of abilities and limitations.

Conversions: Magical items and spells that use alteration magic to subtly change the environment around the caster or wielder fall in this category. For example, the magical power of a *helm of underwater action* converts the water around the wearer’s head to breathable air. Conversion dweomers allow the caster or wielder to speak while underwater—though other creatures outside the influence of the magical item or spell may not clearly understand the speaker.

Transformations: Magical items and spells that fall under this category utilize alteration magic to affect a change *within* the user or wielder that allows him to survive in the surrounding environment. For example, a *portion of water breathing* does not change water into air, but rather allows its user to extract oxygen from the water.

Unlike conversion dweomers, transformation dweomers do not usually surround the wielder with a bubble of air. For example, a *water breathing* spell transforms the recipient’s body so that it can extract oxygen from the surrounding water. The recipient’s lungs and vocal chords fill with water, thereby cutting off the possibility of speech—including spellcasting.

Adaptations: Items and spells in this category use enchantment/charm magic to facilitate (almost) complete adaptation to a hostile environment. Adaptation dweomers allow for unhindered communication. Such items include *Iridescent ioun stones* and *necklaces of adaptation*.

One potent adaptation, *free action* (spell or ring) does not allow the user to breathe water, but does allow the user to move, speak, and fight just as if he were operating on land.

VISION

Perhaps the greatest factor that limits the underwater visual capabilities of humans and demihumans is a phenomenon known as absorption. When the eye perceives a specific color—such as the green exterior of a cloak—what it really sees is the color green reflected

from the cloak. All of the other colors in the spectrum are absorbed.

This process of absorption occurs quite dramatically when light passes into water. The colors with the longest wavelengths are quickly absorbed by water. Thus, red light begins to break down soon after it passes into water.

The deeper light travels in water, the greater the absorption of its constituent colors. For example, red light is almost completely absorbed by water at a depth of about 25 feet, and all of the colors of the spectrum—except blue—are absorbed at depths below 100 feet. Thus, even the clearest water appears a deep blue when perceived at depth.

As one might expect, this process of absorption—as well as the presence of particulates and other detritus found in ocean and lake water—wrecks havoc with the infravision capabilities of demihumans. All infravision functions normally underwater—though its range is only 1/4 that of normal because of constant underwater currents carrying millions of tiny particles and creatures. (Note that this rule affects the optional version of iravision found on page 106 of the *DUNGEON MASTER Guide*).

Furthermore, the scarcity of infrared light and the cold-blooded nature of much underwater life makes the exact identification of objects impossible. Objects in a character's field of vision tend to blur together and over-

lap. Thus, an elf using infravision underwater water could not tell that a sahuagin was approaching. He could only identify the approaching creature as humanoid. In many cases, characters with infravision cannot distinguish the exact number of approaching creatures—especially if these creatures swim close together. For example, three sahuagin swimming within five feet of each other would register as one large heat signature to a character with infravision.

VISUAL DISTANCE UNDERWATER

Large bodies of water—such as lakes, rivers, and seas—are not made up of sterile, clear liquid. Rather, it would be more appropriate to categorize such places as thin soups. Water, especially a lake or ocean, is home to millions of different creatures—from the smallest microorganism to the largest whale. In addition, water carries around particles of silt, floating plankton, and other debris. Such a mixture is hardly conducive to visual clarity.

The tables in Chapter 3 of this book note the visual limitations of the sahuagin. Humans and demihumans, however, see only about one-third as far. Furthermore, their vision degrades twice as fast with depth (full information on character vision ranges is included in *Of Ships and the Sea*).

DUNGEON MASTERY TIPS: HEARING

Role-playing the difficulties involved in underwater verbal communication is quite challenging. The following list offers practical advice on how to facilitate such role-playing.

- Play normally and rely on players to role-play as if their characters can only use brief communication. This is the simplest way to run an underwater adventure or campaign and minimizes the work involved for both players and DMs. However, such a method requires a group of dedicated role-players who are willing to place their characters into danger even though they, as players, can easily communicate the perils of any move to each other.
- Limit every player who runs a character that lacks magical assistance to speak only in two or three-word sentences. This method requires a lot of patience on the part of each penalized player. However, such limitations highlight the difficulties and frustrations involved in underwater communication.
- Have players whose characters do not possess magical assistance cover their mouths when talking underwater. Likewise, have them cover their ears when listening. Although this may seem silly at first, it does convey the difficulties of unassisted underwater conversation.

UNDERWATER CHARACTERISTICS

Weapon	Wt.	Size	Type	Speed	Damage vs. Size		Missile Rate of Fire	Missile Range ¹
					Sm-Med	Large		
Arquebus				N/A				
Axe								
(All types)				N/A				
Blowgun				N/A				
Bow								
(All types)				N/A				
Crossbow ²								
Hand	3	S	—	6	—	—	1	5/10/15
Hand quarrel	*	S	P	—	1d3	1d2		
Heavy ³	14	M	—	11	—	—	1/2	15/20/25
Heavy quarrel	*	S	P	—	1d8+1	1d10+1		
Light ³	7	M	—	8	—	—	1	10/15/20
Light quarrel	*	S	P	—	1d6+1	1d8+1		
Sahuagin ³	12	M	—	11	—	—	1	15/20/25
Sahuagin quarrel	*	S	P	—	1d8+1	1d10+1		
Dagger or Dirk	1	S	P	4	1d4	1d3	—	—
Dart				N/A				
Sahuagin ⁷	1	S	P	4	1d4	1d3	2	5/10/15
Flail								
(All types)				N/A				
Javelin	2	M	P	4	1d3	1d3	—	—
Sahuagin ⁷	3	M	P	4	1d6+1	1d6+1	1	5/10/15
Knife	1/2	S	S/P	4	1d3	1d2	—	—
Lance								
Light ⁴	5	L	P	6	1d6	1d8	—	—
Medium ⁴	10	L	P	7	1d6+1	2d6	—	—
Heavy ⁴	15	L	P	10	1d8+1	3d6	—	—
Mace								
(All types)				N/A				
Man catcher ^{3,5}	8	L	—	9	—	—	—	—
Morning star				N/A				
Pick								
(All types)				N/A				
Pike ⁶	12	L	P	13	1d6	1d12	—	—
Polearms								
Awl pike ⁶	12	L	P	13	1d6	1d12	—	—
Bardiche				N/A				
Bec de corbin ³				N/A				
Bill-guisarme ³	15	L	P	12	1d4	1d6	—	—
Bill ³	15	L	P	12	1d4	1d6	—	—
Fauchard	7	L	P	11	1d3	1d4	—	—
Glaive	8	L	P	11	1d3	1d4	—	—
Glaive-guisarme ³	10	L	P	12	1d4	1d6	—	—
Guisarme ³				N/A				
Halberd ³	15	L	P	13	1d3	1d3	—	—
Lucern hammer ^{3,6}	15	L	P	13	1d4	1d3	—	—
Military fork	7	L	P	9	1d8	2d4	—	—

STATISTICS FOR WEAPONS

Weapon	Wt.	Size	Type	Speed	Damage vs. Size		Missile Rate of Fire	Missile Range ¹
					Sm-Med	Large		
Partisan ⁶	8	L	P	11	1d4	1d6	—	—
Ranseur ⁶	7	L	P	10	1d4	1d4	—	—
Spetum ⁶	7	L	P	11	1d3	1d4	—	—
Voulge	12	L	P	11	1d4	1d6	—	—
Quarterstaff ³	4	L	B	9	1d2	1d2	—	—
Scourge	N/A							
Scythe	N/A							
Sickle	3	S	P	6	1d2	1	—	—
Sling	N/A							
(All types)	N/A							
Spear	N/A							
One-handed ⁶	5	M	P	6	1d6	1d8	—	—
Two-handed ^{3,6}	5	M	P	6	1d6+1	2d6	—	—
Staff sling	N/A							
(All types)	N/A							
Sword	N/A							
Bastard	N/A							
One-handed	10	M	P	9	1d4	1d6	—	—
Two-handed ³	10	M	P	9	1d4+1	2d4	—	—
Broad	4	M	P	7	1d4	1d6	—	—
Cutlass	4	M	P	7	1d3	1d4	—	—
Kopesh	N/A							
Long	4	M	P	7	1d4+1	1d6+1	—	—
Rapier	4	M	P	4	1d6	1d8	—	—
Sabre	5	M	P	7	1d3	1d4	—	—
Scimitar	N/A							
(All types)	N/A							
Short	3	S	P	3	1d6	1d8	—	—
Tulwar	N/A							
Two-handed ³	15	L	P	11	1d4	2d4	—	—
Trident	N/A							
One-handed	5	L	P	6	1d6+1	3d4	—	—
Two-handed	5	L	P	7	1d8+1	3d4	—	—
Sahuagin ⁷	N/A							
One-handed	5	L	P	6	1d6+1	3d4	1	5/10/15
Two-handed	5	L	P	6	1d8+1	3d4	1	—
Warhammer	N/A							
Whip	N/A							

Notes

- * These items weigh little individually. Ten of these weigh one pound.
- Ranges are in yards unless noted otherwise. The numbers represent the limits of the weapon's short/medium/long and ranges. Attacks at medium range have a -2 attack penalty. Attacks at long have a -5 penalty.
 - Normal crossbows do not function underwater. The values are for weapons specially modified for underwater use, see page xx.

- The weapon requires two hands to wield regardless of the user's size.
- These weapons inflict double damage when wield in a mounted charge.
- This weapon dismounts a rider on a successful hit and can trap opponents, see page xx.
- These weapons inflict double damage if firmly set to receive a charge.
- Only sahuagin can throw these weapons underwater.

Weapons Table

HEARING

The ears of surface dwellers do not function well underwater. Complex communications are impossible at ranges beyond 10 feet—though adaptive magic, as described earlier, removes the restriction for the *listener* only. Simple communications, including short, emphatic statements such as “help!” or “look out!” remain understandable at ranges up to 20 yards.

UNDERWATER COMBAT:

Engaging in underwater combat is a dangerous and complex affair—especially for land-dwelling adventurers. The difference in apparent weights and the greater resistance of water provide severe impediments to fighting styles developed primarily for use on land.

Surface dwellers add four to their initiative rolls in hand-to-hand combat and suffer a -4 to their attack rolls when fighting underwater. In addition, the swirling currents and dim visibility of a watery environment prevents a warrior from receiving any attack or damage bonuses from weapon specialization—including multiple attacks per round. Certain magical effects—such as *free action*—negate these penalties.

Furthermore, only thrusting weapons are effective underwater, and even these often prove hard to use. The table on pages 92–93 gives statistics for the weapons listed in the *Players’ Handbook* when used underwater.

UNDERWATER MOVEMENT

While underwater, characters must either swim or walk along the bottom. Nonproficient swimmers can swim at a rate equal to $\frac{1}{3}$ their base land movement rate in yards per round. Proficient swimmers (characters with the swimming proficiency) swim at a rate equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ of their base land movement times 5 in yards.

Encumbered nonproficient swimmers (even those only lightly encumbered) cannot swim any distance—they are stuck at the bottom of the river, lake, or sea (see sinking rules below). Proficient swimmers, however, can still swim while lightly encumbered. They travel at $\frac{1}{3}$ their current land movement rates times 5 in yards. Moderately (and above) encumbered characters simply cannot swim until they jettison the extra weight.

Characters in nonmagical metal armor cannot swim, regardless of the character’s encumbrance category.

While swimming, a character cannot easily change direction or perform any complicated action. Such actions require successful Dexterity checks or they are delayed until the end of the current round. This can be quite inconvenient in a fight. A swimming character can fight (attacking foes to his front), but cannot grab items from a backpack, employ magical items, cast spells, or change weapons, without risking delay.

Any character can walk underwater at a rate equal to one-third his land movement times 5 in yards per round, provided the character in question has a firm connection to a solid surface.

SWIMMING AND ENDURANCE

Character’s cannot swim indefinitely. The limitations on swimming given in Chapter 14 of the *Player’s Handbook* apply to underwater swimmers (but not to characters walking along the bottom).

A character who can breathe underwater does not automatically drown if he fails a Constitution check or allows his Constitution scores to drop to 0 as noted in the *Player’s Handbook*. Instead the character cannot swim or walk more than 10 feet a round for one day. In addition, he cannot fight, cast spells, or use proficiencies. All attacks made against him gain a +4 attack bonus, and the character suffers a -4 penalty to all saving throws. These limitations last for one day. During that day, the character does not gain any hit points for natural healing, does not recover lost ability score points, and does not lose any accumulated attack penalties (see PHB Chapter 14).

Note that the recovery rates listed in the *Players’ Handbook* assume the character rests on dry land. Characters who can breathe water can rest underwater, but recover at only half the listed rates. Characters who have lost both Constitution and Strength points regain only 1 point in each ability for every day of rest.

DIVING AND SURFACING

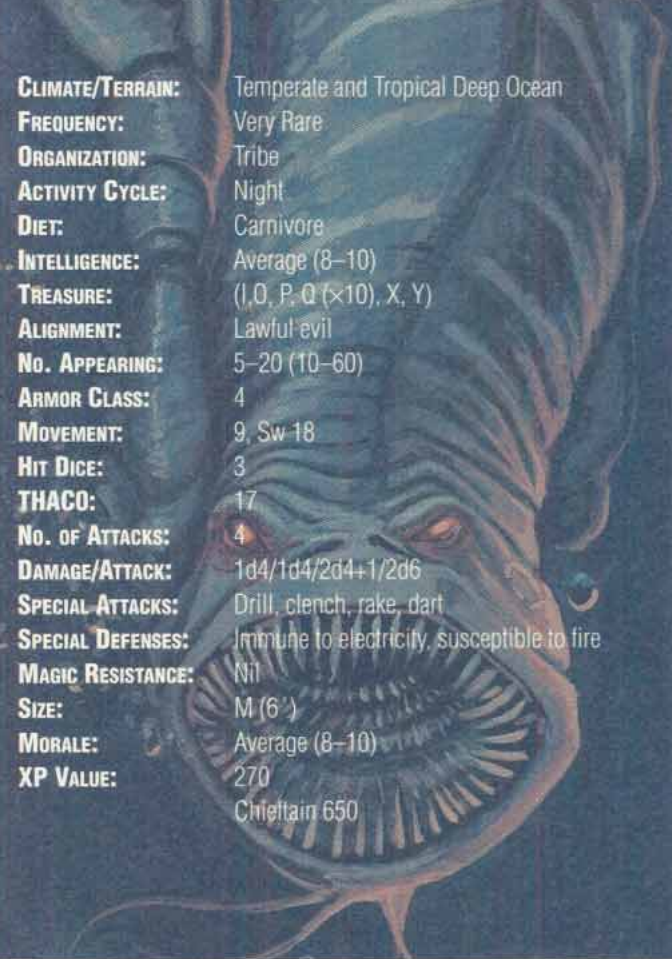
All actively swimming characters can ascend at their maximum underwater swimming rate.

Those characters simply floating to the surface—unconscious characters, for example—rise at a rate of 10 feet per round.

Encumbered characters cannot float to the surface. If these characters do not actively swim, they will sink (see below).

Sinking characters descend at a rate of 10 feet per round. This rate of descent increases to 40 feet per round if a character wears metal armor or carries more than 30 pounds of equipment.





CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Temperate and Tropical Deep Ocean
FREQUENCY:	Very Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Tribe
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Night
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Average (8–10)
TREASURE:	(I, O, P, Q (×10), X, Y)
ALIGNMENT:	Lawful evil
NO. APPEARING:	5–20 (10–60)
ARMOR CLASS:	4
MOVEMENT:	9, Sw 18
HIT DICE:	3
THACO:	17
NO. OF ATTACKS:	4
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1d4/1d4/2d4+1/2d6
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Drill, clench, rake, dart
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Immune to electricity, susceptible to fire
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	M (6')
MORALE:	Average (8–10)
XP VALUE:	270
	Chieftain 650

Anguillians (AN-gwill-ee-anz) resemble a cross between a man and an eel. They have sinuous bodies about 6 feet long, the upper section of which bears two fleshy appendages tipped with bony pincers. The anguillians use these appendages as arms (the pincers can cut, crush, and grasp almost any living object) and forward fins.

Two short legs—ending in wide, six-toed feet—sprout from the creatures' flanks about two-thirds of the way down their bodies. Beyond their legs, anguillian bodies possess flat tails fringed top and bottom with fins.

In addition, the creatures have reptilian eyes and jawless, circular mouths lined with row upon row of teeth. Anguillian snouts are blunt, and they possess a pair of wide fins on the sides of their heads which resemble spiny ears.

An anguillian's scaly body has a muddy brown hue with dots or speckles of black and tan.

Anguillians communicate through clicks, thumps and whistles, just like sahuagin. In fact, these creatures speak a dialect of the sahuagin tongue. Their chieftains usually know the common tongue of surface dwellers (which they speak tolerably well) and the racial tongues of one or two other land or marine races.

Combat: Anguillians make swift attacks aimed at overwhelming the opposition. In addition, they possess senses as acute as those of their sahuagin cousins. When fighting surface dwellers underwater, anguillians gain a +2 bonus to their surprise rolls and impose a –2 penalty to their opponents' surprise rolls.

Once an hour, anguillians can dart through the water at a rate of 30 for five minutes. They can use this burst of speed all at once, or in shorter bursts. However, once they have used their extra speed for five minutes, they must wait a full hour before doing so again.

In open water, anguillians often form a loose sphere around their enemy: a few anguillians swim overhead, a few more attack from the front, rear, and flanks, and the majority strike from below.

Anguillians attack with their mouths, pincers, and tails. Their tails deliver a pile-driver punch, while their pincers slice and crush. On a successful bite, an anguillian attaches itself to its opponent unless the opponent wears metal armor or has a natural Armor Class of 0 or better. Once attached, the anguillian automatically drills into the opponent for bite damage each round. (Anguillians have been known to drill their way into large creatures—such as whales—and literally eat them from the inside out). Victims of an anguillian bite can dislodge the creature only by killing it, or tearing it away with a successful bend bars roll.

While attached, an anguillian automatically rakes its opponent with its feet each round for an additional 2d4 points of damage. In addition, all attacks with its pincers and tail gain a +2 attack bonus.

If unable to attach its mouth, an anguillian can grasp its opponent with its pincers. If both pincers hit during the same round, the creature traps the opponent, automatically inflicting raking and pincer damage each round and gaining a +2 attack bonus with its tail and bite.

Anguillians are completely immune to all forms of electrical attack. However, all fire attacks inflict an extra 2 points per die of damage. Furthermore, the anguillian suffers a –2 saving throw penalty vs. fire attacks. Anguillians cannot abide bright light or fresh water. When exposed to either, they must make a morale check or withdraw.

During their rare forays ashore, anguillians typically carry several stone-tipped javelins, which they clench in their pincers.

Habitat/Society: Anguillians live in the sunless depths of the ocean. They typically dwell at depths between 1,800 and 2,400 feet, rising near the surface only at night to hunt. Some anguillians even venture to the surface on moonless nights. However, the creatures limit such forays to brief raids on lonely islands or attacks on passing ships.

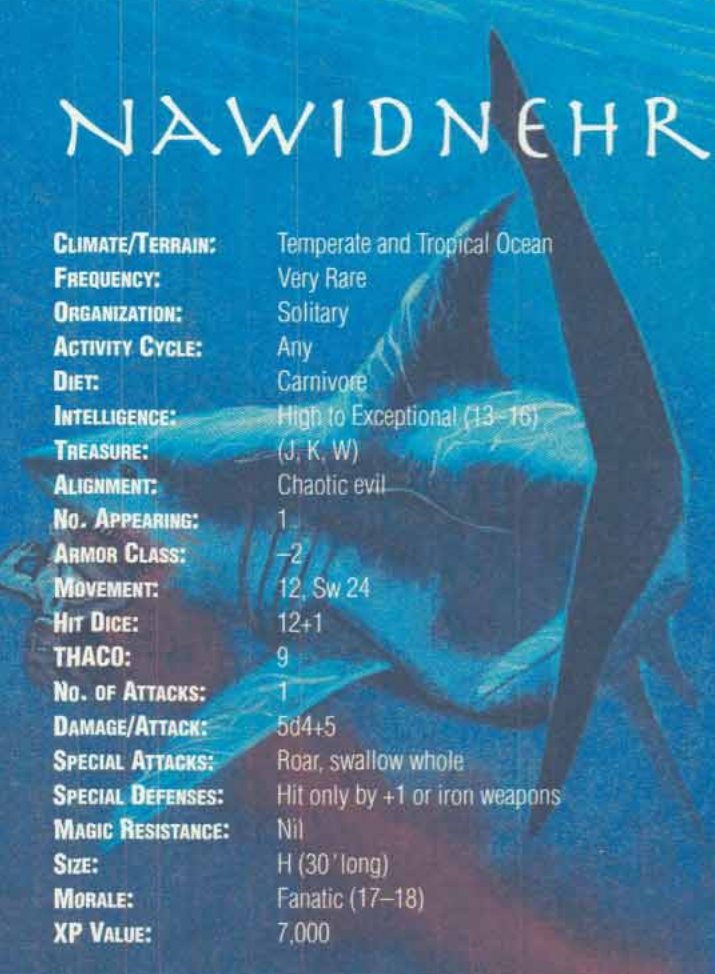
The anguillian's social structure is a patriarchal hierarchy based on an elder chieftain (who has 5 Hit Dice). Anguillian leaders are subject to challenge—just as sahuagin leaders. Unlike sahuagin, however, anguillians do not have a rigid nobility system or a priesthood.

Anguillian form free-swimming tribes that cruise the ocean depths. The entire tribe remains mobile, with the females carrying their eggs along as they swim. Most anguillian encounters will involve 5d4 adult males acting as scouts or hunters for the main group. There is a 40% chance that an anguillian tribe has 3d4 marine eels as guards.

Ecology: Anguillians consume any flesh—including carrion, slain opponents, and their own dead. They regularly hunt giant squid, whales, and a variety of fish. Anguillian meat is foully pungent, and not even the voracious sahuagin care to eat it. Sharks, kraken, and other monsters of the deep aren't so picky, and often prey upon anguillians before the anguillians can prey upon them.

ANGUILLIAN

NAWIDNEHR (SHARKWERE)



CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Temperate and Tropical Ocean
FREQUENCY:	Very Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	High to Exceptional (13-16)
TREASURE:	(J, K, W)
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic evil
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	-2
MOVEMENT:	12, Sw 24
HIT DICE:	12+1
THACO:	9
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	5d4+5
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Roar, swallow whole
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Hit only by +1 or iron weapons
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	H (30' long)
MORALE:	Fanatic (17-18)
XP VALUE:	7,000

The nawidnehr (NAH-widd-near) is a great shark capable of assuming humanoid form. This powerful marine predator has an insatiable desire to kill. Also called the roaring shark, or sharkwere, the nawidnehr uses its shape-shifting abilities to pursue its prey onto land or insinuate itself into an unsuspecting party for a surprise attack.

In their natural forms, nawidnehrs resemble great white sharks. Nawidnehrs, however, boast much more complex coloration. Specimens dwelling in cooler waters tend toward dark blue, with dots or bands of gray or muddy yellow. Some cool water specimens are brown overall, with red and tan speckles. Warm water specimens tend toward brighter colors—such as blue-green or yellow—with yellow or white spots, or stripes. All nawidnehrs have pale underbellies, usually a lighter shade of the prevailing color on their upper bodies.

All nawidnehrs speak the common tongue of humanity. Each individual sharkwere speaks several (1d4+1) other demi-human racial tongues as well.

Combat: Nawidnehrs relish battle. They usually begin attacking with a roar. In shark form, this roar is a thunderous boom that fills a cone 5 feet wide at the creature's mouth, 50 feet long, and 25 feet wide at the far end. Creatures within the cone suffer a shockwave that renders them unconscious for 2d4 rounds—unless they make successful saving throws vs. breath weapon.

When in humanoid form, the creature's roar takes the form of a haunting song. All listeners within 50 feet must make a

saving throw vs. spell. Failure leaves the listener paralyzed with fright for 1d4+4 rounds.

Sometimes the creature decides not to roar when attacking in its natural form. Rather, it lunges at swimmers from below, imposing a -3 penalty to its opponents' surprise rolls.

In melee, a nawidnehr's jagged teeth and powerful jaws can tear away huge chunks of flesh, producing wounds that bleed profusely. A nawidnehr can swallow a man-sized or smaller creature whole on any attack roll that exceeds the minimum number required by 5 or more. For example, if a nawidnehr attacks a sahuagin (AC 5), it swallows the sahuagin whole on a roll of 9 or higher.

A nawidnehr's stomach can hold two man-sized creatures at once, or the equivalent volume of smaller creatures (about four small or eight tiny creatures). Swallowed victims suffer 15 points of damage each round they remain inside the sharkwere. A swallowed creature can wield natural claws or small-sized slashing weapons (type S) normally against the creature's internal Armor Class of 5. Larger weapons inflict only 1 point of damage per attack, plus any modifier for enchantment. No other damage bonuses apply. Victims escape after inflicting 20 points of damage; only one half of this damage total actually applies against the nawidnehr's hit points.

A nawidnehr is harmed by only +1 or better magical weapons, or by weapons forged from cold iron. A swallowed victim can cut his way free with normal weapons, but no damage accrues to the nawidnehr in the process.

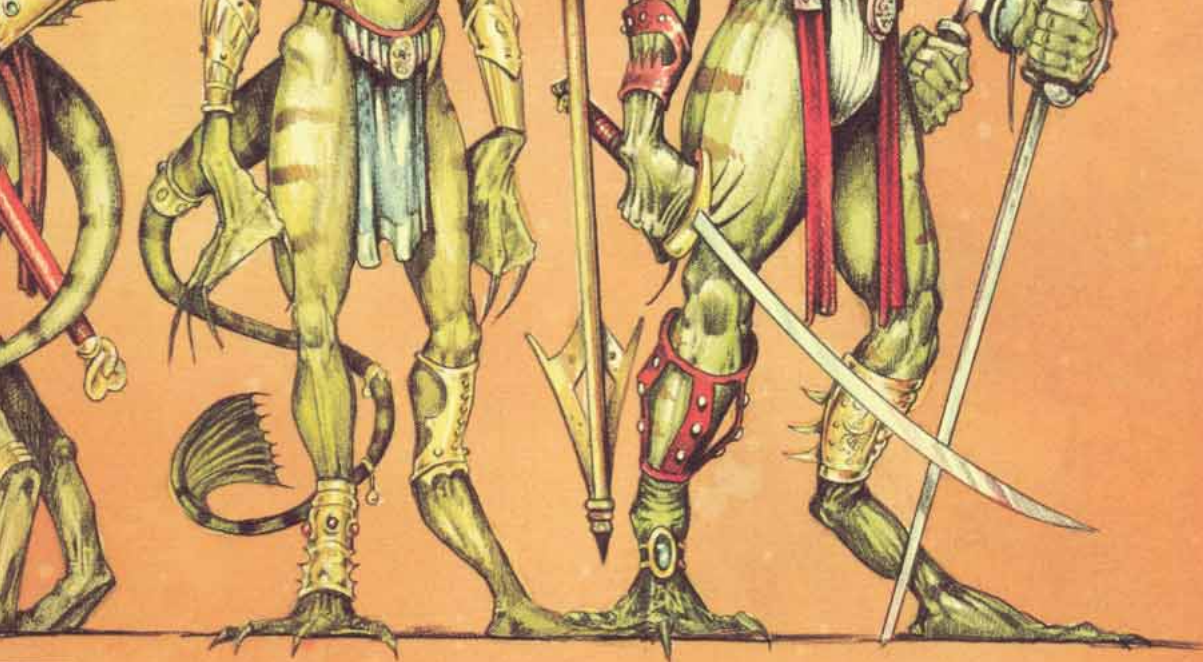
Nawidnehrs can transform themselves into any humanoid creature they have seen. However, the assumed form cannot be greater than huge size. Each change requires but a moment; the creature can attack during the same round as it changes—though it can make only one change each round. The assumed form can be of either gender.

When nawidnehrs use their shape-shifting ability to fool humanoid victims, they try to lure the victim into the water before attacking. They usually leap into the sea, dragging paralyzed victims with them. However, sharkweres will grapple with an opponent and enter the water with a victim in their grasps. Nawidnehrs have effective Strength scores of 18/00 or 19 for this purpose.

Habitat/Society: Nawidnehrs hunt victims every waking moment; they can't stand to leave any other creature in peace. Even the sahuagin fear these powerful predators. Sharkweres swim the oceans, seeking prey as any natural predator. However, these crafty beasts often pose as fishermen, marooned sailors, or friendly natives to attract victims. When encountered under the sea, there is a 40% chance that 2d4+1 large sharks (7-8 HD) accompany a nawidnehr.

Nawidnehrs and weresharks hate each other and will attack each other on sight.

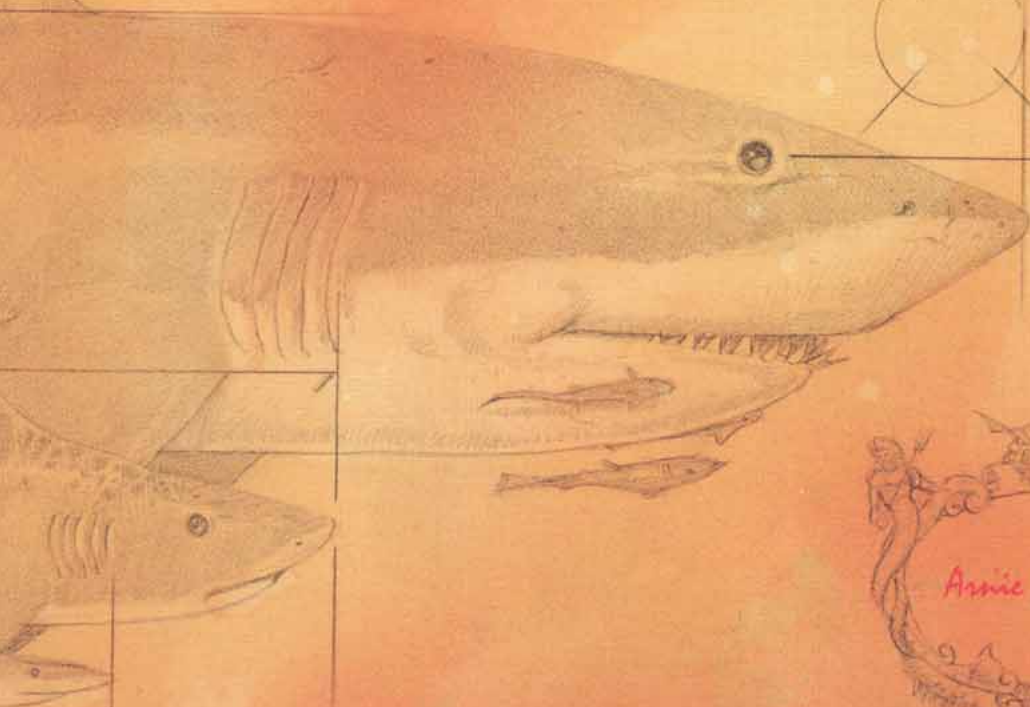
Ecology: Nawidnehrs will happily deplete the fish stocks in an entire area before moving on to ravage another locale. Though they require food, destruction remains their true goal.



Guard Royal High Priestess

King

20' - 6"

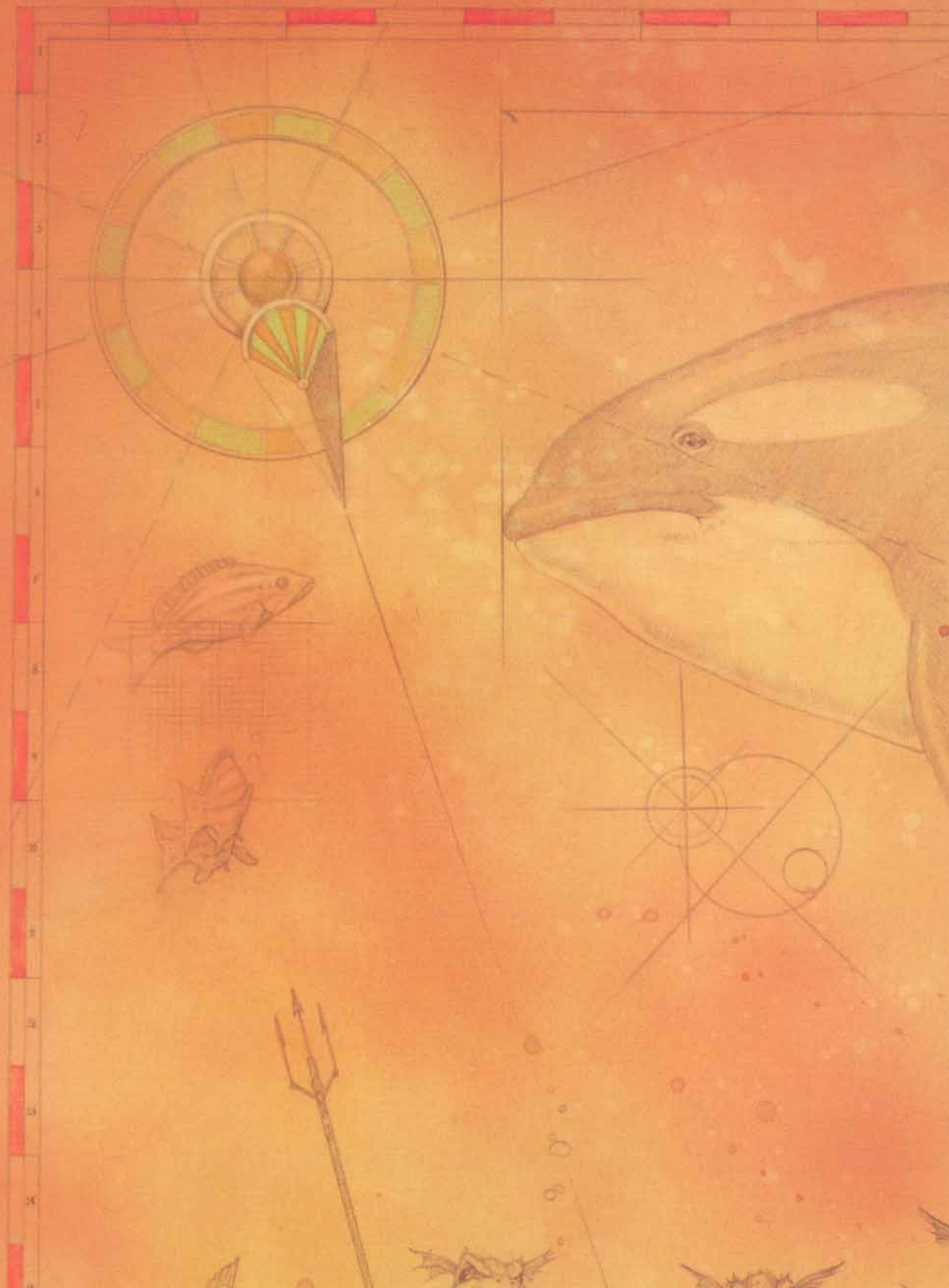


Annie Swehel

Dagan

20-4







8-6°



Greater Vampiric Ixixachitl



Ixixachitl

3-9°



30°

30°



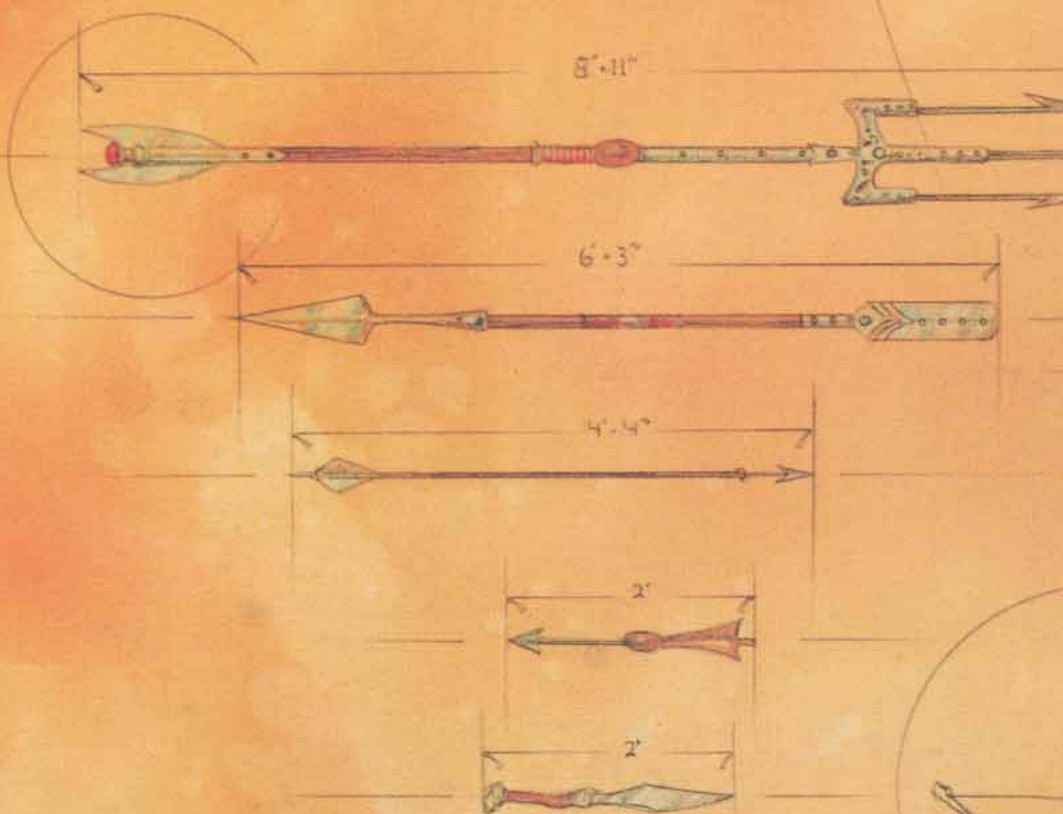
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Hatchling

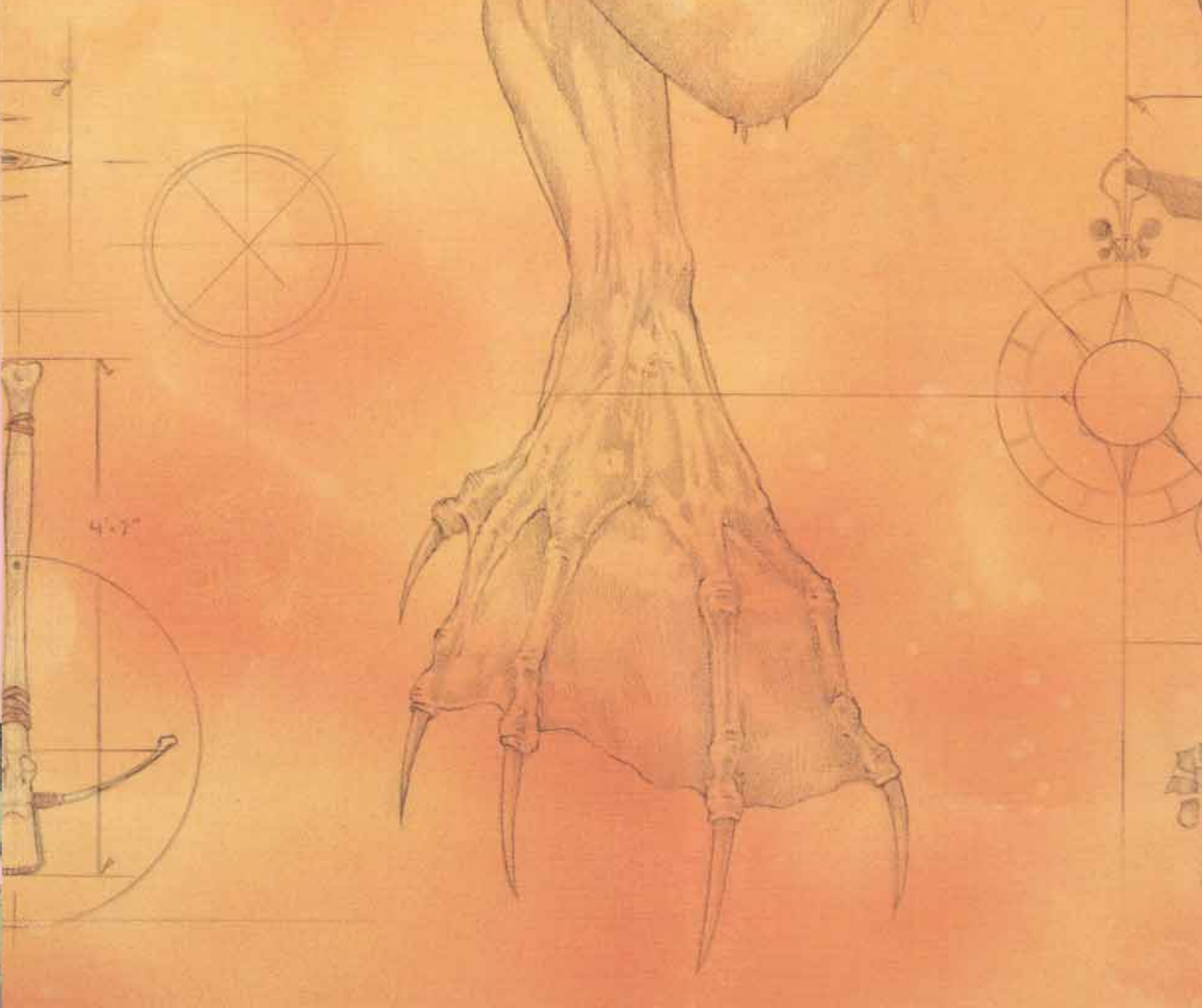
Warrior

Female





Priestess Baronial Guard Chieftain Senior Priestess



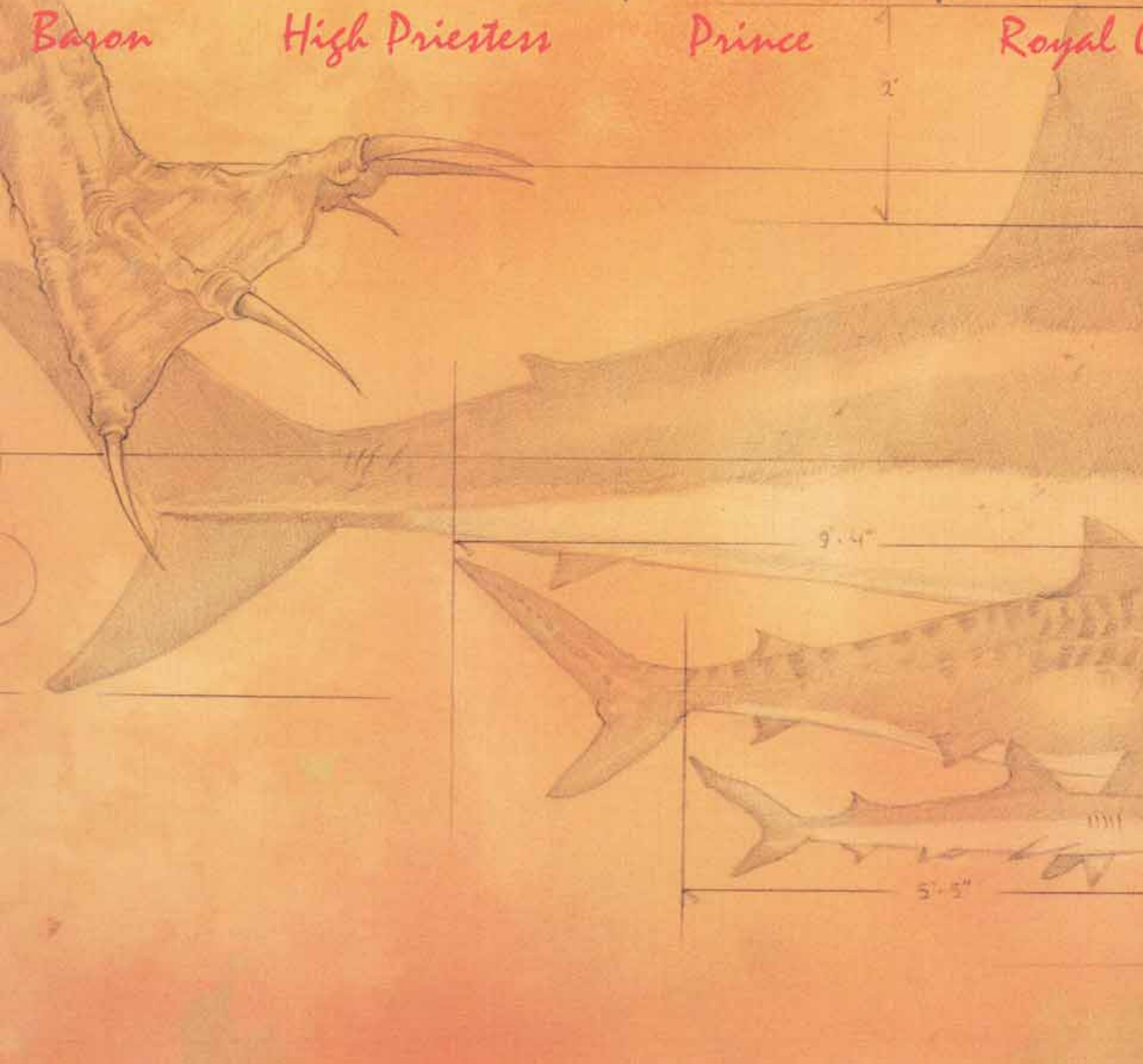


Baron

High Priestess

Prince

Royal Guard



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