

# WISDOM FROM THE WASTELANDS

Issue #5: Domesticated Creatures



By Derek Holland and the Skirmisher Game Development Group

**W**ith the huge variety of life, domesticated creatures in *Mutant Future* come in all shapes and sizes. Some are harmless, some are inherently dangerous, and some become so when they are not tended and become feral. This issue of *Wisdom from the Wastelands* contains 10 new creatures that the people of the post-apocalyptic wastes have relationships with and make use of in various ways.

This publication is dedicated to providing useful information, game content, and ideas to players of modern, science fiction, and post-apocalyptic table-top and role-playing games in general and to fans of Goblinoid Games' *Mutant Future* RPG in particular. The material contained herein are compatible with it and any others that use the "Basic" system introduced in the most popular role-playing games of the early 1970s and are easily adaptable to many other games (especially successor systems, to include those covered by the Open Game License).

## Big Tooth

No. Enc.: d6 (d6)  
 Alignment: Neutral  
 Movement: 90' (30')  
 Swim 120' (40')  
 Armor Class: 4  
 Hit Dice: 28  
 Attacks: 2 (flippers)  
 Damage: 4d6/4d6  
 Save: L14  
 Morale: 8  
 Hoard Class: Special

Big Teeth are massive walruses found in temperate and arctic waters. They grow to 80' long and to as much as 20 tons, so large that nomadic people occasionally live in their honeycombed tusks (some seal their homes against the water, while amphibious or gilled tenants allow the water to wash through the tusks). Wild Big Teeth feed on benthos, creatures living on or in the sea bottom, such as shrimp, crabs, worms, coral, and bivalve mollusks, with giant clams being a favorite. Masters can control their tamed Big Teeth with food, but some do not try and simply go along for the ride, using their big teeth as cheap transportation and effective protection.

**Mutations:** aberrant form, gigantism, natural armor.



## Dangling Gourds

No. Enc.: 1 (0)  
 Alignment: Neutral  
 Movement: Fly 240' (80')  
 Armor Class: 7  
 Hit Dice: 25  
 Attacks: Special (seeds)  
 Damage: 6d6  
 Save: L12  
 Morale: 12  
 Hoard Class: None

Dangling Gourds are 400-500' diameter vine masses that normally float a half mile above the ground. They drop to

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lower altitudes (100' or so) when releasing their seeds, which are surrounded by *explosive fruit*. The explosives kill plants that might prevent the seeds from germinating and anything caught in the barrage takes 6d6 points of damage every round for the five rounds fruit are dropped (save versus energy attacks for half damage). After a few weeks, the seedlings hatch, take to the air, and merge into their own masses — or join existing masses if adult gourds are near the liftoff point. When the gourds descend, people have been known to fly or jump up into the masses, finding relatively safe housing or passage as long as they can avoid the inedible, *explosive fruit* during a bombardment. A dangling gourd can cover hundreds of miles between fruitings (which happen throughout the growing season, depending on latitude and climate), and can carry a few hundred normal-sized humans. Some peoples have tried domesticating Dangling Gourds, a lengthy process that entails shaping the plants, using artifacts or mutations to ameliorate the fruit's explosive nature, and crossbreeding with the hope that desirable traits will emerge; as the mass's composing vines are replaced or converted, the plants gradually become what the gardeners want or need. This has resulted in scores of cultivars and even new species, as each domesticating race would desire something completely different.

**Mutations:** *abnormal size, flight (plant), grenade-like fruit, +d4 plant mutations.*



### Hydrorose

No. Enc. 0 (3d8)  
 Alignment: Neutral  
 Movement: 0'  
 Armor Class: 5  
 Hit Dice: 7  
 Attacks: 1 (prickles)  
 Damage: 3d4  
 Save: L4  
 Morale: 10  
 Hoard Class: VII

Hydro-plants were created by the Ancients to provide clean



sources of water almost anywhere on the planet, filtering it from the soil. There was a huge variety before the cataclysm, and people ensured that many of these precious plants survived to the current day. Hydroroses are nearly-feral patches that cover 10-20' diameter areas. If tended weekly, each plant produce five gallons of water a day during the growing season and 10 pounds of edible fruit (rose hips) in mid-summer. If not trimmed for more than a week, the plants animate and attack anything that comes within 10' of them, whipping the victims with stems covered in spike-sized prickles. The only solution to this problem is cutting the rose to the ground and then tending the resulting sprout with more care.

**Mutations:** *natural armor (plants), natural vegetal weapon, special.*

### Jellybird

No. Enc.: 5d6 (10d10)  
 Alignment: Neutral  
 Movement: 10' (3')  
 Fly 120' (40')  
 Armor Class: 7  
 Hit Dice: 1/2  
 Attacks: 1 (impact)  
 Damage: d6  
 Save: L0  
 Morale: 5  
 Hoard Class: None

These strange mutant sparrows look similar to their stock species — four inches tall and dark brown with white markings — but, unlike the predecessors, Jellybirds have skeletons so soft the animals can survive crushing (but which do not protect them from being suffocated by compressive damage). People like raising them because the birds' bodies are completely edible, they reproduce in huge numbers (in captivity, a pair will have 10-20 young per brood), and they are only mildly dangerous. Usually, the omnivorous adult





birds are given seeds, with chicks getting a higher protein diet of insects or offal bits. If a jellybird flock has not been fed for a couple days, however, the birds will go berserk (morale 12, gains the *quickness* mutation), slamming into anything remotely edible until they make a kill and eat.

**Mutations:** *aberrant form, quickness (variant)*.

### Lemming Grass

No. Enc.: Swarm  
 Alignment: Neutral  
 Movement: 0'  
 Seed 150' (50)  
 Armor Class: 8 (seed 6)  
 Hit Dice: 18  
 Attacks: None (seed contact)  
 Damage: None (seed 2d4)  
 Save: L0 (seed L4)  
 Morale: 12  
 Hoard Class: None

Lemming Grass is a dream come true for carnivores: a grain with kernels that are effectively small rodents. When the mouse-sized seeds mature, they animate and swarm, searching for new planting areas. As long as the seeds can still move, carnivores can eat them. The seed swarms are

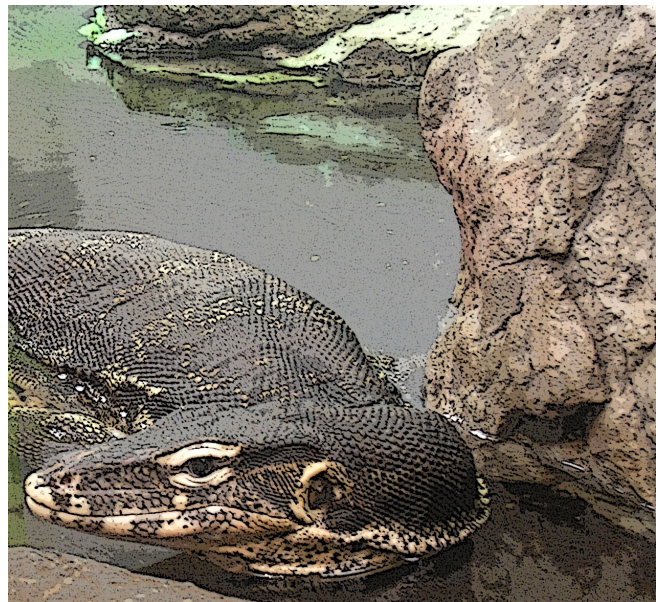


dangerous because they tend to strip all plant life from where they will plant themselves. Any animals or robots caught in a swarm are also torn apart. Fortunately for plantlife, the lemming grass seeds are only active for two weeks in the spring. Meat eaters can pickle the animated seeds and extend their use for a few months. Intelligent carnivores are trying to breed strains with shorter lifespans (for multiple crops per year) and more seed production.

**Mutations:** *animate seed, animal parts or organs*.

### Monitor Serpent

No. Enc.: d4 (d6)  
 Alignment: Neutral  
 Movement: 90' (30')  
 Swim 120' (40')  
 Armor Class: 5  
 Hit Dice: 6  
 Attacks: 1 (bite)  
 Damage: d8  
 Save: L3  
 Morale: 9  
 Hoard Class: VI



These 18' long, legless, mutant monitor lizards are dangerous but very important aquatic mounts for those who live near water. Besides *gills*, Monitor Serpents have organs that allow them to share oxygen with other creatures, which they normally use for keeping their young alive underwater (as hatchlings do not have gills until they six months old), but which others can use as well. A human rider can remain submerged until the animal falls asleep, but will then suffocate, because the serpents cannot extract sufficient extra oxygen while sleeping. Serpents with young overcome this by taking turns: one parent sleeps while the other tends the offspring. The animals are carnivores with large appetites and can detect prey and objects greater than five pounds within 50' using a lateral-line sense organ, similar to a fish's.



But domestic serpents are not allowed to forage because they tend to not return after hunting. Instead, people who keep them use the lizards as garbage disposals, feeding them the inedible parts of animal carcasses so scavengers do not catch the scent of blood and decay.

**Mutations:** *aberrant form (gills), gigantism, unique sense, special.*

### Philly's Stone

No. Enc.: 0 (6d6)  
 Alignment: Neutral  
 Movement: 0'  
 Armor Class: 1  
 Hit Dice: 12  
 Attacks: Special  
 Damage: Special  
 Save: L8  
 Morale: 12  
 Hoard Class: None

Resembling cacti or trees without branches, Philly's Stones are unusual among plants for their very high mineral content. This adaptation protects the plant so well that any physical weapon (melee or missile) used against it will break unless the wielder saves versus stun. Attacking creatures using natural weapons (i.e., claws, teeth) will likely snap them, losing the attribute until the body parts grow back and perhaps permanently. The Philly's Stone fruit is likewise protected until it matures, when the flesh becomes sweet and edible — but those who cultivate the plants generally use them more for protection than food. A village surrounded by a wall of these plants can more easily weather an attack because invaders' weapons will often shatter trying to destroy them. The stone-like plants are also used as obstacles in pit fighting, where gladiators try to trick or force one another into striking one and losing a weapon. Philly's Stones have no special



vulnerabilities and burn like wet plants and the best way to kill them is with radiation. These plants can not be harvested for building materials while alive but crumble over time after dying, making their remains useful as fertilizer but not much else.

**Mutations:** *special.*

### Rana

No. Enc.: d8 (4d6)  
 Alignment: Neutral  
 Movement: 240' (80')  
 Swim 150' (50')  
 Armor Class: 6  
 Hit Dice: 3  
 Attacks: 2 (claws)  
 Damage: d4/d4  
 Save: L2  
 Morale: 5  
 Hoard Class: None

Ranas are giant frogs, the adults reaching about six feet long and a weight of 120 pounds. They have enlarged forelegs, the result of engineering meant to increase the amount of meat a single animal could provide. When they were mutated, Ranas gained size, claws, and (poor) chewing teeth. Consequently, Ranas do not bite prey or attack with a sticky tongue, but instead they tear food to bits before eating it. Rana keepers feed the frogs with giant insects, travelers, and criminals. Because they are frogs, Ranas need to breed in water. The tadpoles get up to eight feet long, including their tails, and some people prefer to eat these instead of mature ranas, as a pair of adults can produce scores of young. The adults are dangerous, fast, and too stupid to train. No one in their right mind would want to ride one these beasts, as the leaping would cause nausea, and the frogs would constantly try to eat their riders. People who raise them do so out of desperation or have access to mutations or artifacts that can control the frogs.

**Mutations:** *aberrant form (natural weapon), gigantism.*



## Leafy Sandstone

No. Enc.: 0 (1)  
Alignment: Neutral  
Movement: 0'  
Armor Class: 4  
Hit Dice: 15+  
Attacks: 3+  
Damage: d8 each  
Save: L10  
Morale: 12  
Hoard Class: XII

This vine grows in sand just under the surface. It has tiny leaves that emerge from the ground making it appear to be many small plants. Leafy Sandstone is carnivorous and, similarly to ant lions, uses pit traps to capture small animals, which are drained of blood and buried below the sandstone. For every five hit dice the plant has, there will be one pit with 10-foot-long, thorn-covered vines. The plant has become a major part of many desert and beach communities because it converts sand into sandstone; while the plant is alive, the stone remains strong and useful for construction. Homebuilders heap up piles of sand, seed them with the plants, and then excavate the interiors after an entire pile is converted to stone. Unfortunately, soon after the plant dies the stone starts to crumble. People with living houses may have to go far out of their way to ensure their home's integrity, and some even maintain herds of small animals to feed their homes.

**Mutations:** *alter soil consistency (new), natural vegetal weapon.*



## Tarry Maple

No. Enc.: 0 (3d4)  
Alignment: Neutral  
Movement: 0'  
Armor Class: 4  
Hit Dice: 24  
Attacks: 3 (slams)  
Damage: d6



Save: L18  
Morale: 12  
Hoard Class: VII

Nasty predators that consume everything coming into contact with them, tarry maples have very soft and gooey surfaces infused with a class 6 poison. Any creature unfortunate enough to touch a maple is not only exposed to the toxin, but also must make an additional saving throw versus death or be drawn into the plant, taking 5d6 points of damage per round thereafter. Indigestible parts and items are forcibly expelled a few days later and thrown 20' to 50' from the trunk. The fallen leaves of the tarry maple are not only edible but also full of blood and mutants requiring blood to survive can drain these leaves as if they were animals. If attacked with ranged weapons or fire, the Tarry Maple can alter itself into a hard form that provides an armor class of -2 and takes half damage from fire and cold attacks. While in this form, the maple cannot absorb prey.

**Mutations:** *alter physical state (new), bud sport, toxic weapon, special.*

## NEW MUTATIONS

### *Alter Physical State*

The mutant can alter the physical state of matter without altering its temperature. For example, wood could be converted into a liquid form. One use allows one state change (i.e., solid to liquid, liquid to gas), and the mutant cannot turn a solid into a gas or a gas into a solid with a single use of this mutation. Alter physical state can be used three times per day and affects 50 pounds per use. Some GMs want to limit this to one substance (and in this case can use the chart for *alter atomic composition* at <http://roll-d-infinity.blogspot.com/2011/02/closer-examination-of-mutation-alter.html>).

### *Alter Soil Consistency*

The plant produces chemicals that alter the density and strength of soil, from mud to sandstone. It can affect 50 pounds of material per day.

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