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# AURORE SOURCEBOOK

*William H. Keith, Jr.*



*Humanity's Furthest Outpost*

Game Designers' Workshop





# 2300

## AURORE SOURCEBOOK

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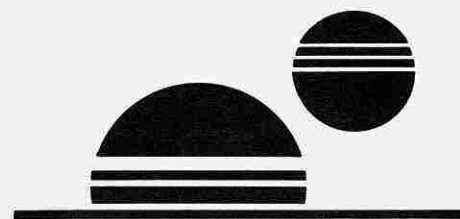
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# Introduction

*Aurore Sourcebook* contains background information for use in **Traveller: 2300** campaigns and adventures. It is not an adventure but gives an overview of the conditions, terrain, biology, and colonies of Eta Bootis IIc, known to inhabitants as Aurore.

Aurore is Earthlike enough that humans can live and work in its temperate zone without resorting to cumbersome survival gear or protective suits. Only slightly smaller than Earth, Aurore is primarily a vast unexplored wilderness; the regions which have been thoroughly explored and developed around each of Aurore's three human colonies are relatively small, much of the surface has only been superficially surveyed and mapped. The fact that Aurore is actually a large satellite of a superjovian gas giant has created extremes of climate and surface conditions which present **Traveller: 2300** player characters with unique and interesting problems. This sourcebook was created to familiarize referees and players with the world—and with the problems characters will face.

Some of this information appears in a different form as background material in *Kafer Dawn*, a **Traveller: 2300** game module set on Aurore. *Aurore Sourcebook* contains more complete information on Aurore, however, allowing the referee to set **Traveller: 2300** campaigns anywhere on the planet. The module *Kafer Dawn* is not needed to complete the information presented here but can complement background material in this sourcebook.

## ETA BOOTIS STAR SYSTEM

**Coordinates:** X – 26.8, Y – 14.3, Z – 10.2

**Eta Bootis A, Muphrid** Type: G0 IV Mass: 1.75 Sol Luminosity: 6.5 Sol Radius: 2.5 Sol

**Eta Bootis B, Rubis** Type: M0 V Mass: .48 Sol Luminosity: .04 Sol Radius: .54 Sol

**Planetary System:** The Eta Bootis System consists of five gas giants all orbiting the system's double primary in its outer zone. Eta Bootis A and B orbit one another with an average separation of 1.425 AUs, with an orbital period of 495 days. The stars are too close together to allow Earthlike worlds to orbit one star or the other, too far apart for an Earthlike world to exist in a habitable zone circling both.

**I Hesperus** Orbital Radius: 4.5 AU Orbital Period: 6.39 years Mass: .8 Jupiter

**II Tithonus** Orbital Radius: 5.85 AU Orbital Period: 9.47 years Mass: 5.3 Jupiter

**III Laodemon** Orbital Radius: 8.19 AU Orbital Period: 15.7 years Mass: 1.6 Jupiter

**IV Theia** Orbital Radius: 12.28 AU Orbital Period: 28.8 years

Mass: .5 Jupiter

**V Astraëus** Orbital Radius: 19.66 AU Orbital Period: 58.37 years Mass: .28 Jupiter

An ESA exploratory mission in 2238 surveyed the system and catalogued the planets. Eta Bootis II was immediately noted as a world requiring further study.

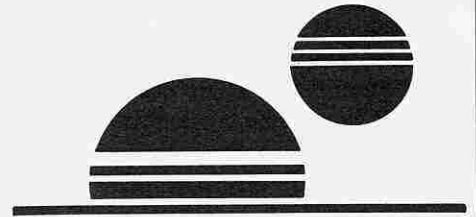
**Eta Bootis II, Tithonus** Mean Orbital Radius: 5.85 AU Orbital Period: 9.47 years Mass:  $1.007 \times 10^{31}$  gms ( $5.3 \times$  Jupiter or .005 Sol.) Equatorial Diameter: 257,000 km ( $1.8 \times$  Jupiter) Rotational Period: 5h 32m 12s Surface Temperature: 1120°K Luminosity: .00003 Sol

This largest of the Eta Bootean planets is a small member of that class of objects known as "brown dwarfs." Over five times more massive than Jupiter (Sol V), Tithonus radiates far more heat than it receives from its suns due to gravitational contraction. It is not quite massive enough to trigger the thermonuclear reaction which would allow it to "turn on" and shine as a true star; thus, it is doomed to exist as a sullen, dull-glowing body lying halfway on the hierarchy of cosmic objects between the largest true planets and the smallest true stars.

The heat Tithonus gives off, however, is sufficient to create a narrow habitable zone at a distance of 3.6 planetary diameters. Tithonus' third major satellite lies within the habitable zone and is massive enough to have retained an atmosphere during its early history. That satellite, Eta Bootis IIc, is the world which men know as Aurore.

**Eta Bootis IIc, Aurore** Mean Orbital Radius: 927,525 km Orbital Period: 2.537 days Rotational Period: 2d 12h 51m 12.96s (2.537 days) Equatorial Diameter: 9450 km Circumference: 29,688.1 km Mass:  $2.27 \times 10^{38}$  gms (.38 Earth) Density: 6.07 gms/cm<sup>3</sup> (1.1 Earth) Surface Gravity: 728.6 cm/sec<sup>2</sup> (2.743 G) Escape Velocity: 8.3 kps Axial Inclination: 1° Temperature (Hot Pole): 90°C+ Temperature (Cold Pole): –75°C to –35°C Magnetic Field:  $5.5 \times 10^{13}$  gauss tilted 8° to the pole Atmosphere: Pressure at Sea Level: N<sub>2</sub>: 78.58% O<sub>2</sub>: 19.34% Ar: 1.23% CO<sub>2</sub>: 305 ppm O<sub>3</sub> and SO<sub>2</sub>: 10 ppm Other Constituents, including Ne, Kr, and NO<sub>2</sub>: 1.5 ppm Tidal Effect: .02 Tithonian Gravitational Field: 129 Sol at 1 AU





# Aurore: Background

**Referee's Note:** This section details the history of the Eta Bootis colonies. While the information in this section will be generally available to the characters, it should be revealed to them only as the successful result of considerable research. Many of these facts, especially those dealing with the Kafer War, have been revealed only very recently and will be available to the characters only through conversations with NPCs, consistent study of newsfax printouts, or personal experience. Characters who have not bothered to spend extra time researching, say, events of the Kafer War, may be exposed to the appropriate information gradually during the course of an adventure as they learn it through contact with NPCs.

For this reason, the referee should not allow the players to read the material in this section but should instead relate it to them bit by bit, at his discretion, and as a result of ongoing role-playing interactions. The referee should, of course, be familiar with the material in this section so that he can maintain consistency in his descriptions of Aurore, the colonists, and the Kafers.

## BACKGROUND: HISTORY

**First Survey:** The first long-term human visitors to the Eta Bootis system were scientists of the French Imperial survey vessel, *Le Chercheur*, on a French-directed, ESA-sponsored mission to chart the systems of the finger of the French Arm beyond Beta Comae.

Earlier explorational visits had noted that Eta Bootis' inner system was barren of planets due to the perturbational effects of the G0 IV star's red dwarf companion and that the system's second planet was a sub-brown dwarf of possible interest for future missions. Data drawn from long-range photographic and spectroscopic surveys had alerted the scientists aboard *Le Chercheur* to the possibility that one of the brown dwarf's satellites might lie within a narrow habitable zone created by the superjovian's own radiated heat. A ship's boat commanded by Capitaine de Corvette Georges Loubet made the perilous approach through the superjovian's radiation belts by executing a transpolar orbital insertion, landing on Eta Bootis IIc near the present site of Lumiere d'Aube on August 24, 2238.

Loubet's expedition remained on the planet for 18 days, visiting four different sites and transmitting the survey reports to *Le Chercheur* by laser. While attempting to land at a fifth site, the landing boat was destroyed by the arrival of an unexpectedly high tidal surge, and Loubet and his entire command were lost.

**First Colony:** In 2240, on the return of *Le Chercheur* to Earth,

data from the survey were disseminated among ESA member states. The Ukraine, though not a member nation, had close political and scientific treaty ties with the European Space Agency and was intensely interested in establishing an out-world colony. In 2241, in exchange for promised development royalties, the Ukraine received an ESA charter to exploit the commercial potential of Eta Bootis IIc. Three years later a Ukrainian colonial expedition headed by Vasily Martos and Polkovnik Yuri Leonovich Kamarov arrived in the Eta Bootis system aboard a leased colony transport converted from the aging French bulk freighter *Sans Facon*.

The site chosen for the new colony was a mountainous island continent astride the equator in the eastern hemisphere which offered some shelter from the world's fierce storms. World, continent, and colony all were named "Novoa Kiyev."

**Second Colony:** Promises of rapid commercial exploitation of Novoa Kiyev's mineral resources proved overoptimistic. The Terran Ukrainian government was unable to expand funding of the colony to meet unanticipated losses of equipment and development costs. In 2245 the French decided to establish a colony of their own in the planet's western hemisphere. The settlement of Port Loubet was established late in 2246.

Though the French colony, too, encountered unexpected difficulties in the economic development of its interests on the planet, French off-world industrial interests and a public spirit of national pride at home combined to funnel money through the Colonial Authority to secure and expand the French base. The settlement of Port Loubet grew to become Aurore, a name which, inevitably, was extended to embrace the entire planet. Since French media and trading corporations had far more visibility on Earth than did the Ukrainian government, the name "Novoa Kiyev" soon was understood to refer to the Ukrainian colony alone.

The name "Aurore" provided the mythological basis for naming the other planets of the system. In particular, Aurore's gas giant primary became "Tithonus." In myth, Aurora, the Greek Eos, goddess of the dawn, pleaded with the gods to grant her mortal husband eternal life, forgetting to include in her request a plea for eternal youth as well. The planet, Tithonus, seemed aptly named, sullenly glowing for billions of years, doomed never to achieve the celestial splendor and vigor of a true star. The twin suns of Eta Bootis became, simply, "Notre Soleil" (Our Sun) and "Rubis" (Ruby).

**Third Colony:** In 2257, a third colony was established south of the tidal fissure called "La Gouffre." Its backers were a

multinational cartel of North American and European corporations interested by survey reports which suggested that large deposits of rhenium and other metals might be present in the area in commercial quantities. The American, Texan, and German colonists had already heard of the difficulties encountered by the French and the Ukrainians in establishing profitable mining operations, however, and with wry humor elected to name their colony "Tanstaaf!"—a very old, popular acronym for "There Ain't No Such Thing As A Free Lunch."

When the cartel broke up the following year, due to the bankruptcy of two of its members, and corporate assets were frozen by the American courts, Tanstaaf! declared its independence and applied to the colonial authorities both of Aurore and of Hochbaden in the neighboring system for favored trade status. Presented with a *fait accompli*, and the possibility of broken relations with Bavaria, the United States of America became the first Terran government to formally recognize the independent colony of Tanstaaf! on February 12, 2258.

**Further Growth:** In 2280 French expansion of mining outposts and farming settlements south of Aurore/Port Loubet led to the incorporation of a satellite colony called "Lumiere d'Aube" (Light of Dawn). Though still administered through the Auroran Colonial Authority and dependent upon the port facilities at Port Loubet, Lumiere d'Aube was locally considered to be an entity apart from Aurore proper, a community of farming settlements or collectives clustered around the site of a former mining outpost.

Nearly half of the initial investment capital for Novoa Kiyev, Aurore, and Tanstaaf! had been plowed into the construction of a trio of sophisticated power satellites in Eos-synchronous orbits and the microwave rectenna farms and power transmission grids on the surface. Though this investment slowed early economic growth, by 2285 nearly 70 percent of Aurore's industry was powered off the satellite grid, and it was predicted that future growth, with this inexhaustible source of cheap power already in place, would boom.

Primarily because of the power grid, all three Auroran colonies were showing signs of modest economic success by the 2290's. Already rhenium mines opened by Tanstaaf! speculators were judged to be marginally profitable, and all promised higher returns as detailed surveys indicated signs of platinum, iridium, uranium, and vanadium in commercially exploitable quantities and placement among the volcanic Hotback Mountains at the base of the High Desert Plateau. Despite the hardships of life on the Auroran frontier, an influx of immigrants seeking a path to quick riches swelled the world's population to almost three million by 2297.

More immediately vital for the colonists than the heavy metals mines was Auroran agriculture. Native Auroran and Terran life are radically different biochemically; humans cannot survive eating native Auroran food, and Terran crops do not grow in Auroran soil. A limited form of terraforming was employed to make food crops possible. Shiploads of soil from the Ukraine, South France, and the Great Plains were shipped at prodigious expense to Aurore, where it was divided into tiny parcels to be carefully worked into larger quantities of sterilized native soil. An entire ecological chain of certain carefully selected Terran organisms, from nitrogen-fixing bacteria to earthworms, were imported, bred, and introduced to the carefully maintained terrestrial plots.

The process represented a large fraction of the initial cost and effort of establishing a human presence on Aurore, but the colonial farms were self-sufficient by 2264, and viable dirt and Terran organisms were no longer needed. The Tanstaaf! settlement actually reported a food surplus in 2291, though ground-to-orbit transport costs prohibit the export of agricultural products.

**The Kafer War:** Contact with the alien race known as the Kafers was first made in 2295 by French scientists aboard a deep space research outpost at Arcturus, though attempts at establishing communication with them evidently failed. All contact with the outpost was lost in 2297, and merchant and military vessels entering the Arcturus system were attacked. Imperial French and Ukrainian naval squadrons were dispatched to the Eta Bootis system as a precaution.

The precaution was tragically well-founded. On April 4, 2298, a large alien invasion squadron entered Eta Bootean space from the general direction of Arcturus and attacked the human fleet under the joint command of Contre-Admiral Paul Armand DuBoise and Kontr-Admiral Sergei Sergeivich Borodin. In three days of savage fighting, the human fleet was broken by superior enemy numbers. Eight Terran ships were destroyed, including the Imperial French flagship *Ste. Jeanne d'Arc*.

The survivors were reorganized under Borodin's command at Hochbaden, some four light-years farther up-arm. Reinforcements, including Imperial French, Ukrainian, and German squadrons, arrived at Hochbaden to bolster the human fleet, and plans were drawn for a return to Eta Bootis.

Meanwhile, enemy ships invested every off-world outpost and station remaining in the Eta Bootis system. Heedless of the dangers presented by the Tithonian Van Allen belts, alien vessels approached Aurore and destroyed the planet's three eos-stationary power satellites and all other orbital facilities. Close orbit was infested with alien warcraft, and surface installations were attacked from space on April 8. The landings began two days later.

Fighting was severe at first and bitter, brutal, and desperate at the last. All three human colonies clung to their central facilities, mines, and farmland, but most outlying settlements were overrun and destroyed. The defenders' militia was bolstered by a unit of German Marines stranded by the departure of their squadron.

For almost three months, the Combined Fleet at Hochbaden did nothing but draw fire from Earth's news media for its inaction. At last, however, a powerful German naval squadron arrived from Earth. Franco-German relations were still difficult in the aftermath of the War of German Reunification which had ended five years before, but it was recognized that this alien threat—the "Arcturian Menace" as the media had it—was a far greater danger than mere international rivalries. The squadron's commander, Kommodore Wilhelm Lutke, was directed to rendezvous with the Combined Fleet at Hochbaden and cooperate with Imperial French forces "in the face of the present crisis."

In fact, he took de facto command, chivying French and Ukrainian officers and officials until the Combined Fleet was under way towards Eta Bootean space. The Kafer armada, already bloodied by the first Battle of Eta Bootis and now scattered throughout the system, seemed unable to organize a coherent defense. Fears that alien reinforcements had arrived during the intervening three months proved groundless, and the isolated and individual Kafer squadrons were systematically hunted down and destroyed. Human ships returned to close orbit, ground forces were landing to relieve the colonial defenders by July 3, and the remnants of the Kafer fleet had abandoned the system within five days after that.

That was not the end of the fighting, however. In many ways, it was only the beginning.

The Kafers, unable to overrun the principal human strongholds, had established numerous bases in the Auroran wilderness. From these bases they continued to strike at human settlements, outposts, and convoys with (if possible) increased viciousness and savagery.

As human relief forces pressed the Kafers back, it was discovered

that the populations of areas overrun by the invaders had been brutalized to a degree unthinkable even to a species with so bloody a past as humanity. Whole communities had been annihilated; homes, hospitals, entire villages had been razed; whole families had been slaughtered. It was estimated that over 300,000 people, most of them civilians, had died in three months. On a world with a relatively small population to begin with, nearly everyone had lost loved ones and friends.

Less personal, perhaps, but even more threatening to the survival of the colonies than human casualties has been the disruption of Auroran industry and agriculture. The Kafers destroyed everything they could in the areas which they controlled before they were driven out. Everything from factories and mine workings to roads and private vehicles was blown up, burned, or damaged. The three orbital power satellites, together with their ground-based rectenna arrays and transmission grids, had been destroyed. This was a particularly severe blow to all three colonies, who had invested heavily in the satellite power system rather than in less expensive but less promising technologies and had been counting on it for present industrial power and for future development. Finally, wildly virulent fungal agents were deliberately introduced to human croplands, apparently in an effort to wipe out the human population by starvation. The outcome of this particular attack is still in the balance; fungal blights in crops and particularly nasty skin and lung diseases in humans and animals have been spreading slowly, and all efforts to combat them have so far been unsuccessful.

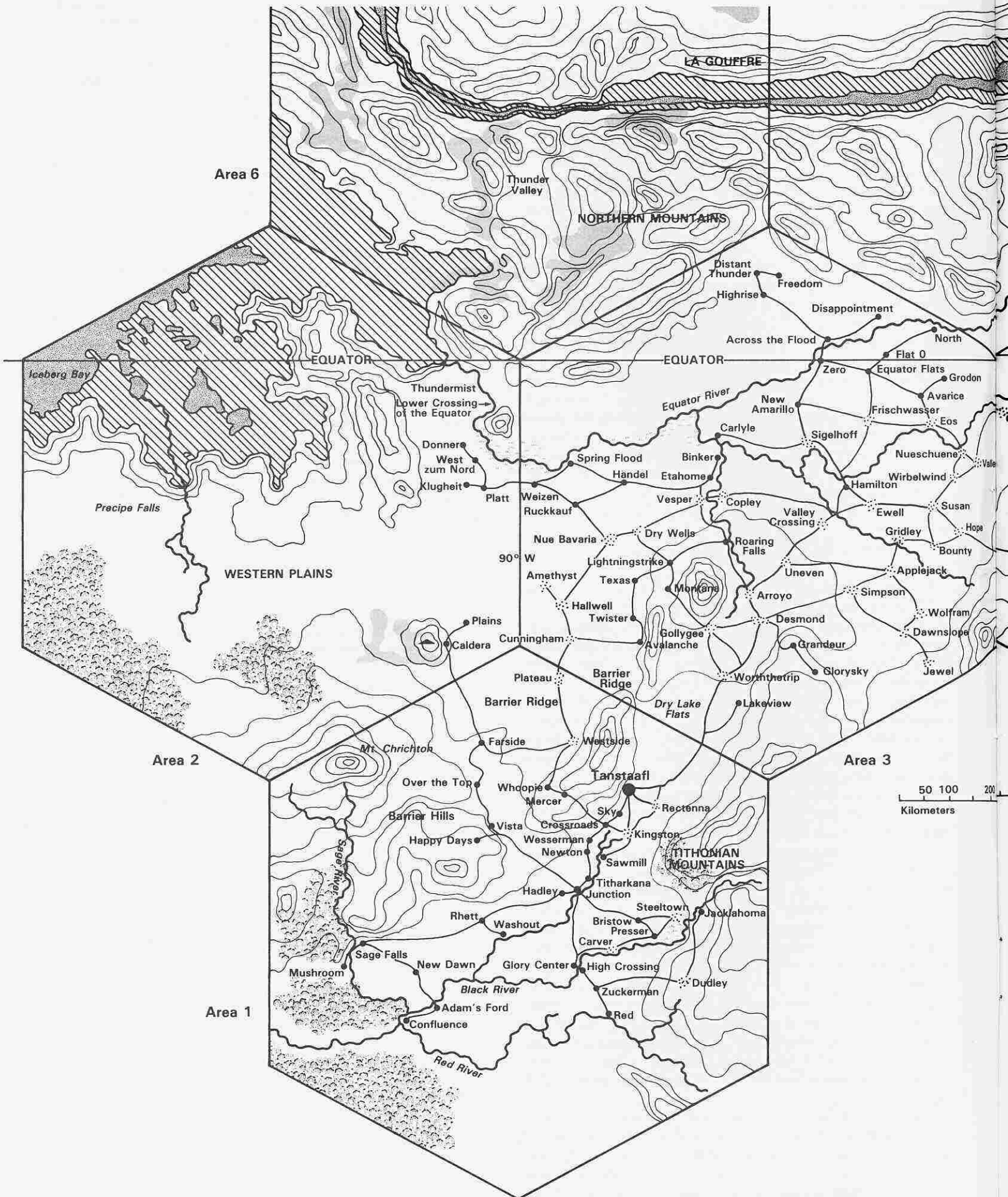
The effects of the war on the Auroran economy have been catastrophic.

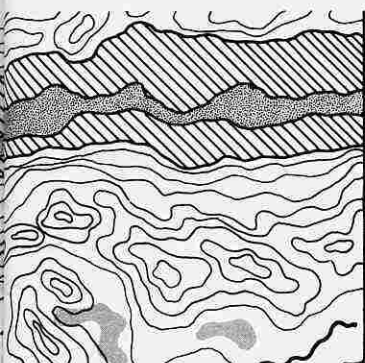
As a result of this intensely bitter assault, Auroran colonists set out to prove that the Kafers were not alone in the single-minded bloodthirstiness with which they waged war. Early orders to capture Kafers for study and interrogation were ignored, and officers finally stopped even trying to enforce them. Kafers never surrendered—never—and the human troops, the colonial militias especially, rarely attempted to capture them. A few Kafers incapacitated in combat and taken by human units were later found to have been “shot while trying to escape.” Dried Kafer heads became popular trophies which were mounted on vehicles or fence posts, and many communities paid bounties of Lv20 or more for Kafer shells, the horny carapaces covering their backs.

A few—a very few—humans who were captured by the Kafers early in the invasion, apparently for study and for the purpose of learning human languages for interrogations, managed to escape or were rescued. These people, those who were able to discuss their experiences at all, have provided humanity with its only glimpse of Kafer behavior, culture, and society. Kafer society is reportedly tightly regimented and militaristic. Individual Kafers appear stupid, short-tempered, combative, and cruel, though they maintain a technology which in many ways is superior to that of humans. For this reason there is speculation that Kafers are part of a kind of telepathic hive mentality. Humans who have conversed with Kafers and survived to tell about it report that they refer to us with a term which translates as “meat being.” Since the earliest humans to contact the Kafers were Bavarians, a few Kafers now speak German (none have yet been discovered to speak English or French).

It seems there can be no quarter with this race which has attacked mankind without provocation and is waging war against us with an unheard of and single-minded bitterness. The Auroran colonists have dedicated themselves to the complete extermination of every Kafer on their world, answering bitterness with bitterness and blood with blood.

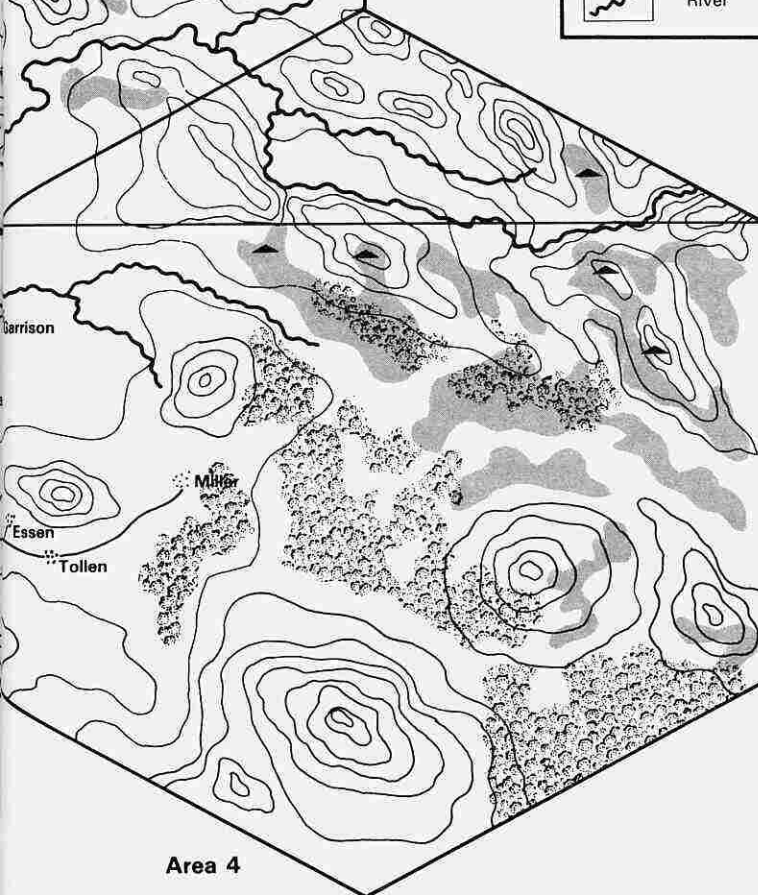






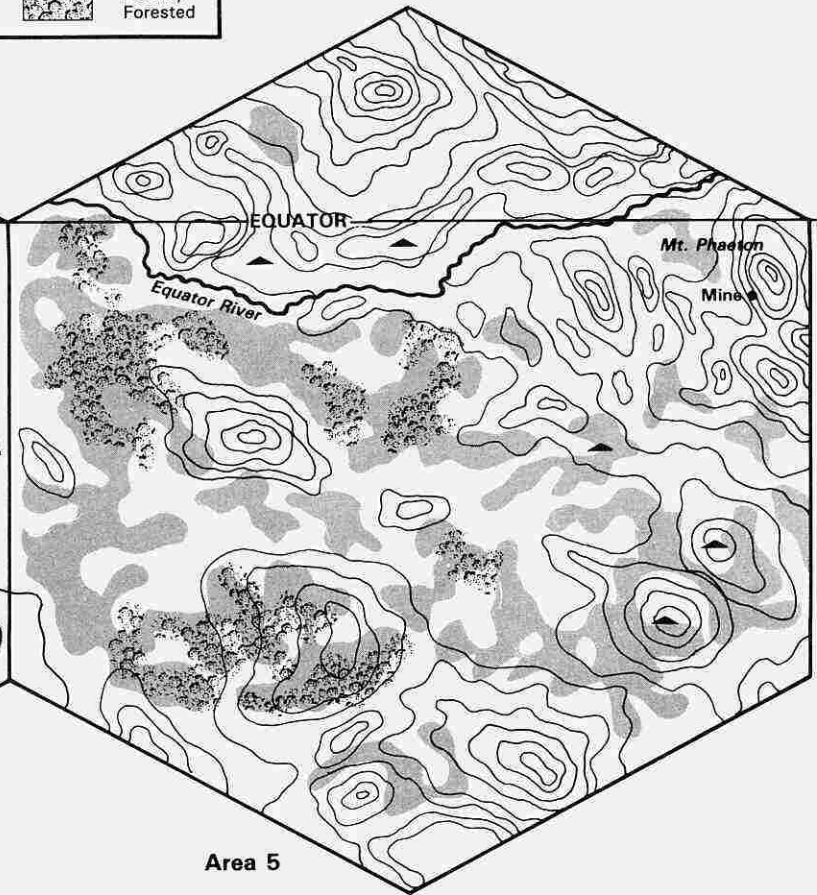
Area 7

TERRAIN KEY			
Symbol	Terrain	Symbol	Terrain
	Water		Road
	Volcano		Tidal Region
	Rubble		Tidal Swamp
	Town		Rough Terrain
	River		Heavily Forested

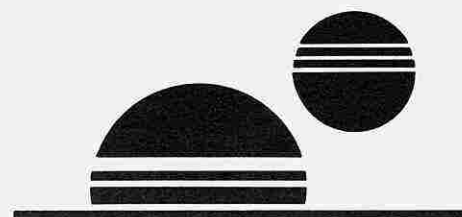


Area 4

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Area 5



# Aurore: The World

This section discusses the various features of Auroran planetography.

**Maps and Navigation:** The first surveys of Aurore established certain conventions in mapping and local navigation. The Base Meridian, or  $0^\circ$  longitude, runs from the north to the south pole, crossing the equator at the point where Tithonus appears suspended directly overhead—the location of the so-called “Hot Pole.” The Cold Pole, lying on the opposite side of the planet, marks the line of  $180^\circ$  longitude. Latitude is determined as on Earth, with the equator at  $0^\circ$  and the poles marking  $90^\circ$  north or south respectively. Positions on Aurore are measured in degrees of east or west longitude, and north or south latitude. Thus, Novoa Kiyev lies at  $115^\circ$  east longitude,  $14^\circ$  south latitude; while Tanstaaff lies at  $88^\circ$  west,  $12^\circ$  south.

On Aurore, a world with a circumference of 29,688 km, one degree equals 82.46 km.

## TERRAIN TYPES

Aurore's planetographical features have been shaped almost entirely by the fact that it is the satellite of a gas giant, tide-locked with a single side always facing its primary. Tithonus radiates considerable heat, and the hemisphere which faces Tithonus has been baked into a desert where temperatures hover at just below the boiling point of water. The hemisphere facing away from the gas giant receives heat only from the distant Eta Bootean suns, and by atmospheric convection from the Sub-Tithonian Desert, and so is forever gripped by temperatures ranging between the freezing point of water and the freezing point of carbon dioxide.

The planet's surface features have been further modified by the gravitational pull of Tithonus, which raises huge tides across low-lying coastal areas called tidal flats, and which continues to generate mountain building and seismic activity across much of the world.

## PLANETARY ZONES

Climate and tides, then, have served to create specific, widely different terrain areas. These are discussed individually below.

### HIGH DESERT

The High Desert is a rugged, circular plateau surrounding the Hot Pole, the point at which Tithonus appears to hang directly overhead. The land is barren, ranges from flat and sandy to rugged and mountainous and is almost completely unexplored. The plateau rim averages well over 12,000 meters altitude above sea level—considerably higher than Earth's Mt. Everest—and at-

mospheric pressure at this altitude is too low to permit humans to breathe without special apparatus. Mountain-building and vulcanism continue almost constantly around the plateau perimeter, the result of Tithonian tidal effects on the planet's crust.

Temperatures range from around  $20^\circ\text{C}$  near the plateau rim to well over  $90^\circ\text{C}$  in the center. Though the low atmospheric pressure in this region effectively raises the boiling point of water to well over  $100^\circ\text{C}$ , eons of steady, dry heat have baked all water from the soil, leaving the central portions of the plateau utterly desiccated, barren, and apparently lifeless.

The French organization, Le Conseil Scientifique d'Aurore, has plans for specially equipped expeditions into the plateau to study conditions there and to search for traces of a native high desert ecology, though the recent invasion by the alien Kafers has postponed all such purely scientific research.

The High Desert is also referred to as the “Hotside,” “Near-side,” or the “Sub-Tithonian Plateau.”

## TEMPERATE ZONE

The temperate zone, circling Aurore across the north and south poles, roughly along the longitudinal lines of  $90^\circ$  east and west, is defined as that region where humans can live with a minimum of special equipment or protective clothing. Although the area is only vaguely defined, it is generally considered to extend from the base of the High Desert (roughly  $50^\circ$  east and west) to the Ice Wall of La Glaciere (roughly  $130^\circ$  east and west).

**Hotback:** The near-Tithonian reaches of the temperate zone are uncomfortably hot, are not permanently inhabited, and are collectively referred to as the Auroran Hotback (Tanstaaff) or La Desolation Chaud (French). Temperatures here range as high as  $40^\circ\text{C}$  at the base of the High Desert cliffs, and the terrain consists of broken, jumbled wilderness areas of volcanic rock and desert badlands, vast lava plains, and spectacular cliff lines where seismic upthrusts have created sheer cliffs hundreds of meters high along still-active fault lines.

La Mer Ceindant (the Encircling Sea) occupies most of the temperate zone and is the product of the melting ice cap. The combined effects of melting ice and the planetary tides result in an unusually low salinity for a planetary ocean. The tidal effects of Tithonus on the sea and tsunamis created by kilometer-sized calving icebergs are responsible for some of Aurore's most savage assaults on human colonization efforts.

Known to English-speaking colonists in Tanstaaff and elsewhere simply as “The Sea,” La Mer Ceindant is also responsible for the



relatively broad zone of moderate temperatures between Aurore's regions of desert and ice. Currents in that sea serve to cool the coastal regions of the Tithonian-side coast and keep the temperatures of the principal French and Tanstaafl settlements pleasantly mild. Those same currents warm the coastal areas of La Glaciere to temperatures well above freezing. Frequent storms and the constant calving of massive icebergs make the near-ice regions of the sea dangerous, but the temperatures, at least, do not make the climate forbidding.

The sea is relatively shallow and thickly scattered with islands. Many of these islands vanish underwater during high tide, and even large land masses such as Novoa Kiyev lose large expanses of coastal land each day with the up-and-down swing of Tithonus on the horizon. Unique ecologies are known to flourish in some of these tidal areas where plant and animal life have adapted to the local tidal rhythms, but few detailed studies of these forms have been made.

Various inlets, gulfs, and small seas are important in their own rights, though each is connected to La Mer Ceindant. These include Iceberg Bay on the equator near Tanstaafl (so named because currents tend to ground icebergs from across the sea there), the Great South Sea (an arm of the sea south of Tanstaafl), and the Zolatah More, or Gold Sea (separating Novoa Kiyev from Zahpad Zemlya to the west).

### TIDAL FLATS

The tidal flats (French: Les Champs de Maree) are low-lying coastal areas which are inundated by Aurore's high tides once each Auroran day. The arrival of high tide can be a gradual and relatively peaceful event on the broad, open tidal plains. Narrow valleys and canyons called tidal bores can focus an incoming tide, however, creating deadly, thundering walls of water hundreds of meters deep moving inland at well over 100 kph. The term tidal flat refers both to the open plains and to the floors of the tidal bores. The phenomenon of Aurore's tides is discussed elsewhere in this sourcebook.

**Inhabited Areas:** The inhabited regions on Aurore include the Novoa Kiyev island/continent at 100° east, the mainland to the west across the White Sea, and the broad, high continental plateaus of Aurore, Lumiere, and Tanstaafl lying between 60° and 90° west. These areas are examined in greater detail in the section on page 9 entitled *The Colonies*.

### LA GLACIERE

La Glaciere is Aurore's permanent icecap, which covers all of the "Far" or "Coldside" of Aurore, between approximately 130° east and 130° west, with the Cold Pole lying squarely in the middle. The rim of the ice pack is the Ice Wall, a cliff as high as 1000 m which is continually calving icebergs into La Mer Ceindant under the influence of storms and tidal effects.

Although Aurore gets most of its heat from Tithonus, the twin suns of Eta Bootis are quite bright in the sky, with the yellow G0 sun having half the angular diameter of Earth's sun as seen from Earth. The popular notion of an Auroran "darkside" is false. To human eyes, the landscape of ice and snow at local noon appears as brightly lit as does late afternoon on a cloudy day on Earth.

Temperatures across La Glaciere range from above freezing at the borders of the sea to -75°C or below near the Cold Pole at night. Severe blizzards are frequent across the entire icecap as warm, moist air from over the sea deposits water as snow. The continuing buildup of ice serves to keep the ice moving from the pole towards the sea. The sea is continually fed by melting icebergs; vast amounts of water evaporate from the ocean's surface and from

tidal seas at the Tithonian side of La Mer Ceindant; and winds from the High Desert carry moisture-laden clouds back over La Glaciere where blizzards deposit more snow and ice—a never-ending cycle of evaporation and precipitation.

### THE WORLD MAP

The world map uses the standard **Traveller: 2300** geodesic mapping system. Each geodesic map triangle measures a little less than 6000 km across one side. For detailed mapping, one geodesic triangle is divided into 28 hexagonal areas (six on a side), each measuring 1000 km across.

The world map (Map 1) shows the entire surface of Aurore. More detailed maps (Maps 2-5) show the individual Auroran colonies and the terrain around them.

### THE COLONIES

There are three colonies on Eta Bootis IIc. The Ukrainian colony of Novoa Kiyev was established on an island continent in the eastern hemisphere. The French colony of Aurore and the independent state of Tanstaafl exist in the west.

The three colonies have certain factors in common.

Each was established by a nation (or, in the case of Tanstaafl, by an industrial cartel) to make profits for that owner by mining certain heavy metals believed to be common and easily accessible in Aurore's dense crust. The difficulties presented by Aurore's hostile environment have banished ideas of fast profits from Auroran mines, however.

In order to be as self-sufficient as possible, each colony is more agricultural than industrial, with extensive areas devoted to raising food. Because Aurore's native biology is incompatible with Earth's (see *Auroran Biology*), local plants and animals are inedible and, in many cases, poisonous to humans. Terran-style agriculture must be supported by the expensive and time-consuming process of bringing small amounts of terrestrial soil (and the attendant world of microscopic animals and plants without which Terran plants cannot exist) from Earth or other colonized worlds to Aurore. This "pay dirt" is mixed with sterilized native soil and allowed to "set" or "cook," as the terrestrial micro-organisms spread throughout the soil mix. This mix is then sold to Auroran farmers, who carefully fold it into sterilized soil on their farms. Because of shipping costs, pay dirt is extremely costly, and only government-sponsored subsidies allow independent farmers to get the pay dirt they need for their own land.

Crops grown in pay dirt-enriched native soil include corn, wheat, various genetically-tailored and hybrid grains, and apples, which are used in various native apple-based wines and liquors.

Most farms also raise food through hydroponics, and some communities have no other industry but hydroponic facilities, related, and support services. Hydroponics facilities are similar to very large greenhouses, with plants grown in chemical baths or with their roots exposed to water and chemical mists. Vegetables and some fruit plants are grown in this way. Fish are also raised in the lower levels of the 'ponic trays, and the "crop" includes harvests of goldfish and carp gene-tailored to produce large amounts of meat.





Because it would be wasteful of expensive pay dirt to grow animal feed on Aurore, the only other meat animals raised so far are guinea pigs and rabbits. These animals are gene-tailored as food animals and weigh as much as 20 kilos each.

All farming operations on Aurore are highly automated, and homesteads consisting of tens of thousands of hectares farmed by a single family with a few hands are not uncommon.

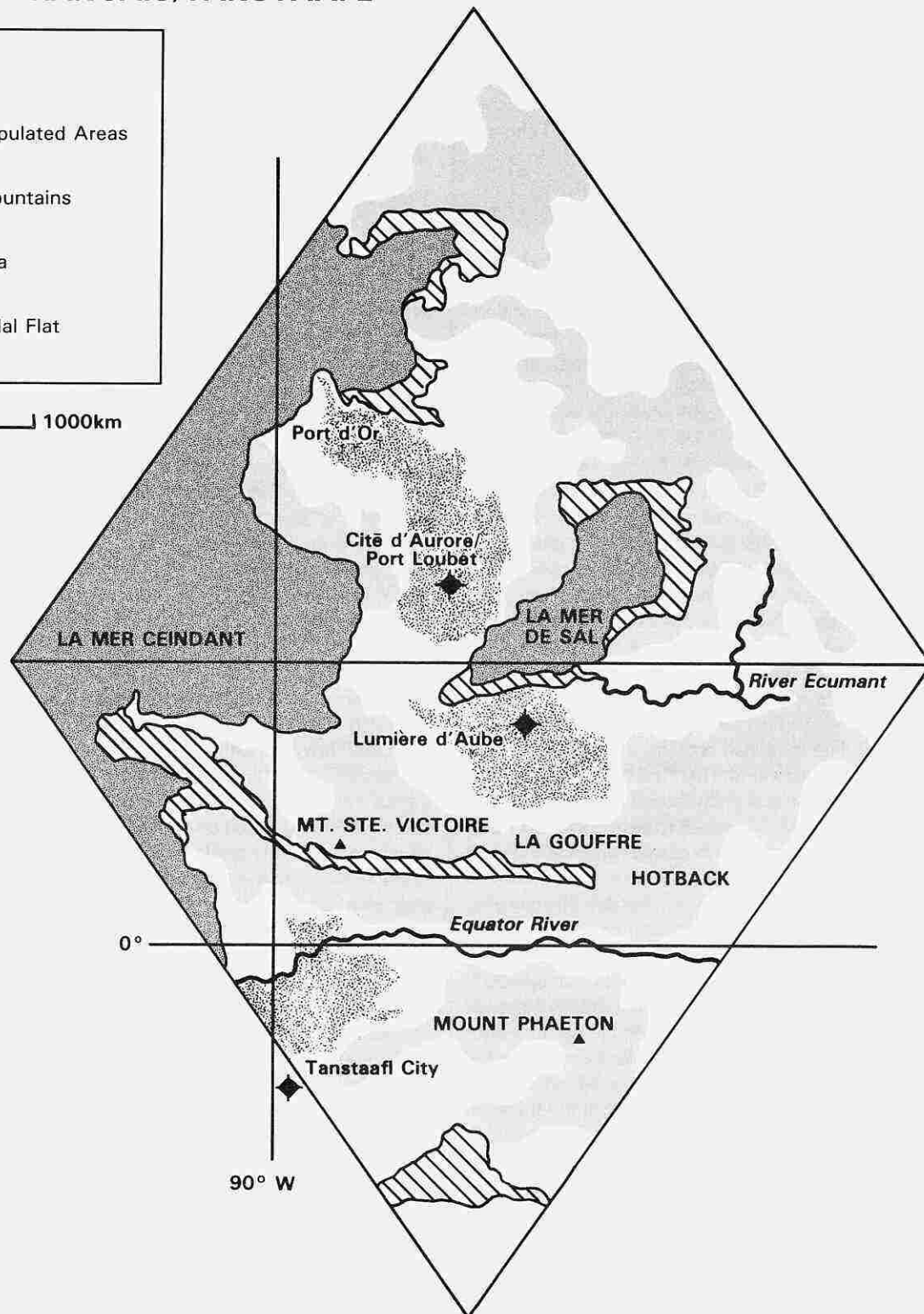
**The War:** The war has badly damaged the Auroran economy, perhaps irreparably. Three solar power satellites, one belonging

# AUORE FRANCAIS/TANSTAAFL

## MAP KEY

-  Populated Areas
-  Mountains
-  Sea
-  Tidal Flat

 1000km



to each of the colonies, were destroyed by the Kafer armada early in the war, and much of the colonies' industry was left without power. Kafer orbital bombardment prior to the landings targeted industrial concentrations—factories, large mines, and transportation centers—and perhaps 70 percent of Aurore's industrial capability has been completely destroyed or severely damaged.

In addition, a fungal blight deliberately introduced by the Kafers, called the Kafer Rot, has destroyed Terran-stock crops in many areas overrun by the Kafers and has been responsible for the spread of various fungal diseases as well. Until a way can be found to control the Kafer Rot, the future of Terran agriculture on Aurore is in grave jeopardy.

## NOVOA KIYEV

Novoa Kiyev was colonized in 2244 by Ukrainian nationals under a special treaty with the European Space Agency. The Ukrainian colony was the first human presence on Aurore, which was first called "Novoa Kiyev," or "New Kiev." Most of the settlements, and the capital city of New Kiev itself, are located on an east hemisphere island continent also called "New Kiev."

**Planetographic Features:** The island continent of New Kiev lies between 80° and 120° east in La Mer Ceindant. The Ukrainians call the sea "Khaltso More" (Ring Sea). East of Novoa Kiyev lies Belaye Prilov (White Straits), and to the west is Zolahtah More (Gold Sea). The land mass itself is some 6000 km long, running generally from 15° north latitude southeast across the equator to 50° south. Narrow straits separate it from La Glaciere (called "Novosibersk" by the colonists) to the east and from the Sub-Tithonian highlands to the west.

Novoa Kiyev exhibits a wide range of terrain types within a relatively small area. Large portions of the northern coast are tidal flats, broad, low, and muddy, which are submerged once each local day by the rising tide. Rugged mountains can be found along the east coast and in the extreme south. Toward the west the equatorial highlands include swamp, jungle, and savannah. Temperatures there, for the most part, range between 15°C and 30°C. To the east, savannah gives way to hardwood forests as the land rises and the mean temperature drops. The extreme eastern portions are only a few tens of kilometers from the ice packs and reach altitudes of up to several thousand meters. Mean temperatures there rarely exceed 20° centigrade and in places remain below freezing.

Storms are frequent in the narrow White Straits passage, but the capital is spared the worst of these by the mountains known as the "Vostok Khrebet."

The Senee Dnepr (Blue Dneiper) is the largest river in Novoa Kiev, a broad, shallow, muddy, and winding river which makes its way west from the Vostok Khrebet and through the trackless jungle marsh known as B'yehdeh Bolatah and empties into Senee Leest Guba.

**The Colony:** Before the Kafer invasion, the city of Novoa Kiyev had a population of over one million, with most of the rest of the population living in towns and villages within a few hundred kilometers of the capital. A few outlying settlements existed along the headland west of the city, and there were scattered outposts and settlements on the mainland across the Zolahtah More in the rugged, arid region known as "Zapad Zemlya" (West Land).

The Kafer orbital bombardment caused serious damage to Kiyevan industry and ground facilities as it did elsewhere on the planet. The first landings took place in the outskirts of the capital itself, and the Ukrainian militia, outnumbered and already rattled by the attack from close orbit, dissolved in the first Kafer ground attacks. The city of Novoa Kiyev was 80 percent destroyed, and

the remainder was overrun. The spaceport facilities at Zvyezdah Port were likewise overrun and are still under Kafer control.

The surviving militia, grounded naval and marine personnel cut off by the loss of the spaceport, and civilian refugees from the city fled west, finding shelter in B'yehdeh Bolatah, the aptly named Misfortune Swamp. The guerrilla leader, Colonel Yuri Mikhailovich Shklovskii, has gathered the New Guard resistance in these swamps, and leads it in sneak raids against Kafer positions, convoys, depots, and troop concentrations. Underground bunkers, storehouses, and entire villages have been hidden beneath the surface of scattered islands of solid ground within the swamps and jungles of the Bolatah, and from here the Ukrainian colonists are carrying on their struggle against the invader.

Novoa Kiyev has been almost entirely cut off from the western colonies by the destruction and capture of the colony's principal city and port. At the referee's discretion, one Ukrainian, at least, a fisherman named Dimitri Khanov, may reach La Cite d'Aurore at the right time to launch the player characters on a new Auroran campaign in the Ukrainian colony.

Casualties in the colony are unknown but certainly exceed one million out of an original population of over four million. Many inhabited settlements remain outside the swamp and mountain holdouts of the resistance, but these have been steadily attacked and reduced by roving Kafer hordes. Many have not been attacked but stand empty, abandoned by inhabitants fearful of approaching alien war parties.

Refugee camps, with populations totaling perhaps 800,000, have been established along the coastland of Zahpad Zemlya on the western shores of the Zolahtah More. Conditions in these camps are desperate, with food supplies low, medicines nonexistent, and the death toll from starvation and disease increasing every day.

**Future Plans:** The Ukrainian militia's situation is desperate, though their energetic and charismatic commander, Colonel Yuri Shklovskii, has saved them from utter destruction and is even waging a campaign aimed at destroying the Kafers in Novoa Kiyev within the next year or two. In fact, the Ukrainians' outlook is grim unless they can get help, and quickly, from outside.

With their spaceport badly damaged and captured, they have no direct communication with off-world forces. A Novoa Kiyevan fisherman, Dimitri Kharov, has recently managed to escape to the French colony with a plea for help. His hope is to recruit additional men to serve with Shklovskii's elite rangers, find a source of military supplies with which to reequip the Ukrainian's New Guard, and enlist concrete French or Tanstaaflian help in continuing the war against the Kafers in Aurore's eastern hemisphere.

Unfortunately, the French and Tanstaaflians are thinly stretched as it is, and substantial help will probably not be forthcoming. Kiyevan leaders have discussed the possibility of creating a mercenary unit similar to the Tanstaafl Free Legion, but they have little to offer off-world mercenaries.

Another option which the Ukrainian colonial government has considered is the possibility of going off-world—to Hochbaden, for instance—and enlisting the direct help of the Germans or other colonial powers as military allies, perhaps in exchange for trade concessions or leases to Ukrainian mines. There are both Terran Germans and Hochbaden officials in Tanstaafl and in La Cite d'Aurore. Kharov will probably attempt to talk to them while he is in the western hemisphere. And this hope, too, is probably destined for failure. Germany, France, and other Terran nations, and various colonies including Hochbaden and Beta Comae have contributed ships, men, and supplies to the campaign at Eta Bootis, but these are either under the command of the Combined Fleet or part of the French Imperial Command operating in Aurore



Francais. No one, it seems, has men or supplies to spare for the Ukrainians.

Depending on the direction the **Traveller: 2300** campaign takes, the players' group may be the only outside help the Ukrainians get.

The characters of Colonel Shklovskii and Dimitri Kharov are described in more detail in the section of this sourcebook entitled *Personalities*.

## AUORE

The French colony on Aurore is known as "La Colonie d'Aurore," "Aurore Francais," or simply "Aurore." The total French population numbers around four million.

**Planetographic Features:** There are two principal areas of settlement: the original landing site and colony northwest of La Mer de Sel, known as "La Cite d'Aurore," and a second city south of La Mer de Sel, called "Lumiere d'Aube."

La Mer de Sel (the Salt Sea) runs from southwest to northeast across the 30th parallel, almost 1500 km long, larger than the Caspian Sea on Earth. It is almost certain that La Mer de Sel was formerly an arm of the ocean, closed off from La Mer Ceindant within recent geological history by the seismic event which raised Les Montagnes Occidental. Large tidal flats exist at either end of the sea. These are alternately exposed and covered by the sea's tidal surges, though these are neither as deep nor as violent as the tides experienced along the open ocean. Hovercraft and small boats routinely cross the southern end of the Salt Sea on a direct route between Aurore and Lumiere d'Aube with no danger from tidal effects.

Les Montagnes Occidental (the Western Mountains) are raw and young and many are still actively volcanic. French mining settlements among the foothills have uncovered deposits of copper, uranium, cobalt, and iron. There are plans to exploit all of these resources when the economic situation—meaning the wars—permits.

To the south lies La Gouffre, The Gulf, a major tidal bore channeled along a seismic fracture running west to east for over 3000 km. The bore contains a shallow river running through a mud flat on the floor of a sheer-sided canyon at low tide. The canyon walls are over half a kilometer high in places, and, save for places where fractures in the rock have created natural ramps leading to the canyon floor, the walls are polished smooth. At high tide, a wall of water over 400 m deep, travelling at 180 kph, races up the canyon, filling the valley and creating a roar which is heard as a daily, drawn-out peal of thunder hundreds of kilometers away. The use of hearing protectors in the immediate vicinity of La Gouffre during flood tide is recommended. Some visitors have gone deaf from the noise.

La Gouffre is the unofficial boundary between lands exploited by the French to the north and the Tanstaaflian Republic to the south.

Two distinct areas have been exploited by the French, one around the capital city and a second "satellite colony" across the Salt Sea, around the city of Lumiere d'Aube.

**La Cite d'Aurore:** The colonial capital of Aurore Francais is the city of Aurore, known either as "La Cite d'Aurore" or simply as "Aurore." Outsiders seem determined to identify the name of the capital city as distinct from the name of the colony and of the world, and the French inhabitants seem equally determined to assert that the distinction is of no importance.

The city of Aurore is laid out in a broad wheel shape on a high, dry plain midway between La Mer de Sel and Les Montagnes Occidental. It was carefully chosen by its early founders to be safe from tides and volcanos. The city has been heavily damaged several

times by severe weather and by seismic quakes, but no point on Aurore's surface is completely safe from these dangers. Like other cities on Aurore, the buildings tend to be low, one- or two-story structures, with domes and partially buried cylinders predominating among the various types of architecture. To the west lies Port Loubet, the spaceport named in honor of the French survey team leader who died during the first manned exploration of the planet.

The city has a population base of approximately 800,000. The surrounding agricultural and industrial regions have a total population of perhaps two million. Agricultural products include hydroponic fruits, vegetables, seaweed and fish; mutated guinea pigs; native Auroran hardwoods; wheat, corn, and rye hybrids; apples and apple wines.

**Lumiere d'Aube:** "Light of Dawn" is a satellite colony of Aurore, a city founded on the far side of La Mer de Sel by the French Colonial administration as a center for the commercial exploitation of territory south of the inland sea. Located on a high plateau rising above La Mer de Sel's southern tidal flat, it offers a spectacular view of Tithonus just above Mont Rouge.

Mining settlements and outposts have been established south of the city in the region of Mont Ste. Victoire, a huge, dormant shield volcano north of La Gouffre.

Deposits of iron, chromium, uranium, and diamonds have been found in the region, though full-scale commercial development during the Kafer crisis has been too uncertain to be feasible.

The city's population numbers about 300,000, and the surrounding communities total about 900,000. Agricultural products include hydroponic fruits, vegetables, and fish; various wheat and corn hybrids; apples and apple wines.

## TANSTAAFL

Tanstaafl—the name comes from the comic-popular acronym for "There Ain't No Such Thing As A Free Lunch"—began as the privately funded colonial project of a consortium of European and North American corporations. The colony was established in 2257. Scandal and bankruptcy among several of the member corporations in the 2260's led the Tanstaaflians to issue a declaration of independence after first arranging privately for economic support and political recognition from the German colonial administration on neighboring Hochbaden.

**Planetographic Features:** The capital city of Tanstaafl lies at the southwestern end of a dry sea bed called the "Great Salt Flats" and under the sheltering lee of the Barrier Mountains to the west. About 1000 km north of the capital, the aptly named Equator River flows west roughly long the planetary equator. Westward lies a steep escarpment overlooking the tidal flats of Iceberg Bay—named because icebergs drifting across from the icecap frequently run aground and melt there.

The settled areas extend north and south of Tanstaafl City, divided by the Barrier Mountains. Mining settlements have been established throughout the Barriers, as well as in the Hotback to the east. Proven resources of magnesium, bauxite, uranium, platinum and iridium, iron, and cobalt have been found throughout the region.

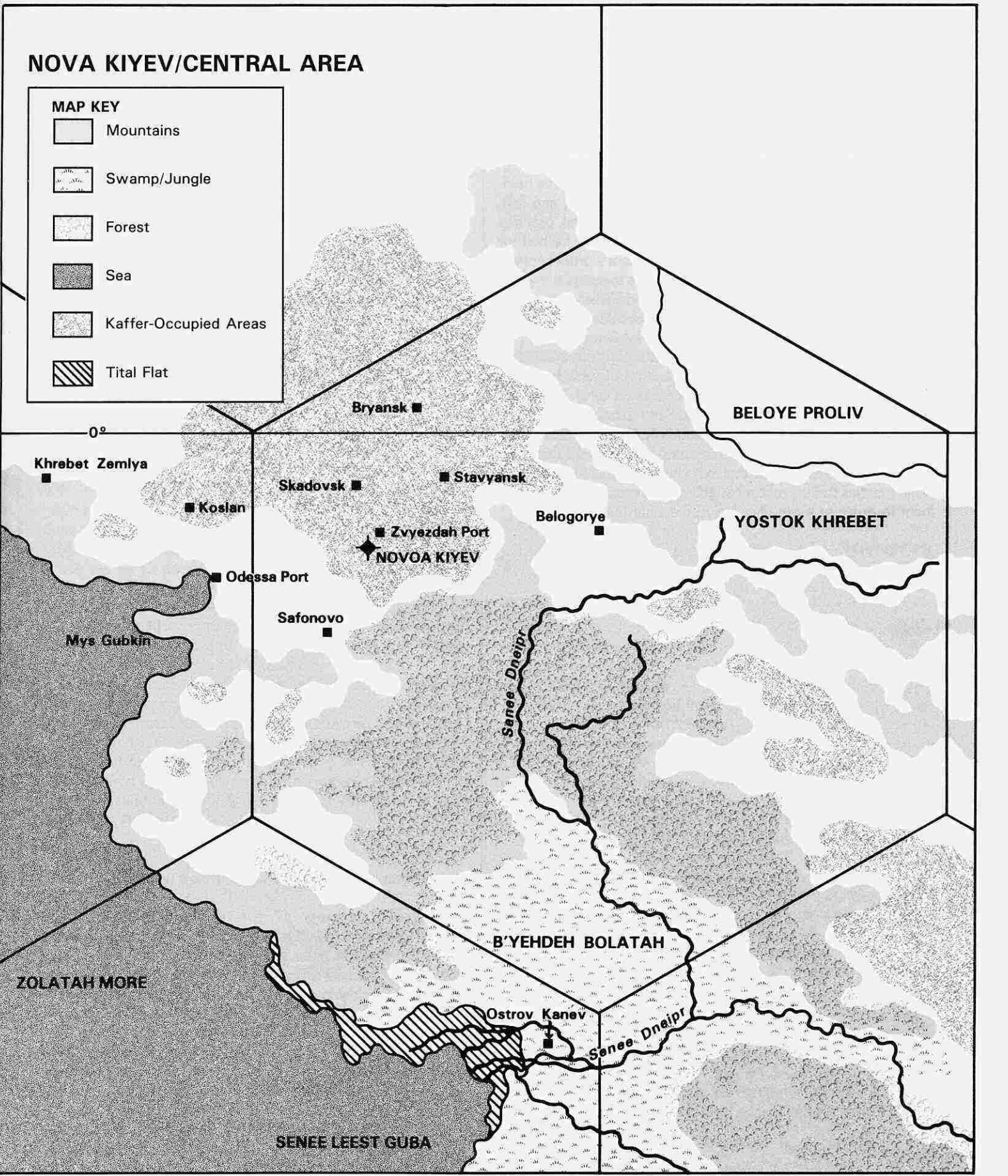
**The Colony:** Tanstaafl City is the single largest settlement in the Tanstaafl Free State with a population numbering about 800,000. Another 1,400,000 people live in the surrounding areas, most in villages or settlements numbering a few thousand. Casualties in the war so far have numbered around 100,000.

Port Blackjack, east of the city on the rim of the dry lake bed, is Tanstaafl's ground-space interface system, with facilities to receive and launch airfoil shuttles, rocket boost vehicles, and scramjets. Industrial capacity is still extremely limited, due both to the loss

NOVA KIIYEV/CENTRAL AREA

MAP KEY

- Mountains
- Swamp/Jungle
- Forest
- Sea
- Kaffer-Occupied Areas
- Tital Flat



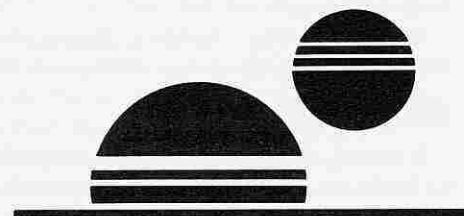
of many major industrial centers and to the loss of the orbital solar power satellites during the early phase of the Kafer attack. An airfield south of the spaceport serves to link Tanstaaf with the other colonies on Aurore, though all contact has long since been lost with Novoa Kiyev. It should be remembered, too, that air travel on Aurore has been sharply curtailed lately due to losses to extremely accurate fire from Kafer shoulder-launched SAMs.

Most of the settlement regions surrounding the city are small villages and co-operatives with populations of a few thousand or tens of thousands, and most are agricultural. Products include apples and apple wines; corn, wheat, and hybrid grains; native hardwood; guinea pig meat; hydroponic fruits, vegetables, and fish.

**The Government:** Tanstaaf maintains a free market, capitalist economy—almost ostentatiously so. Anything could be had for a price (at least in prewar times); the government's proper sphere of operations (outside of the customary bribes to speed the workings of the system) was extremely limited, and Tanstaafians were proud of these distinctions. The war has forced seemingly draconian measures on a population used to a minimum of government interference in their daily lives, and rationing of food, vehicles, and fuel is viewed as a red tape-tangled and insufferable hardship.

Some within the military view the near-anarchy of Tanstaaf's government as worse than a hardship. Petty corruption and inefficiency has hampered military operations (such as the scheduling of landing time and space for incoming orbital supply carriers) enough times in the past so that there is serious talk among some military circles that the military ought to seize control of the government in order to more effectively prosecute the war.





# Life on Aurore

This section details some of the types of characters an adventuring group might encounter on Aurore. The player characters might themselves choose to follow one or more of the careers listed here, while the referee introduces others as NPCs who can lead the players into a new adventure or shape the course of an ongoing campaign.

## CAREERS, SKILLS, AND JOBS

Aurore is a frontier world. Certain careers and career skills are common in such an environment while others are not. The following skill and career listings are provided both to allow the referee to flesh out NPCs encountered during the course of adventures on Aurore and to allow the player characters to seek employment during their stay on this world. It is also possible that players in a **Traveller: 2300** campaign may wish to generate characters who were born and raised on Aurore, with one of these careers serving as that character's background.

The referee is reminded that many of those skills learned on Aurore may not apply on other worlds. For example, a character skilled at Wilderness Craft or Survival in the Auroran Hotback might have only limited ability to deal with similar problems on worlds with different terrain, weather, atmosphere, or conditions. Skill levels acquired by Aurorans may, at the referee's discretion, be reduced or eliminated entirely in characters who travel to other worlds from Aurore.

## NEW SKILLS

The following new skills may be encountered among Auroran characters.

**Heavy Equipment Operator:** The character has experience operating various types of heavy machinery including tractors, cranes, logger vehicles, or spaceport loading equipment. The skill includes both driving the equipment (as for Ground Vehicle skill) and using the remote handling devices such machinery is equipped with. This skill is common on Aurore, as applied to loading and handling equipment at the spaceports and mines and to logging vehicles in the Aurorewood forests.

**Scrounge:** The character can find useful items even in unlikely places. This may involve unofficially liberating supplies from official sources or finding and adapting makeshift items or supplies from cast off or damaged equipment. The large numbers of vehicles and pieces of heavy equipment destroyed and abandoned during the continuing war with the Kafer invaders makes this a useful and frequently employed skill.

**Wilderness Craft:** The character can move undetected through wilderness terrain, can track opponents, and can confuse opponents who may be tracking him. It is related both to Stealth and Survival but is specifically applied to situations where the character's skill will help him sneak up on, trail, evade, or observe enemy forces in wilderness terrain. This skill is particularly useful among those characters who live on the frontier or who earn their livings tracking and killing Kafers.

## CAREERS

Each of the following careers may be encountered in NPCs on Aurore.

### SCAVENGER

The Kafer War has littered the surface of Aurore with abandoned military equipment and vehicles, discarded weapons, even whole cities destroyed by Kafer warheads early in the invasion. Scavengers collect hardware, vehicles, and other items which they can repair and sell or sell as they find them. Some specialize in scrap metal which is sold to Tanstaaff foundries, and which is now supporting Tanstaaff's war-ravaged heavy industry. Some specialize in weapons, vehicles, and electronic equipment or in heavy machinery or machine tools from destroyed towns and factories. A few may have acquired Vacc Suit skill, using it with special armor in exploring radioactive ruins.

**Initial Training:** Survival-1, Sidearm-1, Melee-2, Ground Vehicle-2, Mechanical-2, First Aid-1.

**Primary Skills:** All Mercantile Skills, all Vehicle Skills (except LTA), Scrounge.

**Related Skills:** All Combat Skills, all General Skills (except Swim), Heavy Equipment Operator.

### PROSPECTOR

Initial interest in Aurore centered around the likelihood of heavy metals and rare earths which would make mining Aurore a profitable venture. Prospectors are individuals often living alone on the frontier, who explore new territory in a never-ending search for new bonanzas. A discovery may be developed by a prospector with enough money to buy the equipment to mine it himself, or the claim may be sold to a large mining corporation which has the resources to develop it.

**Initial Training:** Survival-2, First Aid-1, Prospecting-2, Bargain-1, Ground Vehicle-1, Appraisal-1 (applied to ores and minerals).

**Primary Skills:** All Mercantile Skills, Geology, Demolitions, Engineering.

**Related Skills:** Chemistry, Bureaucracy, Combat Rifleman, Melee, Sidearm, Scrounge, Wilderness Craft.

### MINING ENGINEER

A mining engineer is a step above the lone prospector in that he works for (or owns) a corporation with considerable financial and technological backing. Many Auroran towns began as communities around single-shaft mineheads first developed by mining consortiums or corporations. Mining engineers have continued mineral surveys and exploratory mining on the Auroran frontier even during the turmoil of the Kafer War.

**Initial Training:** Appraisal-2 (applied to ores and minerals), Trader-1, Geology-1, Engineering-1, Demolitions-1, Prospecting-1.

**Primary Skills:** All Mercantile Skills, Bureaucracy, Electronics, Engineering, Demolitions, Prospecting, Geology.

**Related Skills:** Survival, First Aid, Sidearm, Melee, Ground Vehicle, Hover Vehicle, Heavy Equipment Operator, Chemistry.

### BOUNTY HUNTER

Bounty hunters may be encountered on the frontiers of a number of human worlds, but on Aurore the term applies specifically to Aurorans who hunt and kill Kafers for the bounty paid by various communities and individuals on the planet for Kafer heads or hides. They tend to be an unsavory lot but are individualistic, rugged, and self-reliant. Many serve as scouts for various militia or military units.

**Initial Training:** Combat Rifleman-2, Sidearm-2, Melee-2, Tactics-1, Stealth-1.

**Primary Skills:** All Combat Skills, all Vehicle Skills (except LTA and Sea Vehicle), Survival, Bargain, Wilderness Craft.

**Related Skills:** First Aid, Bureaucracy, all Mercantile Skills.

### CONVOY RUNNER

Many communities on Aurore have been cut off from other human communities for months or even years by the destruction of towns or because of infiltration by Kafer bands. Some Aurorans

specialize in running supplies (food, ammunition, power cells, hydrogen, weapons) to isolated communities, braving hostile terrain and roving Kafer bands to deliver these supplies.

**Initial Training:** Ground Vehicle-1 or Hover Vehicle-1, Sidearm-1, Melee-1, Trader-1, Bargain-1.

**Primary Skills:** All Mercantile Skills, Combat Rifleman, all Vehicle Skills (except LTA), Mechanical.

**Related Skills:** Bureaucracy, Tactics, First Aid, Survival, Scrounge, Wilderness Craft.

### WILDERNESS GUIDE

Wilderness guides live at the edge of the Auroran frontier. Generally, they have other careers to occupy their time, such as being a scavenger or homesteader. Nonetheless, their knowledge of the surrounding area and of Auroran wildlife makes them invaluable as military scouts, or as guides for supply convoys or scientific expeditions.

**Initial Skills:** Side Arm-1, First Aid-1, Ground Vehicle-1 or Hovercraft-1, Mechanical-1, Biology-1 (as applied to native Auroran life), Geology-1 (as applied to Auroran conditions), Survival-1.

**Primary Skills:** Wilderness Craft, all Vehicle Skills (except LTA), Combat Rifleman, Melee, Bargain, Survival, First Aid.

**Related Skills:** Stealth, Electronic, Prospecting.

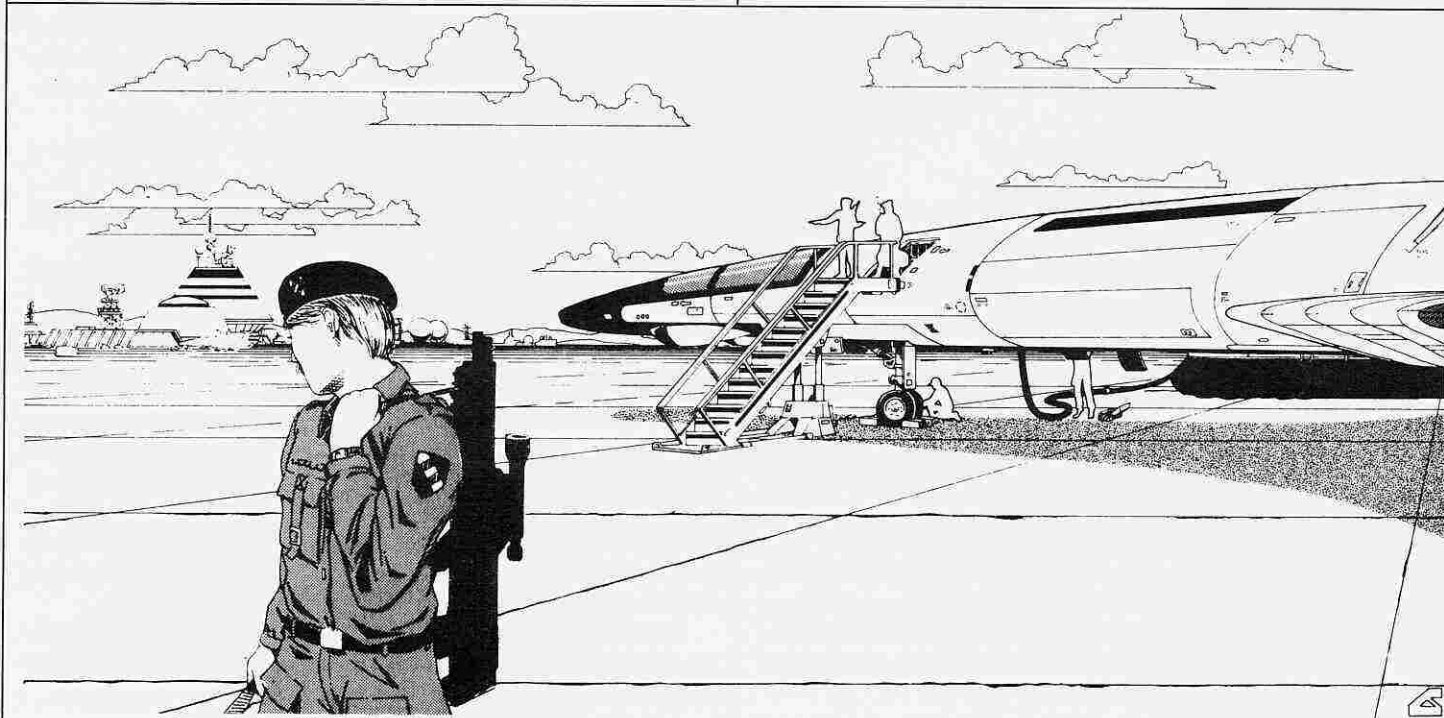
### FISHERMAN

The Auroran equivalent of fish (actually free-swimming creatures combining some of the traits of Terran plants and animals) are useless as food for humans, but they have become valuable in a newly developing exotic chemical industry as a source of lubricating and machine oil and as fertilizer. Working as a fisherman is a common occupation among the Ukrainian colonists, although both Tanstaaf and Aurore Francais were beginning to explore the potential of the exotic chemical market when the Kafers arrived.

**Initial Skills:** Ground Vehicle-1, Survival-1, First Aid-1.

**Primary Skills:** Sea Vehicle, Hover Vehicle.

**Related Skills:** Biology (as related to Auroran "fish"), Melee, Combat Rifleman, Scrounge, Leader.



## HOMESTEADER

The Ukrainian, Tanstaaflian, and French Auroran governments have made land available to prospective frontier settlers in exchange for their agreement to farm or mine the land and to turn a percentage of the crop or mine output over to the government. Homesteader refers to any person living on his own land on the frontier, including hydroponic farmers, meat animal raisers, and independent miners. Besides highly specialized skills (such as farming or animal husbandry), the homesteader will have more generally applied skills such as:

**Initial Skills:** Side Arm-1, Melee-1, Ground Vehicle-1, Survival-1, First Aid-1.

**Primary Skills:** All Mercantile Skills (as applied to his specialty), all General Skills (except Swim and Vacc Suit), all Vehicle Skills (except LTA), Heavy Equipment Operator.

**Related Skills:** Demolitions, Combat Rifleman, Leader, Wilderness Craft, Scrounge, Biology (as related to Auroran life forms).

## MILITIA

Militia are local military forces raised for short-term defense of a particular community. Members have other full-time careers (such as Homesteader or Mining Engineer) but during periods of tension will train together and, at need, band together to face an invader or crisis. They have minimal combat experience, though they may be led by combat veterans. They are almost exclusively drawn from local residents, though exceptions may be made—notably for specialists such as scouts or heavy weapons experts.

Several critical battles in the Kafer War on Aurore have been won by militia volunteers.

**Initial Training:** Combat Rifleman-1, Melee-1, First Aid-1.

**Primary Skills:** All Combat Skills, all Vehicle Skills (except LTA or Sea Vehicle)(See Note).

**Related Skills:** Mechanical, Electronic, Scrounge, Wilderness Craft.

Note: The Ukrainian forces may be considered to be militia forces fighting a guerrilla war against the Kafers. For the Ukrainians, Sea Vehicle skill becomes a *Related Skill*.

## MERCENARY RECRUITERS/MERCENARIES

Tanstaafl does not have a regular army. The militia has been supplemented by a veteran force of mercenaries, the Tanstaafl Free Legion (TFL), a regiment raised locally, consisting of professional soldiers from numerous worlds. Recruiters at several locations in and around Tanstaafl City will sign up characters wishing to join. Applicants must be in good health and possess *at least* Combat Rifleman-2, Melee-2, Ground Vehicle-1, and Hover Vehicle-1.

**Initial Skills:** Combat Rifleman-2, Melee-2, Ground Vehicle-1, Hover Vehicle-1, First Aid-1.

**Primary Skills:** All Combat Skills, Ground Vehicle, Hover Vehicle.

**Related Skills:** All General Skills, Stealth, Bargain, Scrounge, Wilderness Craft.

## OFF-WORLD WORKERS ON AURORE

As a frontier world, Aurore offers vast opportunities to young men and women willing to work hard and endure hardship and danger. Tanstaafl in particular possesses a free-market economy where opportunities are plentiful and fortunes can be made or lost overnight. Too, the war has cost dearly in lives and investment, and workers are sought to replenish the devastated work force as well as to defend Tanstaafl against the Kafer threat.

As a result, thousands of off-worlders have come to Aurore seeking their fortunes, and it is possible that the player characters themselves fall into this category.

The following guidelines are listed to help the referee establish the background of the market in which the newly-arrived player characters will find themselves.

**Hiring Agencies/Laborers:** Hiring agencies have been established in various places in and around Tanstaafl City, La Cite d'Aurore, and Lumiere d'Aube. These agencies provide the service of bringing workers and employers together. Positions found in this way include employment as workers at spaceports, airfields, or in warehouses, loading and unloading cargo. Mine laborers, as well, are recruited in this way.

Pay is Lv2 to Lv5 per hour, and employment is on a day-by-day basis. Transport to work is provided by the employer; and, if the work is outside the city, the employer will also provide quarters (and occasionally meals). The hiring agency is generally paid for the service on a per-head, one-time-only basis by the employer.

Also offered through agencies are jobs as security personnel or guards. Characters seeking these are interviewed by the agency and the prospective employer, and, if possible, computer checks are run on the character's history. In some cases lie-detector tests may be given. Security or guard positions generally require certain minimal skills in Side Arm or Melee, and will pay between Lv5 and Lv15 per hour on a day-by-day basis, or between Lv150 and Lv450 per Auroran day (61 hours, or three 10-hour work periods). The character will usually be required to sign a contract binding him to his employer for a set period of time (commonly 10 to 50 Auroran days), and he will have to pay the agency 10 percent of his income for the first contract period. The characters may negotiate with the prospective employer to have the agency paid by the employer, and subsequent contract periods may be negotiated directly between employer and worker.

Finally, wealthy employers or entire corporations may hire individuals for a variety of special jobs including bodyguard, chauffeur, translator, or general assistant. Pay for such positions depends on the position, employer, and skills (Linguistics, Vehicle Driver, Combat skill). A contract is generally signed by the employer and the employee, and the employee is required to pay the agency 10 percent of his pay for the first contract period.

**Special Services:** Certain characters with valuable skills may be hired on a short-term basis by the Tanstaafl government or the mercenary unit itself. Examples include convoy runners and general laborers to get supplies to an isolated town, and bounty hunters or guides to lead military forces to some destination or for the duration of a mission. Characters with military backgrounds and special experience may be hired by the Ukrainian military command (they are desperate) or the Tanstaafl Free legion (they work that way) to perform certain specific, short-term missions. French military forces tend to be self-sufficient and unwilling to rely on outsiders.

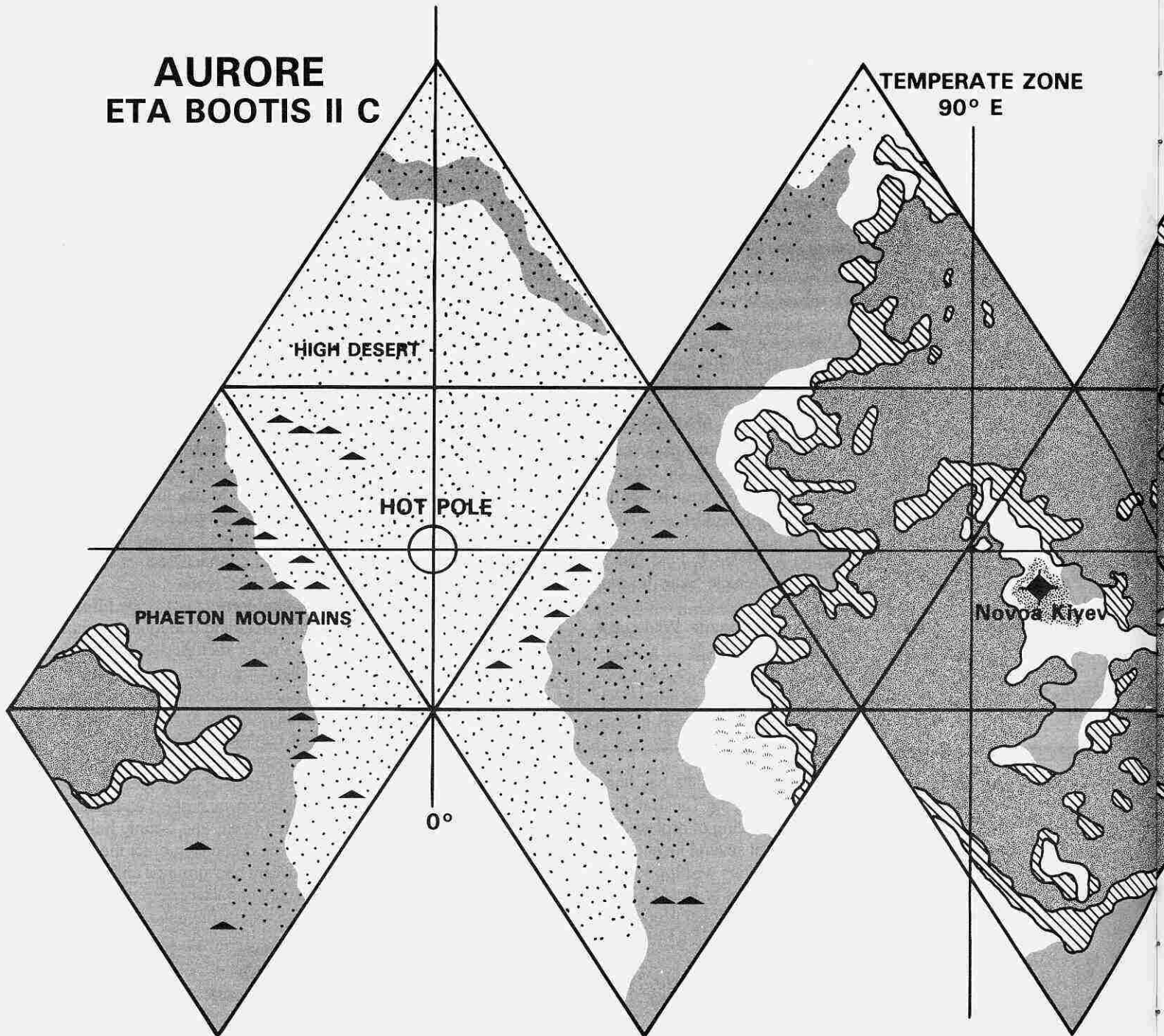
## BREAKING A CONTRACT

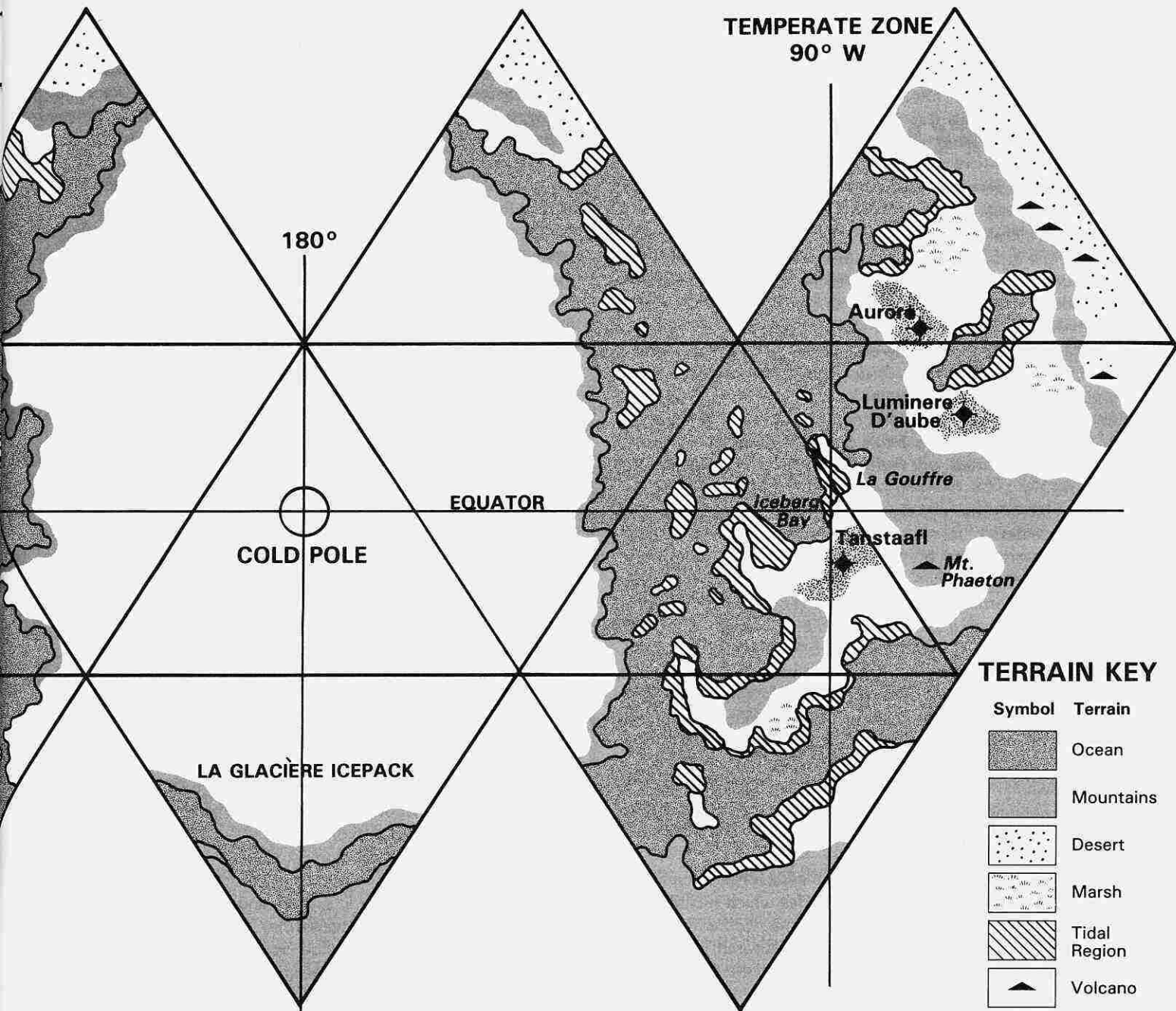
A laborer who skips a short-term contract is unlikely to be caught, but high-value contracts and work contracts covering long periods of time are taken seriously on Aurore. Most hiring agencies and larger corporations employ men, bounty hunters who go after humans instead of Kafers, who hunt down and apprehend contract jumpers. Contract jumpers may be released after payment of a fine or may be forced to fulfill the contract for reduced pay.

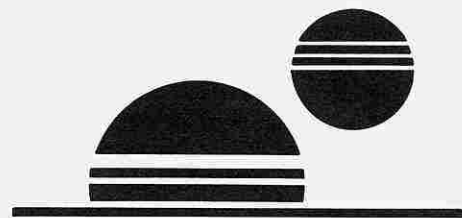
Contract jumpers frequently vanish into the frontier, where a man's past is not questioned, but on his return to civilization (or during the computer checks on those attempting, for example, to purchase passage off-world), he is likely to be apprehended.



# AURORE ETA BOOTIS II C







# Aurore: Biology

**Referee's Note:** Auroran biology is alien and active, and much of it is lethal to humans. Since humans have only been on the planet for a half a century or so, by far the majority of the planet's native life forms are unknown and uncatalogued.

Numerous species have been classified and studied, however, particularly those living in areas explored or colonized by humans. Descriptions of these life forms can be found in certain xenobiological texts and formal papers, in ship or university libraries, and in information terminals on Aurore. Information on some of the more spectacular forms may have circulated through documentaries filmed on Aurore and shown on Earth and elsewhere.

Animal life on Aurore is still relatively primitive. The sea alone can be considered "teeming" as an ecological habitat. "Abundant" areas are found in the woodlands and jungles of both hemispheres, while other terrain types are considered to be "sparse" or "barren." In fact, the orderly categorization of life forms based on their ecological niches breaks down to a certain extent on Aurore.

The distinctions between "plant," "animal," and a third intermediate regnum are blurred, and many life forms occupy any of several different niches, depending on whether they are encountered in barren, sparse, or abundant ecological regions. The creep, for example, can be considered to be a gatherer in barren regions (such as tidal flats) where it exists by drawing minerals from rocks, but in abundant regions it can be considered to be a hunter, pouncer, or large chaser, depending on the hunting and eating habits it exhibits.

It is further suspected that various of the life forms encountered are in fact one stage in complex life cycles which include other life forms, known and unknown, and this may further muddy the distinctions between various categories of Auroran life.

Each animal description below includes a three-letter encounter code indicating where it might be found on Aurore, followed by a single letter indicating the likelihood of an encounter. (For a complete list of the encounter codes, see pages 28-30.) As an example, **MAR: S** indicates the animal is found at sea, and that it is a scarce encounter.

The ferocity of some native Auroran life forms is in keeping with the violence of the world itself. Several common Auroran life forms are listed here, along with their **Traveller: 2300** stats and descriptions of their characteristics and habits. This section is presented as extracts from a technical paper which might be encountered by characters searching for specific information on Auroran life

forms. This information can be read to or by the players, but the referee should arrange it so that they must look up specific life forms separately, and by specific request.

## LA BIOLOGIE D'AURORE

An extract of a paper presented to the Departement de la Biologie Extraterrestre de la Sorbonne, published by Raymond Girard, Ph.D., D.E., 2287.

Aurore is young, as planets go. Eta Bootis A, a young sub-giant rather than a main-sequence star, and its attendant planetary system are probably no more than two billion years old.

Evolution has proceeded rapidly on Aurore, however. The slightly higher-than-normal background radiation stimulates mutagenic processes and has resulted in the rapid evolution of plant-analogues, animal-analogues, and a third intermediate kingdom or regnum which has not been assigned a formal name. All subsequent regnal references are to these groupings.

Auroran plants use a blue-green chlorophyll analogue as a catalyst in a typical photosynthetic cycle. A majority of Auroran plant forms, however, supplement their nutrient intake directly by feeding on other life forms, either as saprophytes or as carnivores. Auroran vegetation tends to be massive, leathery, and blue to charcoal in color. The equivalents of trees tend to be low with thick, spreading caps or foliage masses. The type known as broadtops resemble Terran mushrooms, are up to ten meters tall, and are noted for their light, strong wood. Area-producing plants have the appearance of terrestrial liverworts or coral, are blue to blue-green in color, grow in low-lying clumps, and are rubbery or spongy to the touch.

Land animals are relatively simple, and most are members of a single class, the *xenocancerformes*. Approximate terrestrial homologues would be horseshoe crabs or similar crustaceans.

The intermediates share characteristics of plants and animals, distinctions which are somewhat blurred on Aurore to begin with. They appear to be either sessile animal forms or non-motile plants which have evolved motile forms as one stage in a complex and, as yet, unknown life cycle. One notable example, *Stragulum ambulatio*, is motile or sessile depending on the presence or absence of water.

## AURORAN LIFE

### Bladehood (*Umbraculamina* var.)

Bladehoods are Aurean plants with the appearance of heavy-



stemmed mushrooms two to four meters in height, with broad, flat, and slightly upturned caps. Their root system is extensive and shallow.

Bladehoods are the most openly dangerous of Aurore's plant life. Though sessile, they supplement the nourishment they draw from the ground by trapping and killing animal life which strays too close. When the plant senses pressure over the root system within a meter or two of the central trunk, the cap or parasol snaps down and closes, the motion exposing and extending rows of sharp, in-curved blades which are sheathed and invisible when the parasol is open. Moderately-sized animals (between 5 and 50 kg) are impaled on the blades, which are coated with a highly-acidic secretion, and are killed almost instantly. Larger animals may tear free of the parasol but will succumb within a few moments to the blades' poison. These die in the general vicinity, which is usually populated by numerous bladehoods, and the decay of the corpse fertilizes the soil.

After closing, the parasol gradually relaxes, and it returns to its open position after an hour or two. Dead animals lying anywhere above the root system are rapidly covered by a black, cottony substance growing up out of the ground, which discourages scavengers and works to digest and absorb the body's soft parts.

Bladehoods are superficially identical to a number of other Auroran plant species. They can be recognized if they are seen in their closed state by the fact that some have had sections of their parasols torn or shredded by escaped prey (the damage repairs itself in a week or so), and by the presence of the carapaces, cartilage, or other hard body parts of recent prey.

**Referee's Note:** Auroran animal life is mostly exoskeletal or supported by a soft material more like cartilage than bone. While bladehoods will be surrounded by the non-digestible remains of their recent prey, old body parts tend to break down rapidly in the presence of bladehood digestive juices, and it will take a sharp-eyed and alert character to realize that the vaguely organic-looking bits of material at the base of that particular giant mushroom are, in fact, the skeletal remains of an Auroran life form.

Bladehoods will attack any character who approaches the trunk of the organism so closely as to pass underneath the open parasol or cap. They will only be triggered by a mass greater than 5 kg. The referee may require player characters to roll to identify the bladehood's threat as a routine task.

If the players are completely unacquainted with the bladehood and no characters are present who might warn them, the task becomes difficult. If the character party has already witnessed a bladehood attack, the task becomes simple. If characters are already alert to danger (by a freshly-killed animal or the struggle of an animal within a closed parasol), a routine task will be reduced to a simple one, a difficult task to routine.

The referee might also use random saving rolls to avoid a bladehood during situations (such as a firefight) when the characters obviously are not thinking about the potential dangers of local flora.

Though bladehoods are plants, their characteristics allow them to be classified as animals, as follows:

**Bladehood:** Pouncer Number Appearing: 2D6 - 2 Initiative: 1 Size: 2D6 x 50 Speed: 0 Armor: 0 DPV: Normal Wound: +1 Signature: None Hit: Easy

AGR: R; FRS: S; HTB: R; RVR: S; SEA: R

Bladehoods cause injury both through normal damage and stun (the effects of the blade poison). There is, as yet, no antidote or antivenom, though individual light or serious wounds can be treated as if they were snakebites to stabilize the character's condition.

Bladehoods are found everywhere on Aurore from the high-tide line to the desert's edge on the Tithonian side of the sea. They

are not found on steep or extremely rocky areas, but they are especially common in swamps or soft ground where they can form entire forests. They are frequently found in woodland areas mingled with other plants which are indistinguishable from the bladehoods—but harmless.

In terms of the bladehood's ecological niche, it can be considered to be a point producer (P), a hunter (4), or a pouncer (5).

### Spongegrass (*Spongiagrammen* var.)

Spongegrass refers to any of the many species of Auroran plant life found throughout the temperate zones between the sea and the Sub-Tithonian Plateau. It is widely regarded as the Auroran equivalent to terrestrial grasses. Its color ranges from pale blue to blue-black or charcoal gray. In physical appearance it resembles Terran sponges, pierced by countless small holes and having a yielding, rubbery texture. Some species extend knobbed branches and resemble Terran coral but are still soft and flexible.

Reproducing by the release of microscopic spores through the tiny holes in their structures, they are found everywhere throughout the temperate zones. Related marine species have been recovered along high-tide beach dumps, and tough and hardy, water-conserving forms have been reported among the rocks and broken, volcanic terrain at the base of the Sub-Tithonian Plateau. Entire prairies and mountain valleys filled with nothing but a single species of spongegrass are known in both hemispheres.

Spongegrasses, together with certain marine plants similar to simple algae, are the principal source of photosynthesis on Aurore and are responsible for the planet's current oxygen-rich atmosphere. They also form the bottom of Aurore's land-based food chain, providing food for land crabs, redswifts, and other gatherers, intermittents, and grazers. They are used by humans for insulation, packing, and padding.

Spongegrass is an area producer (AP).

AGR: C; FRS: V; HTB: S; MTN: S; RVR: V; SEA: C; VOL: R; WLD: C

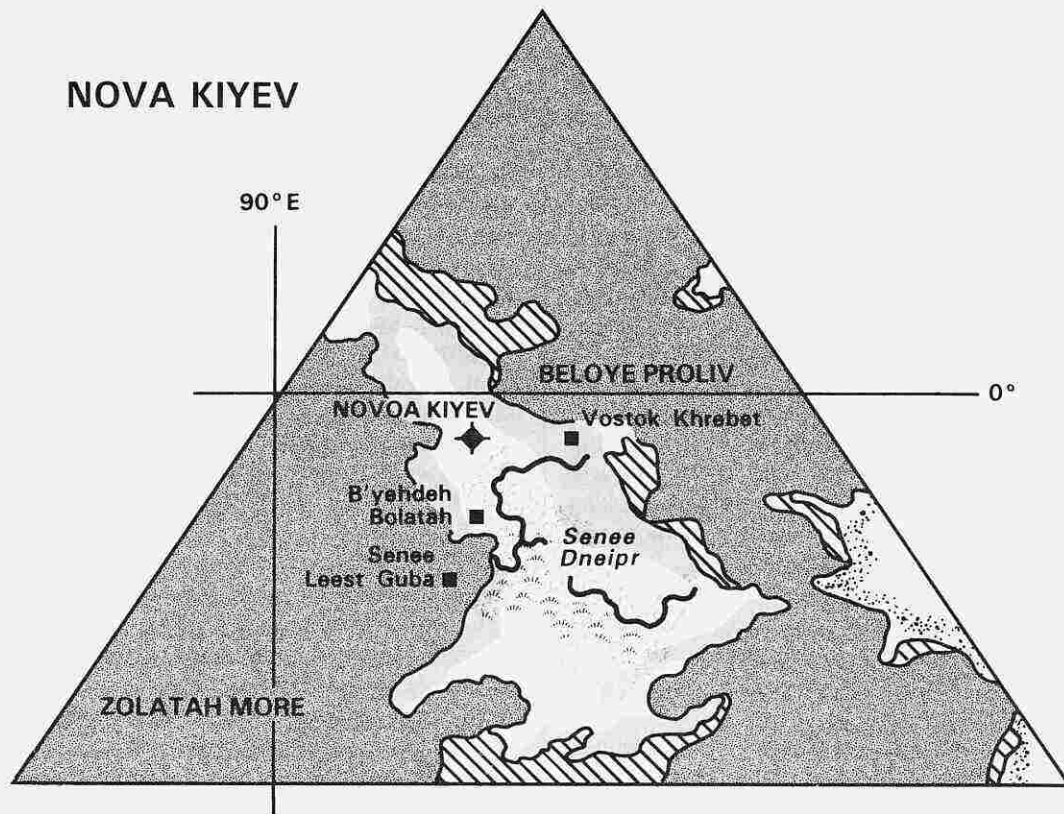
### Creep (*Stragulum ambulatio* et al.)

Creeps, also known as "walking carpets" or "strags," are members of Aurore's intermediate regnum and are found almost exclusively on Auroran tidal flats, though exceptions have been noted. They are flat (5 to 30 cm thick), shaggy creatures which walk with a shambling motion resembling a rug alternately bunching and flattening out as it moves. Glands along the creep's underside secrete a powerful, organic acid which seems not to bother the creep but which dissolves pockmarks in calciferous rock, such as limestone, from which the creep extracts certain minerals and nutrients. Like Auroran plants, they produce their own food through photosynthesis.

Creeps are motile only during low tide. Several minutes before the onset of high tide, creeps use their acid secretions to etch out a sheltered hollow in the rock, against which the muscular undersides of their bodies apply tremendous suction. Even the most forceful of incoming tides cannot dislodge their grip. During high tide, they remain completely non-motile and have the appearance of flat, moss- or weed-covered rocks.

Creeps are hunters. It is believed they have vibration-sensitive nervous systems which sense motion through rock or sand. They capture prey by leaping on it or crawling over it, using their acid secretion to dissolve calciferous armor and to partially digest their prey. They are not terribly fast—a creep moving at high speed is a comical and ungainly sight—but they are very persistent and will trail a prospective quarry for hundreds of kilometers, even leaving tidal areas to do so. Human exploratory parties on Aurore have

# NOVA KIYEV



## MAP KEY



Mountains



Forest



Ice Cliffs



Swamp/Jungle



Sea



Tital Flat

1000km

reported numerous creep attacks on people who were sleeping in the open on the ground.

**Referee's Note:** They are not terribly bright. Usual prey is the Auroran landcrab, but they will relentlessly follow any moving life form weighing 10 kg or more which wanders to within about 20 m of them. Once on a trail, they seem to use smell or other biochemical means to track and will continue to follow so long as the target remains within about 10 km of the creep, does not cross water over a meter deep, and does not take to the air.

Creeps tracking their prey travel at an average speed of 10 kph.

Creeps can be described as follows:

**Creep:** Hunter Number Appearing: 1 Initiative: 8 Size: 100 Speed: 50 Armor: .2 DPV: .8 Wound: Normal Signature: 0 Hit: Routine

AGR: R; FRS: R; RVR: R; SEA: S; TDL: C

Creeps cause injury through blunt trauma during their first attack and normal damage each action thereafter through the use of their acid secretion. Hitting a creep with bullets tends to splatter drops of acid, which cause 1D6–2 light wounds to each character within 3 m of a creep when it is shot.

When considering Auroran ecological niches, creeps are considered to be hunters (4), pouncers (5), or large chasers (6) in abundant regions. In sparse or barren regions, however, they may be encountered as gatherers (1), because of their ability to exist for long periods of time on nutrients eked from bare rock.

### Rumble (*Stragulum vastus* et al.)

This is believed to be a close relative of the Auroran creep, though close studies have not been possible to date. It is an extremely large grazer which lives by absorbing the plant life across a wide swath though a given area. They have been found in remote valleys heavily overgrown with spongegrass, and it is believed on the basis of tracks reported along the seacoast that they may “graze” tidal flats and the sea bottoms as well. Their great size seems to allow them to anchor themselves in tidal flat areas against all but the strongest ebb and flood tide currents. Though they seem to pose no direct danger to humans, they have not been closely observed, for they appear to be quite rare, and all information on the species comes from a handful of chance observations.

Rumbles look like large creeps, measuring several meters in thickness and up to 20 m in length and breadth. They are covered with wrinkled integuments which support heavy growths of spongegrass. Recognizing an unmoving rumble is a difficult task for characters unfamiliar with the creatures, a routine task for native Aurorans or those who have researched the planet's biology.

The principal danger to humans posed by rumbles is the danger of injury should the creatures begin moving while the characters are climbing what appears to be a vegetation-covered hummock.

**Rumble:** Grazer Initiative: 1 Size: 2400 Speed: 1 Armor: 0.4 DPV: None Wound: +1 Signature: +10

SEA: R; TDL: R; WLD: R

Rumbles are considered to be grazers (7) in teeming ecological areas, which, on Aurore, corresponds only to the sea, though their behavior pattern on land certainly could be best categorized as “grazing.” On tidal flats or on land they fill the “gatherer” ecological niche (1). They will never attack, however, nor will they flee. Their actions appear to be random, though an attack by humans would certainly goad one into movement.

### Auroran Landcrab (*Xenocancer pronus*)

Landcrabs are harmless invertebrates found in the temperate zone, both below and above the high-tide line. Truly amphibious, they possess analogues to gills and lungs, and appear to be capable

of living for years as fully terrestrial or fully marine forms, changing from one to the other when trapped or stranded by the changing tide. Sheathed in a tough, leathery exoskeleton (with cartilaginous internal support), they nevertheless can grow to 20 kg or more. They are reminiscent of Terran horseshoe crabs, round and flat, with numerous broad, jointed, paddle-shaped legs, and a long, joint-armored tail. When threatened by an incoming tide wall, they roll up into tight, armored balls which can apparently absorb much punishment.

Landcrabs are extremely common and are often found in loose associations, called pods, of several hundred or more—though nothing is known about their social structure or relationships. They appear to be the primary food source for creeps, bloodsuckers, sand puppies, and bladehoods.

**Referee's Note:** Landcrabs are provided as a food source for several Auroran predators and as background color. They are useless as human food and present no threat to the characters. Their stats are as follows:

**Landcrab:** Grazer Number Appearing: 1D6×1D10 Initiative: 1 Size: 1D6×.5 Speed: 10 Armor: +2 DPV: 0 Wound: Normal Signature: None Hit: Routine

AGR: C; CTY: R; HTB: S; FRS: C; MTN: R; RNS: C; SEA: C; SET: C; TDL: R; WLD: C

Landcrabs are gatherers (1) in the Auroran food chain.

### Bloodsucker (*Hirudogigas aurienses*, *Hirudogigas marinus*)

The bloodsucker, or Auroran leech, is a homologue (physically similar) to the terrestrial leech. It is large, averaging 2 kg in weight, and appears as a leaf- or egg-shaped, charcoal-grey mass lying on the bottom of tidal pools or rivers. One marine variety (*H. marinus*) burrows into sand on tidal flats as the tide ebbs and digs its way free when the sea returns.

A hollow, sharp-pointed prong is held ready inside the creature's body. When triggered, this prong is released by powerful muscular action, penetrating the prey's armor, if any, while the bloodsucker's body attaches itself to the prey. The prong injects a strong digestive fluid, then acts as a siphon to draw off the prey's body fluids.

Even small (thumb-sized) bloodsuckers can cause painful bites, and large (1 kg or more) creatures can inflict considerable damage on unprotected humans. Worse, however, is the fact that the sucker's digestive juices are powerful allergens in humans. Perhaps 50 percent of all humans stabbed by a bloodsucker suffer severe anaphylaxis (allergic reaction), which can result in death. Large doses of benadryl or other antihistamines (contained in most portable medkits) injected within a few minutes of an attack will usually reverse its effects.

A bloodsucker will attack only when it has been provoked—as, for example, when an unwary foot treads on its hiding place in a river bottom, shallow pool, or under a tidal sand flat. The refuge of a bloodsucker can sometimes be spotted by the shells and dead husks of landcrabs, the cast-off remains of earlier meals which accumulate around its hiding place.

**Referee's Note:** Bloodsucker attacks will occur randomly and at the referee's discretion whenever the characters are in a region where bloodsuckers may be lurking. Referees may warn characters to their presence by noting the presence of empty landcrab shells, but since these relics are easily carried away by wind, tide, current or rain, most bloodsucker locations will be unmarked.

Bloodsuckers, or Auroran leeches, can be described in the following manner:

**Bloodsucker:** Pouncer Number Appearing: 1 Initiative: 1 Size: 1D6×.5 kg Armor: 0 DPV: .2 (see Note) Wound: Normal



*Signature:* None *Hit:* Difficult

*RVR:* C; *TDL:* C

*Note:* Characters struck by a bloodsucker will experience an immediate minor wound in whatever part of the body (usually a foot) the referee determines was stung. The wound is treated as normal damage.

The bloodsucker will mold itself to the stricken limb and cling with powerful muscular suction. Removing the bloodsucker is a specific task:

To remove bloodsucker from character: Difficult. Strength. 3 seconds.

Unfortunately, burning the creature with cigarettes or open flames does not cause it to release its grip. It must be peeled off and its prong removed without breaking it inside the victim's skin.

A major or total mishap will result in the prong breaking. A serious infection (treated as a serious wound requiring stabilization, but with one critical point occurring every other day, for a total of five critical points) will result within 1D6 days.

In addition, any character stung by a bloodsucker must roll 1D10. On any odd number, the character will suffer anaphylaxis, experiencing difficulty breathing, severe swelling, and shock. Treat this reaction as a normal severe wound, requiring stabilization.

Bloodsuckers are pouncers (5) on the Auroran food chain.

### **Sand Puppy (*Occultator syrtis*)**

Sand puppies are inhabitants of tidal flats, free-swimming during high water but burying themselves under the sand as the tide ebbs. They resemble fat, finned invertebrate grubs or worms, soft-bodied and eyeless. It is believed that they are one stage in a multiphase life cycle of some larger creature, but other stages in the sand puppy's cycle have yet to be identified. Like bloodsuckers, they have a feeding mechanism which is retained inside the body until it is triggered by pressure on the surface of the sand above them.

This feeding apparatus has been likened to the jaws of a steel trap, serrated, tough, and driven by powerful muscles to lunge up through the sand and snap closed on the prey. Sand puppies average 10 kg in weight, grow to be one meter long, and have a jaw span of over 40 cm—more than enough to engulf a careless human foot. Once closed, even after the creature is dead, the jaws must be broken to be released. Like bloodsuckers, creeps, and other Auroran life forms, sand puppies excrete digestive juices over the trapped member and, aided by a rasping tongue, absorb the prey's soft parts through the walls of the post-mandibular bucal chamber.

**Referee's Note:** Encounters with sand puppies may be dictated by travel through certain areas, but specific attacks on characters will be totally random and at the referee's discretion. Sand puppies can be described as follows:

**Sand Puppy:** Pouncer *Number Appearing:* 1 *Initiative:* 2 *Size:* 10 *Speed:* 0 *Armor:* 0 *DPV:* .2 *Wound:* Normal *Signature:* 0 *Hit:* Easy

*TDL:* S

A sand puppy strike on a character results in a light wound. Removing a sand puppy is a task:

To remove a sand puppy: Standard. Strength. 6 seconds.

Each mishap results in one additional stun point inflicted on the victim. A total mishap results in severe and permanent damage to the injured member.

Sand puppies are rated as pouncers (5) on the Auroran food chain.

### **Dropper (*Canceraculeatus arboreus*)**

Droppers are small, arboreal crustaceaforms related to land crabs. They have flat, lightly armored bodies, and a pair of out-sized forelegs equipped with razor-edged, poison claws. They are encountered only in Auroran wooded areas, generally in rugged country some distance from human population centers. They climb up the trunks of large broadtops and cling to the undersides of the plants' tops, where they blend in to near invisibility. The passage of a large (over 10 kg) animal beneath the broadtop's cover causes them to drop off—hence their name—slashing at the prey with stinging, poison-producing claws as they fall. The thousands of droppers which may inhabit a given area of woodland are then attracted by the thrashings of a poisoned, dying or incapacitated animal. All drop to the ground en masse, converge on the prey, and feed on it.

An attack by a dropper is treated as a stun attack with a DPV of 1. Subsequent attacks on a stunned character are treated as normal attacks with DPVs of .1 x the number of attacking animals, which is at the referee's discretion for any given combat round.

**Dropper:** Chaser *Number Appearing:* 1 (see Note) *Initiative:* 2 *Size:* -2 *Speed:* 80 *Armor:* .1 *DPV:* 1 *Wound:* -5 *Signature:* None *Hit:* Routine

*FRS:* R

*Note:* The initial attack is made by a single creature. Once the stricken character collapses, 2D6 additional droppers will appear in the immediate area (within 30 m). One minute later, 2D6 x 10 more droppers will enter the area. Five minutes later, 2D6 x 100 more creatures will arrive. At his discretion, the referee may continue increasing the number of approaching droppers indefinitely. The attacks will cease and the creatures return to their trees once the characters leave the immediate area.

Droppers are considered to be Chasers (3) on the food chain.

### **Redswift (*Pabulatorufus velox*)**

An Auroran herbivore found in open areas and woodlands. Though threatening in appearance and quite agile, it is harmless. It is a common prey of droppers.

**Redswift:** Intermittent *Number Appearing:* 1D6 *Initiative:* 2 *Size:* 10 *Speed:* 100 *Armor:* 0 *DPV:* — *Wound:* -4 *Signature:* None *Hit:* Difficult

*FRS:* C; *HTB:* R; *WLD:* C

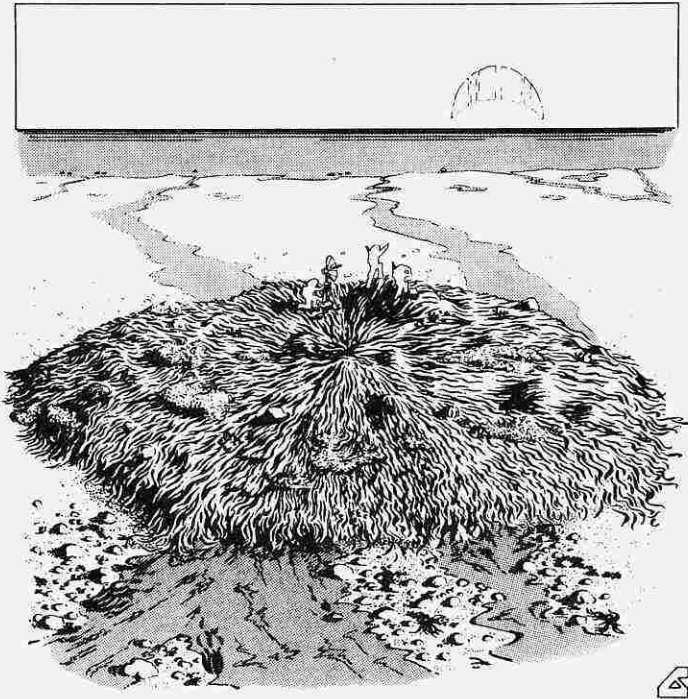
Redswifts are Intermittents (2) in the Auroran food chain.

### **Requintueur (*Incisurator marinus*)**

The requintueur is a large and dangerous Auroran sea animal. Little is known about its habits or range, since it is known only from a single dead and largely decomposed specimen at the high-tide line north of Aurore Francais and from reports of a savage attack on a small boat on La Mer Ceindant.

It is a large (10 m), serpent- or eel-shaped creature capable of great speed, with extremely powerful, extensible mandibles. The reason for the single attack on a human boat is unknown; the creature could have broken off the attack after realizing that humans were indigestible—though 14 of the 15-man crew were killed—or it may have been defending its territory. Further observations and research are needed before rationales for the creature's savage behavior can be determined. Le Conseil Scientifique d'Aurore is reportedly hoping to arrange a marine expedition to study the creature as soon as the war permits.

**Requintueur:** Killer *Number Appearing:* 1 *Initiative:* 10 *Size:*



*A small reconnaissance group unknowingly sets up its portable communications unit atop a large filter-feeder making its home on the tidal flats.*

500 Speed: 100 Armor: .2 DPV: 2 Wound: — Signature: 0 Hit: Easy

MAR: R

Requintueurs are classified as killers (8).

### REFEREE'S NOTE: AURORAN BIOLOGY

Auroran predators which threaten humans do so because of in-born reflexes, not because they seek human meals. Auroran animals are either actively poisonous to humans when eaten (causing anaphylactic reactions such as described for the bloodsucker), or they do absolutely nothing for them, passing through their systems undigested. This is because Auroran life is based on right-handed, or dextro-amino acids, mirror image (and indigestible) forms of the levo-amino acids necessary for human life. For the same reason, humans eaten by Auroran life forms either do nothing for the predators or make them very, very sick.

Characters adventuring on Aurore must carry their own supplies of human food with them. Attempts to live off the land will be useless at best, disastrous at worst.

The human colonies on Aurore have been steadily replacing the native life in selected areas with imported Earth crops. Where terrestrial strains have grown wild in places, they have generally failed in competition with native Auroran forms, and colony farms must be carefully and patiently worked to maintain the balance of their miniature and artificial terrestrial ecosystems. An important (and expensive) Auroran import is still soil brought all the way from Earth, containing the bacteria, nematodes, yeasts, and other microscopic life forms necessary to grow Terran crops in alien soil. Very small amounts of this imported "pay dirt," as it is called, is mixed with sterilized local soil and allowed to "brew." This new-grown pay dirt is then sold to colonist-farmers to be mixed into the carefully sterilized soil of their own plots. The process is expensive at first but results in larger and larger tracts of "terraformed" cropland.

**Acids:** Numerous Auroran life forms use powerful organic acid, either as a digestive juice or, in the case of the creep, to create a shelter from the incoming tide in soft rock. The referee is reminded that these acids do not perform the miracles attributed to various acids on TV or in the movies. They do not eat through steel, nor can the creatures use them to tunnel through solid rock.

Acid-secreting life forms are immune to the corrosive effects of the acids they produce. Many are armored with carbon-based compounds best described as organic plastics.

The effects of acid on unprotected human flesh are severe but not immediate; the stuff will burn the skin and break it down in time but is more dangerous as a systemic poison than as a corrosive. The exception is the creep, which can cause terrible acid burns with just a few moments of exposure. Even so, the stories told by old-hand colonists to Auroran tenderfeet about people being dissolved by giant creeps, bones and all, are just that—stories.

Probably.

The most effective treatment for burns caused by Auroran wildlife is to wash the affected area immediately with plenty of water.

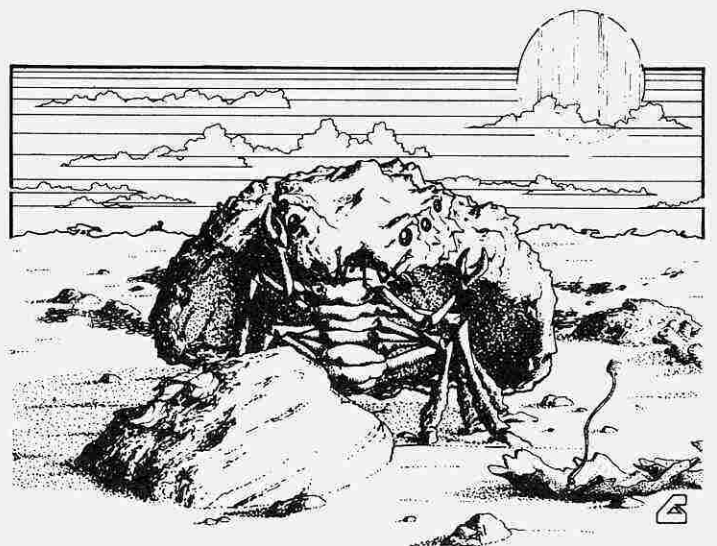
### REFEREE'S NOTE: UNKNOWN LIFE FORMS

Humans have occupied several small parts of Aurore for only a little over 50 years. Vast areas of the Auroran wilderness are virtually unknown or have never been visited at all. The life forms listed above are those dangerous or notable creatures which have been frequently encountered by the colonists.

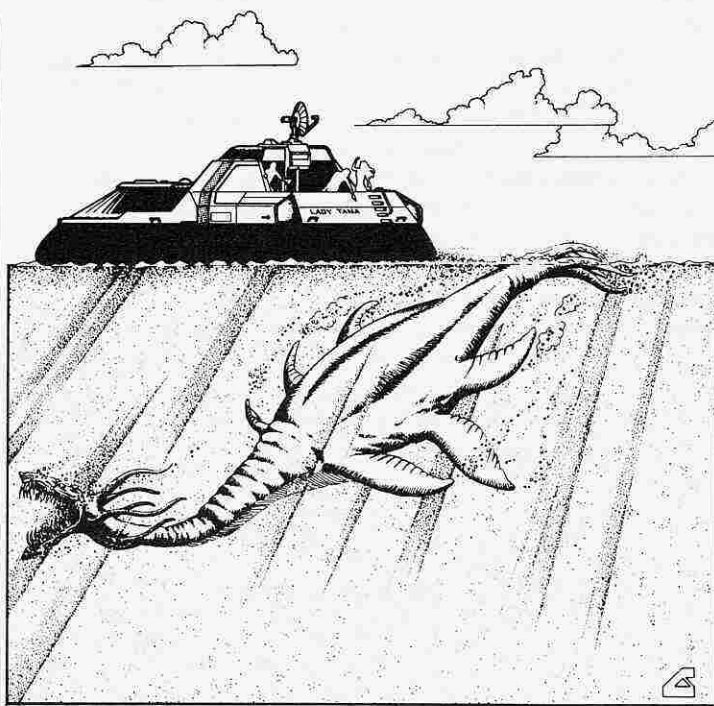
Others exist, however, which are as yet undiscovered, or which are known only as tales and stories told by frightened or otherwise preoccupied men. Several of these are presented below. Some are dangerous, some merely threatening, some simply unusual. They are unnamed, since naming is the prerogative of the characters who discover them. It could be that one of the characters in a **Traveller: 2300** player group could be honored by having a newly discovered Auroran life form named after him.

### Unnamed Auroran Life Form 1

Gatherer: An enormous (20,000+ kg) filter-feeder, of the intermediate regnum, found on tidal flats and shallow seas. It is



*A relative of the land crab, this small creature, which makes its home in the Hotback, closely resembles a rock until it moves.*



*Sightings of this large, serpent-like hunter in La Mer Ceindant have been few and of dubious reliability.*

flat and generally circular and may measure 50 m across. Its great mass prevents it from being injured by violent tides. During ebb tide it grounds on the tidal flat and collects plants and small animals and intermediates forced through its feeding lattices by the movement of the water. During high tide it floats free. It is completely harmless but is encrusted with plant life and sea growth and may be mistaken for an island or sand dune. Its movement may cause surprise or consternation.

**Unnamed 1:** Gatherer Number Appearing: 1 Size: 24000+ Speed: 0 (drifting with current only) Armor: .5 Damage: +1 Signature: None (see Note 1) Hit: None (see Note 2)

MAR: R; TDL: R

Note 1: Though immense, its metabolic rates are quite low and it is not exothermic. Sensors give confused and ambiguous readings.

Note 2: This creature is known to be incapable of attacking humans.

### Unnamed Auroran Life Form 2

Intermittent: A small (-2) relative of the land crab, armor-plated and multi-legged, found among the rocks and deserts of the Hot-back along the base of the High Desert. They live on various plants growing in the sparsely populated badlands. Some species are burrowers. Others are arboreal. Some appear indistinguishable from rocks until they move.

**Unnamed 2:** Intermittent Number Appearing: 1D6 Initiative: 3 Size: -2 Speed: +1 Armor: +1 DPV: -1 Wound: -6 Signature: None Hit: Difficult

HTB: S

### Unnamed Auroran Life Form 3

Hunter: This very large (24,000+ kg) marine creature has been sighted at various points in the Ceindant, but the sighters were never believed. It has a flat, leathery body propelled by six broad paddles, a long and snaky neck, and powerful jaws—in short, a

sea serpent. The animal is in fact the adult form of the sand puppy and may reach 15 m in length. It is encountered only very rarely in the open sea and along the Ice Wall.

Unnamed Auroran Life Form 3 may be variously classified as a hunter (4), classified as a large pouncer (9), or classified as a hijacker (10).

**Unnamed 3:** Hunter Number Appearing: 1 Initiative: 8 Size: 24000+ Speed: Normal Armor: .5 DPV: 12 Wound: Normal Signature: +10 (on the surface only) Hit: Routine

MAR: Very rare

### Unnamed Auroran Life Form 4

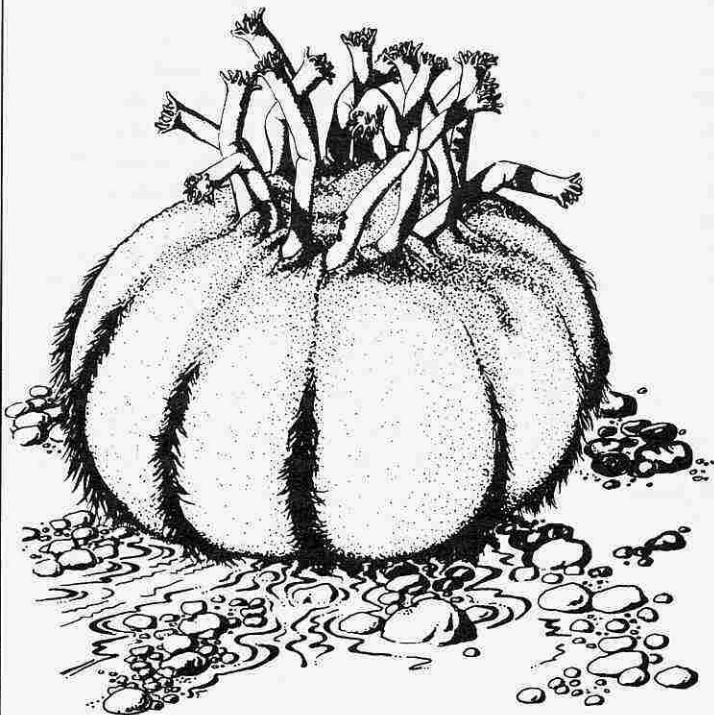
Intermittent: Unnamed Auroran Life Form 4 is a sessile life form classified in the intermediate regnum. Unnamed Auroran Life Form 4 is generally encountered only at low-tide points along tidal flats. It is a creature that is somewhat squat and globe-shaped, with extensible, motile tube-arms which it manages to rise up and flail about when the creature is approached. The tubes are purely a fright-defense mechanism and are quite harmless. The creature is an aquatic filter-feeder, and it also uses photosynthesis to produce food.

**Unnamed 4:** Intermittent Number Appearing: 1D6 Initiative: — Size: 40 Speed: 0 Armor: 0 DPV: — Wound: Normal Signature: Normal Hit: Routine

TDL: S

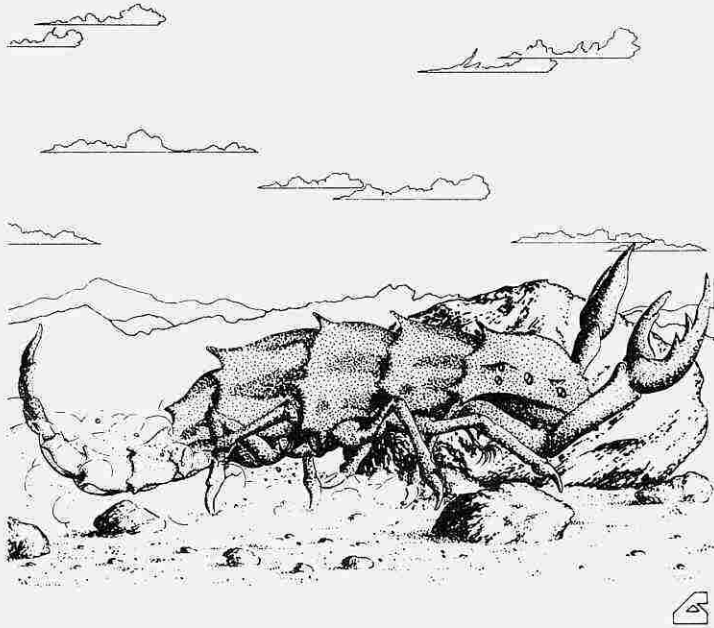
### Unnamed Auroran Life Form 5

Chaser: These are small (5 kg) animals which travel in packs, chasing and wearing down their prey. They appear to be distant relatives of the landcrab, although they are smaller and much faster than the landcrab, and, in addition, the chasers possess razor-edged foreclaws which they often use to slash at their quarry. They are



*Though mildly startling, this sessile creature's frantically waving tube-arms pose no real threat.*





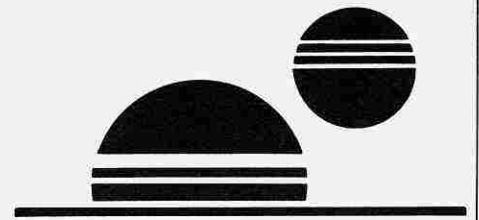
*Scampering across the Hotback, this small chaser (a relative of the landcrab) is in pursuit of its prey.*

generally to be found in areas of the Hotback, somewhere below the High Desert.

**Unnamed 5:** Chaser Number Appearing: 2D6 Initiative: 5  
Size: 5 Speed: 120 Armor: 0 DPV: .1 Wound: Normal Signature:  
Normal Hit: Routine

HTB: S

*Note:* Once they have brought down a human and taken a few bites out of him, they will decide he is unappetizing and flee. Wounds from their claws are easily infected and will become serious on a 1D10 roll of 1, with one roll made on each of the next three days. An infected wound is treated like a serious wound, but with one critical point on each of five successive days. Hospitalization or an Automed will automatically stabilize an infected wound.



# Adventuring on Aurore

Aurore is a planet.

Referees and players alike should keep this rather self-evident statement in mind during their explorations of Aurore. Even though it is a smaller world than Earth, and even though well over two-thirds of the surface is inhospitable desert, ice cap, ocean, or tidal flat, the *habitable* surface area alone is as large as all of the continent of South America. If anything, the terrain features of Aurore are even more diverse than those of Earth, including mountains, deserts, prairies, jungles, river basins, forests, tundra, and badlands, and there is more than enough room for unexpected encounters—or for characters to get lost in.

Referees who use this sourcebook to construct their own **Traveller: 2300** adventures on Aurore may wish to consult the following list of possible Auroran encounters and events. Encounters are meetings with particular NPCs, ranging from Auroran citizens to marauding Kafers. Events are natural occurrences such as storms or volcanic eruptions which affect all characters in a widespread area. The exact nature of the encounter or event is, of course, up to the referee, who may wish to tailor it to better fit the adventure scenario he is presenting.

Each general type of encounter or event is presented with a list of areas where that encounter might take place. The following list of possible areas is also used for encounters with Auroran wildlife:

**AGR:** Within a developed agricultural region of one of the colonies.

**AUR:** Within the French colony of Aurore or its outlying settlements.

**CTY:** In the city area of any of the major colonies.

**COL:** Within or near any of the major Auroran colonies.

**FRS:** Forests, jungles, swamps, or other areas of dense vegetation.

**HTB:** In the Hotback region along the base of the High Desert Plateau.

**ICE:** Along the base of the Ice Wall of La Glaciere.

**IND:** Within a developed industrial area of one of the colonies.

**LUM:** Within the city of Lumiere d'Aube or its outlying settlements.

**MAR:** Within Aurore's La Mer Ceindant, or in any of that sea's gulfs or bays.

**MIN:** Within a developed mining region of one of the colonies.

**MTN:** Within mountainous regions.

**NOV:** On the island continent of Novoa Kiyev.

**OCC:** Regions occupied or heavily infested by Kafers.

**PRT:** At a spaceport facility.

**RVR:** In or near a river.

**RNS:** Within or near the ruins of a town or village destroyed by Kafers.

**RTE:** Established travel routes (roads, tracks, rivers) between towns.

**SET:** Within the developed regions some distance from the main colonies.

**SEA:** Near the seacoast, either atop a cliff or at the high tide mark.

**TAN:** Within or near the independent colony of Tanstaaf.

**TDL:** On any Auroran tidal flat.

**TWN:** Within an outlying town or village of one of the main colonies.

**VOL:** One of the volcanic regions of Aurore, especially in the Hotback.

**WLD:** The wilderness areas generally habitable—not yet explored by Man.

Each of these area types is more completely described below.

**AGR:** Agricultural. All three Auroran colonies depend heavily on agricultural areas to survive. These regions, extending for hundreds of kilometers out from the central colony areas, consist of isolated farms or hydroponic stations and small towns linked by roadways and hovercraft tracks.

**AUR:** Aurore. This entry refers to the city of Aurore, north of La Mer de Sel. It includes the city of Aurore itself; Port Loubet; and the industrial, residential, warehouse, and agricultural regions within a few tens of kilometers of the city proper.

**CTY:** City. This refers to the downtown area of La Cite d'Aurore, Tanstaaf City, or Lumiere d'Aube. Though small compared to Terran cities, with populations of only a few hundred thousand each, they still are respectable by frontier standards, with central business and banking districts, administrative centers, and residential sections. It should be noted that the city of Novoa Kiyev has been overrun and largely destroyed by Kafer forces, and so is not generally included for purposes of normal city encounters.

**COL:** Colony. This entry refers to all three human colonies, including the cities, agricultural, and industrial facilities. It does not apply to outlying mines or isolated homesteads far removed from the inner colonies.

**FRS:** Forests. Auroran forests are scattered throughout the habitable region between the sea and the High Desert. They include any area of dense vegetation growth, including such regions as B'yehdeh Bolatah (Misfortune Swamp) on Novoa Kiyev.

**HTB:** Hotback. As described elsewhere, the Hotback or 'Le

**Desolation Chaud** is the wilderness region of desert, badlands, and volcanic terrain lying along the base of the Sub-Tithonian Plateau and extending for some hundreds of kilometers towards the sea. It is inhospitable territory, habitable, but extremely hot, rugged, and barren.

**ICE:** Icecap. This entry refers to the region along the base of the La Glaciere icecap, frigid and jumbled terrain of ice-gouged bays and calving icebergs.

**IND:** Industrial. All three colonies maintain industrial areas which include factories, warehousing districts, and petroleum refining and storage facilities. Many, perhaps most, of these industrial areas have been destroyed, either by the initial Kafer bombardment, or in more recent Kafer ground attacks, but some remain intact. All industrial areas are located within a few hundred kilometers of one of the four major cities on Aurore—Novoa Kiyev, Aurore, Lumiere d'Aube, or Tanstaaf.

**LUM:** Lumiere d'Aube. Lumiere d'Aube—the name is French for “Light of Dawn”—is a satellite colony of the city of Aurore, located southeast of the French capital on the far side of La Mer de Sel. Considered part of the colony of Aurore, it is an important city in its own right, center of a growing iron industry and an important, newly opened agricultural region. Lumiere has been especially hard-hit by the Kafer invasion.

**MAR:** Marine. This entry refers to the Auroran ocean areas.

**MNG:** Mining. The promise of heavy metals first attracted the attention of Terran corporations and heavy industries willing to invest in the exploitation of Aurore. Important mining regions can be found within a few hundred kilometers of all three colonial centers. Independent mines have also been established at some distance from the cities, particularly in the far Auroran Hotback along the base of the volcanic mountains of the Sub-Tithonian Plateau. They range in size from vast open pit or strip mining operations employing thousands of workers, to small, highly automated operations involving a handful of personnel and one or two shafts.

**MTN:** Mountains. All of the habitable areas of Aurore are highly mountainous. MTN refers to extremely rugged mountain areas

or ranges such as the Phaëton Mountains east of Tanstaaf, along the base of the Sub-Tithonian Plateau.

**NOV:** Novoa Kiyev. The island continent on the opposite hemisphere of Aurore from the cities of Aurore and Tanstaaf was the site of the original Ukrainian colony on the planet. This entry refers both to the city and the island continent, both extremely hard-hit by the Kafer invasion.

**OCC:** Occupied areas. Certain areas of the Auroran wilderness have been heavily infested by Kafers. These occupied regions include both wilderness areas and land once occupied by human villages and agricultural communities. Most human developments in the occupied areas have been destroyed, and travel there is extremely dangerous for humans.

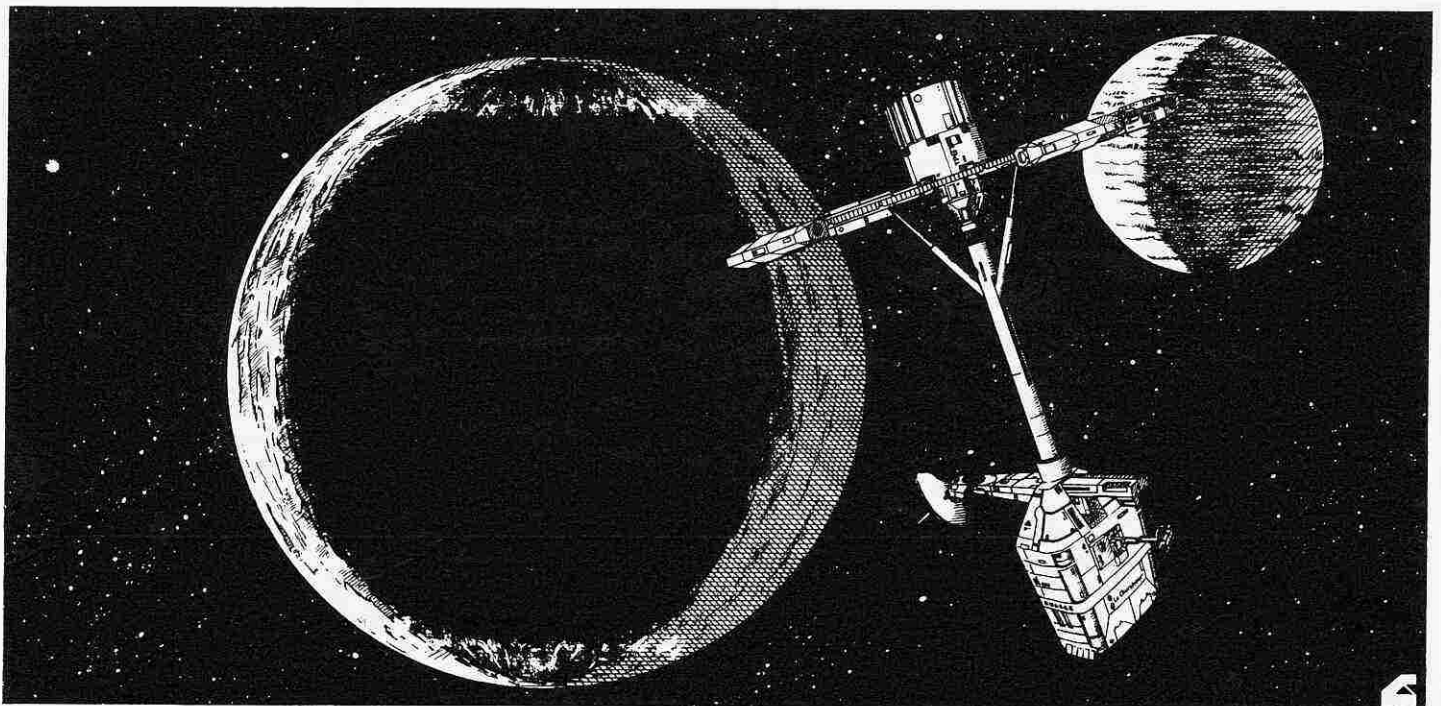
**PRT:** Spaceport. There are two surviving spaceport facilities on Aurore—Port Loubet near Aurore, and Port Blackjack at Tanstaaf. The Ukrainian port has been destroyed. This entry refers to the general area of either spaceport, including all terminal, port, storage, and transport facilities.

**RVR:** River. Refers to encounters along a river bank, or in the river itself.

**RNS:** Ruins. The Kafer invasion has brought savage devastation to large swaths of land once occupied by human villages, towns, and communities. All that remain are ruins. They can be found both in wilderness areas and within a few kilometers of major colonial cities. Some are the result of the Kafer orbital bombardment at the beginning of the invasion. Others were the result of Kafer ground attacks later in the campaign.

**SET:** Settled Regions. This entry refers to outlying settled areas, the communities lying between the immediate vicinity of a colony city and the sparsely scattered homesteads and mines of the Hotback. Settled Regions include industrial centers, agricultural communities, and small towns, tied together by a network of paved roads and hovercraft tracks.

**SEA:** Seacoast. Auroran seacoasts are dangerous areas with the once daily high tides. This entry refers to human-settled areas along the sea, settlements which exist either at the top of sheer cliffs, or just above the high-water point of high tide.



*The survey ship Le Chercheur of the Nafasi class arcs over the night surface of Aurore.*



**TAN:** Tanstaafl. This is an independent colony, founded by a consortium of investors on Earth, now self-governing. The reference is to the city of Tanstaafl itself and its immediate environs.

**TDL:** Tidal flats. Any of the broad, flat areas covered and exposed each Auroran day by the planet's sometimes violent tides.

**TWN:** Town. This refers to one of the numerous small towns which dot the settled areas around each of the colonies.

**WLD:** Wilderness. This refers to the unexplored but generally habitable regions beyond the settled areas of each of the colonies. Isolated mines or homesteads can be found in some wilderness areas a few hundred kilometers from settled regions, but most have never been visited by Man.

**VOL:** Volcanic Areas. Tidal stresses caused by Tithonus are responsible for Aurore's continuing seismic and volcanic activity. Belts of vulcanism exist in some areas, such as along the cliffs of the Sub-Tithonian Plateau. This entry refers to any such volcanically active area.

Each area where an encounter could take place is listed with a code letter which describes the likelihood of that encounter. These code letters are V = very common, C = common, S = scarce, and R = rare. For example, COL: R; SET: S; RNS: C means that that particular encounter is generally rare in the settled areas close to any of the Auroran colonies (COL), more common but still scarce in the more remote settled areas (SET), but common in ruins (RNS). Some of these listings will, of course, overlap. For example, there are numerous ruins (RNS) in the outlying settled areas (COL and SET) of all three colonies. In these cases, common sense and the dictates of the situation will determine the likelihood of any given encounter.

**Abandoned Equipment:** The characters discover military equipment left abandoned after a battle. It may be a burned-out vehicle, an abandoned weapon or field pack, or something as large as a crashed spacecraft. At the referee's discretion, it may be of either human or Kafer origin.

Only very rarely will anything of value remain. Unless the find occurs far from human settlements, local scavengers will have picked over such remains and taken anything which could be used or sold. The referee may, however, present the discovery as an opportunity for the characters to scrounge something they need—a part for a laser communicator or weapon, a length of copper wire, an overlooked box of ammunition, a map...or evidence that a Kafer war party was in the area recently.

COL: R; OCC: S; SET: S; RNS: C; RTE: R

**Avalanche:** An avalanche is a very large iceslide or landslide which threatens to completely bury the characters. Escaping an avalanche is the same as escaping a landslide, but harder. The specific task description is: Avoid avalanche. Characters who fail to avoid the effects of an avalanche may be injured or killed.

ICE: C; MTN: S; VOL: S; WLD: R

**Citizens:** The characters encounter citizens of Aurore.

The number and occupations of these NPCs is left to the referee and will depend on the situation. In general, citizens can be either ignored or approached for specific information. They will be able to answer requests for directions, relate recent events, or pass on rumors or other intelligence.

Citizens will *always* be encountered in undestroyed Auroran cities, towns, homesteads, or any place where there might be people.

**Convoy:** The characters encounter a convoy of trucks or hovercraft which is carrying supplies to a settlement or town isolated by Kafer activity. At the referee's discretion, the convoy runner in charge of the party could offer to hire the characters as a security force for the duration of the run.

Convoys can number anywhere from two or three vehicles and a few men to 50 or more vehicles and hundreds of men. They most often carry food or armed militia but may also carry fuel, water, machine parts, tools, or raw ore from a mine. They generally travel along established routes between certain settlements, though these routes will vary considerably in territory frequented by Kafer bands.

COL: S; SET: S; RTE: R

**Convoy Runner:** The characters encounter the man in charge of a supply convoy of trucks or hovercraft. At the referee's discretion, he may offer the characters transport on a convoy he is currently forming, possibly for money (Lv20 per person), possibly in exchange for their services as a security element or as advance scouts.

CTY: S; COL: S; PRT: S; SET: S

**Corporate Factor:** The characters encounter the factor for an Auroran trading or mining corporation. He is on the look out for newly arrived or experienced adventurers who might be willing to sign on with the company he represents for a short-term or single-mission contract. The mission could require security personnel for a convoy, survey, or mining operation; a team for search and rescue for a corporate survey expedition; or a team for an exploratory survey of a remote Hotback region.

CTY: S; COL: S; TAN: C

**Farming Settlement:** The characters encounter a small (less than 1,000 inhabitants) agricultural community. NPCs will be present who may share rumors with the characters. At the referee's discretion, repair parts or tools for vehicles may be available, as well as NPCs willing to assist the characters. Farms on Aurore are highly automated, requiring extensive machine shop and electronics repair facilities. There will always be NPCs on hand with mechanical, electronics, and first aid skills.

AGR: V; SET: C; COL: S

**Isolated Homestead:** The characters encounter a farm, homestead, or small (less than 50 people) settlement. It will generally be on the very frontier of a colony's developed areas, or beyond. Usually it will be a farm, with hydroponic sheds (like greenhouses, but containing Terran plants grown in troughs of water, with food fish raised in spill tanks underneath) and outdoor terraformed plots (areas of Auroran soil which has been sterilized and mixed with "paydirt" containing Terran soil organisms) growing corn, wheat, potatoes, and other Terran crops.

People encountered at the homestead will be the owner and the owner's family, plus a variable number of hired hands. Because of the highly automated nature of Auroran farming, most homesteads have well-equipped machine shops and repair facilities for various types of vehicles. Most homesteads will have NPCs on hand with mechanical, electronics, survival, and first aid skills.

AGR: C; COL: S; SET: C; WLD: R

**Joygirl:** The characters are approached by an attractive young woman who asks if they're new on Aurore and then offers to show them a good time. If the characters talk with her, they will learn that she is an excellent source of information, since she seems to know all about the world and everyone of any importance on it. She will not volunteer information but will offer to sell it. "Hey, time is money, y'know?"

CTY: C; COL: S; SET: R

**Kafer Encounters:** Several possible encounters involve the Kafers. These are grouped together for convenience and listed below.

**Kafer:** The characters happen to encounter a Kafer warrior who is alone.

Details of the encounter are left to the referee and will depend

on the characters' alertness, the terrain, light, and other factors. However, either the characters will surprise the Kafer (it is doing something other than watching out for them when they first see it), or humans and Kafer will blunder into one another and the surprise will be mutual. The Kafer is armed with a "thud gun" or "flashlight" and 1D6 hand grenades.

OCC: C; RNS: R; SET: S; WLD: R

**Kafer War Party:** The characters encounter 2D6 + 3 Kafers. Most of the Kafers will be armed with thud guns or flashlights. A few will have "horse pistols." Each will carry 1D6 Kafer hand grenades. The Kafer party's alertness will vary at the referee's discretion. Also at the referee's discretion, the Kafers may be traveling in one or more of the Kafer vehicles known as "crawlers" or "bug buses."

The band may be encountered as it attacks a human settlement or homestead, or it may be on the move.

OCC: C; RNS: R; RTE: R; SET: R; WLD: R

**Large Kafer War Party:** The characters encounter 4D6 + 12 Kafers.

This is a large Kafer war band, and it is out looking for trouble. The Kafers will be armed with an assortment of weapons. They will be riding (or have available nearby) a number of crawlers and bug buses equipped with plasma guns.

Depending on the situation, the band may be attacking a human settlement or outpost, or it may be simply on the march.

OCC: S; RTE: R; SET: S; WLD: R

**Kafer Attack:** The characters encounter the *Large Kafer War Party* described above. The Kafers are thoroughly occupied with an attack on a human party.

Depending on the situation, and at the referee's discretion, the human party may be a military or civilian vehicle or convoy ambushed on a road, a small military outpost or a civilian homestead or settlement which has been surrounded and attacked, or a single human or a human family holed up in a building, on a hilltop, or in a cave. At the time of the encounter, the Kafer attack is just beginning or has already begun. The Kafers are not aware of the characters' party, and any attack launched by the characters will take them completely by surprise.

If the situation warrants it, this result may mean an attack on the characters themselves instead, possibly from ambush.

RTE: R; SET: R; TWN: R

**Kafer Encampment:** The characters encounter a Kafer encampment consisting of a number of crude huts or lean-tos and 3D6 + 12 Kafers. They will be armed with all types of Kafer weapons, and vehicles of various types will be nearby. The Kafers will have posted sentries; how many, and whether or not the characters encounter these sentries before sighting the encampment, will depend on the situation and on the referee's discretion.

OCC: C; SET: R; WLD: R

**Abandoned Kafer Encampment:** The characters find an encampment, as above, but it has been abandoned. This find will give the characters a chance to explore in hopes of learning something about their opponents. This exploration is a *Searching for Salvage* task. Finds may include various weapons, Kafer artifacts, or even human prisoners.

A total mishap in this examination means that the camp has *not* been abandoned; the owners were out, and now they've come home. What happens next will depend on how carefully the characters prepared for such a possibility by posting sentries or lookouts.

OCC: S; SET: R; WLD: R

**Landslide:** The characters find rocks, boulders, or other debris rolling down on them from above. Landslides may occur at the

bases of cliffs, on the sides of hills or steep slopes, in mountain valleys, canyons, or deep gullies, along glaciers, or anywhere where rocks, mud, snow, ice, or other debris could land on top of the characters. In ruins, a landslide indicates the collapse of fire- or blast-damaged structures as the characters pass by. The effects of a landslide may be suffered by characters inside or near buildings during a severe seismic quake. Landslides may also occur on or near erupting volcanos, complicated by the presence of hot lava or poisonous gases.

Avoiding the effects of a landslide is an *Avoid Landslide* task. Characters who fail to avoid the effects of a landslide may be injured.

ICE: C; MTN: S; RNS: R; RVR: R

**Lightning:** The characters are endangered by lightning.

Normally, lightning will occur as part of a thunderstorm. Occasionally, severe lightning storms unaccompanied by rain can occur in Aurore's highly charged atmosphere, particularly in the high country east towards the base of the Sub-Tithonian Plateau.

Avoiding lightning is accomplished by rolling for the task *Take Shelter from Storm*. Tracked vehicles are generally well-grounded and safe as shelters from lightning. Hover vehicles or wheeled vehicles, however, can be severely damaged if they are struck, and characters inside them injured or killed. Better as shelters are caves, buildings, and any low area such as a gully or streambed. Failure to take shelter may result in the character being hit and killed or seriously injured by lightning.

Lightning can occur anywhere on Aurore.

**Mercenary Officer:** The characters encounter a mercenary captain in the service of the Tanstaaf government. He will be able to answer questions put to him concerning where things are in town on a 2D6 roll of 6+. If the characters buy him a drink, he'll relate various items of general information and rumors concerning recent military campaigns and events on Aurore. If the characters desire to sign on with "the best merc unit on Aurore" (the Tanstaaf Free Legion), he'll be glad to take them to a guy he knows and fix things up.

TAN: S; SET: R; PRT: S

**Militia-1:** The characters encounter 1D6 off-duty militia. They are unarmed.

Depending on the situation, they could be looking for a good fight (especially in a bar), or they could simply be out for a good time. As necessary, avoiding a fight and striking up a conversation with them are tasks (*Avoid Fight*, *Make Acquaintance*) which will be routine if the characters are not in the military and difficult if they are mercenaries (TFL or Foreign Legion).

Successfully making friends with them will yield several rumors which may currently be circulating in the area.

COL: C; CTY: S; PRT: S; SET: C

**Militia-2:** The characters encounter 2D6 militia, armed and on duty. They may be assembling to attack, or they may be serving as local police or security forces. They will not be inclined to talk, but if players can succeed at a *Make Acquaintance* task (Difficult) with them, they may provide the characters with rumors or other information about what may currently be happening in the area.

COL: S; CTY: S; PRT: S; SET: S

**Mining Settlement:** The characters encounter a small (less than 1000 inhabitants) mining outpost or settlement. NPCs present will include mining engineers, prospectors, and scavengers. NPCs will be on hand with skills such as Mechanical and Electronic. Machine parts, tools, and repair facilities will be available for vehicles and heavy machinery. (Mining operations on Aurore are highly automated, requiring such facilities.) A small convoy



may be assembled nearby to transport mined ores back to civilization.

**MNG:** C; **SET:** S; **WLD:** R

**Port Authority Officials:** The characters encounter 1D6 agents for the Tanstaafl Port Authority. So long as the characters are not trying to smuggle something illegal (addictive drugs, Terran insect pests) onto Aurore, this encounter will be purely routine. The officials may be asked specific questions about events or places on Aurore; they will give a satisfactory answer on a 2D6 roll of 6+. They will also be able to direct the characters to a private hiring agency, a Tanstaafl Free Legion recruiter, or (for a bribe) a joygirl.

The characters will need to see Port Authority officials for permission and to file a flight plan if they wish to fly anywhere else on Aurore, and they will need to see them if they wish to ship weapons or cargos worth more than Lv100,000 on- or off-world.

**PRT (TAN):** C

**Private Hiring Agency Personnel:** The characters encounter one or more (referee's discretion) native Aurorans who work for an agency which recruits workers on short-term contracts. They may be encountered in an agency office, or they may be in a bar or on the streets looking for potential workers.

If the characters are not looking for employment, this encounter can be treated as a *Citizen* encounter instead. If the characters are looking for work, the agency will be able to get them together with employers for any of a number of jobs. The agency will generally take 10 percent of the characters' pay for the next six months as a fee for the service, though this is subject to bargaining.

**COL:** C; **CTY:** C; **PRT:** C; **SET:** R

**Refugees:** The characters encounter 2D6 Aurorans who have been displaced by Kafer raids on their homes or town. They may be living in temporary housing or a shantytown, or the characters may encounter them on a road or at an airfield or spaceport where they have just arrived from elsewhere on Aurore.

The characters may either ignore the refugees or attempt to talk with them. They will be reticent and still in emotional shock over the events of the past several days. Getting to know them is a *Make Acquaintance* task.

Success at this task will yield various currently circulating rumors, as well as information regarding the refugees themselves—such as where they came from and why they were forced to leave.

**CTY:** C; **PRT:** C; **RNS:** S; **RTE:** S; **SET:** C; **WLD:** R

**Ruins:** The characters encounter a settlement, community, or solitary homestead or outpost which has been destroyed. In some cases, these ruins will be the remnants of a factory or mining complex, or even a major city which was devastated by Kafer kinetic energy or nuclear weapons during their orbital bombardment. Isolated homesteads will have been burned.

Ruins caused by nuclear bombardment will be extensive, but, by this time, only the relatively small central crater and the exposed steel skeletons of buildings or bridges will remain radioactive. Ruins caused by kinetic energy weapons (masses of metal or asteroidal debris dropped from space with great accuracy) will not be radioactive at all.

At the referee's discretion, a careful search of the ruins may turn up abandoned equipment of value to the characters. This may be anything from military vehicles or weapons to salvageable heavy machinery in a gutted factory. The referee should keep in mind, however, that such ruins are likely to have been picked over by Auroran scavengers already. Searching through ruins for usable salvage is a specific *Searching for Salvage* task.

Also at the referee's discretion, the characters may occasionally encounter NPCs at ruin sites, including refugees, scavengers, and

lone Kafers.

**IND:** C; **OCC:** V; **SET:** C; **WLD:** R

**Scavenger:** The characters encounter a scavenger, a native Auroran who makes his living finding, selling, or buying anything from abandoned war material to Kafer heads. He is an excellent source of information but will insist on payment (at a price which he and the characters will haggle over) for each piece of information.

This character will also offer to buy Kafer heads or skins (should the characters have any) and would be able to offer them a deal on weapons, vehicles, or almost anything else, at perhaps one-tenth the usual market price.

Bargaining with such a character is a *Bargaining* task.

**COL:** C; **CTY:** C; **IND:** R; **RNS:** S; **SET:** S; **TAN:** V; **WLD:** R

**Seismic Quake:** An earth tremor is felt. If the characters are in the open on flat ground or in aircraft or moving hovercraft, the quake will not be dangerous, but characters inside buildings or ground vehicles or in terrain where landslides or avalanches could take place will be in danger. Avoiding such danger is either an *Avoid Landslide* or a *Take Shelter* task, and failure may result in injury.

To determine the severity of a quake, the referee rolls 2D6 on the Seismic Quake Severity table on page 67.

Seismic quakes may be encountered anywhere on Aurore, though they are far more common in volcanic areas than elsewhere.

**Severe Weather:** A storm is approaching rapidly. The referee rolls 2D6 on the following table.

Die	Result
2-5	Windstorm
6-9	Thunderstorm
10-11	Lightning
12	Tornado

After determining the type of severe weather, the referee should look up the encounter results for that particular storm and apply them.

Weather events occur everywhere on Aurore.

**Soldiers:** The referee must determine the identity of any soldiers encountered during the course of an adventure on Aurore. The maps provided in this sourcebook showing specific unit locations may be of help in this. Possible encounters include any of the various French units (La Milice, Legion Etrangere, etc.) in Aurore Francais; militia or the Tanstaafl Free Legion mercenary unit in Tanstaafl; or guerrilla remnants of the Ukrainian Ochara in Novoa Kiyev. Details of each encounter, of course, are up to the referee and will depend on circumstances at the time.

Specific types of encounters are listed below.

**Soldiers-1:** The characters encounter 2D6 off-duty, unarmed soldiers. The characters may ignore them or approach them seeking specific information. They will answer questions put to them, except if questioned inside a bar, on a 2D6 roll of 8+. If the encounter takes place in a bar, they may have decided that the place is *theirs* and that they don't want strangers in the place. This will be particularly true if the soldiers are Tanstaafl Free Legion or Foreign Legion. Avoiding a fight in this situation is an *Avoid Fight* task.

If the characters are themselves of the same military unit as the NPCs, or if the situation does not seem to warrant a fight, the NPCs can be approached through the use of the *Make Acquaintance* task.

Success at these tasks will result in the troops sharing war stories and theories about the Kafers, which may include various rumors



circulating in the area at the time.

COL: C; CTY: C; PRT: C; SET: S

**Soldiers-2:** The characters encounter 2D6 soldiers. They are armed and on duty. The nature of their duty depends on where the encounter takes place, but they could be patrolling the streets as policemen, guarding a warehouse or spaceport area, or mustering to march out-country to fight Kafers. If approached, they will answer specific questions about locations or events on a 2D6 roll of 8+, but they will not have time to share rumors and will not engage in further conversation.

COL: C; PRT: C; SET: S

**Soldiers-3:** The characters encounter a full platoon of soldiers. Depending on the situation, either they have just returned from combat, or they are about to go into combat. If approached, they will answer specific questions but will not give rumors unless the characters strike up a conversation with them (a *Make Acquaintance* task). This is a routine task if the characters themselves belong to the same unit as the NPCs, a difficult task if they are not.

COL: S; PRT: S; SET: S

**Tanstaaf Free Legion Recruiter:** The characters encounter a sergeant serving with the Tanstaaf Free Legion as a recruiter. "If it's a fight you're lookin' for, boys, we can fix you up! We need good men to fight the Kafers and send 'em packin' back to where they belong!" He will sign the characters on as mercenaries in the Tanstaaf defense forces.

Employment as a mercenary is discussed elsewhere in this sourcebook.

He will not generally share rumors or other information, but he may be induced to do so if the characters can become friendly with him, a difficult *Make Acquaintance* task.

PRT (TAN): S; TAN: C

This encounter could be reshaped by the referee into an encounter with a recruiter for the French Foreign Legion in Aurore Francais.

**Thugs:** The characters encounter 1D6 thugs.

The exact circumstances of the encounter are left to the referee and may depend on the situation. If the player characters outnumber the band of thugs or are well and visibly armed, the thugs will flee and not attempt a confrontation. The referee may elect to have the characters interrupt the robbery of some other NPC of his choosing and use the rescue as an opportunity to introduce the characters to this new NPC.

If the characters themselves are outnumbered or are not visibly armed, the thugs may be attempting to rob them, possibly by confronting them, possibly by following them in hopes of trapping them or luring them into a deserted alley or back street.

If the characters have made any enemies so far in the adventure, these thugs may have been hired by those enemies to kill or threaten them; this encounter then may represent deliberate attack, harassment, or intimidation.

The thugs are novice and/or experienced NPCs, young, armed with an assortment of knives, clubs, or (at the referee's discretion) handguns. They are willing to kill for anything of value.

COL: R; CTY: S; PRT: R

**Thunderstorm:** A severe thunderstorm occurs. The characters will have 1D6×10 minutes warning as clouds mushroom into the sky above them, the sky turns black (during daylight hours), and lightning is seen in the distance (day or night). The storm will begin with hail and fierce rain. If the characters are camped in a low area, a gully, or near a stream or river, they may (at the referee's discretion) experience a flash flood as well. Characters caught out in the open may suffer the effects of lightning on a 2D6 roll of 11+.

Taking shelter from a thunderstorm is a specific task (see page

34). Characters unable to find shelter may (rarely) suffer light wounds from hail, or serious wounds or death from lightning.

The storm will last for 2D6×10 minutes, then abate. At the referee's discretion, it may continue to rain for another 1D6 hours after the severe weather ends.

Thunderstorms can be encountered anywhere on Aurore, though they are rarer towards the Sub-Tithonian Plateau than near the seacoast.

**Tornado:** This is a particularly violent type of windstorm, characterized by a funnel cloud 10 to 100 meters wide, created by a vortex of high-speed wind. The warning for a tornado is the same as for a thunderstorm. The characters will first see the tornado as a black funnel cloud on the horizon to the west-southwest (the direction from which tornados always approach in this region) and will have 2D6×30 seconds to prepare for its approach.

The tornado will touch down near enough to the characters to injure them or their equipment on a 2D6 roll of 12. Vehicles weighing less than 4000 kg will be overturned or severely damaged, and vehicles weighing less than 12,000 kg will be moderately damaged. Aircraft of any type in flight will crash unless the tornado can be avoided.

Avoiding the effects of a tornado is a specific task (see page 34). Failure to take shelter may result in death or serious injury.

The tornado will pass in seconds but will be immediately be followed by a thunderstorm on a 2D6 roll of 7+.

Tornados may be encountered anywhere on Aurore, though they are less common in the mountains and Hotback than they are closer to the coast and along the tidal flats.

**Trader:** The characters encounter a trader recently arrived from off-world. If they are able to strike up a friendly conversation with him (a *Make Acquaintance* task) he will relate several rumors concerning events off-world, such as the arrival of a naval fleet from Earth or the return of the Kafer armada.

CTY: S; IND: R; PRT: C

**Volcanic Eruption:** A nearby volcano has erupted. Possible effects are listed with die roll tables on page 68.

Volcanos are found in certain specific areas of Aurore, especially in chains through the Hotback and along the Sub-Tithonian Plateau.

**Windstorm:** A windstorm begins. The characters will have some warning as the wind begins increasing in intensity. At its peak, gusts will reach 100 kph, and vehicles weighing less than 2000 kg may be overturned or severely damaged.

Avoiding a windstorm is a task (see page 34). Characters who fail to take shelter during the storm may be injured. In broad, open areas, the wind may be accompanied by windborne dust which will obscure visibility. The storm will last 1D6 hours then abate rapidly.

A windstorm is a possible result of a *Severe Weather* encounter result.

Windstorms can occur anywhere on Aurore, though they are less common in the mountains and at high altitudes than elsewhere.

**Wildlife:** The characters encounter native Auroran wildlife. Roll 2D6 on the Wildlife Encounter table on page 64. Note that the creatures encountered may vary, depending on where the encounter takes place.

Auroran wildlife can be encountered anywhere on the planet, though each individual form lives in its own particular terrain type or area. The listing for various specific animals in *Auroran Biology* gives the specific regions where each may be encountered.

**Workers:** The characters encounter a number of workers engaged in off-loading cargo, storing containers in a warehouse, or operating heavy machinery. In remote areas, the workers could

be hired hands working on a farm or mine. The characters can ignore these NPCs or approach them with specific questions about places or events in the area. Those questions will be answered on a 2D6 roll of 8+.

The NPCs will resist being drawn into longer conversations, but the characters can attempt this as a specific *Make Acquaintance* task. Success at this task allows the workers to share various rumors which may be circulating in the area.

COL: C; CTY: C; IND: C; PRT: C; SET: S

## NEW TASKS

The **Traveller: 2300** rules describe the use of specific tasks in order to perform certain actions or accomplish certain goals. The creation and use of new tasks is an ongoing part of the **Traveller: 2300** game system. A number of tasks required by conditions and events on Aurore are presented below.

**Avoid Fight:** The characters may find themselves in a position where someone is looking for a fight—thugs on the street, for example, or a party of off-duty mercenaries in a Dawntown bar. Avoiding a fight in these circumstances requires a fast tongue and a persuasive manner. It is an unskilled task.

To avoid a fight (Unskilled): Routine. Eloquence. 30 seconds.

Any mishap will result in a barroom brawl or an attack, depending on the situation.

**Avoid Flash Flood:** Characters caught in low-lying gullies, stream or river beds, and other low ground by the approach of a flash flood must attempt to scramble to high ground as fast as possible. It is an unskilled task, but the character's dexterity may help in some situations.

To avoid flash flood (Unskilled): Routine. Dexterity. Instant.

The task may be routine, difficult, formidable, or impossible depending on the circumstances, and the results of failure may range from a potential light wound (a sprained ankle while climbing an embankment) to death by drowning. In general, the task will be routine in dry weather, difficult in a storm, and formidable if the characters are caught completely unprepared (they were asleep in their sleeping bags at the time). Alert characters may be warned in advance by the sight of a thunderstorm in the mountains above them.

**Avoid Landslide:** The characters must attempt to avoid the effects of a rock-, mud-, ice- or landslide. It is an unskilled task but may be easier for characters with greater dexterity.

To avoid landslide (Unskilled): Routine. Dexterity. Instant.

An avalanche is a landslide with bigger rocks—and more of them. Avoiding an avalanche is identical to avoiding a landslide but is a difficult task.

The results of mishap will depend greatly on the exact situation. Obviously, characters engaged in climbing a sheer cliff are in greater danger than a character at the bottom of a hill. Avoiding danger in such circumstances may increase routine tasks to difficult, and difficult tasks to formidable ones.

**Bargaining:** The characters are in a position where they must haggle over the price for supplies, Kafer skins, or secondhand equipment from a scavenger or shopkeeper. This is an unskilled task, but Bargaining skill is always a definite plus.

To bargain (Unskilled): Routine. Bargain. 1 minute.

*Disregarding the threat of Kafer attack, this CSA representative continues the foundation's studies on spongegrass (Spongiagrammen sp.).*



Bargaining with some characters, especially shifty sorts and scavengers, may be upgraded to a difficult task.

A mishap result will have various outcomes at the referee's discretion. It could mean a poor price for goods offered by the characters or that the deal falls through. When buying equipment from a scavenger, a total mishap means that whatever was bought malfunctions or breaks almost at once, or that the sale is a scam and that the scavenger has taken the money and vanished.

**Make Acquaintance:** The characters attempt to strike up a conversation with strangers for the purpose of gathering information. This is an unskilled task.

To make acquaintance (Unskilled): Routine. Eloquence. 12 seconds.

A successful outcome in this task will result in the NPCs sharing several rumors which may be circulating in the area; it could also lead to introductions to other more important or more influential NPCs.

**Searching for Salvage:** The characters are searching through ruins or an abandoned camp for anything of interest or value. It may be applied to hunting for something specific—a length of copper wire for some important repairs—or it can simply mean a systematic search for *anything* of value. It is an unskilled task, but, in some applications, Scrounge skill will be of great use. The time factor may vary depending on the nature of the search, but six minutes is a good first approximation.

To search for salvage (Unskilled): Routine. Scrounge. Varies.

A mishap generally means failure in the search. A total mishap could indicate some sudden danger—such as the appearance of Kafers or the collapse of a wrecked building.

**Take Shelter:** The characters see a storm coming and attempt to take shelter from it. This is an unskilled task.

To take shelter from storm (Unskilled): Routine. Dexterity. 6 seconds.



Characters might also want to take shelter during a seismic quake, generally by getting outside and away from any buildings or, if necessary, finding shelter in a doorway or under a table inside. This task, too, is an unskilled task.

To take shelter from seismic quake (Unskilled): Routine. Dexterity. 1 second.

Failure at these tasks can have any of a number of results depending on the nature of the danger. For example, characters caught in a windstorm might be hit—even killed—by flying debris, but their chances of death are much greater if they are caught in the open by a tornado or by lightning. In general, the effects of a mishap in this task are left to the referee's discretion and will depend on the situation.

This list of new tasks is not, of course, intended to be exhaustive. Other tasks that are specific to very particular situations (such as avoiding falling ash from a volcano) are detailed in the chapter headed *Planetographic Details*.

## BACKGROUND DETAILS OF AURORE

This section is designed to help the referee picture Aurore and the conditions there. It is background material only, intended to add color to the referee's narrative and to help remind the players from time to time that they are on an alien planet.

**Similarities:** In many ways, Aurore is similar to Earth. Both are garden worlds, after all, planets where humans can walk around without wearing space suits or other protective gear. Aurore's surface gravity is only seven-tenths that of Earth, enough less that a man feels considerably stronger and lighter as he walks and works. The temperature in the longitudes of Tanstaaf, the French colonies, and Novoa Kiyev is moderate, ranging from 20 to 30 degrees centigrade, but rising rapidly in the region known as the "Hotback," closer to the base of the Sub-Tithonian Plateau. The air is thinner than on Earth at sea level—about what humans experience in Mexico City—but is still well within tolerable limits.

But should a man ever forget that he is on a world far removed from Earth, he need only look at the sky.

**Tithonus:** Aurore is a satellite of the superjovian gas giant Tithonus. Tithonus is a small representative of that class of cosmic objects known as brown dwarfs; it can be considered to lie midway between large planets and small stars on the cosmic hierarchy, and, though it does not produce heat and light through nuclear fusion as stars do, it *does* generate more heat than it receives from the two suns of Eta Bootis. In fact, Aurore receives more heat from Tithonus than it does from its two suns.

Tithonus is visible (at least in part) from anywhere on the planet from 100° west to 100° east. It is a visibly flattened sphere. Its high rate of spin has caused it to bulge at the equator, and though it appears to glow with a dull, red-orange light, bands, swirls, and streaks similar to those in the atmosphere of Jupiter are clearly visible. Tithonus also reflects light from its suns and shows clearly visible phases which change with the positions of the twin suns in the sky.

An observer at the 0-degree longitude line on Aurore, in the center of the Sub-Tithonian Plateau, would see Tithonus suspended in the sky directly overhead. As he walked east or west, the planet would appear to set behind him, until, when he reached 90° east or west, Tithonus would appear to lie bisected on the horizon. On the far side of Aurore, the anti-Tithonian hemisphere, the gas giant is never visible at all.

From Aurore, Tithonus subtends an angle of 15°. This means the disk appears about as wide as does an object five inches long

held at arm's length. Aurore's libration (see the explanation of Aurore's tides on page 36) makes Tithonus appear to rise and fall across 5° or one-third of its own diameter. Thus, an observer standing at exactly 90° west would see Tithonus on the eastern horizon, divided in half, but over a period of 15 hours the disk would rise until only the lower third was hidden. Through the next 30 hours Tithonus would set until only the top third was visible, and then it would begin rising once more. The rise and fall of Tithonus is linked to Aurore's orbital period, nearly 61 hours, and to the tides. High tide occurs as Tithonus reaches the lowest point in its cycle; low tide occurs when it is at its highest.

**Other Moons:** Three other major satellites besides Aurore orbit Tithonus, though Aurore is the largest and the only one which is habitable. The inner satellites, Memnon and Selene, are airless balls of rock which show tiny discs as they rise and fall above the limb of Tithonus and go through the same phases as the parent planet. Antilochus is sheathed in ice and is a small, brilliant disk in Aurore's night sky, but barely visible when it lies past Tithonus in the sky near the giant. Besides these three, there are countless other moons of varying sizes, including five which are larger than 100 km in diameter. All of these appear in Aurore's night sky as slow-moving, brilliant points of light.

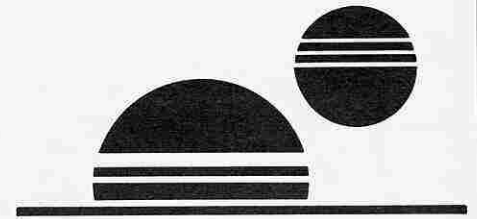
**Eta Bootis:** Aurore's (and Tithonus') parent star is the double star known as "Eta Bootis." Eta Bootis A, called "Notre Soleil" by French Aurorans and "Muphrid" elsewhere, is a G0 IV subgiant. Its companion is an M0 red dwarf called "Rubis." The brighter, yellow sun appears to be about half the size of the sun in Earth's sky, but it appears several times brighter. It is hazardous to look at Notre Soleil with unprotected eyes. Rubis is much smaller, showing a barely perceptible disk when it is visible.

Aurore's day is nearly 61 hours long, precisely the same as its orbital period about Tithonus. From the location of Tanstaaf, at 90° west and close to the equator, sunrise occurs with first one, then the other of Aurore's suns rising above the sullen red hemisphere of Tithonus, illuminating the gas giant's limb with silver light as the yellow sun climbs above it. A little over 15 hours later it is high noon, with the suns directly overhead and the upper half of Tithonus brightly lit. A little over 15 hours later, the suns set in the west in reverse order from their rising, and night and the light of Tithonus rule for the next 30 hours.

Most of Aurore's illumination comes from Muphrid, which is so bright that dim Rubis is lost in the glare for nearly half the time (though it can always be seen when it has risen clear of Tithonus and Muphrid is still eclipsed). At high noon, the surface of Aurore is about as brightly lit as on the afternoon of a lightly overcast day on Earth. The first quarter of the night is more brightly lit than the night of a full moon on Earth, because Tithonus continues to reflect the light of Muphrid after Muphrid has set. Hours pass, however, and the illuminated portion of Tithonus continues to dwindle, growing dark from top to bottom. Depending on how much of Tithonus is above the horizon (libration again) and on how far east or west of 90° west the observer is standing, the changing phases of Tithonus can provide more than enough light to read by, as much as during twilight on Earth. The part of Tithonus not illuminated by Muphrid, however, is sullen and bloody, and all light on Aurore has a reddish cast to it which can take some time to get used to.

**Separation of Muphrid and Rubis:** At their widest separation in the sky, Muphrid and Rubis appear to be 14° apart, coincidentally almost the same as the size of the disk of Tithonus. Thus, Rubis will appear 14° to one side of Muphrid. For the next 141 days, Rubis appears to draw closer and closer to the far brighter Muphrid and at some point, probably about 70 days into the cycle,





# Planetographic Details

This section gives specific details on each of the general planetary zones on Aurore, with suggestions for adventures and encounters in each area.

## HIGH DESERT

**Description:** The High Desert, occupying the Sub-Tithonian Plateau, is completely unexplored except for observations and satellite reconnaissance from orbit. The plateau averages 12,000 meters above mean sea level, and the atmospheric pressure is less than .5 atmospheres. Humans would require oxygen masks to breathe comfortably at this altitude. The mean temperatures range from 40° to 90°C, with the highest temperatures being recorded at the so-called "Hot Pole" at the center of the plateau.

The High Desert is isolated geologically and biologically from the rest of Aurore by the mountain escarpments which surround it. The mountains have different names in different places but are known generically as the "Rimwall."

The plateau is the result of tidal stresses on Aurore's crust imparted by Tithonus, suspended in the sky directly over the Hot Pole. In effect, Aurore has been drawn into an egg shape imperceptible to the human eye, but easily measured by orbital surveys and planetological scans. Tithonus' gravity has caused the hemisphere nearest the giant planet to bulge upwards, and the tidal stresses on Aurore's crust have given rise to constant orogenesis (mountain-building).

Volcanic and seismic activity continues throughout the plateau. Numerous mountains along the plateau's rim are active volcanoes, and in some areas there are daily seismic events as severe as Meralli V or greater.

There is keen planetological interest in the High Desert among Auroran scientists. A major goal of Le Conseil Scientifique d'Aurore (CSA) is to establish research and meteorological stations across the plateau and to conduct planetological and biological surveys of the area. Evidence gathered from orbit suggests that even the most inhospitable desert regions of the central plateau are not utterly lifeless, but opinions differ regarding the nature of such life. Whatever lives there must be quite different from life forms already studied along the world's ocean shores. Too, it is believed that an understanding of the high altitude meteorological processes of the Hot Pole would lead to better understanding of Aurore's complex and violent weather patterns in the temperate zone. Unfortunately, the arrival of the Kafers has interrupted all planetary research beyond terrain mapping and surveys necessary to the war effort.

**Approaches:** The easiest way to reach the High Desert would be by aircraft or air/space interface craft. Since Kafer ground-to-air weapons have sharply restricted air travel of any kind on Aurore, expeditions with the goal of penetrating the High Desert in the foreseeable future are likely to be carried out by means of ground or ground effect vehicles or on foot. While the mountain wall around the plateau is formidable, several overland approaches to the plateau have been identified from orbit, and at least partly surveyed on the ground. These are listed below.

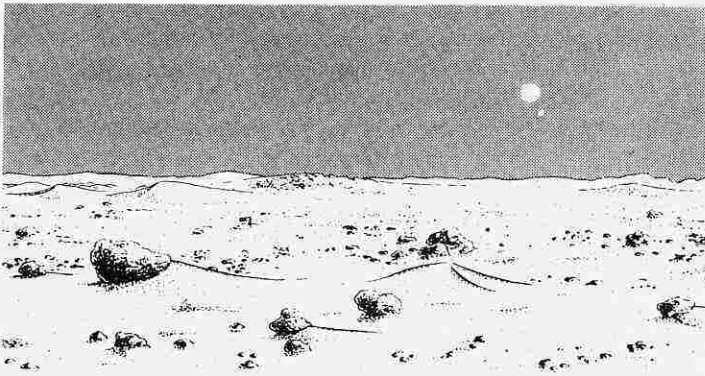
## PHAETON RIFT

The Phaeton Rift is a seismic rift valley along the Phaeton Mountains 7000 km east of Tanstaaf City. The Mount Phaeton named in the scenario *The Slopes of Mount Phaeton* in the **Traveller: 2300** game module *Kafer Dawn* lies at the end of a long mountain spur nearly 4000 km west of the cliff wall proper. The Phaeton Mountains are themselves the result of orogenic processes along the rift valley, evidence of the constant tidal drag of Tithonus on Aurore.

The rift valley itself is 400 km long, running due east in an almost straight line south of and parallel to the equator. In appearance it is similar to the La Gouffre tidal bore north of Tanstaaf, a smooth-bottomed valley hemmed in by sheer rock cliffs varying from 10 to 500 m tall. Once level, the valley floor has been tilted by continued tidal stress; it is now, in effect, a ramp leading from the Hotback lowlands up into the High Desert. The land at the western end of the valley averages 3500 m above mean sea level. At the eastern end it opens onto the Sub-Tithonian Plateau almost 9 km. In most places, the slope is relatively gentle, though the rise is not uniform and there are places where the path becomes difficult and steep. The walls of the plateau running north and south on either side of the valley, however, are nearly vertical cliffs five and a half miles tall, an impossible climb for the most dedicated alpinist, even ignoring the frequent seismic quakes and landslides.

## PASSAGE DE L'ORIENT

Some 4000 km east northeast of Lumiere d'Aube lies the "Passage of the East," a broad fan of broken rock spilled through a gap in the plateau rimwall opened by some ancient seismic event. The spill has created a roadway to the top of the plateau, though the ground is loose and landslides common. The base was first reached in 2291 by the French planetologist/explorer Victor Galtier, but the destruction of three of his vehicles in a landslide prevented further exploration and nearly ended Galtier's career.



### High desert

## NORTH PLAINS PASSAGE

This passage onto the High Desert has been identified by satellite reconnaissance photos. It lies north northwest of the French colony, across the Golfe du Nord on the coast of La Mer Ceindant. The mountain ringwall is low here, and though the land is rocky and barren, it is believed that the way lies open between tidal flats to the east and mountains to the north and west, with the land rising gradually from Aurore's north pole towards the hot pole. The area has not been directly surveyed, however, due to the obvious difficulties of mounting a major planetological expedition by sea.

## S'TYEHNAH

The land west of Novoa Kiyev, called "Zahpad Zemlya," is bordered by tidal flats of varying widths which give way to a sheer, rugged mountain wall called "S'tyehnah" (Wall). The early Ukrainian satellite communities and the camps populated by refugees from Novoa Kiyev are located in fold valleys above the tide line and below the S'tyehnah escarpments, which rise 2000 m above the flood plain.

Though rugged, the climb to the top of the escarpment is relatively easy, for the escarpment has been cleaved by straight-edged valleys and fault lines under the incessant tug of Tithonus' gravity. Once at the top, explorers would be able to travel west across gradually rising terrain for a distance of some 6000 km, at which point the altitude above mean sea level is over 10,000 m and the High Desert can be said to have properly begun. It would be possible for vehicles to make this trek.

## VEHICLES

Vehicles can ascend to the top of the plateau only at the above-named approaches. In places, the slope will be so steep that negotiating the terrain will be a difficult task for the vehicle drivers. The task is stated as follows:

To negotiate difficult terrain with vehicle: Difficult. Appropriate vehicle skill. 10 seconds.

Mishaps in such an attempt will range from a delay (minor mishap), to repairable vehicle damage (major mishap), to a serious mishap which endangers the lives of the vehicle's passengers and threatens to abort their mission.

In some cases, the only way past steep or extremely rocky terrain will be to take the vehicles apart and carry them, piece by piece. This is accomplished as a series of three tasks, repeated for each vehicle. These tasks are not possible for vehicles heavier than 3000 tons, which means that vehicles such as Explorer ATVs

or Bridgeport Swift Songbirds could be carried past difficult terrain, but a heavy truck or a tank could not. Explorer vehicles (such as the Explorer ATV) are generally designed to allow them to be easily disassembled for just this sort of emergency. For vehicles like the military ACV-APC, however, the assembly/disassembly tasks will be difficult rather than routine.

The requisite tasks are described as follows:

To disassemble vehicle to cross terrain: Routine. Mechanical. 10 minutes.

*Referee's Note:* Minimum three individuals per vehicle, at least one of whom must have Mechanical skill.

To carry disassembled vehicle across rough terrain: Difficult or formidable, depending on terrain. Strength. 10 minutes.

To reassemble vehicle after crossing terrain: Routine. Mechanical. 10 minutes.

*Referee's Note:* Minimum three individuals per vehicle, at least one of whom must have Mechanical skill.

Note that the time spans and difficulty of the operation can vary widely depending on the length and grade of the difficult passage and on the number of personnel available to help.

## DIRECT ASCENT

Though forbidding, the Sub-Tithonian Plateau's Rimwall Mountains offer numerous possible points at which an ascent might be attempted. Without exception, these routes are closed to vehicles and could be navigated only by parties on foot. The average height of the Rimwall Mountains is 9000 m, almost five and a half miles, and most of that is nearly straight up, an impossible climb. In places, however, the broken, quake-savaged terrain offers numerous rifts, faults, valleys, and escarpments which could be navigated by a sufficiently determined and properly equipped party. Armed with satellite maps and proper climbing gear, a party could make the passage on foot.

Such a party would need climbing gear, extensive supplies of food and water, and oxygen and breathing masks. Characters attempting this feat would have to possess a new skill: Mountain Climbing.

**Mountain Climbing:** The character knows how to use pitons, rappelling gear, and other climbing gear to scale slopes and cliff faces, and, in addition, he is familiar with techniques for traversing steep slopes. Skill levels allow DMs in performing specific tasks such as negotiating difficult terrain or avoiding injury in dangerous situations.

Any given day of climbing would be considered a task, as described below:

To climb a mountain: Routine to impossible, depending on terrain. Mountain Climbing. 1 hour.

Mishaps would range from minor impediments or delays to the passage (minor mishaps) to potentially deadly falls or threats (such as an avalanche or seismic event). The referee may decide to introduce additional set tasks during the course of a day's climb, representing unforeseen difficulties in the path; dangers posed by storms, quakes, or rockfalls; or delays caused by getting lost or choosing the wrong direction at a fork in the path. These tasks are literally too numerous to mention; they will vary from simple attempts to find shelter (during a storm, for example) to extremely

difficult traverses of sheer rock walls.

The successful completion of a day's climbing activities will result in the characters finding a camp, having gained both altitude and distance on their route. The passage will be an average of 60 km long, with a change in altitude of 9000 m. Each day's climb will cross approximately 2 km and change altitude by 300 m, though these values will vary drastically from day to day and in different areas. The climbers will require rest approximately one day out of five. Thus, on the average (and not allowing for delays caused by rockfalls, wrong turns, and mishaps) the passage from the Hot-back to the High Desert will require 36 days. A major problem for such an expedition would be that of supplying the climbers with enough food and oxygen to make the entire ascent—a problem conquered on Earth's mountains through the use of base camps.

There are places where the Rimwall is literally a vertical wall. Once a climbing party reached the rim at the top, special high-strength, low-weight lines (such as the carbon monofilament cables used in the construction of the beanstalks on Earth and Beta Canum) could be lowered to another party waiting at the base of the cliff, and then portable winches could be used to haul additional equipment, supplies, personnel, and even pieces of vehicles to the top.

Such an operation—both lowering the lines and hauling equipment up a five-mile cliff—would be a difficult task, described as follows:

To haul equipment (or deploy lines) up five-mile cliff: Difficult. Engineering. 30 minutes.

Minor and ordinary mishaps will result in delays as lines foul or minor mechanical problems arise which must be overcome. The result dictated by a serious mishap is obvious.

## ON THE HIGH DESERT

The High Desert encompasses an area covering almost 40 million square kilometers, nearly as large as the entire continent of Asia on Earth. Within such a large area, even desert can show considerable variation. The terrain is barren throughout, but it includes "seas" of basaltic rock, plains of broken rock, weirdly shaped and wind-eroded badlands and canyons, and seemingly endless expanses of sand dunes and dune seas. The region's constant vulcanism and seismic activity have worked to produce vast stretches of chaotically jumbled and twisted surface features.

The High Desert offers certain obvious challenges to characters attempting to traverse it. Among these are the following:

**Pressure:** With an atmospheric pressure less than half that of Earth at sea level, the air is unbreathable without special equipment. An oxygen tank and breathing mask are sufficient to enable a human to work at these altitudes, at least in the regions near the Rimwall where the temperature is not excessive.

One special difficulty of explorations at low pressures is that ground effect vehicles which rely on an air cushion to lift them clear of the surface (such as the Bridgeport Swift Songbird and various hover tanks) do not function well on Aurore above altitudes of 3000 m and will not function at all above 5000 m.

**Temperature:** The temperature rises steadily as one approaches the Hot Pole until it hovers near 90°C or more. In fact, the boiling point of water under the low atmospheric pressure of the central plateau would be far higher than 100°C, but the image of the Hot Pole baking under temperatures which are literally boiling is a popular one among Aurorans.

While special garb is not required to combat the low air pressure

of the plateau, unprotected humans will soon die from the heat. Special environmental suits are necessary for survival in the interior of the plateau, where the average temperature exceeds about 50°C.

**Weather:** The low pressure contributes to a phenomenon of the Sub-Tithonian Plateau—high winds. Air currents from Aurore's cold side are channeled across the temperate zones and over the desert as the air mass over the Hot Pole heats and rises.

The result is a steady wind toward the Hot Pole at low altitudes and away from the Pole at high altitudes. Periodically, winds which average 60 kph grow into storms with wind velocities of 200 kph or more, and tornados are frequent occurrences. Since Aurore's tide-locked rotation is quite slow, there are no Coriolis-induced storms such as Earth's hurricanes and typhoons, but the low pressure of the desert's high altitudes encourages extremely high wind speeds. The wind, naturally, picks up loose sand across the ergs or "sand seas," creating sandstorms which can last for weeks, completely blanketing the surface from orbital observation.

The natural processes which generate these storms are not yet fully understood.

**Volcanoes and Seismic Events:** Volcanoes are found thickly scattered throughout the Sub-Tithonian Plateau, though they are especially common along the Rimwall itself, where the mountain-building process continues. The majority of eruptions consist of lava flows which may extend for miles, and there are stretches of terrain encompassing thousands of square kilometers covered entirely by cracked and barren wastelands of basaltic rock.

Seismic quakes occur almost constantly across the entire High Desert Plateau, contributing in their own way to the area's topography. Rift valleys, fractures, and similar features are common, and one of the greatest dangers of travel anywhere on the High Desert is the danger of landslides during or after a severe quake. A danger peculiar to the High Desert is that caused by shifting or settling rock strata below the desert's surface, resulting in treacherous areas which look solid, but which can give way under careless pressure from foot or vehicle tread. The explorer, Victor Galtier, lost part of his expedition when rock and sand gave way above a kilometer-deep chasm on the Passage de l'Orient.

The dangers presented by both volcanoes and seismic quakes are thoroughly discussed elsewhere in this sourcebook.

**Biology:** Until recently it was assumed that the High Desert was completely lifeless. Life has a peculiar tenacity, however, and has shown a remarkable ability to adapt to extraordinary ranges of conditions on every world with its own biosphere. Satellite reconnaissance late in 2294 revealed large patches of desert surface which showed spectroscopic evidence for the Auroran analogue of chlorophyll. There has been considerable dispute among Auroran authorities over the possible nature of these patches: they seem to represent some type of native plant life, but opponents to the biological theory hold that some unknown inorganic chemical process could be the explanation instead.

The question of Auroran Hotside life forms has been temporarily shelved, along with much else, pending a resolution of the ongoing Kafer crisis. Considering the competitive viciousness of various Auroran life forms native to the planet's temperate zone, the possibility of native Auroran life forms on the Sub-Tithonian Plateau should be considered a potential threat to any explorers in the High Desert.

## REFEREE'S NOTE

The information above describing overall conditions on the High Desert may be revealed to the player characters during the course of play before they actually set out to explore it (through



conversations with locals or research). Though the High Desert remains unexplored, enough is understood about conditions there to allow characters to research what they need to know from local sources. These sources include planetary information databases which can be accessed at spaceports and in information centers in each major city, the headquarters of scientific organizations such as La Conseil Scientifique d'Aurore, and knowledgeable NPCs such as Victor Galtier.

The information which follows should be revealed to the players only as a result of personal experience. Conditions in unexplored territory, especially on a new world with only partially understood planetary dynamics and a poorly understood biosphere, will always contain surprises for those individuals who are certain that they already know what to expect.

## HIGH DESERT TERRAIN

The referee can use his own discretion about the actual terrain types and formations an exploration party will encounter while traversing the High Desert. The following list describes various types of desert terrain and features which might be encountered on the Sub-Tithonian Plateau.

The frequency of each specific type of terrain is given in terms of whether the feature is very common, common, scarce, or rare. Its size will be given in terms of 100 km hexes for broad areas, and in meters or kilometers for smaller terrain features.

Travel time information is given as a percentage based on the desert travel time figures given in the *Traveller: 2300 Player's Manual* on page 44. Thus, a 200% modifier applied to the two days required to traverse a 100 km desert hex on foot results in an actual travel time of four days, while 75% would reduce two days of travel to a day and a half. (Note that travel time modifiers are not given for travel by horse or other riding animal, since there are no native Auroran animals of this type, while imported animals, such as horses, would not survive the Sub-Tithonian Plateau's low atmospheric pressure.

**Special Problems:** The referee should note those factors associated with the indicated terrain type or feature which could have a bearing on the game or the characters.

**Referee's Note:** Travel information regarding hovercraft is provided even though the low air pressure precludes the use of hovercraft on the High Desert. There are desert areas elsewhere on Aurore where hovercraft can operate (See *Hotback*). The information provided in this section can be applied to conditions in any desert region on the planet.

## DESERT TERRAIN TYPES

Deserts are not homogeneous expanses of sand like in the movies. They have a variety of different land forms, described in more detail in the following paragraphs.

### ERG

A vast expanse of sand shaped by the prevailing winds into dunes. Ergs are also known as sand seas or dune seas; travel by foot or wheeled or tracked vehicle in this type of terrain is difficult and slow.

**Frequency:** Very common. Among other parts of the High Desert, the regions within 1000 km of the Hot Pole are entirely erg terrain.

**Size:** Minimum of seven contiguous 100 km hexes.

**Travel:** Tracked  $\times 150\%$ ; Foot and wheeled  $\times 200\%$ .

**Special Problems:** Areas of soft sand tend to trap vehicles, requiring routine or difficult tasks to dig them free. Sandstorms are frequent, more so than on other types of terrain; rolls for sand-

storms should have a DM of +1 in addition to other DMs for the roll (see *Sandstorms*, below). In addition, travel across loose-packed sand and up and down sand dunes is extremely tiring. The referee should periodically remind the players that their characters are exerting themselves, forcing them to rest frequently.

### REG OR SERIR

This is desert surface composed of gravel (Reg) or pebbles (Serir), often tightly-packed or laid down in a mosaic pattern. It is normally the result of water erosion. Serir areas on the High Plateau must be assumed to be the result of wind action, or to be traces of water action from some extremely remote period of Aurore's history, before the Sub-Tithonian Plateau was formed. It is relatively uncommon among the other terrain types of the High Desert.

**Frequency:** Scarce.

**Size:** One or two contiguous 100-km hexes.

**Travel:** As for Desert listings in the *Players' Manual*.

**Special Problems:** None.

### HAMMADA

Hammada is rocky, wind-sculpted and wind-polished terrain, generally formed when a plateau composed of different types of rock weathers unevenly. A more familiar name for the terrain type is "badlands," and it is composed of an astonishing variety of mesas, buttes, canyons, columns, and odd rock formations, all of which represent masses of rock left standing when wind or water wore away the softer rock which once surrounded it. The surface of hammada terrain may be bare rock, gravel, or wind-blown sand. Sand dunes may be encountered in hammada, though sand will not cover everything, as in erg.

**Frequency:** Common.

**Size:** Minimum of one 100-km hex. Areas seven or more contiguous hexes in extent are common.

**Travel:** Hover  $\times 125\%$ ; Tracked, wheeled and foot  $\times 150\%$ . Additional delays may be incurred by encounters with canyons or other special types of terrain features.

**Special Problems:** Some rock formations such as natural bridges or canyons may represent danger from landslides or falls to careless characters. Rough terrain may damage wheeled or tracked vehicles and may preclude travel by hover vehicles.

### LAVA FIELD

Lava fields are the result of extensive volcanic eruptions which deposit layers of molten rock over vast areas. The lava hardens into basalt or other hard, igneous rock. The terrain may be completely flat, or tortured and broken. In some cases, as the rock cools, it splits into a mosaic pattern of six-sided basaltic columns which can be quite difficult to walk on, though it does not impede vehicles.

**Frequency:** Very common, particularly within 1000 km of Rimwall and along the flanks of active or dormant volcanoes.

**Size:** One 100 km hex in extent. Smaller flows, some only a few kilometers long and a few tens of meters wide, are possible.

**Travel:** Varies with nature of terrain. Smooth surfaces have no effect at all on travel. Lava fields which are somewhat rough and broken, or which have been split into basaltic columns, will not slow vehicles, but travel by foot is modified by 150%. Extremely rough or broken terrain will result in a modifier for all vehicles as high as 300%, and wheeled or hover vehicles may be completely blocked. The referee may use his own discretion as to the nature of the lava field's surface.

**Special Problems:** Usually, volcanoes are nearby.

## CANYON

A canyon is a steep-walled valley which is generally the result of water erosion along the banks of a river. Since there has not been any free-flowing water on the High Desert in many millions of years, the relatively rare Sub-Tithonian canyons are either the result of wind erosion or the remnants of extremely ancient river courses from some geological epoch when the plateau was lower or the overall air pressure was higher.

**Frequency:** Rare. They are encountered almost exclusively within hammada-type terrain.

**Size:** Canyons may range from arroyos a few meters deep and a kilometer or less long, to vast, ancient canyon systems 100 km or more long and 500 m or more deep.

**Travel:** Varies with size of canyon. Long, deep canyons may block all vehicles and require a cautious and difficult descent and ascent by characters on foot. On the average, an encounter with a canyon will add 1D6×3 hours to a journey as the characters search for paths which their vehicles can traverse through or around the canyon.

**Special Problems:** Since canyons are erosion features, the rock along the canyon rim may be worn and prone to giving way under a careless step or the weight of a vehicle brought too close. Travellers along the floor of a canyon risk the dangers of landslides or avalanches, especially in the aftermath of a seismic quake.

Since there is no longer water erosion on the Sub-Tithonian Plateau to clear the floors of Aurore's remaining desert canyons, travellers will find many parts of the canyon floors blocked by rubble and debris knocked loose by the region's frequent quakes (see *Rockfalls*, below).

## ROCKFALLS

Because seismic quakes are so frequent in the High Desert Plateau, there are numerous areas where rock has broken free from canyon rims and cliff faces and spilled into a fan-shaped mass of piled debris. Rockfalls may be easily avoided in many cases, but travel along the floor of a canyon may be completely blocked by repeated rockfalls from the canyon walls, and, in some cases, a convenient rockfall may offer the only approach through and onto a sheer-walled cliff. The Passage de l'Orient east of Lumiere d'Aube is a very large rockfall in the face of the Rimwall.

Rockfalls are dangerous because of the possibility that a careless step could cause some delicately balanced mass of rock to slip, creating an avalanche or opening a deep, hidden chasm. Too, rockfalls are often located at places where landslides occur frequently and repeatedly every time a major seismic disturbance takes place.

**Frequency:** Scarce. They occur most frequently in hammada-type terrain and only where rock from a high elevation can spill into an adjacent lower area, such as the floor of a canyon, or along the base of a cliff.

**Size:** Varies. The smallest lie halfway up the side of a cliff a few tens of meters high and may be no more than a hundred meters wide. The largest known is the Passage de l'Orient, which breaches a cliff over five miles high and is nearly 200 km long and over 60 km wide.

**Travel:** Varies with the size and nature of the fall, but, on the average, all travel times are modified by 200%.

**Special Problems:** Hidden chasms are described below. Traversing loosely packed rocks is a difficult task described as:

To traverse a rockfall: Difficult. Endurance. 10 minutes.

A mishap may mean that rocks have given way under the weight of the characters or their vehicles, causing damage or injury.

## FAULT ESCARPMENT

Seismic faults are common on the High Desert, especially near the Rimwall. These are fairly straight lines which mark the joints between sections of Aurore's planetary crust and are particularly prone to seismic quakes. An escarpment may be a straight, sheer cliff where one side of the fault has risen high above the other side. Some faults may form valleys with vertical escarpments as walls in regions where the two sides of the fault have drawn apart, creating a valley between them.

**Frequency:** Common, except along the Rimwall where they are very common. (The Rimwall itself can be considered to be an extreme type of fault escarpment.) Escarpments more than 500 m high or 50 km long are rare.

**Size:** Varies. Fault escarpments may be anywhere from a few tens of meters to hundreds of kilometers long, and from a few meters to thousands of meters tall. On the average, they will be a few tens of kilometers long and a few hundred meters high.

**Travel:** An escarpment's effects on travel depend on the escarpment's size. The steep cliff will generally halt all vehicle travel, and travel on foot can be continued only with mountaineering skill and climbing equipment. On the average, an escarpment will add 2D6×3 hours to a party's travel time as the characters are forced to find a way around or through the cliff.

**Special Problems:** Seismic quakes are especially common along major faults. Add a DM of +1 to all rolls for the occurrence and severity of seismic quakes when characters are within 10 km of a fault. The usual dangers of rockfalls and avalanches are to be found along the edge or base of a fault cliff. The greatest difficulty associated with fault escarpments is the delay they are likely to cause in travel.

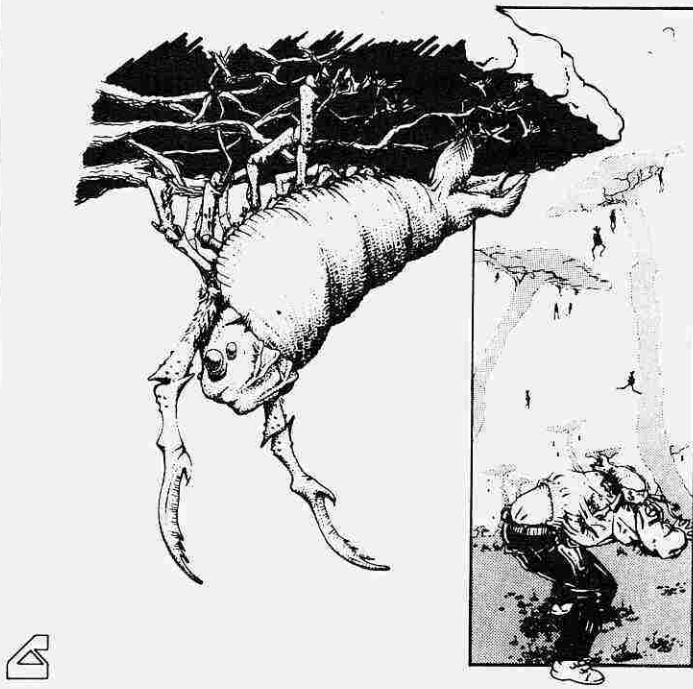
## SPECIAL EROSION FEATURES

Rocky terrain, especially extensive hammada areas, may contain special terrain features created by windblown sand or erosion by long vanished rivers. These include:

*Natural Bridges and Arches:* These are formed by erosion



*Auroran bloodsuckers (Hirudogigas Aurorienses, Hirudogigas marinus) greatly resemble their Terran namesakes but can grow up to 2 kg in weight.*



A dropper (*canceraculeatus arboreus*), hanging from the cap of a broadtop, waits for a potential meal to pass below.

creating a tunnel through a rock wall.

**Mesas and Buttes:** These are vertical-sided, flat-topped "islands" of rock.

**Columns and Spires:** These are rock pillars hundreds of meters tall and only a few tens of meters thick.

**Capped Pillars:** These are rock columns preserved from erosion by large rocks on top of them which are eventually left balanced high atop vertical pillars.

**Dikes:** These are thin walls of volcanic rock representing igneous intrusions into sandstone which later eroded.

**Frequency (all types):** Common in hammada terrain, scarce to rare elsewhere.

**Size:** Mesas and buttes may cover several hundred square kilometers. (As a rough, working definition, mesas are broader than they are tall, buttes are taller than they are broad.) Other features will be relatively small (that is, a few kilometers in length).

**Travel:** There will rarely be any compelling reason to climb any of these special terrain features. The largest mesas may add a few hours to travel times for travellers forced to go around them.

**Special Problems:** Climbing any of these features is quite difficult and dangerous, requiring Mountaineering skill and special equipment to scale their sheer cliffs. Within the scope of **Traveller: 2300** adventures, however, it is unlikely that the need to climb any of these features will arise. Some danger might exist from falling rock along the base of one of these features, especially during a seismic quake, but it can be expected that these features, having survived millions of previous quakes, are unlikely to collapse just at the moment the player characters venture near.

The players may find unusual geological formations useful for navigation. By noting the position of a formation in relation to other formations or to the position of Tithonus in the sky, positions may be determined and a straight course maintained.

## OTHER DANGERS

The following list details various special dangers associated with

travel on the High Desert or in other desert terrain on Aurore. Frequency and other pertinent information is included as for desert terrain types.

## SANDSTORMS

Sandstorms occur frequently in the High Desert. The referee may either introduce them as he sees fit to complicate or hinder the characters' plans, or he may roll 2D6 once every 10 hours, with a sandstorm beginning with every roll of 9 or higher. There is a DM of -1 anywhere within 1000 km of the Rimwall and a DM of +2 within 1500 km of the Hot Pole.

Characters with any prior experience in the Auroran Hotback will recognize the signs of a beginning storm: a stiffening wind and a long, low, mass of ocher-colored cloud on the horizon, rolling across the terrain. The direction of the storm will always be towards the Hot Pole. At the pole, contradictory winds will sweep together in a rising brown pillar of cloud as much as 3 km tall, a meteorological explosion which sweeps sand up and out across the desert for a total of hundreds of kilometers in every direction.

Avoiding injury from windblown sand is a standard task described as follows:

To avoid injury from sandstorm: Routine. Endurance. 5 seconds.

Success in this task indicates the character managed to find shelter or moved to ground high enough to avoid the low rolling cloud of sand. A mishap will result in injury to the character in the form of normal damage and stun with a DPV of .1. The wind-blown sand will burn unprotected skin, and there is a very real danger of suffocation. A total mishap will result in death. A protective suit will protect skin and breathing, but the character could find himself buried alive. Digging out will be a difficult task, unless friends are available to help:

To dig out of sand after storm: Difficult. Strength. 1 Minute.

**Referee's Note:** One or more unburied characters helping to dig will reduce the level of difficulty to routine.

**Frequency:** Very common in erg terrain. Common in hammada terrain near ergs. Scarce to common elsewhere on the plateau.

## VOLCANOES AND SEISMIC QUAKES

The dangers faced by characters approaching erupting volcanoes are discussed elsewhere in this sourcebook. Both are more common on the High Desert than elsewhere on Aurore.

Volcanoes can generally be seen from a distance of 50 km or more and can be avoided unless they first erupt just as the characters pass close by—possible, but unlikely, and entirely at the referee's discretion. The referee can position volcanoes, active and dormant, along the path the player characters take, using them as background color or as hindrances or threats as the adventure requires.

Seismic quakes will occur as described in the sourcebook section on quakes, but there will be a DM+1 on all rolls for both their occurrence and their intensity.

**Frequency: Volcanoes:** Common within 1000 km of Rimwall, scarce elsewhere. **Seismic Quakes:** Very common.

## HIDDEN CHASMS

A special danger of the High Desert is that of hidden chasms. These are caused when faults open in the rock which are filled



with rubble and drifting sand, or which open without disturbing layers of sand packed above them, or when faults severely weaken a layer of rock already covered by sand. The surface of the ground looks perfectly normal, though characters with an Intelligence of 12 or higher may notice a slight depression in the sand, or that the rubble in the boulder field ahead looks precariously balanced. Any weight exceeding 4D6×10 kilograms will dislodge the underlying structure, breaking through to a yawning chasm beneath.

On a 2D6 roll of 5 or less, the character will feel the ground giving way in time to jump clear. On a roll of 12 he will vanish into the pit never to be seen again, unless a kind-hearted referee elects to break his fall and a leg with a conveniently placed rock floor or ledge beneath the opening. On a 6-11, he will fall but will be able to cling to the edge of the chasm. He can attempt to escape, as described by the following task:

To escape a hidden chasm: Difficult. Strength. 6 seconds.

**Referee's Note:** The presence of one or more other characters who are not trapped by the chasm will reduce the difficulty level to routine by grabbing the falling character and hauling him out.

Vehicles which break through the camouflage overlying a hidden chasm will survive only if the chasm is not particularly deep. Roll 2D6+4 on the Mishap table. A minor mishap represents damage which can be repaired, though it will be a formidable task to get the vehicle free of the chasm. A major mishap will cause damage which cannot be repaired without tools and machines not available in the middle of the Auroran wilderness, and every character aboard should roll 2D6+4 again on the Mishap table to determine whether they have been injured, and how seriously. A total mishap results in the destruction of the vehicle and the deaths of all aboard.

It was the collapse of a rock shelf overlying a particularly large chasm in the Passage de l'Orient which ended Victor Galtier's explorations of the High Desert nine years ago.

**Frequency:** Common in rockfalls and other piles of loose, broken debris. Scarce in hammada and erg-type terrain.

**Size:** Varies. Most are a few meters wide and a few tens of meters deep. A few are tens of meters wide and hundreds or thousands of meters deep.

## SAND PIT

A sand pit is similar to a hidden chasm. It marks a spot where a deep pit or canyon has been filled by loosely packed sand to the extent that it looks like a normal sand surface but will not support a character's or vehicle's weight. Occasionally, a seismic quake will open a gap in underlying rock, leaving sand overhead more or less intact but ready to give under the weight of a character. Characters and vehicles wandering into a sand pit will sink from sight in a matter of minutes and cannot be recovered.

A character who find himself sinking in a sand pit may delay his descent by lying spread-eagle. If other characters can get a line to him, or if a chain of characters holding onto one another can reach the trapped character, he might be drawn from the trap. The effort is a task defined as follows:

To extricate a trapped character from sand pit: Difficult. Strength. 10 seconds.

**Referee's Note:** This task can be accomplished by one character using a rope or by a number of characters forming a human chain. Circumstances will dictate which is more effective.

Mishaps, obviously, result in the loss of the character. Vehicles which wander into a sand pit large enough to swallow them will be lost, though characters aboard may escape, a routine to difficult task for each of them, if they do not roll mishaps in their attempts.

**Frequency:** Rare. Sand pits are encountered only in erg-type terrain, or in sand-covered hammada close to the borders of an erg.

## LIFE

Remarkably, there *is* life on the High Desert, though human explorers will have to find and study it in person for this to be proven. The life form is a tenacious form of plant life distantly related to low altitude forms, a low, spongy, blue-colored mass which spreads across many square kilometers in an uninterrupted mass. It exists by intermittently secreting a powerful acid similar to that evolved by numerous life forms in the temperate zones. The acid breaks down sand which has blown over the plant mass; the sand's components, silica and oxygen, are utilized by the plant, and the process has the added effect of keeping the plant growth unburied and exposed to the infrared radiation of Tithonus. The plant mass can be buried under tens of meters of sand; in time (aided by windstorms) even deeply buried plant masses will eat their way to the surface once more.

The desert plants' threat lies in the fact that the acid secretion is intermittent. It is unlikely that human characters will notice the growth's acidic properties the first time they find it. The clue to its presence lies in two questions: What do the plants use for food in a desert singularly lacking in organic materials, and how can they survive when the wind keeps burying them in sand? While the plants obviously use infrared radiation from Tithonus and Muphrid (their blue-green pigmentation, the same as lowland plants, suggests this) they must use *something* to build the material of their bodies, which consist of tightly interlocking frameworks of silica crystals, much like the spicules of a terrestrial sponge. Further, while the same winds which bury the plants might also uncover them, it is unlikely that the plants could survive as a species if they were totally dependent on being uncovered by chance.

These questions, together with the knowledge that lowland plant and animal forms secrete various types of highly potent acid, should warn the characters about what *could* happen. The referee may also give broad hints to player characters with Intelligence values of 12 or more and appropriate experience with Auroran animal life.

If the characters do not take note of these clues, they will find that the entire mass of vegetation will turn unexpectedly and dangerously acidic on a 2D6 roll of 9+, with one roll being made every 10 hours. The acid will do normal damage with a DPV of .2 to any character in contact with it. Boots and various types of protective clothing will afford some protection, but continued exposure will defeat any protection less than full body armor in a few minutes. The effect will last for 2D6×10 minutes, with the characters receiving additional damage every combat round they remain in contact with the deadly vegetation. After that period of time, the acid oxidizes, and the vegetation becomes harmless once more.

## ADVENTURES ON THE SUB-TITHONIAN PLATEAU

Government-sponsored expeditions to the Auroran Sub-Tithonian Plateau are unlikely so long as substantial Kafer forces remain in the temperate zones, or if there is the threat of further Kafer invasions. Such expeditions are highly desirable for a number of reasons, and various Auroran foundations and scientists have been advocating a High Desert exploration for several years.

Referees who want to run a desert adventure can do so in any



### Fighter, Ukrainian “storm, Ochrana”

After the near-total destruction of the Civic Guard (Ochrana), a resistance organization sprang up calling itself the “Novoa Ochrana” or “New Guard,” under the charismatic leadership of Yuri Mikhsilovich Shklovskii. Uniforms and equipment were, and remain, makeshift, as this illustration of a fighter indicates. The guerrilla is wearing a Ukrainian Army ballistic field jacket, from which the sleeves have been removed, over a civilian sweater and trousers. The green sweatband and neckcloth indicate the company to which the guerrilla belongs, but many companies use green. She has an officer’s mapcase to which she has attached a civilian hunting knife. The belt and shoes are civilian as well. She is carrying an SG-77 assault rifle, which is extremely rare in the Novoa Ochrana. The Ramirez-Abruggo BF-1, Traylor Arms M-2, and the AS-89 are all much more common.



### Lieutenant, Ukrainian Infantry

Illustrated is a platoon leader of Strelkhovy Polk 4 (4th Rifle Regiment). The red-on-black shoulder strap, barely visible under the rigid combat armor breastplate, indicates rank, while the quartered rectangle in the distinctive raspberry red of the Ukrainian Strelkhovy identifies the regiment. The only regular Ukrainian infantry unit in Novoa Kiyev, the 4th Strelkhovy landed in French Aurore after the Second Battle of Tithonus and was ferried to the Ukrainian colony aboard hydrofoils and hovercraft.

This officer is carrying the Mueller-Rivera F-19 laser rifle, standard issue for Ukrainian snipers but seldom used by officers. The rigid breastplate over ballistic fatigues. The quilted padding over the knees, elbows and helmet top is only for protection against abrasion and wear. Note the combat pack and shoulder brackets of the breastplate.





### **Tanstaaf Militia Infantry**

Although there are official uniform regulations for the Tanstaaf Militia, the rapid influx of recruits since the Kafer invasion has rendered them meaningless. Most militia wear civilian hunting clothes, eminently practical in the Auroran Hotback.

Based on a group holograph taken of the 19th Militia Company shortly before the Battle of the Plateau, this plate is a good study of a typical militiaman. He wears a civilian hunting shirt and load-bearing vest along with Texan Army desert fatigue pants. The hat, goggles, musette bag and hunting knife are all of civilian origin. His weapon is the Guiscard 7.5mm FC-70 hunting rifle, perhaps the most common rifle in use by the Tanstaaf Militia.





### Senior Constable, Tanstaaf Rural Police

Although the militia and the Tanstaaf Free Legion constitute most of Tanstaaf's defenders, about 300 Rural Police also patrol the highways and sparse areas of the colony. Originally numbering over 1,000, the Rural Police suffered extremely heavy casualties. While not trained or equipped for extended combat, they are better acquainted with the countryside than any other group. So the remaining cadre of officers continues patrols, usually in four-person teams, as elite long-range recon parties. Casualties continue to be heavy among these lightly armed groups that penetrate deep into Kafer territory.

The senior constable shown is in the preinvasion uniform of the Rural Police. The silver bar on the collar shows rank while the winged six-pointed star of the Rural Police is prominent on the cap badge, green-over-white brassard, and metal throat gorget. The load-bearing harness is standard and carries a communications set on the left side, and the power pack and holster for the AS-3 sonic stun pistol. The knife on the ankle is nonstandard. Officers on recon patrols are more informal but wear the basic uniform, with more lethal weapons.



### Ramrod Trooper, Tanstaaf Free Legion

Tanstaaf relies on a network of regional militia troops for defense, stiffened by the professional mercenary soldiers of the Tanstaaf Free Legion. The most common form of support provided to local militia by the TFL is the Rapid Response Team, nicknamed "ramrod" teams. Each ramrod team is roughly platoon-sized and is carried in three Kangaroo IV ACV-APCs purchased as surplus from the Australian Army.

Although uniform regulations are fairly lax in the TFL, the trooper is dressed and equipped in close-to-standard-issue garb. She is wearing the French 2245-pattern helmet and vedette half-armor over a green fatigue pullover and dungarees. She has an AS-89 assault rifle with two magazines in her civilian-style belt and a bandoleer of 30mm grenades. A Kangaroo IV in the background is in the TFL's camouflage pattern.





### **Kafer Infantryman**

This is an excellent view of a Kafer infantryman and shows a good range of equipment carried. This soldier is armed with the standard Kafer assault rifle/grenade launcher (nicknamed the "thud gun" by the Tanstaaf Free Legion). The load-bearing harness is leather with several O-rings that will accept interchangeable pouches, scabbards, etc. This soldier has a combat knife suspended from his chest, a single magazine pouch from his waist, and a canteen from his left hip. A ration bag is slung from an O-ring attached directly to the soldier's carapace. Most soldiers encountered have had such rings attached to their carapace, usually by passing them through holes drilled in the carapace itself. It is generally believed that the Kafer carapace is so insensitive, like a fingernail, that this is a painless operation.



### Kafer Sniper

This Kafer soldier is wearing a pair of thermal image goggles which are extremely rare in Kafer service and are normally found only on vehicle commanders. He is armed with the simple and robust laser rifle/grenade launcher (nicknamed the "flashlight" by the Tanstaaf Free Legion). He has a sweat rag, small ration bag and what appears to be a pair of human ears hung from his harness. Collecting ears seems to be widespread among Kafer soldiers.

His body and carapace coloration are a light reddish brown. Few Kafers have been seen with color much lighter than this. Skin and carapace color vary from this hue through a dark charcoal, almost black. Skin and carapace color are almost certainly genetically based but appear to have no social significance as Kafers of all hues are found in all units and at various ranks.



### Kafer Officer

Although exact ranks among Kafers are still something of a mystery, this specimen is marked as a senior officer by wearing the asymmetrical gorget on his chest. Junior officers wear smaller, more elaborate gorgets. The ceremonial metal and plastic "helmet" also indicates a senior officer, although often dispensed with in the field. On his left hip is the officer's sidearm, the massive 14.5mm revolver almost universally called a "horse pistol." The main indication of senior rank is the elaborate scepter (nicknamed "cattle prod" by the Tanstaaf Free Legion). Junior officers carry a short version which delivers a high voltage but low amperage shock to soldiers. The version illustrated incorporates a magnetic pellet gun to gain the attention of soldiers at a distance. Popular fiction portrays Kafer officers using scepters or whips to force compliance or beat soldiers into battle. But observation indicates that the scepter is used *before* an order is issued, not after.

Because of a poor-quality photograph taken through a thermal image lens, the artist could not determine the correct hue and left the image green.



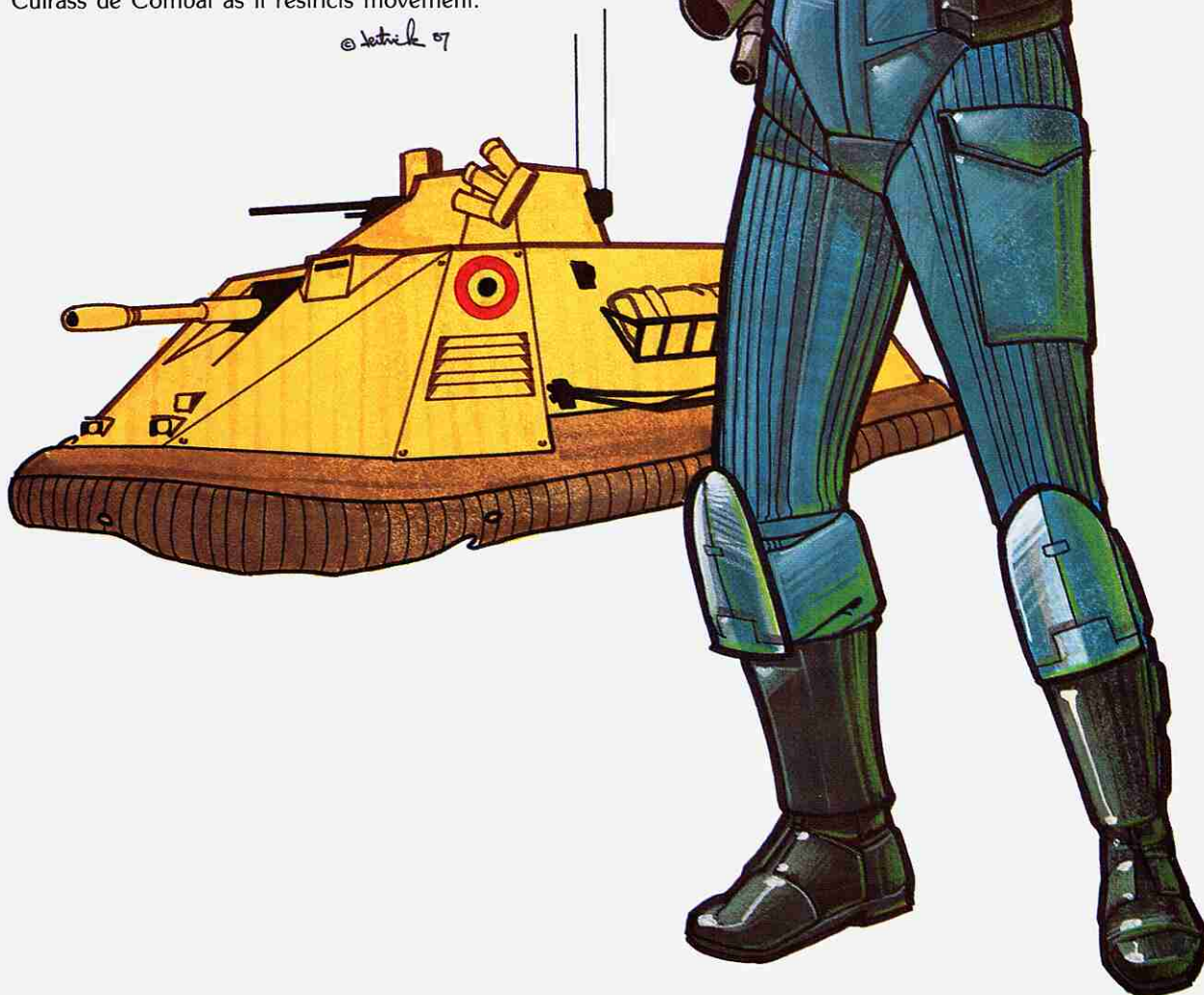


### **Captain, French 7th Regiment Aero-Cuirassiers**

This illustration is from a photograph of Captain Antoinette Bouchard, commanding officer of the 2nd Squadron, 7th RAC. In the background is a French AC-8 gunsled, unmarked except for the national tricolor roundel on the chassis side. All gunsleds in the 7th's 2nd Squadron bore names beginning with the letter "B," and Bouchard's sled was named "Boulogne."

Bouchard wears the tanker's uniform for French Metropolitan troops, worn by gunsled and ground AFV crews. She is wearing the dismantled duty helmet. While in vehicles, tankers wore a nylon commo helmet with a padded top to protect the head from collisions with equipment and the roof. The dismantled duty helmet like the 2297-pattern infantry helmet except for the communication gear, allowing a wireless interface with the vehicle's intercom net. She is wearing the standard ballistic fatigues and armored knee protectors worn by first-line combat troops. Like most crewmembers, she is not wearing the Cuirass de Combat as it restricts movement.

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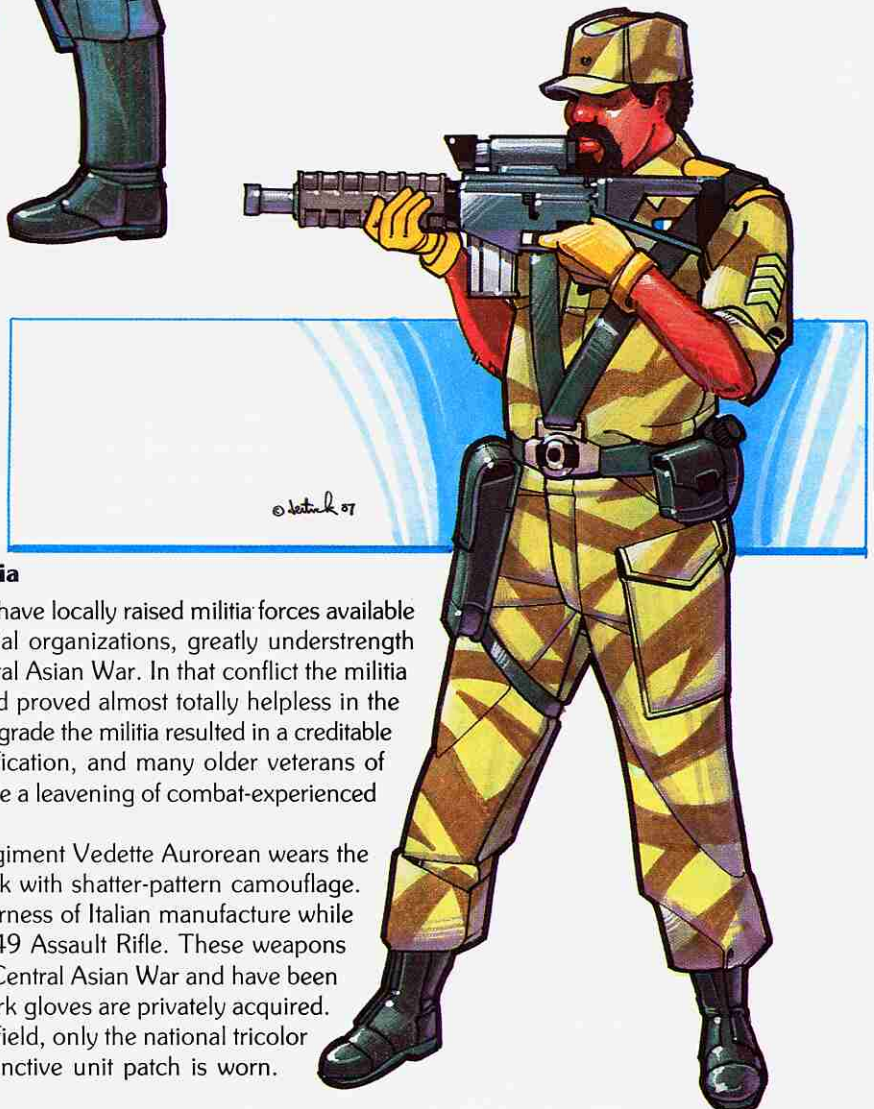




### Corporal, II Battalion, 13 Demi Brigade, Legion Etrangere

This squad leader is seen on patrol in the Auroran Hotback. He is wearing the standard French ballistic fatigues, armored knee protectors, and the rigid Cuirasse de Combat. The Legion continues to use the older 2245-pattern helmet, but this legionnaire instead is wearing the Legion's distinctive white "kepi" and has his tactical camera, normally carried in the right half of the helmet, on his shoulder bracket instead. Although all French infantry wear the kepi as part of the dress uniform (blue for all troops except the Legion, which wears a white kepi), a soft fatigue cap is issued for wear in the field. It is both comfortable and practical, and only the stubborn adherence to tradition causes them to continue to wear the "Kepi Blanc" in the field.

While he has his chevrons attached to his sleeve, NCO and enlisted rank badges are normally on a brassard over the left sleeve or, if the sleeves are up, on the left wrist. The corporal carries the standard FAM-90 assault rifle with extra magazines on his belt. On his right wrist is an inertial navigation system used by patrol leaders.



### Sergeant Major, French Colonial Militia

Most colony worlds of the French Empire have locally raised militia forces available for defense. These forces were mostly social organizations, greatly understrength and only sketchily trained, prior to the Central Asian War. In that conflict the militia was called out on several colony worlds and proved almost totally helpless in the face of regular troops. A crash program to upgrade the militia resulted in a creditable performance in the War of German Reunification, and many older veterans of the regular forces from both wars now provide a leavening of combat-experienced troops.

This senior NCO of a battalion of the Regiment Vedette Aurean wears the old French 2264-issue desert fatigue smock with shatter-pattern camouflage. His load-bearing gear is a black nylon V-harness of Italian manufacture while his rifle is a Manchurian Wu-Bejing Type-49 Assault Rifle. These weapons were captured in great numbers during the Central Asian War and have been widely issued to Militia units. The yellow work gloves are privately acquired. In common with other French troops in the field, only the national tricolor flash is worn (over the left breast); no distinctive unit patch is worn.



**Unteroffizier (Sergeant), Kampfgruppe Reiner,  
214th Luftkissenpanzer Abteilung**

In 2299 a technical mission was formed from the 214th Luftkissenpanzer Abteilung under Major Gerhard Reiner, battalion deputy commander. The mission was equipped with 15 LkPz-IXs and in 2300 arrived at Port Loubet to begin transition training for a squadron of the 1st Regiment Cavalerie Aureocean. While most of the mission carried out familiarization classes with 12 LkPz-IXs, three remaining Lukis formed a platoon-sized battle group under direct command of Reiner. It continues as a demonstration unit with French aero-mechanized patrols and has cooperated in three major offensives.

Illustrated is a vehicle driver wearing the standard German-vehicle jump suit and padded helmet with intercom link. Branch of service (armor) is indicated by the pink uniform piping (Waffenfarbe), while the shoulder straps extend over the upper shoulders in the distinctive wings of the Luftkissenpanzertruppen. Piping on the collar indicates NCO rank, while the lack of marking on the shoulder strap indicates the rank. The decoration worn is the Armored Assault Badge won in the War of German Reunification.

He is not wearing standard goggles, but their outline can be seen dividing the clean upper part of his face from the dusty lower half. He is carrying an

Austrian P-11m automatic, obviously privately purchased, and has a civilian leather holster.

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number of ways. The following list gives several possible scenarios. The referee should feel free to adapt these to his campaign, or invent his own.

- A shuttlecraft is damaged by Kafer surface-to-air missile fire as it makes its approach towards Tanstaaf's spaceport. On board is a Terran special forces general and his staff (or a politician and his staff, or some other high-ranking official), arrived from Earth to personally evaluate the course of the Kafer War. Telemetry signals indicate that the shuttle has gone down somewhere on the Sub-Tithonian Plateau.

The exact position of the downed shuttle can be determined by orbital reconnaissance, but it is not known whether the VIP or his entourage has survived. It is known that the shuttle had enough supplies, air, pressure suits, and emergency equipment for all on board to survive for a number of weeks.

Maybe....

The local military command authorizes a probe-in-force accompanied by a search and rescue mission. The expedition must reach the top of the plateau, make its way to the crash site, and rescue survivors, if any. In addition, there may be papers or important supplies on board which must be recovered for an upcoming campaign in the war.

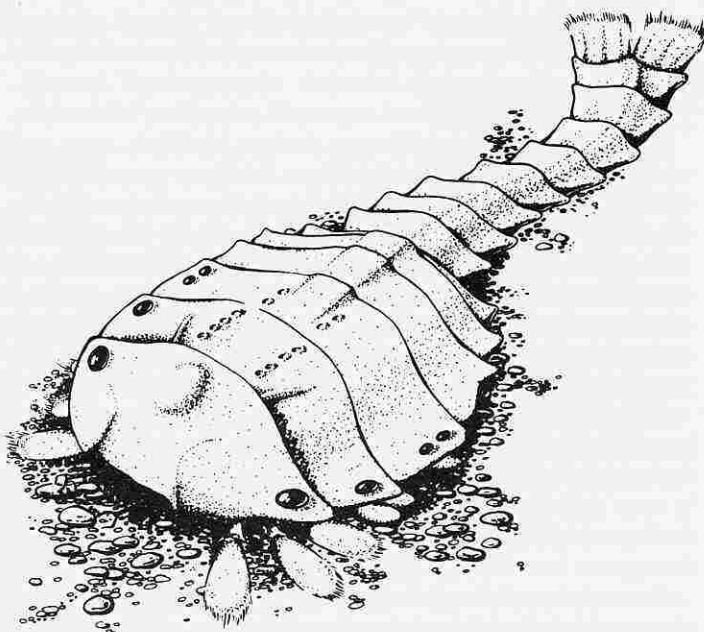
Whether or not there are survivors, whether or not some or all of the survivors are badly injured, and other aspects of the rescue can be worked out by the referee as he desires. An added complication might be the approach of a Kafer war party bent on investigating the wreckage. They may have noted human interest in the crash and want to find out what is important about that shuttle.

- An Auroran planetary scientist—Dr. Jean Paul Girot of the Conseil Scientifique d'Aurore, or another like him—has decided to bypass government roadblocks and mount his own private expedition to the High Desert. Girot has invested his own private fortune in the CSA and fears he will have lost everything if the war prohibits further research and exploration. Other scientists might have equally compelling reasons. Particular research projects include verifying the existence and determining the nature of possible life spotted on the plateau by recon satellites and the emplacement of a chain of weather stations and microwave relay stations across the plateau in order to learn more about Aurore's tempestuous weather patterns.

Whatever the details, the characters are hired to accompany the expedition to protect it from Kafer attacks. If the characters are in one of the military units on Aurore, they may be reluctantly assigned to the expedition by a military authority which has finally agreed to allow the expedition to depart, possibly for reasons (such as terrain mapping and establishing microwave communications links) of its own.

- Victor Galtier, a French planetologist and explorer, has been tormented ever since the loss of three of his vehicles in a hidden chasm nine years ago ended his attempt to reach the High Desert. Like Girot, he fears personal ruin and is determined to lead an expedition to the Hot Pole whatever the cost. He may assemble an expedition for another attempt using his own resources. It is also possible that such an expedition would be organized by Girot and Galtier working together, each for their own purposes.

- A military expedition might be assembled on the suspicion that a Kafer base has been established on the Sub-Tithonian Plateau. Studies of the bodies of dead Kafers suggest that these life forms may be better adapted to conditions on the plateau than humans. Heat does not seem to bother them as much, and their lungs appear to be designed for a thinner atmosphere. (This does not mean that they could survive on the plateau without protective suits or breathing gear, but it does suggest that survival there



*The most common animal life in Aurore's temperate zone, this Auroran landcrab (Xenocancer pronus) scuttles its way across the dirt.*

would be easier for them.) Recon satellite photographs have indicated some sort of activity on the High Desert. The characters are part of a military expedition to discover whether or not Kafers are on the plateau and to destroy any base or encampment found.

Whether or not the Kafers are really on the plateau is up to the referee. The "some sort of activity" could be caused by seismic ground movements, rolling boulders and the like, and the desert itself will provide more than enough danger to keep things interesting in the game.

However, the presence of a Kafer war party would certainly add a fitting climax to the dangers of an expedition to the interior of the Sub-Tithonian Plateau.

## TEMPERATE REGIONS

Aurore's temperate zone is a belt lying between the Rimwall and the Icewall of La Glacier. All of the human colonies on Aurore are located within the temperate zone, Novoa Kiyev in the western hemisphere, Aurore and Tanstaaf in the eastern. Technically, La Mer Ceindant lies within the temperate zone as well, but it is discussed separately in this listing.

The temperature of the zone varies from near 0°C along the ice shelf to 40°C or more at the base of the Rimwall. Since Aurore gets the majority of its heat from the superjovian Tithonus which always remains in about the same place in the sky, the polar regions are not cooler than areas close to the equator. The temperature changes instead as the observer moves toward or away from Tithonus. The climate, planetography and biology of the temperate zone is discussed at length elsewhere in this sourcebook, as are the human colonies. The temperate regions include a wide variety of terrain features, however, and these are discussed in this section. Each listing gives the following:

**Frequency:** The relative frequency of that terrain type: very common, common, scarce, or rare.

**Size:** An estimate of the size of the terrain area or feature for mapping purposes.

**Travel Time:** A listing of travel time by various means based on the typical travel times given in the *Traveller: 2300 Players' Manual*.

**Special Problems:** A discussion of special problems associated with that terrain type.

## HOTBACK/DESERT

Desert and arid terrain makes up perhaps two-thirds of the non-ocean portions of the Temperate Zone. It is most common along the base of the Rimwall, where the average temperature may exceed 40°C. Native Aurorans in and around the Tanstaaf settlements speak of the entire wilderness area between settled lands and the Rimwall as the Auroran Hotback, which includes both true desert and land which is merely arid. The term "Hotback" has come to be applied to such terrain below the Rimwall by French-speaking colonists as well.

Aurore's lowland desert terrain is similar in most respects to the High Desert of the Sub-Tithonian Plateau, differing only in that the temperature is not so extreme. The air pressure is only slightly lower than Earth's atmospheric pressure at sea level, and water has been important in the shaping of the lowland desert's terrain features.

The various terrain types of the lowland deserts are the same as in the High Desert, and their descriptions will not be repeated here. In the lowlands, where rivers have carved out numerous canyons and mesas, hamma is the most common type of terrain, and ergs and dune seas are relatively rare. An exception is La Mer de La Sable 500 km west of Lumiere d'Aube. This is a true erg some 300 km across, surrounded by rugged hamma terrain in the area south and west of the Passage de l'Orient.

### Lowland Desert Terrain

**Frequency:** *Erg*: Scarce; *Hamma*: Very Common; *Reg/Serir*: Common.

**Size:** Varies. Same as listed for various terrain types on High Desert.

**Travel Times:** Same as listed for various terrain types on High Desert.

**Special Problems:** Same as listed for various terrain types on High Desert.

## TIDAL FLATS

The nature and biology of Aurore's tidal flats are discussed at length elsewhere in this sourcebook. They are found along the shoreline of most of Aurore's ocean and major bays. They range from narrow strips of beach at the base of high cliffs to broad, open prairies of mud or sand hundreds of kilometers wide. The most dangerous are those found in narrow, steep-walled canyons or fault valleys such as La Gouffre, where incoming tides are channeled into walls of water hundreds of meters high, moving at well over 100 kph.

### Tidal Flat Terrain

**Frequency:** Very Common along Aurore's seacoasts and islands.

**Size:** Varies.

**Travel Times:** Travel times are the same as for flat terrain, except x150% for travel by foot or for wheeled vehicles. The sheer cliffs of tidal bores such as La Gouffre will further hamper travel and should be treated as canyons, as described in the section on the High Desert.

**Special Problems:** Tidal flats have their own special dangers, principally the incoming tide and several species of particularly unpleasant life forms, which are discussed elsewhere in this sourcebook. Travel across Auroran tidal flats is extremely hazardous at all times and should be avoided when possible.

## MOUNTAINS

Perhaps one-third of the temperate zone terrain is mountainous. The result of violent forces deep within the planetary crust, these mountains can be considered to be outlying spurs of the Rimwall itself. The most important range near human-occupied territory is the Northern Mountains, lying north of Tanstaaf and pierced by the La Gouffre tidal bore. This range is known as "Les Montagnes Equatorial" to the French of La Colonie d'Aurore. It is dominated by the massive, apparently dormant shield volcano known as "Mont Ste. Victoire," rising over 3000 m above the north rim of La Gouffre.

The Northern Mountains are an offshoot spur of a larger range to the east called the "Phaeton Mountains." These branch from the Rimwall southeast of Tanstaaf, run northwest, then hook to the south to a mountain above the Equator River some 3000 km from Tanstaaf known as Mount Phaeton. Mount Phaeton is the subject of a scenario in the GDW **Traveller: 2300** module *Kafer Dawn*.

Travel through mountainous areas on Aurore is always slow and difficult. The terrain is broken and rugged and laced by tortuous channels and valleys which frequently end in cul-de-sacs and blind canyons. Mountain terrain can be combined with other types of terrain, described elsewhere, such as desert and forest. The following list details some of the terrain types encountered specifically in the mountains.

### VALLEY (MOUNTAIN)

Mountain valleys offer the best terrain for travel through the mountains but are often blocked by rock spills from the slopes on either side and often end in blind canyons or dead ends.

**Frequency:** Common.

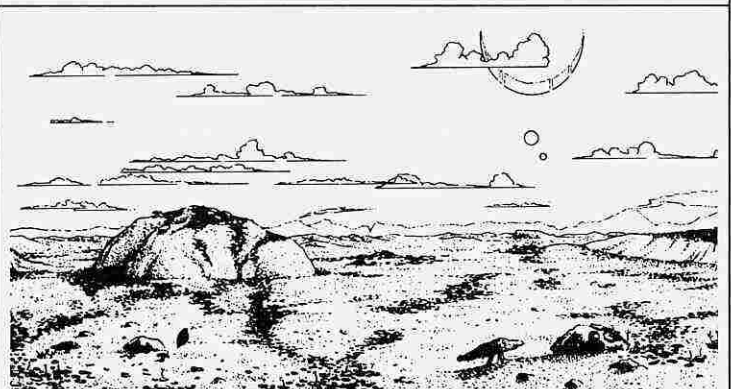
**Size:** Varies, from a kilometer or two to hundreds of kilometers.

**Travel Times:** Along a valley floor is the same as for flat terrain. Across valley slopes are the same as for hilly terrain. Rockfalls or dead-end valley branches may delay travel by 2D6-2 hours as alternate routes are explored.

**Special Problems:** Valleys offer havens for native wildlife, and numerous Auroran valleys are home to bladehood forests and other dangerous life forms. Valleys formed by rivers may still have rivers which create their own problems (see *Rivers*, below).

### CANYON (DESERT, MOUNTAINS)

Mountain canyons are the same as valleys but with steeper sides. A canyon across an expedition's path will delay the group 2D6 x 3 hours while a way is found around or through the canyon, and scaling a canyon's walls is a difficult task requiring Mountaineering skill. Canyons are discussed in greater detail under *Deserts*.



*Hotback*



## Canyon

**Frequency:** Common in mountains and hammada-type terrain. Scarce to rare elsewhere.

**Size:** As described under *Deserts*.

**Travel Times:** As described under *Deserts*.

**Special Problems:** As described under *Deserts*.

## FAULT ESCARPMENT (MOUNTAINS, HIGH DESERT)

Aurore's mountains are the product of the continual gravitational tug imposed on the planet by the gas giant Tithonus. Violent dislocations of Aurore's crust within the past few thousand years have produced fault escarpments, where one side of a seismic fault has risen far above the other side, creating a sheer, straight rock cliff.

Fault escarpments pose the same problems as other cliff face terrain, hindering travel and requiring special training and equipment to scale them directly. For game purposes, they can be treated as a special form of canyon (See *Deserts*).

## VOLCANOES (MOUNTAINS, HIGH DESERT)

Volcanoes are specifically discussed elsewhere in this sourcebook. They are most common in the regions along the Rimwall but can be found elsewhere. Both Mount Phaeton and the immense Mont Ste. Victoire are volcanoes—presumably extinct, but then, as so much else about Aurore, little is truly known about them. A major eruption of Mont Ste. Victoire could cause enormous damage both to Tanstaafi to the south and to Lumiere d'Aube to the northeast.

**Frequency:** Common in mountains along Rimwall; scarce elsewhere.

**Size:** Varies.

**Travel Times:** As for *Volcanoes* in the Travel Time table.

**Special Problems:** Discussed on pages 67-68.

## PLATEAU (MOUNTAINS)

A plateau is a relatively flat highland area resting at the top of surrounding mountain slopes. The Sub-Tithonian Plateau is an extreme form of plateau, averaging over five miles in altitude and covering almost forty percent of the entire planet. A special case is the terrain feature known as the "Continental Plateau," which is that part of Aurore's surface surrounded by La Mer Ceindant, and which includes and encircles the Sub-Tithonian Plateau. The habitable surface of Aurore can be pictured as the first step of a two-stepped plateau, rising above the tidal flats, but a level below the much higher Sub-Tithonian Plateau.

Most plateaus are no more than a few thousand square kilometers in area, with altitudes averaging a few hundred meters above the surrounding terrain. Plateaus offer no special problems other than those associated with travel.

**Frequency:** Common in mountainous regions; scarce elsewhere.

**Size:** Varies.

**Travel Times:** Slopes as for mountainous terrain. Tops as for flat terrain.

**Special Problems:** None.

## HAMMADA (DESERT, MOUNTAINS)

Mountainous areas in arid regions are frequently carved by wind and water into characteristic hammada-type terrain (badlands). Hammada terrain has been discussed in the section on *Deserts* above.

**Frequency:** Very common in arid, mountainous regions,

especially close to the Rimwall.

**Size:** Varies; discussed under *Deserts*.

**Travel Times:** Varies; discussed under *Deserts*.

**Special Problems:** Discussed under *Deserts*.

## RIVERS

Numerous rivers arise in the mountains of Aurore's Hotback and along the slopes of the Rimwall and make their way to La Mer Ceindant. Several Auroran rivers are formidable obstacles. Because of the overall topography, most flow from east to west in the western hemisphere, and from west to east in the eastern.

The largest river near human-occupied regions is the Equator River. It arises in the Phaeton Mountains northeast of Mt. Phaeton and flows west, more or less on or parallel to the equator, for almost 5000 km to the aptly named waterfall, Thundermist, where it plunges off the Western Plains Plateau and into the tidal flats of Iceberg Bay some 200 m below.

Broad, deep rivers are prone to tidal effects the same as other large bodies of water, though not to the same extent as the sea. In other places, where deep valleys have been carved out of rock by the river, steep-sided river valleys serve to block surface travel. Tidal flooding and difficult terrain are two features of the Lower Equator which have served to hinder the spread of the Tanstaafi colony north to the mountains. Only one place in inhabited areas, a town called Across the Flood, offers relatively easy passage by way of a recently constructed, extremely narrow suspension bridge. A second crossing, at a broad, shallow spot called the Lower Crossing of the Equator located about 100 km from Thundermist, is only rarely more than a few centimeters deep and is easily forded, but there are no permanently inhabited settlements closer than Donner, some 120 km to the south.

Several particular terrain features are associated with rivers. These are listed below, together with information on their frequency, size, travel restrictions, and special problems.

## FORDS (RIVERS)

Fords are shallow areas in a river where it is possible to cross on foot or in wheeled or tracked vehicles. Known fords allow rapid passage of a river. Unknown fords may require time to find but will speed later crossings.

Finding a ford requires a 2D6 roll of 10+ by any adventuring party searching for a ford, with one roll allowed for every four hours of search. Fords will rarely, if ever, be found in areas where the river is particularly deep or swift-moving, though oddities of local terrain (such as the natural dam of broad, flat rock at the Lower Crossing of the Equator) may create an unexpected and anomalous ford. A DM of -2 should be applied in such areas, or the referee should simply decide on his own whether or not a ford exists, and where. A DM of +2 can be applied in upstream areas where the river is both shallow and narrow. Above a certain point determined by the referee, rivers become streams which can be forded at any point desired.

## Fords

**Frequency:** Rare.

**Size:** Varies. The Lower Crossing of the Equator is a few centimeters deep and over 5 kilometers wide. More commonly, fords will be knee- to waist-deep at a place where the river is anywhere from a few tens to a few hundreds of meters wide.

**Travel Time:** Known fords allow river crossings without extra delays for the river itself. There will be a time delay in searching for an as yet undiscovered ford, as described above. There is also the possibility of delays caused by muddy areas in the river, as



described under *Mud* below.

**Special Problems:** Various types of native Auroran life forms live in rivers, most notably the Auroran leech or bloodsucker in areas with muddy bottoms. Mud, too, presents its own problems, as described under *Mud*, below.

Known fords represent ideal places to lay an ambush. In the continuing war against the Kafers, it is possible that local Kafer bands have discovered certain fords. The referee could use this fact to allow Kafers to set an ambush for an unwary adventurer party, or for the adventurers to set a trap for a Kafer band. Characters attacked while crossing a river have their initiative levels lowered by two for so long as they are in the water.

## MUD (RIVERS, SWAMPS)

Some rivers may have muddy bottoms. Usually, this mud will be little more than an inconvenience, but occasionally characters may encounter mud flats or muddy river bottoms deep enough to trap vehicles and cause serious difficulties for characters crossing on foot.

Once trapped in mud, escape is a task, described as follows:

To escape being stuck in mud: Routine to difficult. Strength or Vehicle skill. 1 minute.

*Referee's Note:* Assistance from other characters or vehicles will reduce the level of difficulty and the time required.

Mishaps will generally result in the vehicle or character becoming more deeply mired than before, increasing the difficulty or the time required to free it/him. Cooperation by many characters and the use of other vehicles to tow a mired vehicle will both simplify the task and reduce the time needed to complete it.

## Mud

**Frequency:** Common along rivers. Muddy areas are also very common in swamps and bogs (see below) and scarce in jungles.

**Size:** Varies. Some rivers may have extensive mud bottoms or banks covering stretches of river ten km long or more.

**Travel Time:** Delays caused by mired vehicles or characters may extend travel times, as may a search for a safe crossing (see *Fords*, above). Mud will not affect hover vehicles.

**Special Problems:** Certain species of Auroran wildlife may attack characters from hiding places within mud. Characters or vehicles may become trapped in mud, requiring a special task to free them, at the referee's discretion, or on a 2D6 roll (made for each character or vehicle making the crossing) of 10+.

## QUICKSAND (RIVERS, SWAMPS)

A special danger in river crossings is quicksand, an area of sand or mud so saturated with water that personnel or vehicles rapidly sink below the surface. Contrary to popular myth, quicksand does not "suck people under," but movement is difficult because of the viscosity of the solution, and characters may panic, or their clothing may become so waterlogged that they cannot remain afloat, and they drown. Any character or vehicle which blunders into quicksand will become trapped.

Escaping from quicksand is a task:

To escape from quicksand: Formidable. Strength. 30 seconds.

*Referee's Note:* Assistance by other characters and the use of lines, tree limbs, or other aids will reduce the difficulty level to difficult or routine. The trapped character should make a 2D6 roll against his Coolness Under Fire. Failure in this roll leads to panic,

which will increase the difficulty level of the task.

Vehicles trapped in quicksand cannot be recovered. Characters aboard may attempt to escape, using the task formula given above, but with a basic time of one combat round.

## Quicksand

**Frequency:** Rare.

**Size:** Varies. Usually occurs in patches a few tens of meters wide.

**Travel Times:** Delays may be incurred during rescue operations.

**Special Problems:** Obvious.

## STEEP BANKS (RIVERS)

Particularly swift-running rivers may, in the course of thousands of years, wear deep and steep-sided valleys through solid rock. Such rivers are the usual cause of valleys and canyons.

True canyons are described in detail elsewhere. Steep river banks will slow travel, block hovercraft as well as wheeled or tracked vehicles, and may necessitate a search for an easier passage across the water. Finding such a passage requires a 2D6 roll of 9+, with one roll made by each group of characters searching allowed every four hours.

Travel along the course of a river may carry a character party into a region blocked on either side by steep banks. The search for an area where the party can leave the river is carried out in the same way as for characters seeking to cross the river, described above.

In human-occupied regions, the Equator has steep banks, in places 50 m or more high, from the town of North to a point some 500 km downriver where the Equator is joined by a tributary from the south.

## Steep River Banks

**Frequency:** Common.

**Size:** The size of steep river banks varies; height ranges from a few meters to hundreds of meters in river canyons. Average is a few tens of meters.

**Travel Times:** Steep river banks delay travel as described above.

**Special Problems:** Travel delays are the principal problem posed by steep river banks. In Kafer-infested areas, parties (either human or Kafer) travelling by river may be subject to ambush from the shore in regions where the river is hemmed in by steep banks. Characters caught under fire in such an ambush would lose 2 Initiative levels so long as they were exposed to fire from the heights above them.

## WATERFALLS (RIVERS)

Waterfalls serve little purpose in game terms but to add additional color to the game narrative. They are not common, although they do occur with some frequency in mountainous or rugged terrain. Truly spectacular waterfalls occur along the Continental Plateau's edge above La Mer Ceindant, where every Auroran river spills off the plateau and plunges some tens or hundreds of meters to the tidal flat (or sea, depending on the tide) below. The best known in human areas both fall into Iceberg Bay: the 200-meter Thundermist on the Equator and 150-meter Precipice Falls on the Westron.

Crossings are rarely possible close by waterfalls but may be located a short distance upstream or downstream. Waterfalls offer convenient, easily located rendezvous for parties which must split during the course of an expedition or mission.

## Waterfalls

**Frequency:** Common in mountainous terrain. Scarce to rare elsewhere.

**Size:** Varies, most are a few tens of meters tall.

**Travel Times:** Delays imposed by other terrain and the river itself may hamper travel.

**Special problems:** None, apart from those imposed by other local terrain features.

## JUNGLES

Jungles are characterized by heavy growths of tall trees (or the local equivalent of trees, in the case of worlds like Aurore). The forest canopy blocks light to the surface and actually hinders the growth of dense underbrush. Thick ground growth is evident only in areas where the tall, light-blocking canopy has opened (along a river or where trees have fallen) to admit light to the ground.

Jungles are not common on Aurore. Low-lying areas close to the sea tend to be periodically inundated by the planet's tides. One extensive mix of jungle and swamp, the Balotah, does exist in the eastern hemisphere, on the island continent of Novoa Kiyev. Colonel Yuri Shklovskii is continuing a bitter guerrilla war against the Kafers from this tangle of swamps, rivers, and tropical forest.

Travel is hampered more by the swamps or tangled undergrowth which interrupts the true jungle than by the jungle itself. However, hovercraft cannot penetrate jungle terrain except along the rivers themselves because of the close spacing of the trees and tree roots, and the rough nature of the highly eroded ground.

## Jungle

**Frequency:** Rare. True Auroran jungles are found only on Novoa Kiyev and in isolated, well watered valleys which lie both close to the sea and close enough to the Hotback that the local temperature is above 30°C.

**Size:** On Aurore, the largest jungle on Novoa Kiyev is several



A sand puppy (*occultator syrtis*), burrowed in the sands of a tidal flat, makes a quick meal of a passing land crab.

thousand kilometers across. Most occupy relatively small valleys, a few tens or hundreds of kilometers across.

**Travel Times:** Per *Forest* in the *Player's Manual*. Swamps and bogs, as well as rivers, within the jungle will further hamper travel.

**Special Problems:** Auroran jungles have their own forms of native life, especially in and near rivers. Jungle growth provides excellent cover near natural travel routes (paths and rivers) from which ambushes can be sprung.

## SWAMPS AND BOGS

Swamps are a type of terrain distinct from jungles. They are wetter and are characterized by an open (or nonexistent) treetop canopy and heavy undergrowth, broken by broad, open stretches of mud or water. Tidal bogs vary with the tide cycle between surfaces of mud and water. While dense undergrowth hinders travel, there will always be open surfaces which permit travel by boat or hovercraft in almost any direction.

Swamps and bogs are more common on Aurore than jungles, particularly along broad rivers where tidal incursions flood low-lying land once each tidal period. Much of the area along the Equator between Thundermist and the settlement of Spring Flood is tidal bog, low-lying land which varies between shallow, open water and thick, deep mud, grown over by a tangled variety of Auroran swamp vegetation.

The difference between swamp or bog and true jungle in game terms is apparent primarily in how they affect travel. Hovercraft have little difficulty navigating swamps or bogs where vegetation is sparse or at least presents openings between the trees broad enough for hovercraft to travel. Swamps and jungles alike hinder passage on foot or in tracked or wheeled vehicles, but swamps present the added difficulty of large expanses of mud or quicksand.

## Swamps and Bogs

**Frequency:** Common along rivers, especially where tidal action periodically floods low-lying land. Rare elsewhere.

**Size:** Varies. Auroran swamps average a few hundred kilometers across.

**Travel Times:** Per *Swamp* in the *Travel Times* table in the *Player's Manual*. However, muddy areas (see *Mud*, above) are very common in swamps and will frequently delay travellers who are proceeding on foot or are riding in tracked vehicles. Tidal bogs are primarily mud and are extremely difficult to cross on foot or in any vehicle other than hovercraft. Wheeled vehicles cannot navigate swamps at all.

**Special Problems:** The delay caused by mud is the greatest problem posed by Auroran swamps. Visibility is quite limited in swamp terrain, providing ample opportunities for ambush. Also, as in jungles, swamps have their own varieties of native Auroran wildlife (including bladehoods and bloodsuckers) which present additional hazards for travellers.

## FORESTS

Auroran forests (as opposed to rain forests, or jungles) are fairly common near inhabited regions in the temperate zone. Consisting primarily of the Auroran broadtop trees (which look much like giant Terran mushrooms), they have been sources of the burgeoning Auroran lumber industry which provides native hardwoods for construction and furniture throughout the human colonies. In general, Auroran forests occupy the regions between the Hotback and the edge of the Continental Plateau above the Tidal Flats.

They are treated as Woods for the purpose of determining travel time.



## Forest

**Frequency:** Common in temperate zone between sea and Hotback. Scarce in the Hotback.

**Size:** Varies. Typical forested areas range from a few hundred to several thousand kilometers across.

**Travel Times:** As given for *Woods* on the Typical Travel Times table in the *Player's Manual*.

**Special Problems:** Several dangerous native life forms inhabit Auroran forests, including the bladehood. Limited visibility makes them likely areas for ambushes or hidden Kafer camps.

## COLONIES

The Auroran colonies are described fully elsewhere in this sourcebook. Additional information on Tanstaaf is provided in GDW's module *Kafer Dawn*.

## ADVENTURING IN THE TEMPERATE ZONE

Since the entire human population on Aurore is confined to several relatively small areas within the planet's temperate zone, most adventures will take place here. The regions within the temperate zone in the immediate vicinity of each colony area, as well as large tracts of the Auroran Hotback, are the battlefields of the current war between human colonists and the Kafer invaders.

Vast areas of the temperate zone are still unexplored, though the entire planetary surface has been mapped by satellite. Further exploration of unknown areas has been shelved pending a resolution of the Kafer War and the recovery of the planetary economy.

However, several situations could arise requiring human exploration of unknown regions of Aurore's habitable zone. These are listed below. The referee should feel free to adapt these to his own ongoing campaign, or to introduce ideas for scenarios of his own design based on these or similar ideas.

- Recent plans call for a new level of cooperation between French and Tanstaaf military forces. It is believed that a large body of Kafers occupy the general region north of La Gouffre, between the Tanstaaf and Auroran colonies. The player characters volunteer (or are ordered) to participate in a mapping/probe-in-force expedition into this region. The mission is twofold: they must map and survey the land to confirm intelligence estimates of satellite recon data, and they are to seek out and identify concentrations of Kafer forces. The expedition will then be in a good position both to report Kafer movements and positions and to coordinate Tanstaaf/French airmobile strikes into the region. A reprise of the scenario *Thunder Valley* presented in *Kafer Dawn*, where large numbers of Kafers are lured into La Gouffre to be destroyed by the incoming tide, is also possible.

- Orbital reconnaissance photographs have pinpointed a large and unidentified structure somewhere (Referee's choice) in the unexplored Auroran wilderness. It is believed that the structure is a Kafer artifact. A heavily armed military expedition is assembled to enter the area, determine the nature and purpose of the artifact, and deal with it as appropriate.

The actual nature of the artifact is left to the referee's discretion. It could be a natural phenomenon previously unnoticed, such as the salt-encrusted bed of a circular lake which has recently drained away during a seismic event, a curiously regular (but natural) lava bed, or an artificial-looking (but natural) fault escarpment. Such artificial-appearing terrain features are common even on Earth, where the natural processes which formed them are well understood. In an alien and poorly studied environment, such natural artifacts could be relatively common. Whatever its nature, the terrain feature would serve as an excuse for the referee to get

the player group into unfamiliar territory, tangling with Auroran wildlife instead of Kafers for a change.

Alternatively, the artifact could in fact be Kafer in origin. Possibilities include excavations for a landing field for Kafer inter-face vehicles in expectation of the arrival of a new Kafer war fleet, a Kafer HQ and communications center, or the wreck of a Kafer troopship downed during the early days of the war and unnoticed until recently. A Kafer base or landing field would be heavily guarded, and large numbers of Kafer personnel would be in the area. A Kafer ship might be completely abandoned, providing human scientists with an unexpected opportunity to study Kafer ship technology. More likely, large numbers of Kafers will be at the site already (or in the area, looking for the wreck themselves) seeking to strip the ship of anything which would be of use to them and to deny the ship and its secrets to the human enemy.

- A joint civilian-military expedition is organized for the purpose of surveying unexplored territory outside of inhabited regions near the local colony. The mission has several purposes. Military authorities would like to thoroughly survey the area in order to prepare for possible operations against the Kafers. Also, civilian authorities are looking for new, exploitable resources (farmable land, water, native forests) to replace those lost to Kafer attacks and the spread of the vicious fungal blight known as Kafer Rot. The expedition would enter an unknown area of the referee's choosing, establish a camp, and explore the surrounding region, making maps, taking readings, setting up automatic sensors and monitoring equipment, and setting up microwave relay stations. Depending on the area, the expedition would have to contend with native wildlife, the usual gamut of Auroran natural dangers, and the possibility of unexpected Kafer parties.

## LA MER CEINDANT

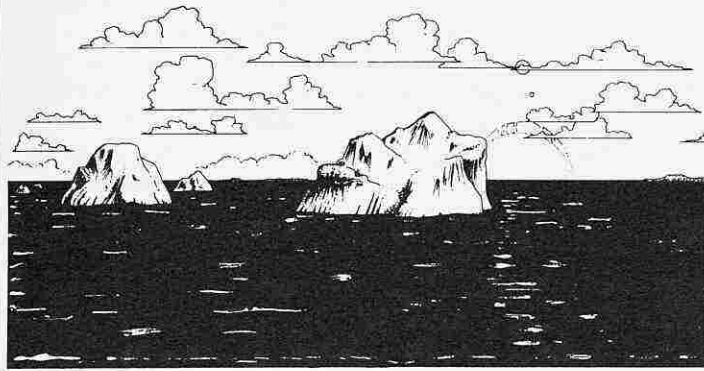
La Mer Ceindant, or the Encircling Sea, is Aurore's only ocean. Except for the relatively small, landlocked bodies such as La Mer de Sel, it is the only major body of liquid water on the planet. It is a band running completely around the planet, separating the Cold Pole's ice cap from the land around the Hot Pole. The sea's moderating effect on temperatures has made life possible along the relatively narrow band of habitable land between the Rimwall and the sea. Altogether, Aurore's sea only occupies about twenty percent of the total surface area of the planet, but it forms the vital buffer between fire and ice which makes life on Aurore possible.

Of all the planetographical features of the planet, the sea is the least known and the most mysterious. Recurring reports of truly enormous life forms continue to surface, only to be denied by Auroran biologists and researchers. The fisherfolk of Novoa Kiyev have made their living off Aurore's seas for over 50 years and have achieved some understanding of the world's complex tides and weather, but even they fear the sea and the monsters they are convinced lurk beneath its surface.

## AURORAN USE OF THE SEA

The Ukrainian colonists have the only well developed fishing industry on the planet. No native Auroran life forms can be eaten by humans; they are, at worst, poisonous, at best, useless, to the human digestive system. However, the Auroran analogue of fish, known as pisceforms to the scientists and rebah (fish) to the fishermen, has proven to be a useful and economical source of nitrogenous fertilizer for the terraforming process which enables Auroran soil to support Terran food crops such as apples, wheat and corn. Until the Kafers came, several hundred hydrofoils and other light surface craft provided the Ukrainian colony with enough fertilizer for its own needs with enough left over to trade with the





### Encircling Sea

French and Tanstaaflians for needed machine parts and electronics.

Since the loss of most of Novoa Kiyev to the Kafers, fishing as an industry has ceased. The Ukrainian fishing fleet has been diverted to other uses—principally evacuating refugees from Novoa Kiyev to havens in Zahpad Zemlya and running covert military operations along the occupied coast.

The French use similar hydrofoils, hovercraft, and other surface small craft such as armed launches, to patrol their own coastlines and to mount limited amphibious operations against small pockets of Kafer resistance along the coast. The French have never had much interest in Aurore's seas, and the small Martinet hydrofoil manufacturing facility north of La Cite d'Aurore was established primarily to produce a local product for sale to the Ukrainians.

The Tanstaaflians have no port facility at all and show no interest in the sea whatsoever.

### PILOTING

Avoiding disaster aboard seagoing vessels requires Sea Vehicle skill and is generally a task, or Piloting roll, described as follows:

To avoid danger at sea: Routine to formidable (as appropriate). Sea Vehicle skill (as appropriate). 30 seconds.

The level of difficulty of a given task will depend on the situation. Avoiding shallow water during a tidal surge might be a routine task; performing the same task in the teeth of a force 10 gale would be difficult or even formidable. Seagoing Vessel skill may be applied as a general skill, or the referee may specify that players have specific skill in specific types of craft, including large vessels (over 20 m), small craft (under 20 m), and hydrofoils. Hovercraft skill can be applied to attempts to pilot oceangoing hovercraft.

### DANGERS

Even the oceans of a well known and thoroughly explored world like Earth can be dangerous at any time, and the unknown seas of an unexplored world are more dangerous by far. The following list describes some of the dangers associated with travelling the Auroran sea.

Note that some of the dangers listed are not applied to hydrofoils or hovercraft. These exceptions apply only when hydrofoils are planing at high speed, or when hovercraft are actually in motion. Hovercraft floating in the sea and hydrofoils moving with their foils retracted are treated as ordinary, deep-hulled watercraft.

### STORMS

The weather patterns which create severe storms over Aurore's land surfaces serve also to create violent storms at sea. Unlike a

world which rotates rapidly on its axis, such as Earth, Aurore does not have coriolis storms—typhoons and hurricanes.

Storms at sea can be forecast up to 20 hours in advance by native Aurorans with at least some experience of the sea. Storms will occur on a 2D6 roll of 11+, with one roll made once each 30 hours the characters are at sea.

The severity of a storm is measured by its Beaufort Number. The following chart is used to determine a storm's Beaufort Number.

### BEAUFORT SCALE

No.	Name	Wind (kph)	Description
0	Calm	1	Sea completely calm, like a mirror
1	Light air	1-5	Ripples on water surface
2	Light breeze	6-11	Small wavelets
3	Gentle breeze	12-19	Large wavelets, beginning to break
4	Moderate breeze	20-28	Small waves, white caps
5	Fresh breeze	29-38	Moderate waves, many white caps, some spray
6	Strong breeze	39-49	Waves of 2 to 4 m; white foam and spray
7	Moderate gale	50-61	Sea heaps up. Foam blown in streaks
8	Fresh gale	62-74	Waves of 4 to 6 m. Spindrift, foam streaks
9	Strong gale	75-88	Waves of 4 to 6 m. Spray affects visibility
10	Whole gale	89-102	Waves 6 to 9 m. Heavy, rolling seas
11	Storm	103-117	Waves 9 to 14 m. Limited visibility
12+	Hurricane	117+	Waves over 14 m. Severely limited visibility

The descriptions can be used to help paint the narrative picture of a storm at sea. Severity is determined by rolling 2D6 below.

### STORM SEVERITY

Roll 2D6, and implement the following results:

**2-6:** Rain and thunderstorm, with winds at Force 6 or less. A squall arises, requiring one piloting roll to avoid mishap. It lasts for 1D6+2 hours, then abates.

**7:** Force 7 gale. Begins as Force 5 (Fresh Breeze), increasing to Force 7 wind over the next 1D6-1 hours. Storm remains at Force 7 for the next 1D6+2 hours, after which it abates. Piloting rolls must be made twice during the storm, as well as at any time wind or waves threaten to carry the vessel into a lee (downwind) shore.

**8:** Force 8 gale. Begins as a Force 5 wind increasing to Force 8 over the next 1D6 hours. Storm remains at Force 8 for the next 1D6+2 hours, after which it abates. Piloting rolls must be made every other hour, and at any time when wind or seas threaten to carry the vessel into a lee shore.

**9:** Force 9 gale. Begins as a Force 5 wind, increasing to Force 9 over the next 1D6 hours. Storm remains at Force 9 for the next 2D6 hours, after which it abates. Piloting rolls must be made every other hour, and at any time when wind or seas threaten to carry the vessel into a lee shore.

**10:** Force 10 gale. Begins as Force 5 wind, increasing to Force 10 over the next 1D6 hours. Storm remains at Force 10 for the next 2D6 hours, after which it gradually abates. Piloting rolls must

be made every other hour, and at any time when the wind or seas threaten to carry the vessel into a lee shore.

**11:** Force 11 storm. Begins as Force 5 wind, increasing to Force 11 over the next 1D6 hours. Storm remains at Force 11 for the next 2D6+2 hours, after which it gradually abates. Piloting rolls must be made once each hour, and at any time when the wind or high seas threaten to carry the vessel into a lee shore.

**12:** Force 12 or higher storm. Begins as Force 5 wind which increases to Force 12 over the next 1D6+2 hours. Storm remains at Force 12+ (as high as Force 17, the highest possible) for the following 2D6+2 hours, then gradually abates. Piloting rolls must be made once each hour, and at any time when the wind or high seas threaten to carry the vessel into a lee shore.

The effects of various mishaps are left to the referee but include various types of damage to the vessel or its engines, leaks, and such devastating mishaps as running aground in shallows or striking submerged rocks. A total mishap invariably results in the loss of the vessel, requiring the crew to abandon ship. (See *Shipwreck*, below.)

## WATERSPOUTS

Waterspouts are identical to tornadoes, but they occur only at sea. They consist of a rapidly whirling funnel of water rather than dust and debris. Waterspouts occur on a 2D6 roll of 12, with one roll made every 30 hours the characters are at sea. A DM of +2 should be added if a regular storm of Force 7 or higher has recently occurred.

Waterspouts can be seen at considerable distances but will only threaten the craft on an additional roll of 9+. Avoiding an approaching waterspout, a routine task, requires a Piloting roll. A mishap will result in damage to the vessel, and a total mishap will result in its destruction.

## TIDE REEFS

Aurore does not have an analogue of terrestrial coral, and it has nothing like Earth's coral reefs. However, the daily rise and fall of the planet's tides bring certain submerged masses of rock much nearer the surface once during each tidal cycle. These tide reefs, as they are called, are not dangerous to hydrofoils or hovercraft, but watercraft drawing more than a half meter of water may strike them at low tide when they would have passed over them at high tide.

Their presence is left to the referee's discretion or to a 2D6 die roll of 10+ made once each hour during low tide when the vessel is within 10 km of the shore or any large island. On a roll of 10+, the vessel will strike the unseen reef. Damage can be determined by rolling 2D6 on the Mishap table, with a DM of +1 for every 10 kph of the craft's speed above 10 kph. A total mishap will result in the vessel's sinking, requiring the crew to abandon ship.

Hydrofoils and hovercraft are not endangered by tidal reefs.

## TIDAL FLATS

Tidal flats are discussed at length elsewhere in this sourcebook. Their principal danger to seagoing craft lies in the possibility that boats could become stranded on a tidal flat when the tide goes out, leaving the craft high and dry until the tide returns.

The referee should consult the rules for determining the speed of the tide where a boat might become stranded. If the tide is moving faster than the boat's top speed, the boat will become stranded as the tide ebbs.

Stranded boats can be refloated by waiting for the tide flood. However, if the velocity of the incoming water (in kilometers per hour) is more than the length of the boat (in meters)  $\times 2$ , the boat

will suffer severe but repairable damage. If the water's velocity is more than the length of the boat  $\times 3$ , the boat will suffer severe damage which must be repaired in port. If the water's velocity is more than the length of the boat  $\times 4$ , the boat will be destroyed and the crew will be forced to swim for shore or take to the life rafts.

Note that vessels which are stranded on tidal flats are generally in no immediate danger. Crew members who descend to the surface of the flat may be at risk from various native life forms.

## TIDAL SURGE

Tidal surge is the strong current caused by ebb or flood tides which may drag a deep hulled boat off course. They are most severe in narrow channels and passages, and off the mouths of major tidal bores such as La Gouffre. The referee should use his own discretion as to the presence of these currents. They occur during the peak periods of incoming tide (towards the shore) and outgoing tide (towards the sea). The effects of being trapped in a tidal surge are also up to the referee. Surges are rarely dangerous, but they could serve to drag the craft into shallow water or submerged rocks, requiring special tasks by the pilot (a Piloting roll) to avoid a shipwreck. A mishap would result in damage and possible stranding of the craft. A total mishap will result in the sinking of the vessel, requiring the crew to abandon ship.

Hovercraft and hydrofoils are not subject to tidal surges.

## TSUNAMIS

Tsunamis are also called tidal waves, though they have nothing to do with tides. They are caused by seismic events or by the violent explosion of undersea or island volcanoes. In the open sea they are not dangerous and may pass ships without being noticed. In areas close to shore, however, shallow water causes the tidal wave to build to 30 or more meters in height. Water is drawn out away from low-lying shore areas and tidal flats, then returns as a wall of water which destroys everything in its path.

Tsunamis are special events decreed by the referee, who determines that a volcanic explosion or major seismic quake has occurred at a set time and place. Because of their violent nature, such seismic or volcanic events should be considered to be rare occurrences. The tsunami will travel outward from this event at a speed of 700 kph. Warning of the wave's approach may be broadcast by ships or stations closer to the wave's source, or by satellites which record the event triggering the wave, and the subsequent inundation of low-lying areas.

Ships within 10 km of the shore may be destroyed, damaged or stranded by a tsunami. Make a 2D6 roll on the Mishap table, with a +DM of 10-D where D is the ship's distance from shore in kilometers. A minor mishap results in repairable damage to the



*Tidal Flats*



ship. A major mishap results in severe damage as the ship is swept against rocks or other obstacles. A total mishap results in the immediate destruction of the ship against rocky cliffs or the stranding of the vessel far above the normal high tide line, depending on the nature of the seacoast where the incident occurs.

## ICEFALL

Near the Ice Wall of La Glaciere, the frequent calving of icebergs may result in surges similar to tidal surges which could sweep vessels into rocks or shallow water. The phenomenon is called "Icefall" or, in French, "La Glace Tombee."

A major icefall will occur either at the referee's discretion, or on a 2D6 roll of 11+, with one roll made every 30 hours the vessel is within 10 km of the Ice Wall. The effect is treated as a tidal surge travelling out from the point where the icefall has taken place. If rocks, shallow water, or other hazards lie close to the vessel opposite the direction of the fall, the vessel's pilot must make a Piloting roll to avoid damage to the ship.

## LIFE

As noted previously, the Auroran sea is home to a variety of life forms, many unknown, some exceptionally large and hungry—including one specimen remarkably like the sea serpents of Teran maritime legend. Such encounters are left to the referee's discretion, subject to the frequency of encounters with that particular life form. Piloting rolls may be used in an attempt to avoid a hungry or angered predator, and weapons skills may be applied in combat.

Because of their nature, encounters with large, hungry denizens of La Mer Ceindant should be rare occurrences.

## SHIPWRECK

Mishaps as a result of any of the above dangers may result in the loss of the crew. Details of the disaster will vary, of course, depending on the nature of the disaster, factors such as whether a storm is blowing and how close the vessel is to land, and on whether the stricken vessel has life rafts.

In general, abandoning ship is a task, described as follows:

To abandon ship (Unskilled): Difficult. Swimming. 10 seconds.

Characters who do not have Swimming skill must rely on flotation devices or on friends who can swim, or they must board a life raft or lifeboat before it is launched. The skill becomes routine in calm water, formidable in storms of Force 9 to Force 11, and impossible in storms of Force 12 or higher. Other factors (such as fire, freezing waters, or an attack by hostile life forms) will further increase the difficulty of this task.

A total mishap results in the character's death.

## ADVENTURING ON LA MER CEINDANT

Several possible events could lead the player characters into a scenario or an entire campaign voyaging on Aurore's sea. These possibilities are listed below. Referees should feel free to adapt these to their own Auroran campaigns or to use these as guides for developing scenario ideas of their own.

- A Ukrainian, Dimitri Kharov (see page 74), has recently arrived in La Cite d'Aurore after travelling halfway around the planet in his Martinet hydrofoil. The purpose of his voyage was to enlist the aid of the other Auroran colonies in the desperate struggle of the Ukrainian colonists against the Kafer invaders.

Unfortunately, both the French and Tanstaaflian colonists are thoroughly enmeshed in their own struggles against the invader,

and there is little help to offer. It is possible, however, that French or Tanstaaflian authorities could be convinced to send a small expeditionary task force to Novoa Kiyev, partly to promote the image of human unity against the Kafer threat, partly to observe the situation in the eastern hemisphere so that French and Tanstaaflian military authorities can better gauge their own chances of success.

The expeditionary force can range from a handful of player characters crowded onto Kanov's lone hydrofoil to hundreds of men on a small flotilla of vessels, depending on the referee's desires and the plans laid by the player characters. However large the fleet, the passage from the Auroran colony to Novoa Kiyev will be at least as dangerous as the ultimate confrontation with the Kafers.

And even after complete victory over the Kafers, there is still the voyage home....

- The allied French-Tanstaaflian military command has developed a plan for trapping a large number of Kafers currently infesting the Northern Mountains in the general area of Mont Ste. Victoire. Troops of the Tanstaafl Free Legion will move north to take up positions along the south rim of La Gouffre. French units will advance south from their positions southwest of Lumiere d'Aube. A third force, consisting of combined TFL and French troops, are to be landed by sea along the cliffs north of the entrance to La Gouffre. The combined force is to move swiftly inland, locate and flush the Kafer forces, and drive them eastward, concentrating them in the path of the main French force from the north. If the Kafers are too strong to be driven, they can at least be pinned by the amphibious force along the north flank of Mont Ste. Victoire until the French force can arrive to finish them off.

The combined force is to be assembled at high tide in Iceberg Bay, close by the mouth of the Equator River, where a large TFL force will meet a small French Foreign Legion strike force aboard a flotilla of Martinet hydrofoils. The flotilla will then proceed north about 1500 km, to a high tide landing point north of Mont Ste. Victoire.

Landings and embarkations will have to be carefully timed with the tides. In addition, tidal surges off the mouth of La Gouffre will have to be avoided. The coast along Iceberg Bay and along the mouth of La Gouffre is treacherous with numerous shallows, tidal reefs, and large tidal flats. Perhaps the greatest danger is that some military bureaucrat has miscalculated the times of ebb and flood tides. The threat posed by a storm blowing in from the west is also a worrisome thought.

And then, once the characters make it ashore, the Kafers are waiting....

- Like so many other research projects, explorations of La Mer Ceindant and surveys of its coasts and biology have been suspended for the duration of the war. It is possible, however, that La Conseil Scientifique d'Aurore could assemble money and material enough to provide for a small marine expedition, particularly if it sets off in the guise of a military survey with the purpose of charting possible passages for future amphibious operations.

The referee should determine the nature of the expedition, which could range from a conservative mapping of the coastline between the French colony and Iceberg Bay to the highly ambitious charting of routes from Aurore to Novoa Kiyev or across La Mer Ceindant to the Icewall. It is also possible that continuing reports of extremely large and dangerous life forms in La Mer Ceindant will finally impress the authorities enough so that they will authorize a biological expedition to find these monsters and assess the threat they pose to future marine operations.

- A transport aircraft carrying an important French general has gone down somewhere at sea, possibly in a storm, possibly as the result of Kafer ground fire. An expedition is assembled aboard

a Martinet hydrofoil to enter the region where the aircraft is believed to have gone down. The group's orders are to search for wreckage and survivors, organize a rescue, and recover certain valuable papers and computer programs believed to have been on the aircraft when it went down.

The Kafers are not believed to have a marine capability, but the invaders have been known to spring surprises on the human defenders before this.

And they are likely to be interested in the downed aircraft as well.

## LA GLACIERE

The Auroran icecap is an immense sheet of ice ranging from hundreds of meters to several kilometers in thickness, covering over a quarter of the entire planetary surface. Together with the Hot Pole, it is one of the prime shapers of Aurore's weather. Hot, high-altitude winds rising to extreme altitudes over the Hot Pole circulate to the hemisphere opposite Tithonus' sullen, glowing-coal heat where the air cools and sinks. Water vapor picked up from moist, rising currents above La Mer Ceindant precipitates over La Glaciere as snow which falls in fierce blizzards lasting for perhaps weeks or months on end. Pressed outward by the growing mass of ice at the center of the ice sheet, vast blocks of ice break off, a process known as "calving," and the newborn icebergs drift across La Mer Ceindant to melt in the much warmer waters along the continental land masses of the temperate zone.

In its own way, La Glaciere offers challenges as great as or greater than those facing explorers at Aurore's Hot Pole. The air is thick enough to be breathable, but the temperature ranges from a high near freezing along the Ice Wall where the icepack meets the sea, to  $-70^{\circ}\text{C}$  or below, close to the freezing point of carbon dioxide. At temperatures below  $-50^{\circ}\text{C}$ , breathing masks and warmed air supplies are necessary for survival during exposures of more than a very few minutes. In addition to the cold, both the fierce storms and the ice itself offer special dangers unique to Aurore's ice sheet.

## DANGERS

Several specific dangers confront explorers on the La Glaciere ice. These are listed below. Where applicable, the frequency of the danger is noted.

## COLD

The single greatest danger of the Auroran icepack is the cold. This self-evident fact is examined in detail in the table below.

## EFFECTS OF COLD

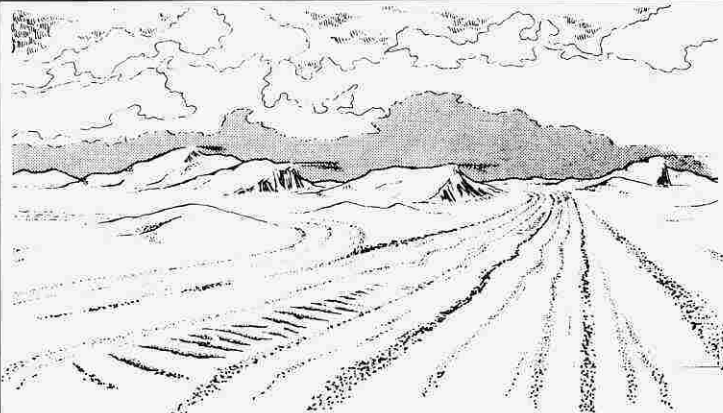
Temperature Result in degrees C:

**0 to -10:** Unprotected characters receive normal damage (DPV = .1) for each 10 minutes they are exposed to the weather. Characters with exposed skin (face, hands, etc.) receive normal damage (DPV = .1) for every 30 minutes they are exposed.

**-11 to -25:** Unprotected characters receive normal damage (DPV = .2) for each 10 minutes they are exposed. Characters with exposed skin (face, hands, etc.) receive damage every 30 minutes. In addition, the difficulty level for all tasks is increased one level (routine becomes difficult, difficult becomes formidable.)

**-26 to -50:** Unprotected characters receive normal damage (DPV = 2D6/10) for each five minutes they are exposed. Characters with exposed skin (face, hands, etc.) receive damage every 15 minutes. In addition, the difficulty level for any task is increased one level (difficult becomes formidable, etc.)

**-51 and below:** Unprotected characters receive normal damage (DPV = 1) for each five minutes they are exposed.



## La Glaciere

Characters with exposed hands or faces receive damage to those every 15 minutes. Difficulty levels are increased by two levels (routine becomes formidable). Breathing masks and warmed air supplies become necessary for more than extremely short periods.

## LOCAL TEMPERATURE

The icecap receives heat only from the planet's true suns, Muphrid and Rubis, and by convection currents in the atmosphere from the Tithonian side. In the following table, the terms "sunset" and "sunrise" refer to the rising and setting of Muphrid, the larger and brighter of Aurore's suns. Rubis adds little heat to that imparted by Muphrid. Local temperature can be determined below:

## TEMPERATURE TABLE/LA GLACIERE

### Local noon to local sunset (Sunset = noon + 15 hours)

Die	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Temp.	-35	-36	-37	-38	-39	-40	-42	-44	-48	-50	-55

### Sunset to midnight (Midnight = sunset + 15 hours)

Die	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Temp.	-40	-41	-42	-44	-48	-50	-54	-56	-58	-60	-65

### Midnight to sunrise (Sunrise = midnight + 15 hours)

Die	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Temp.	-45	-48	-50	-52	-55	-60	-65	-70	-70	-75	-80

Within 1500 km of the Cold Pole, apply a DM of +1 to all rolls. Within 1000 km of the Ice Wall, apply a DM of -2.

The referee should roll 2D6 at the beginning of each period (noon to sunset, sunset to midnight, midnight to sunrise, sunrise to noon) or once every 15 hours. Several rolls can be made during one 15-hour period, but extreme changes in the temperature (for example, a roll at noon of  $-35^{\circ}$  and another roll 3 hours later of  $-50^{\circ}$ ) are unlikely and will occur only in connection with a drastic change in the weather. The referee should endeavor to present most temperature changes as smooth transitions.

## WEATHER

Besides determining the temperature, the referee should determine both the wind and the weather during each 15-hour period. The following tables can be used:

## WEATHER TABLE/LA GLACIERE

Roll 2D6 and implement the following results:

**0:** Calm and clear, with no clouds. Wind speed is 5 kph or less.



**1-4:** Clear weather, few or no clouds.

**5-7:** Partly cloudy.

**8-9:** Overcast. Light to moderate snow on 2D6 of 8+.

**10-11:** Heavily overcast. Moderate snow on 2D6 of 7+.

**12-14:** Moderate snow. DM of +2 on wind speed table.

**15-18:** Heavy snow. Visibility sharply limited. DM of +4 on wind speed table.

Apply a DM of -2 during daylight and an additional -2 for a current local temperature of -40°C or less, or -4 for a current temperature of -60°C or less. Apply a DM of +3 at distances between 2000 and 3000 km from the Cold Pole, and a DM of +5 within 2000 km of the Cold Pole. In addition, apply a DM of +2 if there has been a temperature change (up or down) of 20° or more within the past 15 hours.

### WIND SPEED TABLE/LA GLACIERE

#### Die Beaufort Results

≤4	0-1	Wind is less than 5 kph
5	2	Wind speed: 6-11 kph
6	3	Wind speed: 12-19 kph
7	4	Wind speed: 20-28 kph
8	5	Wind speed: 29-38 kph
9	6	Wind speed: 39-49 kph
10	7	Wind speed: 50-61 kph
11	8	Wind speed: 62-74 kph
12	9	Wind speed: 75-88 kph
13	10	Wind speed: 89-102 kph
14	11	Wind speed: 103-117 kph
15+	12+	Wind speed over 117 kph

**Weather Determination:** The referee should roll first for temperature, using the appropriate table for the current position of Muphris in the sky, and modifying the roll for the distance from the Cold Pole. The temperature may modify the roll for weather.

Next he should roll for weather, applying the appropriate modifiers for temperature, daylight, and distance from the Cold Pole.

Finally, he should roll for wind speed, applying the appropriate modifiers for weather.

**Wind Chill:** At temperatures below freezing, wind will increase the effects of cold, making it seem colder than it really is, a factor known as *wind chill*. The following table can be used to estimate wind chill, based on wind speed or the Beaufort Number of a storm.

### WIND CHILL TABLE/LA GLACIERE

Wind	Beaufort	Wind Chill/°C							
	0	-5	-10	-15	-20	-25	-30	-35	-40
12-19	3	-7	-15	-21	-24	-30	-38	-43	-50
20-28	4	-11	-19	-26	-33	-36	-42	-51	-56
29-38	5	-14	-21	-30	-38	-42	-48	-56	-62
39-49	6	-18	-26	-36	-42	-48	-52	-62	-67
50-61	7	-19	-27	-36	-45	-50	-54	-65	-70
62-74	8	-19	-28	-36	-50	-54	-58	-66	-73
75-88	9	-20	-29	-37	-52	-55	-60	-66	-75

Wind chill is determined by cross-indexing either the approximate wind velocity or a storm's Beaufort Number with the current temperature. Thus, a temperature of -20° with a wind speed of 70 kph (a Force 8 wind, or fresh gale) would give a wind chill of -50°C. Wind velocities greater than 88 kph and temperatures lower than -40°C have little additional effect on wind chill.

When determining the difficulty of a task in arctic conditions, the referee should apply the wind chill temperature if the task is

in an area that is exposed to the wind and the actual air temperature if the task is in an area that is sheltered from the wind. Shelter from the wind can be as complex as an ice house or windscreens; on the other hand, it can be as simple as a spot in the lee (upwind side) of a vehicle.

### BLIZZARD

Blizzards are frequent in the vicinity of the Cold Pole, less frequent but still common near the Ice Wall. The high winds of these blizzards cause blowing snow which sharply reduces visibility.

Depending on the needs of the scenario, the referee may determine the beginning of a blizzard for himself or he may determine the event randomly by rolling on the La Glaciere Weather table. Blizzards can be defined as snowstorms (9 or higher on the Weather table) accompanied by high winds (Beaufort Number 8 or higher.)

Native Aurorans who have experience with Aurore's weather patterns will be able to foretell the approach of a blizzard. Also, blizzards can be predicted through observations by weather satellites and orbital stations if the characters have the necessary communications links (via ground microwave relay stations). Blizzards give 1D6+2 hours warning of their approach, through the appearance of low, dark clouds and an increase in the wind.

Wind speed can be determined using the weather and wind speed tables presented above under *Weather*. In general, increased wind speeds will not make conditions more hazardous for well protected or sheltered characters, but walking is difficult in storms with a Beaufort Number of 9 to 11, and impossible at 12 or higher.

Unprotected characters will suffer the effects of wind chill in a high wind in addition to the usual danger from cold (see *Wind Chill*, above). Finally, the cloud cover associated with some storms creates the conditions necessary for a whiteout (see below).

Visibility during a blizzard is reduced to a few meters if the wind is Force 8 or higher and to zero in a Force 12 wind. The referee should use his own discretion during attempts at sighting, basing his decision on such factors as whether it is day or night (anywhere on La Glaciere, Tithonus will be below the horizon, and the only light will be from Aurore's distant twin suns), how hard the wind is blowing, and what the object of the sighting attempt is. Various electronic IR and motion scanners are not hampered by weather conditions, though heavy snow can block radar, and snow and high winds will mask sound.

Travel is slowed during a blizzard. Figures in the *Player's Manual* for travel over a glacier are a basis for travel on La Glaciere. These are modified by 150% during storms up to Force 8, by 200% during storms up to Force 10, and by 300% at Force 11 or higher. Travel by foot is impossible in winds over Force 11. Hovercraft will tend to crab and balk in high winds and will not function at all during storms of Force 9 or higher.

### WHITEOUT

In arctic terrain, under certain lighting conditions, the presence of a low layer of white clouds reflects light from the snowfield, creating the eerie, zero-visibility condition known as a whiteout. Travellers in a whiteout can become completely disoriented, and the presence of blowing snow during a blizzard can literally reduce visibility to less than a meter. The greatest danger is disorientation, since travellers lacking a compass or other navigational aids will begin to circle aimlessly.

Whiteouts can occur suddenly, often without warning, though they may be associated with the low-level clouds which move in just before or just after a storm, or they can occur during a severe blizzard. A referee may introduce a whiteout at his own discretion,

or he may determine the event randomly on a 2D6 roll of 12, with one roll made every 30 hours. A DM+2 is applied to any roll that is made within six hours of the beginning or the ending of a snowstorm (a roll of 10 or higher on the Weather table). A DM of +2 must also be applied when the sky is overcast.

Whiteouts will also coincide with any severe blizzard (15 or higher on the Weather table) on a separate 2D6 roll of 9+.

Whiteouts will last for 1D6 hours.

Since Aurore does have a weak magnetic field, locally-produced compasses are available which enable travellers to move in a straight line, even during a whiteout. Additionally, navigational satellites can be used to fix the positions of exploration parties, assuming secure microwave relay links exist to pass the information on to the explorers.

Travel is generally halted during whiteout conditions even with compasses or other navigational aids. The dangers of blundering into some unseen danger (a crevasse or ice mountain, or even the edge of the Ice Wall) are too great. The referee must use his own discretion as to the likelihood of such an encounter during travel under whiteout conditions.

### SNOW BLINDNESS

Though Muphrid, the brighter of the true suns, is not as bright in Aurore's sky as Sol is from Earth, the effects of its light glinting from the ice can temporarily blind unprotected travellers on La Glaciere's ice sheets.

Snow blindness may affect characters who are facing Muphrid while travelling over the ice for long periods of time. The position of Muphrid in the sky can be determined by using the information presented elsewhere in this sourcebook on the movements of the true suns through the sky, and by realizing that Muphrid will appear to travel across the southern sky to characters north of the equator and in the northern sky to characters to the south.

For example, snow blindness might affect characters some distance north of the equator who are travelling south when Muphrid is at its midday position, or it might affect characters travelling east during the 10 to 15 hours when Muphrid is rising. Snow blindness will only be possible when the weather is clear.

During each hour that the characters are travelling in a direction which the referee has determined is toward Muphrid (and, consequently, toward the reflected glare of Muphrid on the ice ahead), each player rolls 2D6. A DM of +1 is added for each successive hour the character has been travelling, +1 for the first hour, +2 for the second, and so on. A stop of two hours or more is necessary to rest the eyes enough to eliminate the compounding of DMs. On a modified roll of 12 or higher, the character will become blind. The effects are temporary and will wear off in 1D6 hours, but the character's walking speed will be halved during this time, even if he is led by others, and he will not be able to engage in combat or perform most tasks.

Protective goggles, the tinted visor on arctic environmental suits, or the polarized windshields of explorer vehicles will prevent snow blindness.

### CREVASSE

A crevasse is a break in the icecap, often extending for tens or hundreds of meters down into the ice. Wind-blown snow may block a crevasse near the surface or form a snow bridge which may support a character's weight—or it may not. Characters or vehicles may fall into ice crevasses during periods of poor visibility or because the crevasse is hidden, and surface ice or snow gives way under too much weight.

Crevasses are scarce across most of La Glaciere. Within 1000

km of the Ice Wall they are common, however, and within 5 km of the Ice Wall's edge they are very common. The following table can be used to determine the characteristics of any given crevasse.

### DESCRIPTION OF CREVASSE

Roll 2D6 and implement the following results:

**2-6:** Crevasse is narrow, usually less than 1 m wide, and 1D6×10 m deep. On an additional 2D6 roll of 8+ (with a DM of +2 within two days of a blizzard in the area) the crevasse will be covered over with snow and be invisible. The snow will support 2D6×10 km of weight without breaking. Any character who, together with any clothing and equipment he may be carrying, exceeds this weight will break through the snow. Tracked vehicles longer than three m in length can negotiate the crevasse without difficulty. Smaller vehicles will break through and be lost.

**7-8:** Crevasse is 1D6 meters wide and 1D6×10 meters deep. On an additional 2D6 roll of 10+ (with a DM of +1 within two days of a blizzard) the crevasse will be covered with snow and be invisible. On an 8 or 9 a snow bridge will exist across the crevasse, but the crevasse itself will be visible. The snow will support 2D6×5 kg of weight without breaking. On the average, vehicles more than three times wider than the crevasse can cross without danger, but smaller vehicles will break through the snow and be lost.

**9:** Crevasse is 2D6 meters wide and 2D6×10 m deep. A snow bridge will be present on a 2D6 roll of 9+. The bridge will support 2D6×5 kilograms without breaking.

**10-11:** Crevasse is 2D6+3 meters wide and 2D6×10 meters deep. The side of the crevasse within 5 m of the edge will support 2D6×20 kilograms of weight. If this weight is exceeded (by the total weight of all characters who approach the edge this closely, their equipment, and vehicles), the rim will give way and all characters in the danger area will fall into the crevasse.

**12:** Crevasse is an ice canyon well over 20 m across and 100 m deep. It presents a barrier which must be circled rather than crossed. Finding a way around the crevasse will add 2D6 hours to the expedition's travel time.

A crevasse will be easily visible under normal conditions but may be obscured at night, in a blizzard, or during whiteout conditions. The referee should use his judgment, basing his decision on factors such as visibility and the character's experience on the ice, to determine the likelihood of a character stumbling into an unseen crevasse.

**Falling into a Crevasse:** Characters who find themselves falling into a crevasse may attempt to grab hold of the edge or a lifeline and try to keep from falling. This is a task, described as follows:

To avoid falling into crevasse: Formidable. Strength. Instant.

*Referee's Note:* Various circumstances may reduce the difficulty level, such as having the characters linked together by lifelines or having the character who approaches the crevasse connected by a line to a vehicle or other heavy object.

Mishaps will have the result of injury or death for the character. Vehicles which fall into a crevasse will be lost, though it may be possible to salvage equipment from them. The referee should make his own determination about survival of passengers.

### ICE MOUNTAIN/SERACS

In a planet with as much seismic activity as Aurore, movements in the crust may be transmitted through kilometers of overlying ice. Too, the outward movement of the ice sheet towards La Mer Ceindant results in inevitable collisions between separate glaciers. Both factors result in the eruption of vast blocks of ice up above



the level of the surrounding terrain. These blocks are called seracs when they are building-sized blocks or columns, ice mountains when they are several hundred or thousand meters broad and tall, and escarpments when they consist of a long, straight cliff similar to seismic escarpments in rock.

Ice mountains or escarpments will add 2D6+4 hours to the travel time of characters trying to find a way past them. Travel over such terrain features is impossible without special equipment—and an extraordinarily compelling reason to do so.

Avalanches are common along the base of an ice mountain or escarpment, and very common along the base of a serac. The dangers and tasks associated with avalanches are described elsewhere in this sourcebook.

## ICEFALL

Icefall, known to the French as Glace Tombee, is a danger peculiar to the reaches of La Mer Ceindant within a few kilometers of the Ice Wall. Vast chunks of ice, sometimes kilometers broad, split from the slow-moving glaciers and collapse in spray and thunder into the sea. This birth of icebergs is called calving. The tidal surges they raise threaten vessels many kilometers away, and characters close by the impact can temporarily lose their hearing in the avalanche of noise. Beach areas lying close between the sea and the Ice Wall and well above the high-tide mark can be swept bare by the cascade of water from a nearby fall, and seagoing vessels or hovercraft can be picked up and deposited far inland by the water's swell. Characters travelling along the edge of the Ice Wall might be threatened when the ice under their feet gives way. Avoiding a fall is a task:

To avoid falling with ice: Difficult. Agility. Instant.

Icefall is an event orchestrated by the referee and is described in greater detail in the section on La Mer Ceindant. It is generally a rare event, but occasional (and rare) weaknesses in the structure of the ice give rise to avalanches of ice cascading into the sea. The falls create a nearly continuous thunder and terrible danger for watercraft anywhere in the vicinity.

## ADVENTURING ON THE AURORAN ICECAP

As have other long-term research and exploration projects on Aurore, explorations of the La Glaciere ice cap have been suspended pending a resolution to the Kafer crisis. There is some possibility, however, that the characters might find themselves caught up in an adventure on Aurore requiring travel to or across the icecap.

● An increase has been noted recently in the number of icebergs coming to ground in Iceberg Bay, and orbital reconnaissance confirms that the number of icebergs calving opposite the bay along the ice cap's west equatorial zone has been increasing. Aurore's long-term climatological patterns are as yet completely unknown, and there is some concern that this increase could mark some dramatic, and potentially disastrous, change in the planet's climate. An expedition under the auspices of La Conseil Scientifique d'Aurore (CSA) has been hastily assembled to travel to that region of the Ice Wall opposite Tanstaaf and study the calving phenomenon in hopes of discovering the reason for the increase.

The expedition can be equipped with Avignon Martinet hydrofoils or hovercraft, as desired, and will carry any equipment deemed necessary to scale the ice wall (there are several relatively gentle approaches accessible to hovercraft or tracked vehicles), set up camp, and study the movement of the glaciers. The characters will be along as a mercenary security force if they are civilians and as a military security detail if they are members of

a military unit such as the Tanstaaf Free Legion or the French Army.

The result of the study will be the eventual discovery by the expedition's scientists that stresses and pressures within the ice, together with fractures and cleavages caused by an ancient seismic disturbance far back in the interior of La Glaciere, have resulted in this particular segment of glacier ice (only now moving down upon the sea's edge to become part of the Ice Wall) becoming unusually weak and prone to fracturing. The result is an increase both in the local speed of the ice and in the calving process, increases which can be proven to be temporary. Aurore's climate is not changing and the colonies are in no danger—at least from the ice.

The same cannot be said for the exploration party, however. The entire area within 5 km of the Ice Wall and north or south of the equator for a distance of some 500 km each way is literally riddled by crevasses and weak areas in the ice. Travel is extremely hazardous, and encounters with crevasses and avalanches are frequent. Explorations on the sea near the Ice Wall will be subject, of course, to the dangers of calving bergs.

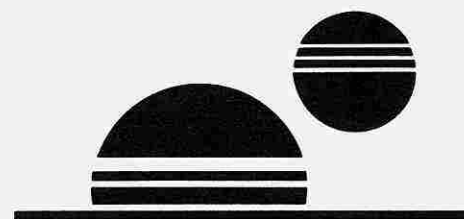
● A Martinet hydrofoil is missing. One of the craft's passengers was a high-ranking Terran officer recently arrived from Hochbaden to assess the progress of the war against the Kafers. Details are sketchy, but it is believed that the officer, General Reinhardt, had the hydrofoil detour from its proper course north along the coast between Tanstaaf and Aurore. It is possible that the craft was diverted by its pilot to avoid a particularly bad storm.

Satellite reconnaissance has detected what may be the wreckage of the Martinet, aground on a low-lying portion of a 5km iceberg midway across La Mer Ceindant.

An expedition is assembled for a search and rescue mission. The adventurers will have to check the iceberg wreckage, which they will find abandoned. References in the ship's log indicate the ship was wrecked when an icefall lifted the hydrofoil clear of the water and smashed it onto the iceberg. The survivors, including the general, decided to make for what they believed to be a strip of land along the Ice Wall coast.

Further searching will locate the site of the survivor's encampment. The site has been drowned by the wave from another icefall. A path leading up through the glacier wall nearby suggests that the survivors had warning enough to flee for higher ground—in this case, the top of the glacier.

The expedition will have to ascend the glacier to find the survivors, who will eventually be found huddling in a crude, and nearly invisible, ice house atop the glacier. They had salvaged enough provisions from the wreckage and the camp to survive until their rescue, but they will be found to be in terrible shape, frostbitten, half starved, and nearly crazed by thirst. The characters will find that the adventure will not end until they get their charges back down to the foot of the glacier—and then they still must escape the dangers of Glace Tombee.



# Special Information

Despite its beauty, visitors to Aurore must never forget for a moment that it is, after all, an alien world. Those who are native to Aurore know the planet's dangers and live with them, but an instant's carelessness—a stroll on a quiet beach or through a peaceful forest glade—can mean death to the unwary stranger who misinterprets Aurore's deadly beauty.

This section discusses the greatest dangers confronting humans on Aurore. Longtime inhabitants, those who have lived on Aurore for all or most of their lives, know these dangers as facts of life and casually accept them. Newcomers will have to learn of these dangers through research before they arrive on the planet, through conversations with locals, or, if they survive, the hard way.

## TIDES

Tithonus exerts a constant gravitational pull on Aurore which, in effect, stretches the planet from a sphere to an egg. Though this distortion is too small to be detected by the naked eye, Aurore's librational movement as it circles Tithonus is sufficient to raise daily "slosh tides" all along the shores of La Mer Ceindant. They are most extreme along the equator and almost nonexistent near the north and south poles.

The average height of these tides in the open sea at the equator is only about six meters. As on Earth, however, the depth and shape of the sea bottom and the contours of the land contribute in places to multiply this figure many times.

The maps of Aurore show certain areas along the coast marked as "tidal flats." These are low-lying stretches of coastland, occasionally hundreds of kilometers wide, which are inundated by the incoming tide and left bare when it recedes. Tidal bores or gulfs are narrow, steep-walled canyons which are empty or contain only a little water at low tide but are filled by the incoming tide by a wall of water moving with incredible speed and power. Both tidal flats and tidal bores are dangerous at certain times each day.

The Auroran day is 2.537 Earth days long, or about 61 hours. Aurore's libration is a 5° back-and-forth or "nodding" motion caused by the slight eccentricity of its orbit about Tithonus. The result is a once-daily period of high tides along all coastal areas in one hemisphere as Tithonus appears to drop toward or below the horizon coupled with low tides on the opposite hemisphere as Tithonus rises. This seems backward to most newcomers to Aurore who assume that high tide must be linked to the rising of Tithonus in the sky. The explanation is that the bulge of water heaped up by Tithonus' gravitational attraction remains more or less in place (there is some movement, of course), while Aurore

itself moves back and forth under it, in and out of the mound of water.

This cycle results in a thirty and a half hour period between high tide and low tide at any one point on the planet.

On tidal flats, the water is continually moving seaward between high tide and low (called ebb tide) and continually moving inland between low tide and high tide (called flood tide). Though it is the planet which is moving, the relative velocity of the water at any given point can be calculated by dividing the distance from high-tide point to low-tide point and dividing by 30 hours.

For example, if the distance is, on the average, 100 km, the speed of the water is 3.3 kph or less than 2 knots, a rather gentle current. The danger comes in certain specific areas where broad, flat plains or narrow canyons focus the power of both ebb and flood tides and increase their speed dramatically. On a plain 1000 km wide, the water speed will average 33 kph (18 knots), which is a strong current by any standards.

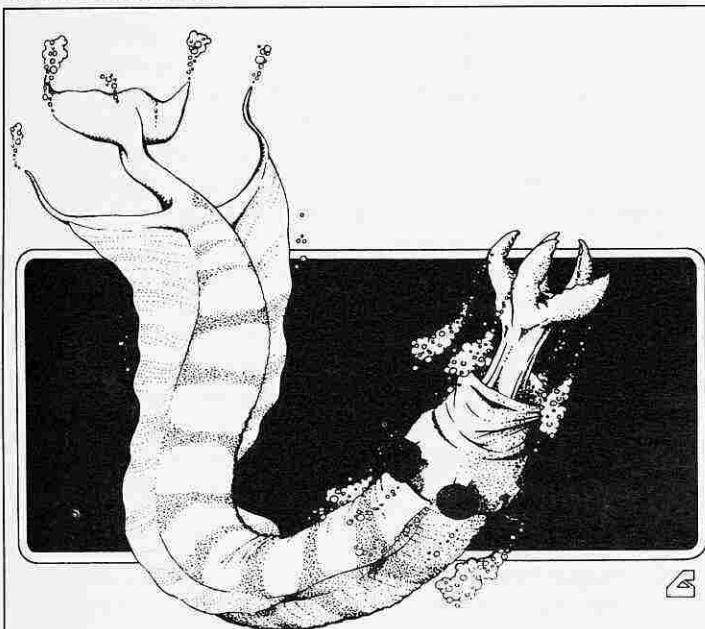
Worse is the danger presented by tidal bores. An example is the crustal fracture called La Gouffre (The Gulf) north of Tanstaaf. Water cannot enter the gulf for the first 15 hours of flood tide because of the position of a natural dam at the gulf's entrance. Once the water rises above this obstacle, however, it races up the 2700 kilometer length of the canyon at speeds which may exceed 180 kph, creating the roar which is heard on the far side of the Northern Mountains. Ebb tide in La Gouffre is milder, for various reasons having to do with the terrain, with the outgoing current rarely exceeding 100 kph.

Tidal bores are a relatively common phenomenon along the jagged and convoluted Auroran coastlines. Tidal stresses in the planet's crust have opened numerous deep-sided clefts in rocky mountain barriers, clefts which run generally east-west, and which cataclysmically fill each day as the tide comes in.

Characters trapped in a tidal bore by the approach of high tide are doomed unless they can fly or are able to escape to higher ground before the water arrives. Escaping the water will be a task which will be routine, difficult, formidable, or impossible depending on the terrain, the availability of vehicles or climbing equipment, and the speed of the water. During ebb tide watercraft will be pulled seaward by the outgoing current, though hovercraft are safe unless they set down on the water. Swimmers are liable to be swept out to sea by the inexorable drag of swift, seaward currents.

When mapping areas on Aurore on his own, the referee should use the guidelines presented above to estimate the speed and force





A denizen of La Mer Ceindant, the *requintueur* (*Incisurator marinus*) is known only from a single sighting, when it attacked a small boat.

of the water and to judge the difficulty of escaping its approach. The tides should be tied in with the rise and fall of Tithonus (if the giant is visible) in the sky. Depending on the local situation, the onset of flow tide can be gentle and gradual—or it can be announced by thunder, growing louder... and louder....

### SEISMIC ACTIVITY

The gravitational pull of Tithonus on Aurore which causes Aurore's tides also generates considerable seismic activity on the planet. Aurore's 5° libration creates a daily flexing of its crust, and this has resulted in numerous fault lines, chains of volcanic mountains, and the raising of the Sub-Tithonian Plateau.

The Sub-Tithonian Plateau and the High Desert which caps it average 5000 m above mean water level, centered on the hemisphere facing Tithonus. This plateau is circled by volcanos and seismic faults, evidence both of the gravitational stress in the planet's crust caused by Tithonus and of the continuing process of orogenesis (mountain building) on Aurore.

The raising of the High Desert has resulted in numerous fracture lines in the crust, most running parallel to the equator. Continued tidal stresses cause frequent slippage along these faults, felt as seismic quakes.

The severity of the quake will vary randomly, though mild quakes will be much more common than severe ones. Quake severity is commonly measured in the Mercalli Scale, which ranges from I (not perceptible to humans) to XII (cataclysmic).

To determine the severity of a quake, the referee rolls 2D6 on the following table.

### SEISMIC QUAKE SEVERITY TABLE

Die	Result
2-7	Mercalli III
8	Mercalli IV-V
9	Mercalli VI-VII
10	Mercalli VIII-IX
11-12	Roll again on this table, with a DM of +2
11-13	(Second roll): Mercalli X-XI
14	(Second roll): Mercalli XII

The results of quakes of various severities are described below.

**Mercalli III:** Characters feel the quake, but there is no damage or chance of injury.

**Mercalli IV to V:** Characters in buildings hear doors and windows rattling. Pictures may fall from walls, or crockery from shelves. Characters on steep slopes or in positions from which they might fall may be injured if they fail to *Take Shelter from Seismic Quake*.

**Mercalli VI to VII:** Weak or poorly constructed buildings may suffer damage (2D6 roll of 8+). Characters inside such structures may be injured if they fail the routine task *Take Shelter from Seismic Quake*. Characters who are in positions from which they might fall find avoiding injury a difficult task. Along hillsides, landslides or avalanches will be started on a 2D6 roll of 12.

**Mercalli VIII to IX:** A destructive quake. Weak or poorly constructed buildings will collapse, and preparing for the quake becomes a difficult task inside them. Well constructed buildings may collapse (2D6 of 9+). Characters in positions from which they might fall find avoiding injury a formidable task. Wheeled vehicles may be overturned (2D6 of 10+), and avoiding injury in them is a formidable task. Falling rubble in city streets may be a hazard. (Avoid as for landslide, a routine task.) Along hillsides or steep slopes, landslides or avalanches will be started on a 2D6 roll of 10+.

**Mercalli X to XI:** A disastrous quake. All buildings except for the most strongly built collapse, and even well constructed buildings may collapse (2D6 roll of 7+). Water and fuel pipes and underground storage tanks rupture, and widespread fire is a possibility. Avoiding injury inside collapsing buildings becomes a formidable task. Avoiding injury in well built buildings is a routine task. Falling rubble in city streets, or falling rocks or trees in wilderness areas may be dangerous, and escaping injury is a routine task. Along hillsides or steep slopes, landslides or avalanches will be started on a 2D6 roll of 9+.

**Mercalli XII:** A cataclysmic quake. In the open, escaping injury is a difficult task. Characters caught in a position from which they may fall find avoiding injury an impossible task. Nearly all buildings will be reduced to rubble, with only the very strongest surviving (2D6 roll of 5 or less). Escaping injury inside a collapsing building or an overturned vehicle is a formidable task. Escaping injury in a building which remains standing is a difficult task. Falling rubble in city streets, or trees or rocks in wilderness terrain, is very dangerous, and escaping injury here is a difficult task. Ruptured underground pipes and tanks cause fires which spread rapidly and destructively. Along hillsides or steep slopes, landslides or avalanches will be started on a 2D6 roll of 9+.

**Referee's Note:** Most buildings on Aurore are fairly well built and can usually withstand quakes of up to Mercalli IX with minimal damage. Poorly built buildings tend to occupy the poorer or sleazier parts of major towns and cities and are built with the idea that if they fall down, it's easy enough to rebuild them. Many of these structures have been rebuilt a number of times, and look it, since they were first constructed.

Truly major quakes are rare, but when they occur, an entire city may be devastated, and towns and villages for many kilometers in all directions may be badly damaged. Such an occurrence would justify the mobilization of all available military and labor forces to dig out and rebuild, and this could present the players with a complete subadventure within a larger campaign. Workers will be engaged in rescuing trapped citizens, opening blocked streets, and rebuilding. Military and paramilitary forces will be occupied with rescue work; finding, treating, and transporting casualties; guarding

homes and civilians from looters; and guarding and transporting food and medical supplies to stricken areas.

In the last half of the century, major quakes have severely damaged inhabited areas eight or ten times, and the machinery for rescue and rebuilding is efficient and well practiced.

A disaster of this magnitude now, however, will be complicated by the presence of the invading Kafer army. Military and medical supply stockpiles are low or nonexistent, and military forces will have to race supplies to the stricken area in transport convoys. There is also the very real danger that Kafer forces in the area will take advantage of the disaster and attack.

A quake of Mercalli XII would be, quite literally, a cataclysm. Every settlement on the hemisphere would be affected to varying degrees, and the quake will be accompanied by massive, large-scale changes in the terrain. Possible changes would be new mountains, the appearance of new volcanoes, the creation of rift valleys or tidal gulfs, or a drop in the level of the land which would turn formerly dry areas into tidal flats or submerge them completely.

In the history of the human colonies on Aurore, a quake of this magnitude has never occurred. However, it is believed that La Gouffre is the result of such a quake, as are the mountains which have isolated La Mer de Sel and the opening of the Great South Sea. The High Desert continues to grow higher, and this growth is probably accompanied by quakes which devastate continent-sized stretches of land.

The referee should employ a Mercalli XII quake in an Auroran campaign only once, if at all, and he should choose its timing with great care. Such a disaster would change the face of the planet and could threaten the human presence on Aurore. A seismic disturbance of these proportions would immediately end any current adventure and would introduce a completely new campaign—one which begins with a simple struggle to survive.

It is entirely possible that *all* life—native, human, and Kafer—could be snuffed out by such a seismic apocalypse, as Aurore's delicate balance between hot and cold was shattered by changing ocean currents, clouds of volcanic dust in the high atmosphere, and the collapse of continent-sized chunks of La Glaciere ice pack. Aurore could literally become a hostile world, uninhabited and uninhabitable, overnight.

## VOLCANOES

The High Desert Plateau is ringed by active volcanoes, another result of the continual tidal stresses within Aurore's crust. Volcanoes, unlike seismic quakes, pose no threat to the characters unless they choose to approach them.

Volcanic eruptions and related activity are the results of rolls on event tables provided for areas close by active volcanoes. The Volcanic Eruption Severity table is used to determine the severity of the event. Once the severity is known, a second roll on one of the Volcanic Eruption Results tables will determine just what has happened.

### VOLCANIC ERUPTION SEVERITY

Die	Result
2-6	A
7-8	B
9-10	C
11	D
12	E

### VOLCANIC ERUPTION RESULTS

**A—A Very Minor Eruption:** This poses little danger. Roll 2D6 on the following, and implement the result:

2-7: Steam Escapes from the Crater. This is visible as a tall, white plume above the mountain, but there is no other result.

8-9: Seismic Quake. A 2D6-3 roll is made on the Seismic Quake table. Steam may escape from the crater at the same time.

10+: Seismic Quake. A 2D6-2 roll is made on the Seismic Quake table. Steam escapes from the crater, and the ground may feel warm. A DM of +2 will be added to the *next* roll made for volcanic activity in the area.

**B—Minor Eruption:** Roll 2D6 on the following, and implement the result:

2-7: Steam Escapes from the Crater. A 2D6-2 roll is made on the Seismic Quake table. The ground feels distinctly warm.

8-9: Ash Fall. A cloud of smoke hangs above the mountain. A fine layer of volcanic ash falls everywhere within 5 km of the mountain and extends for 25 km downwind (See *Weather*, below). A 2D6-2 roll is made on the Seismic Quake table.

10+: Ash Fall. As above, but a DM of +2 is added to the next roll for volcanic eruption severity made in the area.

**C—Major Eruption:** Roll 2D6 and implement the result:

2-7: Major Eruption. A pillar of smoke extends into the sky, and there is continual seismic activity of about Mercalli IV to Mercalli V. Ash falls everywhere within 10 km and for 100 km downwind. Eruption will last (2D6-1)×30 minutes.

8-9: Major Eruption. As above, plus falls of cinders. Avoiding them is a separate task:

To avoid a shower of cinders: Routine. Dexterity. 10 seconds.

Failure to take shelter from a cinder fall results in a potential light wound with a DPV of .3.

10+: Major Eruption. As above (2-7), plus a lava flow. Avoiding a stream of molten lava is a special task:

To avoid lava (Unskilled): Routine. Dexterity. 30 seconds.

In rugged or overgrown terrain, the task becomes difficult rather than routine.

A mishap in an attempt to avoid lava results in a potential light wound with a DPV of .5. A serious mishap results in a potential serious wound with a DPV of 1. A catastrophic mishap results in death.

**D—Major Eruption:** As above (C), but with an added special danger. Roll 2D6 on the following, and implement the result:

2-4: Severe Quake. Conditions pertaining to a Major Eruption (2-7 above) exist. In addition, a quake at a Mercalli VI-VII occurs.

5-7: Major Eruption (but long-lasting). Events are as described under Major Eruption, above, but will last 2D6×2 hours.

8: Volcanic Explosion. All characters within 1 km of the crater are killed outright. All characters between 1 km and 2D6 km of the crater suffer potential light wounds with a DPV of .5.

9: Exceptionally Heavy Ash Fall. A major eruption (2-7 above) occurs. Heavy ash fall for 2D6×10 km downwind (determine randomly) results in an accumulation of 2D6×2 meters within 2D6×1 hours. Buildings, vehicles, and individuals will be buried unless they leave. Moving from the ash fall area is a specific task:

To avoid being buried by ash fall: Routine. Endurance. 30 minutes.

A mishap may result in becoming mired in the ash. A catastrophic failure may mean the characters are buried and will suffocate unless they have air supplies and continue digging out.

10: Mud Flow. A major eruption (2-7 in Major Eruption, above)



occurs. In addition, superheated water underground on the side of the mountain erupts downhill, mixes with ash, and turns into a stream of boiling mud which moves with exceptional speed. Avoiding the hot mud is the same as avoiding lava, but is considered a difficult task, rather than routine.

**11+: Poisonous Gas.** A major eruption (2-7 in Major Eruption, above) occurs. In addition, a cloud of hot, poisonous gas races down from the mountain at hurricane velocity. Characters caught unprotected will be both burned and suffocated. Protection can be provided by a deep cave or solid basement, a sealed and armored vehicle such as an Explorer ATV or a military ACV, or any full-body armor with its own air supply. The direction of the cloud will have nothing to do with current wind direction.

**E—Volcanic Explosion:** The volcano explodes suddenly and cataclysmically. All characters within  $(2D6 - 1) \times 5$  km of the crater are killed outright. All characters within  $2D6 \times 10$  km of that inner area suffer potentially serious wounds with a DPV of 1. All characters within  $2D6 \times 10$  km of this middle zone suffer potentially light wounds with a DPV of .2. In addition, roll  $2D6 - 1$  on the Seismic Quake Severity table.

**Referee's Note:** These rules are provided as general guidelines for the referee's use when the characters are adventuring within a few hundred kilometers of one of the volcanos marked on the Auroran area maps. Generally, volcanic eruptions will follow a pattern of warnings, minor eruptions and seismic quakes which will gradually build, over a period of weeks or months, to a major eruption. However, no volcano is ever totally predictable, and even a seemingly extinct volcano is capable of a sudden major eruption with little or no warning beforehand. Such events are at the referee's discretion.

## WEATHER

Weather on Aurore is a product of the delicate balance between the extreme cold of the anti-Tithonian icepack, and the extreme heat of the Sub-Tithonian Plateau. Air masses circulate between the two, with cold, low-altitude winds blowing steadily from the cold side towards the hot, and hot, high-altitude winds blowing from the hot side to the cold. Isolated cells of rapidly rising wet, low-altitude air masses result in violent, localized thunderstorms frequently accompanied by tornados.

Weather can threaten the characters both directly (through lightning or the approach of a tornado, for example) or indirectly (by turning a road to mud or by triggering an avalanche or a flash flood).

Characters born and raised on Aurore know the signs of approaching bad weather and can offer advice to an off-world character party, warning them to take shelter because of the approach of a storm or alerting them to the dangers of camping on the floor of a dry stream bed or gully below high ground.

Several specific task descriptions are presented in the *New Tasks* section which may be used to avoid the effects of severe weather.

## RADIO INTERFERENCE

Charged particles from the Eta Bootean suns trapped in the Tithonian magnetic fields and circling the superjovian at high speeds create a natural, broad-band static roar which renders radio useless throughout the Tithonian satellite system. This interference is so severe that wide-beam broadcast transmitters are simply not used. Shielded or fiber-optic cables are used for information transmission in the major colony cities and between the various outlying settlements. More remote areas keep in touch with one another and with the nearest city through a network of directional microwave relay towers.

These towers, which are several tens of meters tall and are set on the tops of prominent hills, maintain line-of-sight contact from relay to relay across large parts of the inhabited reaches of both Tanstaaf and the French colony. On the average, these towers are located approximately 50 km apart. Homesteads and small settlements within 20 or 30 km of a tower have small dish antennas trained on the tower, and messages can be relayed by tight-beam microwave transmission to anyone else on the net. Transmission equipment is too bulky for casual mobility. Military trucks can carry a transmitter and dish antenna, together with the computer equipment necessary for maintaining a fix on the nearest relay tower. Even these are useless, however, beyond the approximately 30km, over-the-horizon radius which restricts line-of-sight transmissions on Aurore.

This system is used to direct the rapid response combat teams which respond to reports of Kafer attacks or activity in thinly populated areas. Homesteaders on the fringes of settled areas can report Kafer movements, and militia teams can investigate homesteads which have mysteriously fallen silent.

## WILDLIFE

Aurore has its own native ecology, including a number of life forms deadly to humans. Each is described in some detail in the section entitled *Biology*.

Wildlife encounters are governed by the encounter codes listed for each animal—for example, *MTN: R* (a rare encounter in mountainous areas).

If the referee prefers, the following chart can be used instead as a general encounter table at any time when the referee determines that a wildlife encounter seems to be justified. When a wildlife encounter is desired, roll  $2D6$ . Note that the creatures encountered may vary, depending on the location in which that specific wildlife encounter takes place.

### WILDLIFE ENCOUNTERS

Location	2-5	6-7	8-9	10-11	12
Tidal Flat	—	Sand Puppy	Creep	Unnamed 4	Unnamed 1
Rvr, Swp	—	Bloodsucker	Bladehood	Bloodsucker	Creep
Woods	—	Redswift	Bladehood	Dropper	Creep
Open I	—	Landcrab	Landcrab	Bladehood	Redswift
Hotback	—	—	Landcrab	Unnamed 2	Unnamed 5
Rgh, Mtn	—	Landcrab	Unnamed 2	Unnamed 5	Dropper
Open II	—	—	Unnamed 1	Unnamed 3	Requinteur

**Wildlife Encounter Results:** Wildlife encounters refer to the various forms of plant and animal life described on pages 20-26. A “—” result is left to the referee's discretion. Possibilities include:

The sighting is of any Auroran life form chosen by the referee, so long as it is of a species which may be encountered in this terrain type.

The sighting is of an Auroran life form of the referee's own design which might be encountered in this terrain type.

The characters hear and/or see something moving but cannot identify it. The characters may misidentify this, believing it to be a Kafer or a dangerous native life form.

The characters *think* they see something, but the sighting proves to be a false alarm.

The referee treats the roll as a No Encounter result.

## THE KAFER ROT

The Kafers have added a new biological hazard to Aurore's ecosystem, one which promises to cause a great deal of additional



*Bladehoods (Umbraculammina var.) form a cluster in the lowlands by the town of Spring Flood.*

harm to the Auroran colonies before it is through. A fungal blight has been deliberately introduced to areas overrun by the Kafers. This blight primarily attacks Terran plants. Corn and wheat develop grey-white blotches which grow into clumps of fibrous white strands, resembling cotton, which rapidly consume the entire plant. Apple and other fruit trees are less quickly threatened but still sicken and die within a few months' time. Hydroponics greenhouses remain unaffected unless spores are introduced from the outside, and then every plant in the building will be consumed within hours.

This is of serious concern to all three Auroran governments. Of graver concern is the fact that some humans have contracted one of two diseases which seem to be caused by the same fungal parasite. A nonfatal (thus far) form of the blight, called Greypatch, begins as inflamed, itching areas on exposed skin and loss of hair. In a matter of days, the patches turn grey-white and insensitive, then gradually (over a period of months) become covered by cottony tufts of fungal growth. Greypatch has been controlled by surgical removal of the growth in each case.

A more serious and generally fatal manifestation in humans is the lung disease called Kafer Rot. Spores from infected plants settle in the victim's lungs, grow rapidly, and choke him.

Characters who enter agricultural areas either formerly or currently occupied by Kafers run the risk of contracting one of these fungal diseases. Each day the characters travel through areas where evidence of the blight is visible (cottony tufts on Terran vegetation, fields filled by rotting vegetation), each character should roll once as for a task to avoid contracting the disease.

To avoid fungal blight (Unskilled): Routine. Endurance. Instant.

A major or minor mishap results in the character developing Greypatch, though symptoms will not occur for 2D6 hours after the exposure. Greypatch grows slowly and is not fatal but does require medical attention at one of the principal colony cities. The character must make additional rolls to avoid the blight each day

he does not receive treatment, even if he has left the contaminated area where he contracted it. Further minor or major mishaps result in the affliction spreading and require other characters, as well as the afflicted character, to roll to avoid the disease as well.

A total mishap on any roll results in the character contracting Kafer Rot. He will become incapacitated in 2D6 hours (symptoms: coughing, difficulty breathing, pain, fatigue), and he will die 2D6 hours after that.

Scientists on Aurore and elsewhere are searching desperately for an agent which will kill the fungal blight, but research has been hampered by the war and by the danger to the researchers. The discovery of a drug or chemical to counteract the fungus' effects is crucial in the fight to save Aurore.

### ALONG LA GLACIERE

La Glaciere is a single, massive glacier which covers most of the cold hemisphere of Aurore. In places, the ice is well over a kilometer thick and ends in sheer ice cliffs. The temperature along the seacoast next to the ice shelf is generally in a range between five and 15 degrees centigrade, and the ice, propelled by the mass of the interior icecap and continual falls of fresh ice and snow there, moves inexorably to the water's edge, calving icebergs as it goes. The fall of one of these gargantuan blocks of ice, some over a kilometer long and weighing millions of tons, can set up tidal waves on nearby islands and coastlands as destructive as the regular Auroran tides. These "ice surges" can cause unexpected rises in the water level along tidal flats at low tide, as well as high tides many meters higher than normal.

Along the ice cliffs themselves, Icefall (called Glace Tombee by French-speaking Aurorans) can flood low-lying encampments, swamp boats, or deafen characters too close to the thunderous roar of ice mountains slipping into the sea.

In addition, the regions along the edge of the icecap are often swept by savage storms or cloaked in impenetrable fog as low, warm bodies of air rising from La Mer Ceindant meet the cold, dry air dropping off the glacier.

### OTHER DANGERS

The dangers listed above are those common to those parts of Aurore where the characters are likely to be adventuring. Aurore is a planet nearly as large and certainly as diverse as Earth, however, and it is certain that there are phenomena and dangers as yet undiscovered by Aurore's inhabitants.

Conditions on the High Desert itself, for instance, are radically different from Aurore's lowlands. Here, the air is too thin to breathe without special breathing gear, the perimeter of the plateau is continually torn by storms and high winds, and temperatures in the interior of the plateau approach the boiling point of water. On La Glaciere, temperatures drop to  $-75^{\circ}\text{C}$  in the interior, and cyclonic blizzards can hover about the Cold Pole for weeks. Special survival gear is necessary for human survival in the extreme conditions present in both regions.

These conditions are mentioned briefly to provide general guidelines for referees who desire to map other parts of Aurore for additional adventures and campaigns on this world.

### SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

**Desert Environmental Suit:** A pressure suit which insulates the wearer from the high temperatures of the Sub-Tithonian Plateau's interior, as well as providing him with air and with protection from the abrasive effects of windblown sand. The suit contains a battery pack and a system for circulating low-temperature oxygen from the breather pack as a coolant. The batteries last about



30 hours, but they can be easily recharged from any external power source. The breather pack is designed to filter and pressurize air from outside, mixing it with oxygen from a small tank as needed to create the proper gas balance. Depending on conditions, the oxygen reserves will last from twenty to forty hours. The suit is formfitting and lightweight, similar to a standard vacuum suit. The helmet is a transparent, transplex bowl designed for maximum visibility. *Weight: 5 kg Armor: 0.1 Initiative penalty: None Price: Lv800*

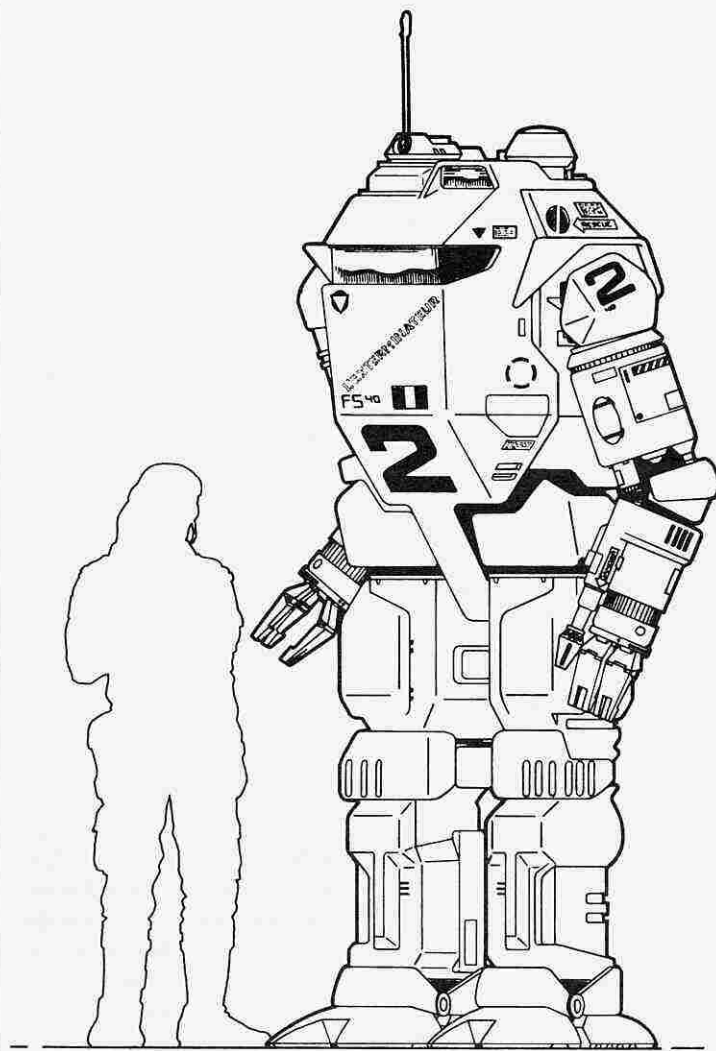
**Arctic Environmental Suit:** A protective suit designed to protect the wearer from extreme cold. The battery pack powers the suit's heating elements and warms air which is drawn directly from the outside. The batteries last about 25 hours longer in temperatures above  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$  when the wearer can turn off the heaters and rely on the suit's insulation alone to warm him; they can be recharged from any external power source. The suit is made somewhat cumbersome by the heating elements, but the gloves are flexible enough to allow most tasks to be performed without penalty. Extremely fine work, however, (wiring or working with delicate electronic components) will have its difficulty level increased by one (routine to difficult, for example) if the character attempts the task while wearing gloves. The helmet includes a snap-down tinted visor to protect against snow blindness. *Weight: 7 kg Armor: .1 Initiative Penalty: -1 Price: Lv1000*

**La Tortue Explorateur:** A French-designed, tracked ATV similar to other explorer ATVs. It can negotiate all but the most severe grades and ditches and is designed to be rapidly disassembled and reassembled for piecemeal transport past impassable terrain. It is large enough to serve as living quarters for up to six personnel, and its enclosed and pressurized design makes it suitable for explorations of the high-temperature, low-pressure environment of the High Desert. *Type: Tracked All-Terrain Vehicle Crew: Driver Weight: 2500 kg Armor: Suspension: 1 All faces: 1 Signature: 8 Evasion: 0 Sensor Range: none Cargo: Five passengers and 2000 kg Max Speed: 100 kph Cruising Speed: 50 kph Combat Movement: 200 m Off-Road Mobility: Full Power Plant: 0.2 MW hydrogen fuel cell Fuel Capacity: 200 kg Fuel Consumption: 5 kg/hr Endurance: 40 hours Price: Lv18,000*

**Climbing Gear:** A backpack-and-harness rig which includes tools useful or necessary for scaling cliffs or steep terrain. Included are 15 pitons; rock hammer; crampons; 100 m of light, strong line; goggles, gloves, boots, and other personal protective gear; and a personal harness with strategically placed snaps and clamps to aid in steep ascents. Mountain Climbing skill is necessary to use this equipment. *Weight: 3 kg Price: Lv500*

**Powered Hoist:** A small, semi-portable, electrically powered hoist for hauling personnel or supplies up vertical cliffs. It is designed with an unfolding crane arm to extend past the edge of a cliff and has broadly splayed, tripodal legs which are anchored to the rock surface to brace it during operation. The hoist is internally powered by a 0.1 MW hydrogen fuel cell. Lift rate depends on the size of the load and the distance hauled. It takes 1 hour to raise the maximum allowed load of 500 kg a distance of 500 m, but only 30 minutes to haul 250 kg the same distance. *Weight: 25 kg (with tank empty). Fuel Capacity: 3 kg Fuel Consumption: .2 kg/hour/100 kg lifted Load Capacity: 500 kg Lift Rate: 500 m/500 kg/hour, with a maximum speed (for 70 kg or less) of 1 m/second (500 min about 8.3 minutes) Price: Lv1500*

**Portable Weather Station:** A portable weather station is designed in such a way that it serves as a completely automated meteorological station. The portable weather station is designed to monitor local weather conditions (for example, the station will monitor temperature, humidity, wind speed and direction, at-



*Pictured is a French BH-21 combat walker with pilot.*

mospheric pressure, light levels, radiation and electron flux levels, precipitation, air quality and constituents, etc.) and broadcast the data to a central collection station for processing. Because of the severe difficulties with radio transmissions in the highly charged atmosphere, data telemetry on Aurore is accomplished through a line-of-sight chain of microwave relay stations. The unit is powered by internal batteries, trickle-charged by a small solar power array integral to the station. *Weight: 100 kg (The device can be broken into five sections of approximately 20 kg each for transport by individual characters) Price: Lv35,000*

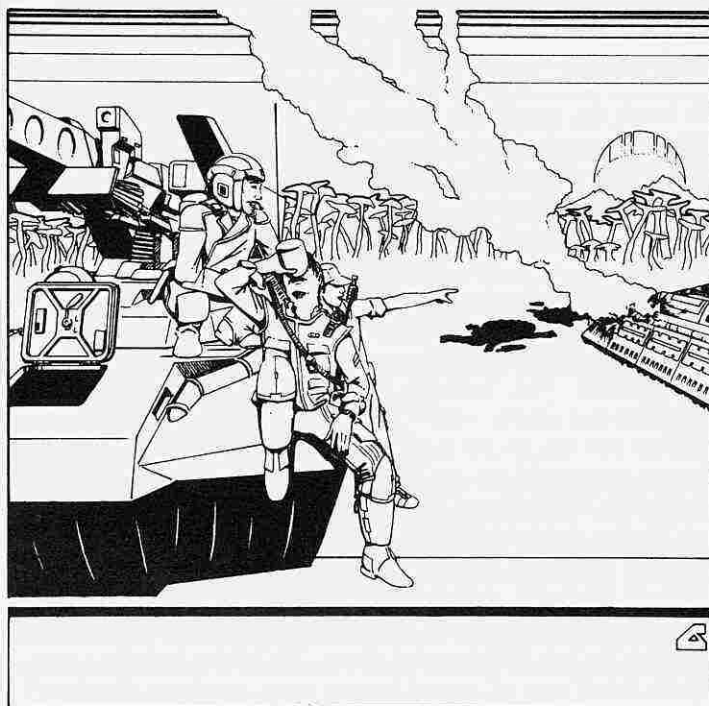
**Microwave Relay Station:** A compact and portable relay device which picks up microwave transmissions along a direct line-of-sight and rebroadcasts them to another relay, establishing a communications chain across long distances when cable or standard radio transmissions are impractical or impossible. The unit is internally powered by a battery which recharges itself from an integral solar power array. The relay station is directed by an internal computer which monitors and adjusts the device's antennae orientation to maintain links with neighboring stations despite seismic quakes or high wind. These units are locally manufactured (using a few imported components such as the solar arrays and the computer chips) and are vital to Aurore's communications network. *Weight: 5 kg Range: Varies with terrain and line-of-sight conditions but averages 40 km Price: Lv250*

**Avignon Martinet:** The Avignon Martinet is representative of a class of hydrofoil watercraft which is quite common on Aurore and on other colony worlds with breathable atmospheres and large, open bodies of water. The Avignon Martinet watercraft is constructed largely of nonmetallic synthetic materials and components, and so it possesses a low weight and great structural strength. The hydrofoil watercraft is manufactured by a colonial branch of the Avignon Corporation of La Cite d'Aurore, under license to the French Imperial Government. Technical components are shipped from Earth, while native materials are used in the local manufacture of hull and superstructure synthetics.

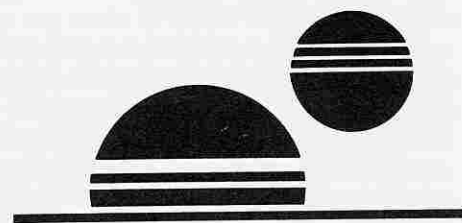
There is no Auroran navy in the usual sense of the word, but French infantry officers command small squads of troops aboard Martinets appropriated by the government for coastal patrol duties, operating out of Le Port d'Aurore. Before the war large numbers of Martinets were sold to Novoa Kiyev as part of the economic treaties between the French and Ukrainian governments. Most of the Martinets sold to Novoa Kiyev were employed by fishing cooperatives which were operating out of the Ukrainian colony. A number of them served as ferries between the island continent of Novoa Kiyev and the frontier settlements above the tidal flats of Zahpad Zemlya to the west. When the Kafers landed, a hurriedly assembled fleet of fishing craft, including several hundred Martinets, carried thousands of Ukrainian colonists from Novoa Kiyev to Zahpad Zemlya in an emergency evacuation which is still underway—though the flood of refugees has reduced to a trickle during more recent times.

The Martinet measures in at 12 m long and weighs 9000 kg. It can carry a cargo of a total of up to 5000 kg, or as many as 80 people, with great crowding in the hold and upper decks. The Martinet can reach speeds of 20 knots (37 kph), and it travels at its top speed with its foils retracted. On open water and at speeds in excess of 15 knots, hydrofoils extend from the hull to lift the craft bodily from the water. With only the foils and the propulsion surfaces aft underwater, the Martinet can exceed speeds of up to 60 knots (111 kph). Though the triple hydrojet propulsion system draws more power and burns power from the vessel's fuel cells faster at high speed, the vessel's many useful aerodynamic qualities actually increase its efficiency (and range) at 'planing' speeds. Martinets utilized as fishing boats quite often use their high speed to reach distant fishing areas; then they generally retract their foils and continue to trawl at low speeds, returning to port in a high-speed run when their holds are full.

There are numerous other designs which are commonly used by both the French and Ukrainians on Aurore. All of these designs share a number of similar characteristics. *Type:* Hydrofoil watercraft *Crew:* Pilot-navigator, engineer, and from four to eight hands *Weight:* 9000 kg *Armor:* All faces: 1 *Signature:* +2 *Evasion:* 10 *Cargo:* 5000 kg or 80 people maximum *Max speed:* 111 kph *Cruising speed:* 37 kph *Combat movement:* 300 m *Weapons:* Normally none. Hydrofoils adapted for coastal patrol and combat may have a wide variety of machineguns or laser weaponry mounted in jury-rigged hard points. *Power plant:* 0.6 MW hydrogen fuel cell *Fuel capacity:* 1200 kg *Fuel consumption:* 17 kg/hr at cruising speed; 30 kg/hr at high speed *Endurance:* 70 hours at cruising speed; 40 hours at maximum speed *Range:* 2590 km at cruising speed; 4440 km at maximum speed. (Note: The Martinet hydrofoil, *Pahseelnee*, which brought Dimitri Kanov and his crew to Le Port d'Aurore, was outfitted with extra fuel tanks in the cargo hold. These extra fuel tanks served to extend the vessel's high-speed range to nearly 15,000 km and made the voyage possible without the added hazard of stops for refueling.) *Price:* Lv80,000







# Personalities

The following is a list of important NPCs on Aurore. Together with their personal biographies and NPC motivation results, a short paragraph is devoted to how that character might influence or be encountered in a **Traveller: 2300** campaign set on Aurore.

## COLONEL VICTOR M. CARNOT

Colonel Carnot is the commanding officer of the 2nd Regiment Cavalie Etrangere, one of the French Foreign Legion units stationed at La Colonie d'Aurore. He is a living legend among both French colonists and soldiers on Aurore, and his name is well known in the planet's Ukrainian and free colonies as well.

He was born in Orleans, France, in 2250 and graduated at the top of his class from La Academie Militaire de Paris. He rose swiftly through the line command ranks of L'Armee Metropolitaine during the Central Asian War, commanding a brigade at the Battle of Toregat Pass. At 42 he became the youngest French officer ever to be posted as General de Division.

He commanded the 3rd Division de Marche during the War of German Reunification. His daring, his energy, and his turning a blind eye to orders saved the French front from complete disintegration at the Somme. A popular hero with citizens and troops, he was far from popular with the Union high command. During the war he had been an outspoken critic of the French government's policies in the prosecution of the campaign. After the war his views received wide publicity and made him further enemies within a government struggling to find reasons—and scapegoats—for the government's failed foreign policy.

Carnot was publically censured for his failure to move his division according to orders received from his commanding officer at the Somme...the "blind eye," in fact, which had saved the French line during the final German assault.

His request for a court-martial to clear his name was denied on the grounds that the best interests of the government would not be served by holding what was certain to become a media circus with the "Hero of the Somme" on center stage. He was offered instead a promotion intended to sideline him in a staff position in Paris, out of the public eye and out of the government's hair.

Unwilling to accept the promotion and the administrative make-work which went with it and unwilling to retire at the age of 45, he elected instead to accept a reduction in rank and a chance at field command. In 2295 he transferred from L'Armee Metropolitaine to the French Foreign Legion, accepting a colonel's slot as commander of the Legion's 2nd Cavalry Regiment.

Carnot arrived with his unit shortly after the destruction of the

Kafer fleet in the Eta Bootean system. His unit has been operating in the area east of Lumiere d'Aube and La Mer de Sel, acting as a rapid response force throughout the entire region north of the River Ecumant.

He has shown his characteristic energy and determination in the campaign to eliminate the Kafer threat from the French colonial region. His envelopment of a Kafer horde at Marais Marmont may have turned the tide of the recent Kafer campaign against Lumiere d'Aube. Nevertheless, his keen wit and independent personality have made him enemies within the Auroran colonial administration just as they did on Earth. There has been talk that he would better serve the Auroran cause as a liaison officer with the Tanstaafl Free Legion, arranging the details for cooperation between the two governments and their military arms.

While necessary, such an essentially ambassadorial position would be a waste of Carnot's very real talents, and the assignment would generate considerable personal bitterness in the man. His single greatest weakness is his inability, after 30 years in the French army, to understand the dynamics and danger of government politics.

Carnot is an Elite NPC.

**Meeting Carnot:** The player characters might meet Carnot as the senior French liaison officer assigned from La Colonie d'Aurore. He might approach the player characters with a particular mission which he considers vital to the future of the war on Aurore, but which he is unwilling to entrust to political cronies of the Auroran command staff. He might also be encountered during any mission on or near French territory, either as commander of the (literally!) "cavalry arriving in the nick of time" or as commander of a 2nd cavalry detachment surrounded by Kafer forces and in need of help.

It is also conceivable, if unlikely, that he could play some part in a revolutionary French Auroran plot against the colonial administration. Such revolutionaries might have Carnot in mind as leader of an Aurore Libre, even if they have not as yet approached him with a specific proposal. Such a plot, even if doomed to failure, could involve the player characters in a complex and hazardous campaign in La Cite d'Aurore.

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Club Ace:* Carnot is a natural military leader. *Heart Ace:* He hates injustice in any form and has particular contempt for small-minded politicians who desire only personal gain at the expense of honor and country. His outspokenness on matters of both military and political morality have repeatedly gotten him into trouble with his superiors.

## DR. JEAN PAUL GIROT

Dr. Girot, first a graduate and later a professor of exobiology ("La Biologie Extraterrestre") at the Sorbonne, gave up his position at the university for a chance to head up L'Académie Scientifique d'Aurore, an institute in La Cité d'Aurore devoted to researching the native biology and biochemistry of Aurore. The academy was funded partly by the French government and partly by private contributions, including his own. Under his leadership, La Vue Zoologique d'Aurore (Auroran Zoological Survey) began a five-year series of studies and expeditions in 2295 designed to facilitate a better understanding of Auroran life forms and cycles.

Unfortunately, all planetary research has been suspended by the Kafer invasion, and planned (and funded) projects such as expeditions to the hot and cold poles have been canceled. Research into Auroran biology has been replaced by a government-sponsored program to understand the Kafers—research understandably handicapped by a lack of living Kafers for study. What research can be done proceeds under the often crippling shackles of government secrecy, bureaucracy, politics, and mismanagement.

Girot has been brought to a personal crisis by these events. Having given up his prestigious position at the Sorbonne as well as a large part of his personal fortune to travel to Aurore and establish the Scientific Academy, he fears that his life's work and ambitions have been ruined. His devotion to science has been replaced by a burning hatred of the Kafers.

He is a Green NPC.

**Meeting Girot:** *Kafer Dawn* includes a scenario which requires the player characters to attempt to capture a live Kafer in order to establish better understanding with these aliens. If that quest is successful, the characters might encounter Girot shortly afterward. Girot will either want the characters' help in obtaining access to the captive (who will, probably, be kept under tight government security), or Girot may be brought in as an expert exobiologist to assist with biological studies of the Kafer and in the attempt to establish communication.

It is also possible that Girot will approach the characters directly in the hope of assembling a private expedition to capture a Kafer for the Scientific Academy. Such an expedition would definitely not be sanctioned by the French government, which fears that such expeditions could provoke further Kafer outrages in the Interior.

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Club Queen:* Girot is an extraordinarily stubborn individual. *Heart 6:* Loyalty. Girot holds an unreserved loyalty towards his academy, which he feels is threatened both by government stupidity and by Kafer violence.

## YURI MIKHSILOVICH SHKLOVSKII

Colonel Shklovskii may be the senior surviving officer of the Ukrainian Militia on Novoa Kiyev. The Kafer invasion affected the Ukrainian colony much more severely and directly than it did the other human settlements on Aurore. Novoa Kiyev's defensive forces were badly hurt during the initial Kafer bombardment, and the capital city itself was largely overrun during their landings. Colonel Shklovskii, former commander of the 4th Battalion of the Kiyev Colonial Guards, has assembled a small command in the wastelands west of New Kiev and has been conducting hit-and-run partisan-type raids against Kafer encampments and positions on Novoa Kiyev for the past two years.

Little is known of the exploits of Shklovskii and the remnants of his army in the colonies of the western hemisphere since there is scant opportunity for word to get out from Novoa Kiyev. Stories of Shklovskii's exploits have trickled to the west by way of fisher-craft and airfoils which have been able to elude the Kafer patrols

and make it across the north pole to the French colony.

From what little is known, Shklovskii is the docudrama picture of the rugged partisan fighter—lean, hardened, and tough. His men have the double problem of surviving Kafer efforts to track them down and surviving Aurore itself, and the handful of survivors of the original Colonial Army are the hardest, luckiest, and best. Shklovskii has demonstrated his ability to lead these men time and time again. He specializes in craftily laid ambushes contrived to kill dozens or hundreds of Kafers within a few minutes, with the attack team melting away into the mountains or swamps before the Kafers can organize and strike back.

Virtually the entire surviving human population of Novoa Kiyev belongs to the resistance since the Kafers do not appear inclined to allow humans to remain alive within areas which they control. An elaborate system of interconnected underground bunkers, greenhouses hidden in jungles, and farmland cultivated on solid islands hidden in the midst of trackless swamps allows the people, now numbering a few tens of thousands, to survive. Shklovskii has organized these survivors into a disciplined elite force willing and able to strike back. Shklovskii's stated goal is the complete destruction of all Kafer forces on Novoa Kiyev within the next two years.

He is an Elite NPC.

**Meeting Shklovskii:** Conditions on the Ukrainian colony of Novoa Kiyev are far more difficult than in Aurore or Tanstaaf. There, the Kafers are in control of most facilities, while the humans have been reduced to small bands wandering in the wilderness, hounding the Kafers with persistent and annoying hit-and-run raids. It is possible that Ukrainian agents (such as Dimitri Kharov, below) might contract with the player characters, hiring them for their experience with Kafers, to help the human resistance on Novoa Kiyev. Such a contract would require a voyage around the planet, probably via hovercraft, and a meeting with Shklovskii in his jungle camp on the west coast of the island continent. The player characters would then find themselves in a bloody and bitter Vietnam-style war to the death among the highlands and swamps of Novoa Kiyev.

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Club Ace:* Shklovskii is a natural military leader with an innate grasp of tactics and terrain. *Spade Ace:* He is a charismatic leader who has inspired an almost fanatical devotion among his men. He is an extremely powerful NPC who should be played carefully—and who will probably die in a last, heroic effort to cleanse his beloved Novoa Kiyev of the Kafer menace.

## DIMITRI KHAROV

Kharov is a Ukrainian fisherman who was able to elude Kafer patrols and escape from the island continent of Novoa Kiyev. The grandson of original Ukrainian colonists on Aurore, he is fiercely proud of both his Ukrainian ancestry and his Auroran heritage. Since 2289 he has owned and operated his own fisherfoil, a hydrofoil craft designed to reach fishing areas swiftly, then convert to a conventional shallow-draft trawler. (Note: Aurore's "fish," like all native flora and fauna, are inedible by humans, but certain species are invaluable for chemical manufacturing and processing and as raw material for the manufacture of nitrogenous fertilizer.)

Kharov lived and worked in the port of Mariupol on Novoa Kiyev's north coast. The village was destroyed by Kafer war parties shortly after their landing, and Kharov's family was slaughtered. He was at sea at the time and survived to join Colonel Shklovskii in the Pripet Swamp, and his hydrofoil has participated in numerous raids along the coast and up the Dneiper River.



After two years, however, Kharov has escaped to the French colony by taking his hydrofoil north across the north polar circuit and along the Ice Wall to Pointe d'Or. He has come hoping to raise support for the Ukrainian partisans as well as to open a channel for shipments of war material and supplies to Shklovskii's people.

So far, however, this part of his mission has been a failure. Both Tanstaaf and the French colony are too occupied with their own Kafer problems to spare time, men, or equipment for the Ukrainians.

He is a Veteran NPC.

**Meeting Kharov:** The player characters may encounter Kharov in Tanstaaf City, La Cite d'Aurore, or Lumiere d'Aube where his impassioned public pleas for aid draw crowds and comment, but little material support. The characters might choose to join Kharov as an elite commando unit in order to serve with the illustrious Colonel Shklovskii or to escape political or economic difficulties in the Western Hemisphere. The player characters might also be encouraged or ordered to go to Novoa Kiyev by either the French or the Tanstaaf governments in order to ascertain firsthand conditions in the Ukrainian colony since the Kafer attack.

Such an assignment would begin with a long and harrowing voyage across half of Aurore, followed by a military campaign with the Ukrainian partisans. If the player characters survived and managed to return to the west, they would be questioned by French or Tanstaaf military intelligence concerning their impressions of the Ukrainian war.

The Germans (see Ambassador Walter Luebke) might also be interested in an eyewitness report about conditions in Novoa Kiyev.

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Heart 10:* Love of country (Novoa Kiyev and the world of Aurore). He is also strongly influenced by an open admiration for Colonel Shklovskii. *Club 8:* Dimitri wants revenge upon the Kafers, who have destroyed his family, country and way of life.

### AMBASSADOR WALTER LUEBKE

Tanstaaf's independence was due largely to the diplomatic intervention of the German Colonial Administration on Hochbaden. The industrial cartel which had initially financed the Tanstaaf consortium included German banks and corporations and was unwilling to confront Germany over her overt support of the fledgling republic. Germany's diplomatic recognition of Tanstaaf was the guarantee of Tanstaaf's independence.

Walter Luebke was born on Earth, in Erfurt, Saxony. At the time of Tanstaaf's declaration of independence, he was undersecretary to the German Ambassadorial Minister to the Bavarian colony of Hochbaden and was involved in the negotiations with the Tanstaaf trade delegation which brought Tanstaaf's request for recognition and favored-trade status to that world. The success of the embassy in those negotiations as a third party mediator brought the rise of his star in diplomatic circles. With news of the German reunification on Earth, he became the German ambassador accredited to Tanstaaf on Aurore.

He is a distinguished, smooth, and polished man, soft-spoken and intelligent. He can be an extremely persuasive speaker and has been known to get into good-natured debates with French officials over the future of French colonialism.

What is not openly known is that Luebke also maintains ties with Germany's colonial military intelligence department, the *Kolonialnachrichtenamt*, or KNA, and that it was the influence of this organization which was responsible for his rise. Luebke is not a spy posing as a diplomat. Rather, he is a diplomat who uses his position to feed intelligence to the KNA and to provide sup-

port for KNA activities.

Luebke is ambitious and seeks to extend Germany's political and economic interests among the colonies. A wholehearted supporter of the concept of German reunification, he believes that French imperialism is a threat to peace within the human sphere which will one day lead to further war. He hopes to increase greater Germany's influence among Earth's extrasolar colonies at the expense of the French Union wherever possible.

Toward these ends, he has been seeking to increase Tanstaaf's reliance on neighboring Hochbaden, both as a source of military and industrial supplies and as a market for off-world trade once the shattered Tanstaafian economy begins to recover. He does this primarily through friendly meetings with Tanstaafian leaders and merchants. The embassy is also headquarters, however, to a number of agents of the KNA, who keep a close eye on French activities on Aurore in general and in Tanstaaf in particular. There are, at the moment, no direct liaisons between the French colony on Aurore and the German government or colonial authority. While Luebke would deny this, he is not only aware of the KNA's presence on Aurore but has himself worked to establish the organization's network of agents and informers in Tanstaaf City, La Cite d'Aurore, and Lumiere d'Aube.

Luebke's intelligence apparatus was cut off from Hochbaden during the Kafer invasion, and only recently has communication been reestablished through German merchant traders which call from time to time at Port Blackjack. The invasion has brought both danger and opportunity to Luebke's plans. The centers of French industry and agriculture on Aurore have been savaged by the Kafer attacks, creating conditions of economic and political instability which could be exploited by Germany. At the same time, the French have heavily reinforced and garrisoned the French colonies to the point of bringing in Metropolitan troops, and this could tend to draw the colonies even closer to their parent government.

Luebke is an Experienced NPC.

**Meeting Luebke:** A casual encounter with Luebke is unlikely since he generally remains within the German *Residenz* in Tanstaaf City. The characters might be approached by Luebke's agents, however, if they have shown themselves willing to work against French interests, or if they are in need of money.

The characters might also be launched into the tangled world of Auroran espionage when they foil an assassination attempt on an ambassadorial staff car and find that the target of the attack was Luebke. The attackers in this case will be a political fringe group called the "People's Army of Aurore" (PAA) hired by the French DGSE (Military Intelligence) to eliminate Luebke and make it look like a random terrorist act. If Luebke is impressed by the player characters' military competence, they might be recruited for covert actions against the French.

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Spade Queen:* Luebke, for all his gentility and polish, is absolutely ruthless in his pursuit of his political goals. *Spade 8:* He is ambitious and seeks to manipulate those around him. These motivations are subordinate to his desire to see German expansion at French expense.

### COLONEL FRANCOIS PAUL LAUTREC

Lautrec is Luebke's opposite number in Auroran diplomatic circles. Born in Ste. Nazaire in 2260, he graduated from the Sorbonne in 2281 and from the St. Cyr Military academy in 2285. He served as a major during the War of German Reunification, during which time he was posted to the DGSE, French Military Intelligence. His beloved wife was killed during the German air raid on Calais.

In 2295 he was assigned as French Military Attache to the

Tanstaaf Free State. Operating out of the French Embassy in Tanstaaf, he maintains a modest local intelligence structure with which he keeps track of the activities of such diverse forces as the Germans and the People's Army of Aurore, and serves as military liaison with French forces and the French Corps Diplomatique.

Lautrec believes that, ultimately, both the Ukrainian colony and the Tanstaaf Free State will be forced by economic necessity to merge with Aurore Francais, at which time the entire planet will become part of the French Empire. The Kafer War has ravaged both Tanstaaf and Novoa Kiyev far worse than it has Aurore Francais, and the union of the planet under French rule is only a matter of time. He feels great compassion for the citizens of the other Auroran states but is content to watch and await further events.

Lautrec is a Veteran NPC.

**Meeting Lautrec:** The characters may be approached by Lautrec or his people for various purposes. Possibilities include the infiltration of a PAA group planning terrorists attacks against the French Banque Premiere d'Aurore in Tanstaaf City, espionage against the Germans, or the rescue of French citizens such as Paul Girof from terrorists or Kafers in Tanstaafian territory. If the characters are hired first by Luebke, they may find themselves facing Lautrec as an opponent in the "shadow war" of Auroran politics.

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Heart Ace:* Justice, modified by his belief that France must triumph in the political arena. Justice is the greatest good, and he believes justice to be the ultimate triumph of France over her enemies. *Heart Queen:* Love. Lautrec still loves his wife, Denise, whom he views as a victim of German militaristic ambitions. He wishes he could have died in her place, but works now to thwart those he holds responsible for her death.

## LAURENT HENRI COURTOIS

Courtois is a powerful French trader based in La Cite d'Aurore. His corporation, Ciel d'Argent, is one of the largest on the planet. A millionaire many times over, Courtois lost a fortune when Aurore became isolated from the interstellar trade lanes with Earth, and since the return of the Combined Terran Fleet, he has been working to reestablish Aurore's burgeoning trade with the rest of human space. He also owns the largest apple wine orchards in the French colony and owns parts of many others, both in La Colonie d'Aurore and in Tanstaaf.

He is not a native of Aurore but emigrated to the planet in 2289. According to his own story, he was born the illegitimate son of a poverty-stricken Flemish refugee in Calais but had made his first million livre by the time he was 30. There are persistent rumors that he was in fact a powerful leader of a French crime syndicate (La Fraternite) but that he was forced to flee Earth because of rivalries within the organization's ranks.

Courtois denies or ignores all such rumors, of course, but he is known to travel with an armed, three-man bodyguard and to employ what amounts to a small personal army at the fortified villa which he calls home.

He is a handsome, polished, and sophisticated man, a connoisseur of wines imported (at great cost) from Terra. He speaks quietly and with deliberation and can be a genial host. He is capable of towering rages, however, and he has a reputation for ruthlessness with business competitors.

He is an Experienced NPC.

**Meeting Courtois:** Laurent Courtois can be either a powerful patron or a powerful enemy to the **Traveller: 2300** player characters. He could become their enemy when a small, local wine manufacturer under pressure from Courtois' agents approaches the characters for help or protection. He could become their patron

when a Kafer attack closes Port Loubet, and he needs a small, well armed and well trained paramilitary unit to escort a shipment of Auroran applejack wine to the Tanstaaf spaceport for transshipment off-world. It is also conceivable that Courtois is involved in the tangled web of money, alliances, and betrayal between Germany, France, and Tanstaaf. He could be supplying money to the PAA or other fringe political independence groups, or he could be supplying information to Germany or to France or to both.

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Diamond King:* Courtois will do anything for money and believes that every man has his price. *Spade Queen:* He is also completely ruthless in his dealings with others and will let nothing stand in the way of his goals. He seeks both wealth and power.

## GOVERNEUR FRANCOIS F. E. DESCHANEL

Deschanel is the senior administrator of the French colony of Aurore and governor of the planet's four million French colonials. He assumed the post in 2294, after having served as vice governor of the French colony on Kimanjano and before that as a Board Administrator at the outpost of D'Aragnon.

As governor, Deschanel shares responsibility with the French military for the defense of the French colony against the Kafers, and he is the civilian official charged with guiding Aurore into economic and industrial recovery.

Though adequate, Deschanel is not the charismatic leader needed to inspire a people faced by war. He is more administrator than leader, inspires neither citizens nor the military, and is content to delegate responsibility among his subordinates. One result of this "hands-off" government policy is greatly increased corruption and graft at high government levels. Laurent Courtois, in particular, has bought a number of officials in Deschanel's administration. One result of such favor peddling is the fact that military shipments from Earth have occasionally been delayed in favor of trade goods consigned to Courtois' mercantile corporation, Ciel d'Argent.

Deschanel is a Green NPC.

**Meeting Deschanel:** The player characters are unlikely to meet Deschanel personally, but they will hear much about the man (little of it good) from French military leaders and colonials. They may meet the governor or one of his secretaries, however, if they are drawn into the web of political intrigue on Aurore which involves Germany, France, Tanstaaf, and Laurent Courtois.

**NPC Motivation Results:** Since the players are unlikely to meet Deschanel, these are left to the referee's discretion.

## THOMAS "LONG TOM" BELLAMY

Bellamy is First Citizen of the independent state of Tanstaaf. Tanstaaf is based on rather freewheeling capitalist ideals, and Long Tom is a bluff and genial image of those ideals.

His father was a native of the United States of America and administrative vice president of Comspace Enterprises, one of the members of the consortium of companies which joined to fund the cartel's corporate colony on Aurore. At the time of Tanstaaf's declaration of independence, Tom was a junior officer of the Auroran branch of Comspace. With the office besieged by some of the more radical elements of Tanstaaf's free militia, he convinced the defenders that their best interests, from a totally pragmatic point of view, lay with the government which controlled the city rather than with a board of directors 30 light-years away. He managed to parley the surrender of the Comspace facilities into a heroic blow for freedom among the militia forces and wound up on the first Administrative Council for Tanstaaf City.

He proved to be a born politician. Helped by a small personal fortune (rumored to have originated in the Comspace Corporation's



office safe), he financed the Auroran Gold Party, ran for First Citizen in 2280, narrowly missed election, then ran again in 2288 and won. By the time the next election came around in 2296, Long Tom was thoroughly entrenched with a majority of the Council representatives squarely in his pocket.

He won by a landslide. Bellamy is now a political boss in the best old-Earth traditions of New York's Boss Tweed, Boston's "Honey Fitz" Fitzgerald, and Chicago's Mayor Daley.

His free-spirited (some would say anarchic) style of government has led to problems. As in the French colony, there is a serious rift growing between the civilian government and the military staff. Bellamy's government makes no secret of the fact that it is corrupt, advertising itself as the first government in human history to be completely open about that fact with its people. There is constant political maneuvering and influence peddling over allotment of ground berths at Port Blackjack and for interface slots on the ground-to-orbit shuttles which are controlled by Port Authority officials appointed by the First Citizen. Tanstaafl's military command staff insists on priority clearance for its own cargos on civilian shuttles. There have been numerous disputes over these priorities and over the thinly disguised bribes required by port officials to expedite flight clearances and scheduling.

There is serious talk now, among militia authorities, that it may be necessary to replace the civilian government with a military council willing to enforce the edicts of martial law evenly, in the interests of winning the war against the Kafers. So far, such plans have not gone beyond the talking stage.

He is a Novice NPC.

**Meeting Bellamy:** The player characters may meet Bellamy in ceremonies honoring them for some heroic act in the Kafer War in which they have taken part. He could approach them secretly with a request for assistance, either overtly as a security force, or covertly as his personal agents, in the growing power struggle between Tanstaafl militia leaders and the civilian government.

The characters might also be approached by militia leaders or by leaders of the mercenary Tanstaafl Free Legion who want them to participate, either overtly or covertly, in a military take-over of the Tanstaafl government. In this case, the characters might meet Bellamy as an opponent or as a target.

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Spade Queen:* Bellamy is ruthless in his quest for political power. *Spade 8:* He is ambitious and seeks to manipulate others around him. His ultimate goal is to use the Kafer War to gain control over the French colony as well, in hopes of one day uniting Aurore under his personal rule.

## VICTOR GEORGES GALTIER

Galtier is a French citizen born in Geneva, Switzerland, who emigrated to Aurore in 2288. He is renowned as an explorer. His quests have included a winter crossing of the Trans-Antarctic Mountains and the scaling of Mount Grodon on King. His greatest fame lies in his narration of a long-running and extremely popular series of National Planetographic specials filmed on several worlds across known space.

In 2291 he set out in an attempt to reach Aurore's Hot Pole. The expedition was funded partly by La Conseil Scientifique d'Aurore and partly by the National Planetographic Foundation. The loss of three of his five vehicles in a hidden crevasse during the ascent up the face of the Rimwall ended the expedition.

He returned to Earth for a time and took part in several additional expeditions, but Galtier was unwilling to let the matter of Aurore's Hot Pole rest. In 2295 he assembled funds for another try and returned to Lumiere d'Aube in hopes of organizing a second attempt.

The second expedition was interrupted by the Kafer crisis. Galtier's expedition was canceled—once upon news of the destruction of the French research station at Arcturus and again when the Kafer fleet appeared in-system.

The area east of Lumiere d'Aube is still heavily infested by Kafer forces, but Galtier has been attempting to bring pressure on the military and the French government to allow another Hot Pole expedition. His principal concern is his own prestige, coupled with the knowledge that further delays will certainly result in his abandoning the quest a second time, when the CSA and the Planetographic Society withdraw their backing.

Galtier is a proud and stubborn man, unwilling to accept such a defeat. Unable to persuade the military authorities to provide him with protection through Kafer-controlled areas to the Passage de l'Orient, he has begun casting about for mercenaries willing to provide security for his expedition during his second attempt.

He is a Novice NPC.

**Meeting Galtier:** The players might be approached by Galtier in his quest for mercenary security forces for his expedition. Characters who have experience with camera equipment, as well as experience fighting Kafers, would be especially welcome. If the characters belong to a military unit, they might be ordered to accompany the expedition when the government at last gives in to Galtier's requests.

Galtier might also decide that conquest of the Hot Pole is impossible so long as Kafers block the wilderness areas between the French colony and the Rimwall and, in the interests of preserving his documentary popularity and his financial backing, might then elect to conduct a filmed expedition to some other hostile part of Aurore—a voyage around La Mer Ceindant, for example, or a trek across La Glaciere to the Cold Pole. In either case, the characters would be approached by Galtier's agents to serve as cameramen, assistants, drivers, and security forces for the Galtier Expedition.

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Spade Queen:* Galtier is extremely stubborn and set on having his own way. Determined to preserve his name as one of the greatest of all explorers (and his ratings with the Planetographic Expeditions series) he will let nothing stand in his way—disaster, government bureaucracy, or Kafer hordes. *Spade Jack:* Galtier is pompous, arrogant, and extraordinarily pleased with himself and his accomplishments. On any expedition, his moods will vary from that of a martinet, determined that every detail be carried out in strict accord with his instructions, to those of an absolute, megalomaniacal tyrant. On camera, incidentally, he appears warm, jovial, and human, in sharp and surprising contrast to his off-camera personality.

## ORGANIZATIONS

### People's Army of Aurore

The PPA is made up of disaffected people from both Tanstaafl and Aurore Francais. Its membership includes Bavarians and other German anti-Reunification nationalists who do not want Aurore to deal with a united Germany; French revolutionaries who seek an independent and united Aurore; members of the Auroran Socialist Front, a communist brotherhood seeking a unified Auroran socialist state; and a so-called "fringe element" of anti-war groups such as the Gabriels, who believe the Kafers to be God's emissaries in judgment against mankind.

The People's Army is largely harmless. Closely watched by various official organizations, most of its activities are limited to printing books of curious content and distributing antigovernment literature. A handful of PAA members have pursued more activist strategies, such as kidnapping important French or Tanstaaflian

officials and blowing up a weapons depot in Port d'Or.

**Meeting the PAA:** Characters may meet the more harmless of PAA members upon their arrival on Aurore. They are feverish young men and women distributing antigovernment or antiwar literature at the spaceport and soliciting contributions "to the Cause." Conversations with these youngsters could provide newcomers to Aurore with a very strange picture of the Kafers—messengers of God who strike down only the willful and sinful, for example.

The militant arm of the PAA is rarely encountered and is largely ineffective. Characters who are hired as bodyguards for wealthy and powerful men such as Laurent Courtois, however, might encounter several well armed PAA members at a roadblock or in a city street during a kidnapping attempt. PAA members might also attempt to infiltrate a supply base or military depot at which the characters are assigned for security details.

### La Conseil Scientifique d'Aurore

The Auroran Scientific Council, a joint venture of French government and private interests, was established as a nonprofit research foundation in 2274. Its charter calls for the "survey and exploration of the physical and biological environment of Eta Bootis IIc." Its board of directors includes a panel of scientists representing several disciplines, and its prewar budget allowed the hiring of vehicles (aircraft, ground and hover vehicles, ships), equipment,

and personnel to conduct biological and geophysical surveys of various parts of Aurore.

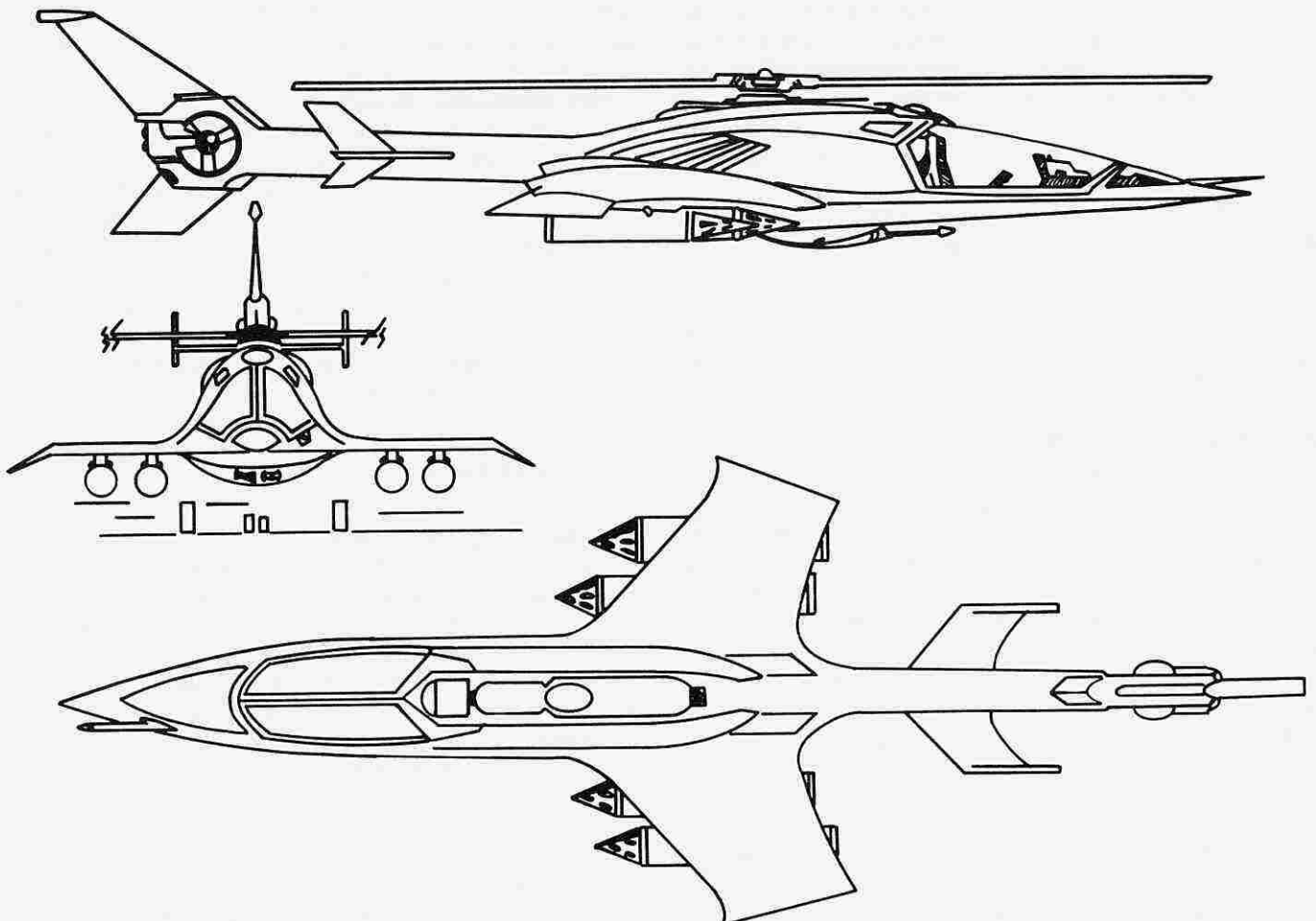
Numerous projects are currently on the Council's planning agenda, including expeditions to both the Cold and Hot Poles and a zoological survey of the coastal area along the Ice Wall, but all such operations have been temporarily suspended for the duration of the emergency—meaning the Kafer War.

The Council still manages to support limited research, particularly when they can convince the military that a particular project (such as the exploration of a particular river valley or mountain range, or a search for pitchblende or chromium deposits) might have military importance.

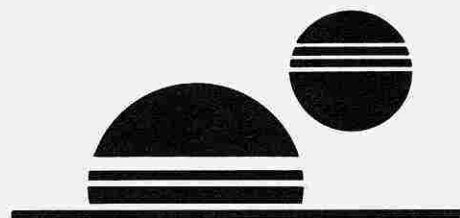
**Meeting the Auroran Scientific Council:** Adventuring characters who are seeking to hire themselves out might be contacted by the Council and asked if they would like to serve as mission security, vehicle drivers, or scouts for a scientific expedition into unexplored Auroran territory. Such expeditions (because of their semi-military nature) are mounted in or near Kafer-occupied territory more often than not, and Kafer attacks are a constant possibility.

Typical missions most generally consist of a four- to six-week survey of a given area mapped by the referee, noting mineral deposits, cataloguing and recording life forms, performing meteorological studies, surveying and mapping, and searching for traces of Kafers.

## Aerofabrique Zephyr X-Wing Gunship







# The Kafers

The human colonies on Aurore are under attack by an alien race known as the Kafers. The Kafers are described in greater detail in the **Traveller: 2300** game module *Kafer Dawn* from GDW, and referees who wish to develop game scenarios involving the Kafers are referred to that book. This section gives a brief outline of what is known about the Kafers.

## HISTORY

The Kafers were first encountered by a party of French scientists five years ago, in 2295, at a research outpost in the Arcturus system some 4.5 light-years from Eta Bootis. Two years later, all contact with the French station was lost, and the scientists are now presumed dead, victims of Kafer aggression. One year after that, in 2298, a large Kafer space fleet entered the Eta Bootis system and attacked human ships and installations.

Imperial French and Ukrainian squadrons in the Eta Bootis system were savagely handled and forced to withdraw. All three of Aurore's power satellites, along with orbital and deep space facilities throughout the system, were destroyed, and all of the surviving human ships were forced to withdraw to neighboring Hochbaden.

The Kafer fleet launched a vicious bombardment of Auroran cities and factories from close orbit, using low-yield nukes and kinetic energy weapons of great accuracy and power. Numerous settlements were obliterated, and as much as 80 percent of the planet's industrial capacity was destroyed. Kafer landing craft began disgorging hordes of Kafers soon afterwards.

A cobbled-together human fleet consisting of a German squadron and Ukrainian and French reinforcements was dispatched to Eta Bootis and, after fierce fighting, was able to drive the Kafer fleet out of the system. Savage fighting on the ground stopped the various Kafer advances and shattered what little organization the invaders possessed. The Kafers now occupy most of Novoa Kiyev, including the Ukrainian colonial capital, but elsewhere they occupy wilderness areas on and beyond the fringes of human settlement. Individual Kafer bands are still numerous and dangerous, and the fighting continues, but the infusion of reinforcements and modern weapons has given the planetary defenders new hope that the enemy can be decisively defeated.

## APPEARANCE

Kafers are two-meter tall nonhuman bipeds. The articulation of their joints is similar to that of humans, but they are more heavily muscled. Parts of their body, including their upper heads and

backs, are encased in a horny, spiny carapace. Elsewhere their skin is tough, with short, coarse bristles on their lower arms and legs. Their hands consist of three, mutually opposing thumbs and lack the strength of a human grip. Their eyes are small, deep-set under heavy brow ridges, and darkly pigmented. Kafer mouths are complex organs consisting of multiple handling, tearing, shredding, and sucking appendages. Most humans feel revulsion and disgust at the Kafer appearance, which is often compared to that of a Terran lobster or insect. The name "Kafer," in fact, was applied to them by German troops on Aurore (Bavarians serving with the French Foreign Legion). The word means *bug* in German, and, in a darkly humorous twist, also happens to be an old slang term for a young, pretty girl.

## REFEREE'S NOTE: THE KAFERS

*Kafer Dawn* and the *Aurore Sourcebook* are the first of several **Traveller: 2300** products which deal with the alien opponents of Man known as the Kafers. Encounters with the Kafers will reveal several mysteries about them which the players, over a period of time, will have a chance to solve.

Subsequent modules in the Kafer War series will reveal more about Kafer psychology and physiology which, at the time of *Kafer Dawn*, are imperfectly understood by humans, if at all. The following guidelines are presented to the referee so he can introduce Kafers in Auroran scenarios of his own design without contradicting information about these beings which has not yet been released.

Typical Kafer NPC stats are as follows:

**Size:** 18  
**Strength:** 12  
**Dexterity:** 12  
**Endurance:** 16  
**Determination:** 15  
**Intelligence:** 2/12  
**Eloquence:** —  
**Education:** —

These values will vary somewhat from individual to individual but can be used as a starting point. Kafer intelligence is always low until shortly after combat begins, then jumps by as much as 10 points or more. Not all Kafers have a basic intelligence of 2. Officers and some other veterans have intelligence levels as high as 6 or 8, and some very rare individuals have basic intelligence levels of 10 or 12 at all times. Kafer intelligence is *never* raised higher than 14 during combat, however.



When role playing combat with Kafers, the referee should consider them to be Green NPCs during the first moments of combat and allow them no advantage at all for tactical skill. It may be possible, for example, for a human party to ambush a Kafer column which has no point or flankers or route security. The column will react with agonizing sluggishness to human fire and may even fail to take shelter until they have suffered a number of casualties. After the first few moments of confusion (which will be obvious to the human players), all Kafers become Veteran NPCs and all Kafer officers become Elite. It *always* requires four light wounds to incapacitate any Kafer, at any time, however.

Kafer bands under fire should be allowed advantages as though being led by officers with Leadership and Tactical skill levels of 3 or more. During the role-playing narrative between the players and referee, the referee should particularly stress how clever the Kafers have become in combat *after* that first noticeable confusion. They will exhibit seemingly superhuman skill in determining the best place and manner to attack and in infiltrating human lines. They will use cunning tricks including feigning death, hiding in or under burned-out vehicles or buildings, or underwater. They will note human concern for noncombatants and comrades, and use captured humans as screens. They are adept at identifying human officers and picking them off in order to disorganize the humans' command structure.

This change in Kafer combat abilities will last for as long as they remain under fire, for as long as humans remain in sight, and for approximately 30 minutes after the end of the battle. Thirty minutes after they are no longer receiving fire or have humans in sight, they will revert to the same intellectual levels they exhibited before combat began.

The reason for this change is rooted in Kafer physiology and psychology and will be revealed in later modules of the Kafer War series. The referee should try to present these aspects of Kafer behavior in a casual and natural manner, allowing the players to draw their own conclusions. Kafer behavior is a clue to their psychologies and is, in fact, part of a puzzle which the players will have to solve in later Kafer War modules.

If they live long enough to do so, of course.



## KNOW YOUR ENEMY!

Training Circular K17-1

Kafers have only been observed at close quarters by humans who were themselves prisoners of the Kafers and under considerable emotional and mental stress. It is unknown how objective our present picture of their psychological make-up and societal structure is, but it is known that it is still fragmentary.

With this fact in mind, the two words which seem best to characterize Kafers are "cruel" and "stupid." Their society appears to be extremely militaristic and regimented, and, indeed, the notions of "civilian" and "military" as distinct entities do not appear to be a part of Kafer thinking. Most Kafers not in positions of leadership appear dull-witted. Officers carry a device described as a "cattle prod" with which they jolt subordinates *before* giving a command. Bullwhips are common and are used for the same purpose as the prods.

Kafer technology appears to be, on the whole, more advanced than that of humans—but it is less diffused: it is encountered only aboard starships or at important bases. Ordinary Kafer troops are armed with relatively simple (if deadly) weapons and do not appear to rely on technical support such as battlefield computers or sophisticated communications devices. Kafer equipment which has been captured tends to be extremely simple and rugged in design. Sensitive electronic gear is generally protected by metal bars or grates, and these often show signs of having been dented by blows. This supports a common observation: Kafers appear to have extremely short and uncontrollable—or uncontrolled—tempers.

A final disquieting note: A number of human prisoners were taken by Kafers early in the war, apparently for the purpose of learning human languages for intelligence purposes. Since that time, humans who have been addressed by Kafers (either prisoners, or, on rare occasions, personnel communicating with them by radio) report that their name for us is the German *Fleischwesen*.

This translates as "Meat Being."

### THE KAFER SOLDIER

Most humans who have fought Kafers extend to them a grudging respect: they fight with a cunning which seems amazing in beings who at times exhibit the most bizarre stupidity. Kafer organization is loose and at times appears nonexistent. Human terms for Kafer military units—"Horde," "Band," and "War Party" reflect this. More often than not, Kafer parties appear to be shambling mobs which show no march discipline, are ridiculously easy to track, and are frequently just as easy to ambush.

Once engaged in combat, however, they become cunning and ruthless foes. They fight with an absolute and total abandon, a manic desperation which is terrifying in its intensity. News accounts have referred to them as "berserkers." This ruthless combat psychology, their use of overwhelming numbers to crush prepared positions, and the incredible cunning of small bands which infiltrate human lines and strike key tactical positions to open the way for direct attacks have combined time and time again to defeat the human forces set against them.

### KAFER HARDWARE

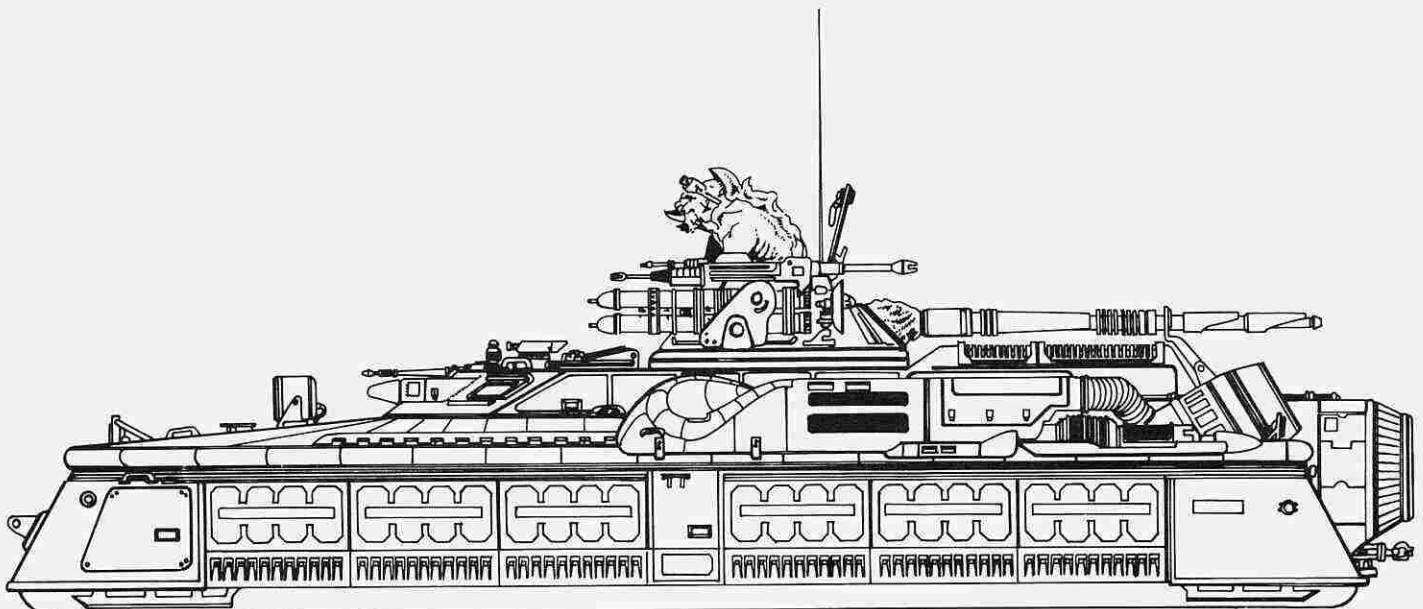
Numerous samples of Kafer weapons and equipment have fallen into human hands. Most of these are still being studied, but their principal weapons are known and understood. These are described below along with the common names now associated with them in Tanstaafl service.

**"Horse Pistol":** An extremely rugged and heavy revolver.

Type: 14.5mm revolver Weight: 1.3 kg (Bulk = 0) Length: 31 cm Ammunition: 14.1×31mm fixed cartridge ball Muzzle Velocity: 490 mps Magazine: 6-round cylinder. Weight of 6 rounds: 0.2 kg ROF: 5 Aimed Fire Range: 80 meters Area Fire Burst: 3 rounds (AFV = 0.25) Area Fire Range: 40 meters DP Value: .9

**"Thud Gun":** An assault rifle/grenade launcher similar in some respects to the German SK-19.

Type: 12.1mm assault rifle with integral 27.2mm grenade launcher Weight (empty): 6.5 kg Length: 76.2 cm (Bulk = 2) Action: Single shot or bursts



**Ammunition:** 12.1×31mm APHE **Muzzle Velocity:** 610 mps **Magazine:** 66-round magazine **Magazine Weight:** 2 kg **ROF:** 2 **Aimed Fire Range:** 500 m **Area Fire Burst:** 10 (AFV = 1.5) **Area Fire Range:** 300 meters **DP Value:** 1.1

**Type:** 27.2mm grenade launcher **Muzzle Velocity:** 375 mps **Magazine:** 9-round box magazine **ROF:** 2 **Aimed Fire Range:** 600 meters **DP Value:** as explosion, (EP = 4)

**"Flashlight":** A Kafer laser rifle of rugged and simple design.

**Type:** 75-01 laser rifle with integral 27.2mm grenade launcher **Length:** 76.2 cm (Bulk = 2) **Action:** single shot **Pulse Energy:** 0.7 mj **Muzzle Velocity:** c **Magazine:** a Kafer power cell with energy for 12 pulses **Magazine Weight:** 1.8 kg **ROF:** 5 **Aimed Fire Range:** 1300 meters **DP Value:** 2

**Type:** 27.2mm grenade launcher **Muzzle Velocity:** 375 mps **Magazine:** 9-round box magazine **ROF:** 2 **Aimed Fire Range:** 600 meters **DP Value:** as explosion, (EP = 4)

**"Beamer":** A vehicle-mounted, high-energy plasma gun.

**Type:** 40 megawatt vehicle-mounted plasma gun **Action:** single shot **Ammunition:** charged cells, 13.3×28.3mm similar to Terran photonic core plasma cells, but more compact **Ammunition Weight:** .2 kg **Magazine:** 100 cells in detachable cartridge magazine **Aimed Fire Range:** 2000 meters **DP Value:** as tamped explosion (EP = 5)

**Hand Grenade:** A general-purpose explosive hand grenade. **Weight:** .4 kg **DP Value:** as explosion (EP = 3)

**"Snapfire":** A large number of these remote anti-vehicle missiles are left behind by Kafer troops when they abandon human areas. These missiles are very difficult to locate due to their small size and excellent camouflage, and usually are not detected until after launch. Keyed to high-speed aircraft, "snapfires" have virtually grounded all civilian and most military aviation in Tanstaaf.

**Type:** remote emplaced air defense missile **Launcher Weight:** 13 kg **Missile Weight:** 17 kg **Range:** 9000 meters **Guidance:** automatic **Homing Value:** 25 **Attack Angle:** direct **Damage:** EP = 6

## KAFER VEHICLES

Like their weapons, Kafer vehicles are simple, rugged, and reliable. They are similar in design to human tracked and hover vehicles, but tend to be larger and heavier. Three types have been widely encountered.

**"Crawler":** A general purpose, enclosed, tracked APC. It is often equipped with a turret-mounted "Beamer" plasma gun.

**Type:** Tracked all-terrain personnel carrier **Crew:** driver **Weight:** 4500 kg **Armor:** **Suspension:** 1 **All faces:** 1.1 **Signature:** 8 **Evasion:** 0 **Sensor Range:** 6 km **Cargo:** 10 passengers & 2000 kg **Max Speed:** 80 kph **Cruising Speed:** 40 kph **Combat Movement:** 160 meters **Off-road Mobility:** full **Power Plant:** hydrogen fuel cell, approximately 0.2 Mw **Fuel Capacity:** 204 kg **Fuel Consumption:** 6 kg/hr **Endurance:** 34 hours

**"Bugbus":** A general purpose, open-topped, tracked APC. A mounting ring to the left of the driver frequently supports a Kafer Weapon Type 4 plasma gun.

**Type:** Tracked all-terrain personnel carrier **Crew:** driver **Weight:** 5100 kg **Armor:** **Suspension:** .8 **All faces:** 1 **Signature:** 8 **Evasion:** 0 **Sensor Range:** 6 km **Cargo:** 17 passengers & 2500 kg **Max Speed:** 90 kph **Cruising Speed:** 50 kph **Combat Movement:** 180 meters **Off-road Mobility:** full **Power Plant:** hydrogen fuel cell, approximately 0.2 Mw **Fuel Capacity:** 240 kg **Fuel Consumption:** 8 kg/hr **Endurance:** 30 hours

**"Deathsled":** A large, extremely heavily armed hovercraft. It does not have jump-jet capability beyond a height of about two meters, barely enough to provide a reasonable obstacle-crossing capability. The turret is constructed so that the missile launchers face to the rear. However, the turret is often seen with the gun traversed to the rear and resting in a travel lock, which brings the missile launchers to bear forward. Likewise, the commander's rotating cupola is mounted with a beamer facing in one direction and an autocannon and machinegun in the other. The design rationale for these decisions is unclear. By the same token, examination of destroyed vehicles reveals four crew stations, a driver, turret gunner, commander, and one other. The fourth crewman has neither controls nor vision apparatus at his station and his function, if any, is a mystery (This crewman, for lack of a better title, has been designated the "kibitzer").

**Type:** Hovortank **Crew:** commander, gunner, driver, kibitzer **Weight:** 23,000 kg **Armor:** **Plenum:** 35 **Front:** 120 **All other faces:** 40 **Armament:** 10.13cm mass driver gun in turret **Aimed Fire Range:** 2000 meters **Range Finder:** +1 **ROF:** 3 **Rounds Carried:** 62 **DP:** 110. Twin anti-vehicle missile launcher mounted externally on turret side. Missiles appear to be roughly equivalent to French Manta-1. No reloads carried. One 40 megawatt plasma gun carried in commander's cupola along with one 22.2mm autocannon (roughly similar in performance to Type 12 autocannon) and one 12.1mm machinegun (similar in performance to the Type 12 autocannon) and one 12.1mm machinegun (similar to DunArmCo Mini-12).

**Signature:** 8 **Evasion:** 4 **Sensor Range:** 8 kilometers **Cargo:** 1000 kg **Max Speed:** 170 kph **Cruising Speed:** 140 kph **Combat Movement:** 320 meters **Off-road Mobility:** full **Power Plant:** 3 Mw MHD turbine **Fuel Capacity:** 700 kg **Fuel Consumption:** 100 kg/hr **Endurance:** 7 hours

## FOOD

Kafer food consists of packaged rations (much like human food concentrate packages stored) in their camps. Though similar to human foods in makeup, Kafer prepared food is of a fibrous and odiferous quality nauseating to humans. Also frequently found are objects referred to as "rotting sausages," tubular chunks of extremely tough, prepared meat, which they seem to enjoy tearing at with their mandibles.

Humans can survive for long periods on Kafer food. It lacks two amino acids necessary for long-term survival, but is otherwise nutritious. The smell, consistency, and stories about Kafer eating habits, however, discourage most humans from trying it even under extreme circumstances.






## KAFER SHIPS

So far, no Kafer spacecraft have been captured intact. Observations made during the two battles for Eta Bootis suggest that Kafer vessels tend to be extremely large and carry large crews. A number of Kafer orbit-to-ground vessels were shot down or otherwise destroyed during and after the invasion landings. These vessels—stubby, highly reflective, burnished gold-colored flying wings—were also much larger than analogous human ship types and appeared each to carry a very large number of Kafer soldiers and their equipment.



# AUORE West Temperate Zone

## MAP KEY

-  Populated Areas
-  Mountains
-  Sea
-  Tidal Flat
-  Kafer-Occupied Areas

1000km

## MILITARY OPERATIONS AREAS

### COLONIAL REINFORCEMENTS

- a. I/6 RIC
- b. III/9 RIC
- c. II/10 RIC
- d. Elim. V/10 RIC
- e. Elim. RCC

### FOREIGN LEGION

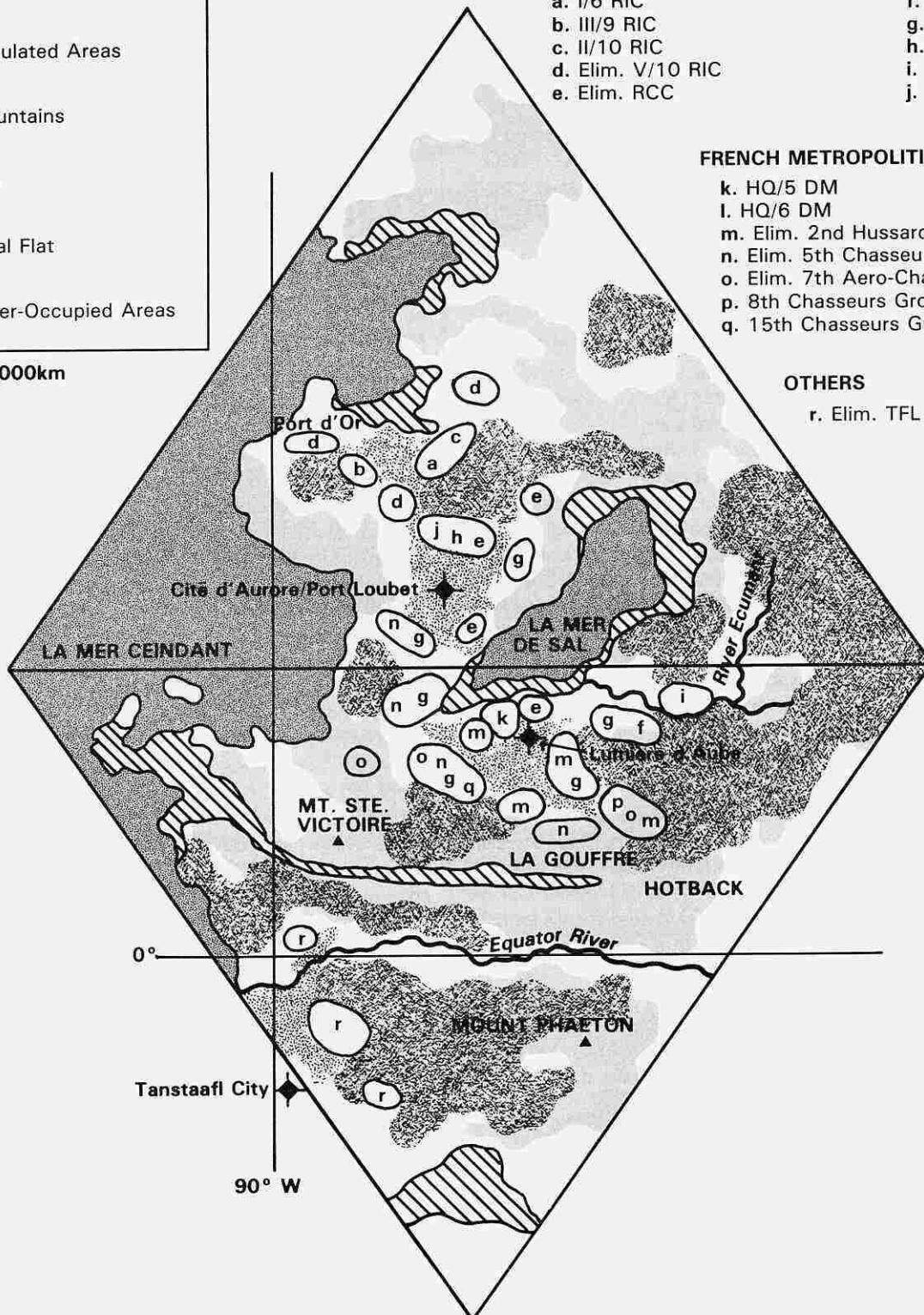
- f. II/13 DBLE
- g. Elim. I/4 RIE
- h. III/5 RIE
- i. RCE
- j. RIAE

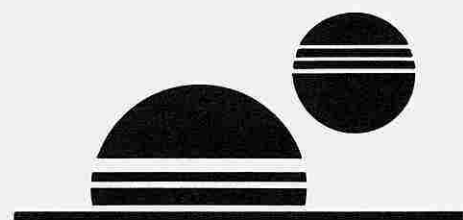
### FRENCH METROPOLITAN TROOPS

- k. HQ/5 DM
- l. HQ/6 DM
- m. Elim. 2nd Hussard
- n. Elim. 5th Chasseurs
- o. Elim. 7th Aero-Chasseurs
- p. 8th Chasseurs Group
- q. 15th Chasseurs Group

### OTHERS

- r. Elim. TFL





# Military Operations

Aurore is a world at war.

Tanstaaf and Aurore Francais are waging a more-or-less conventional ground war against Kafer invaders. In Novoa Kiyev, forces are reduced to small bands striking from hidden bases and from offshore in a dark and bloody guerrilla war.

Players may campaign on Aurore as members of military forces by joining a regular military unit (French Army), militia (La Milice, Tanstaaf militia or the Ukrainians' New Guard), or mercenary outfit (French Foreign Legion or Tanstaaf Free Legion). To fight Kafers, players may join military units since neither human military, civilian officials, nor Kafers approve of armed human civilians wandering the Auroran colonies' fringes alone. Civilians with knowledge of a campaign area, or military or paramilitary backgrounds may be hired as guides or scouts, or as security for expeditions.

Characters will undergo training ranging from a brief weapons course for militias to a 12- or 16-week period with the TFL or Foreign Legion. Once they complete their training, they will be posted to a regiment (generally determined by the referee). Where they wind up is up to the referee and (to some extent) the playing group. Some may serve on a roving task force or strike group (a "fire-brigade" which deploys in response to Kafer threats). Others may remain in a particular area. The smaller, special forces such as the "commandos" of the Tanstaafian militia will be deployed as quick-response teams (QRTs) to answer calls for help from settlements, outposts, or convoys in a general area, while local militias will serve near where they were raised.

## MISSION ASSIGNMENTS

This list details mission types. The referee should choose a type deliberately or by rolling 2D6, then add his own details.

Regular Operations		Special Operations	
Die	Result	Die	Result
2	Raid	2	Raid
3	Patrol	3	Raid
4	Outpost	4	Outpost
5	Escort	5	Rescue
6	Garrison	6	QRT
7	Garrison	7	QRT
8	Garrison	8	Recon
9	Garrison	9	Recon
10	Escort	10	Escort
11	Security	11	Rescue
12	Patrol	12	Combat

## MISSION DESCRIPTIONS

**Combat:** Combat refers to either an all-out assault on the enemy by friendly forces or an all-out effort to meet an enemy thrust. Usually it means a major battle. Sometimes it means a major campaign which culminates in several battles. It will not occur frequently, but it is considered to be a special mission which will interrupt whatever other assignment the characters are currently engaged in. Combat will involve frequent and seemingly aimless movement from place to place, lots of digging and camping in the open, and brief interludes of fire, fear, and death. The referee should determine the specific background of a particular battle and what the outcome will be. The player characters' participation in the battle can then be role played in detail, while the referee engages in shaping events in the scenario to fit the outcome that he has already determined.

**Escort:** The characters are assigned as drivers and guards for a convoy. This convoy group could be either a military convoy supplying a front-line unit or a civilian convoy carrying supplies, arms, food, or ores to or from a settlement endangered by Kafer forces which has received military protection. The referee must determine the type of convoy and its route. Problems which the convoy may face include attacks, natural disasters such as seismic quakes or floods, and breakdowns en route. The characters will have to determine strategies during an attack. In the event of a breakdown, they will have to decide whether they want to delay the convoy while any necessary repairs to the broken-down convoy vehicle are carried out, abandon the broken-down vehicle, or split the convoy into separate groups of persons.

**Garrison:** By far, the vast majority of any soldier's military career will be spent simply waiting. A garrison assignment, by definition, means that the characters have received an assignment to a base or outpost in an area that is currently located in friendly territory.

The characters themselves may be put in a variety of circumstances: They may be positioned to act as reserves; they may be called upon to serve as a training cadre for a group of new military recruits; they may have been pulled out of actual combat in order to reequip and train with new weapons and equipment, or to receive R&R—or the purpose of their assignment could be a combination of any number of the circumstances listed above.

This time when a character is under a garrison assignment to a base or outpost somewhere in friendly territory can be used by the players as a general period of rest and recuperation for the



characters without a detailed role-playing session for every passing day.

Troops on garrison duty *will* be involved in other activities from time to time, including patrols, escort, and security duty. Bases near a combat area may be subject to enemy attack, or a sudden friendly or enemy move could result in the characters being suddenly thrown into combat. Often characters on garrison duty will be called upon to volunteer for special details, such as security or MP duty at a spaceport or to serve as drivers and escorts for a military convoy. Details of the period, as always, are up to the referee.

**Outpost:** The characters are assigned to a forward outpost for their unit. Their mission will require them to serve as observers, to conduct patrols within several kilometers of their position, and to monitor Kafer activity in the area.

They may be expected to act as spotters for artillery or air strikes. In general they will be expected to avoid combat. In the face of a heavy attack, they may be forced to abandon their post and E&E (Escape and Evade) to friendly lines.

This mission result can also be applied to operations such as roadblocks or perimeter security where the characters must wait for, challenge, and hold any enemy advance toward the position he is occupying.

**Patrol:** The characters travel to a specific objective behind enemy lines. Types of patrols include:

**Probes:** Gathering intelligence about enemy positions and strength. The characters will avoid combat if possible.

**Ambushes:** The characters will set an ambush in an area of known enemy activity. They may be forced to wait several days before contact with the enemy is made.

**Search-and-Destroy:** Patrols can be deployed against suspected Kafer concentrations in the hope of trapping small units and destroying them, or to find and destroy a suspected camp or weapons cache.

**Prisoners:** By this time it is known that Kafers never surrender and that capturing one for interrogation is almost impossible. A unit still might be ordered to capture a live Kafer, however—particularly by a commanding officer new to Aurore and the Kafer War. Such an assignment is *extraordinarily* difficult to carry out, but not completely impossible. The capture of a living Kafer is extremely desirable and would result in the characters who carried out the feat becoming heroes.

**Raid:** The characters are ordered to raid an enemy installation, usually a Kafer encampment spotted by a patrol or outpost. The purpose may be to hurt the enemy or upset the timing of his attack, to gather prisoners or intelligence, or to free human prisoners. This mission result could also apply to search-and-destroy operations in Kafer-occupied territory aimed at finding and killing as many of the enemy as possible.

**Recon:** The characters are ordered on (or asked to volunteer for) a long-range patrol requiring deep penetration of enemy lines. The primary mission will be to gather information about enemy positions, strengths, and movements, though it may be combined with a raid against known positions. Recon patrols must be carefully planned. The extraction of the group from enemy territory may be more difficult (and dangerous) than its insertion.

Recon can also apply to special missions to unknown territory for the purposes of mapping or surveying the area. This could be for the purpose of determining the safety of a planned convoy route or military movement, or it could be a search for mineral resources at the behest of the civilian government and approved by the military.

**Rescue:** The characters participate in a rescue mission. This

could be a strictly military operation, usually involving a search for a friendly aircraft or convoy which is overdue or missing. Such a mission can be combined with a routine patrol. It will involve locating the wreckage, the recovery of special equipment or bodies, and the rescue and evacuation of survivors, if any.

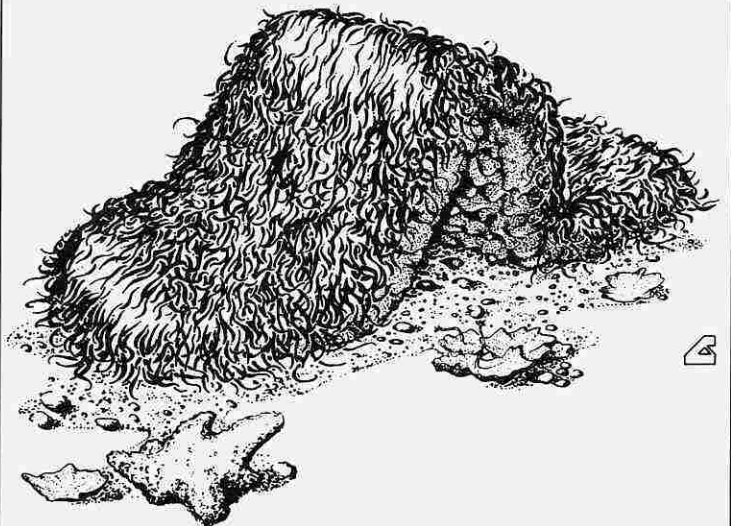
This mission assignment could be the result of a request by civilian authorities for help in the aftermath of a disaster (such as a massive seismic quake) or a massive Kafer attack. The referee must determine what the nature of the disaster is. Characters will be involved in the rescue and evacuation of the injured, management and security of refugee camps, management and security of supply and evacuation convoys, defense against Kafer attacks, and operations against looters or other lawless elements.

**QRT:** Assignment to a Quick-Response Team will find the characters assigned to a base camp responsible for a broad area, usually several hundred kilometers across. At any given time, a QTR's ready team will be on the alert for an immediate scramble, which is initiated by word through a local microwave relay or cable communications net that Kafers have been sighted in a particular location. QTRs are deployed by helicopter or tilt-rotor aircraft, and units characteristically are in the field at the designated LZ within 10 minutes of receiving their call. QTR duty is characterized as long periods of waiting—weapons and equipment already stored aboard fueled and ready aircraft—until the inhabitants of a settlement or homestead report they are under attack. Then the unit boards its aircraft and proceeds to the attack, often grounding in the middle of a firefight.

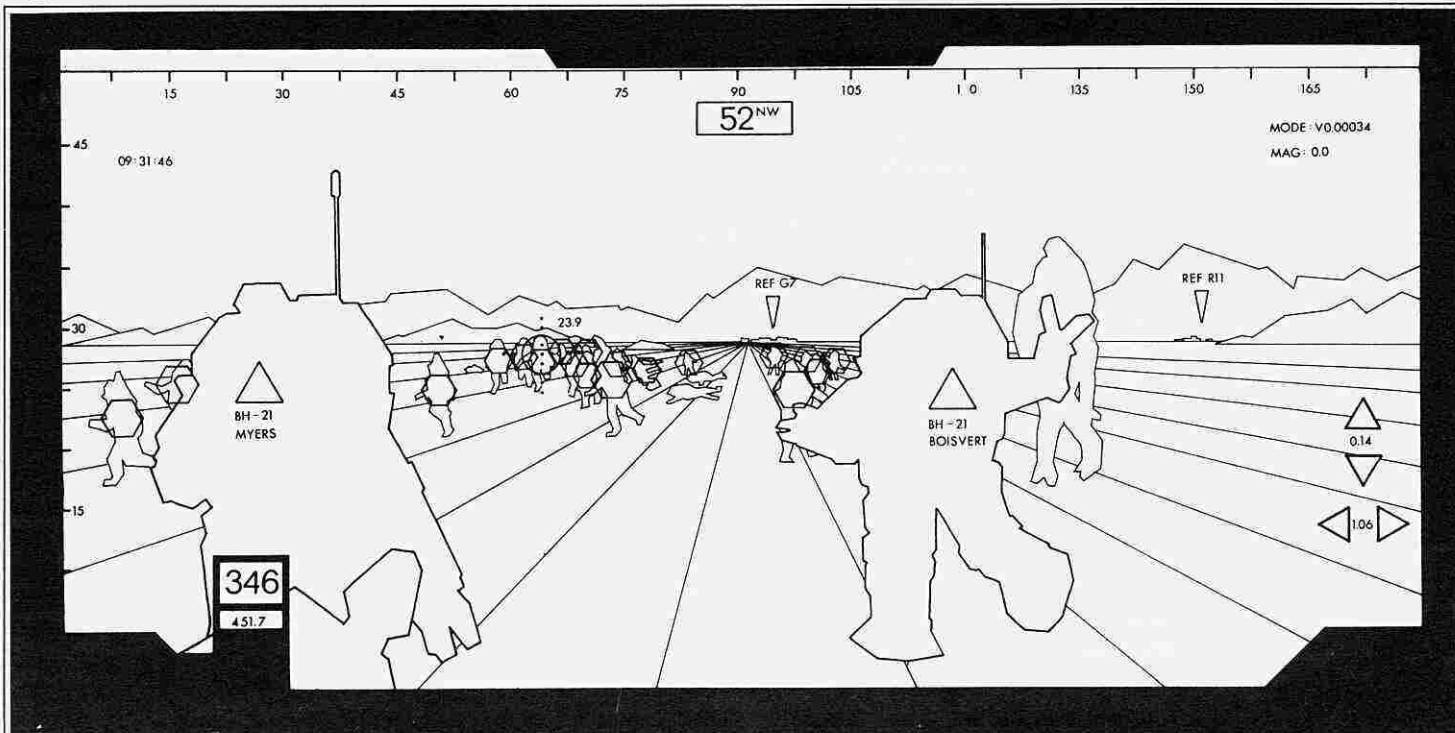
So far in the Kafer War, QTRs have proven to be the most effective general strategy in eliminating the alien invaders.

**Security:** The characters are assigned to a security detail. This usually involves walking sentry-duty at a supply dump, training compound, base camp, or other facility. These assignments generally last a week or two, during which time the referee must determine whether or not an attack will occur. Generally, unless the facility is an advance base subject to frequent harassment, attacks will be rare.

Security assignments may also apply to duty in a city, large settlement, or spaceport, with the characters operating for a time as military police. This duty may be routine, since local police and militia forces have been stretched quite thin by the war, or it could be the result of a special request by civilian authorities during a period of rioting or discontent among the civilian populace.



A creep (*Stragulum ambulatio*) shambles after its prey.



## MISSION CONSIDERATIONS

When determining the events of a particular mission, both the referee and the players should consider the following factors.

**Terrain:** The referee should provide the players with maps of the area of operations. These can be presented as satellite recon or military survey maps, which the player characters can use to plan their mission. Referees are specifically allowed to photocopy any map in this sourcebook for the players' use.

**Kafer:** The referee should determine whether or not Kafer forces are present in the operations area as well as the likelihood of contact during a mission. Specific contact can be determined at the referee's discretion or by creating and using encounter tables.

**Friendly Forces:** The presence of friendly troops or civilians in a given area should be determined. Contact can be determined arbitrarily by the referee, or he can create and use encounter tables.

**Mission Objectives:** The exact objectives of the mission should be determined by the referee and then explained to the players as part of their characters' mission briefing.

Their briefing should include a summary of the terrain in which they are expected to operate, the presence and size of enemy forces known to be in the area, the nature of specific mission objectives, and their priorities if several objectives are incorporated into a single mission.

**Tactical Problems:** The referee must determine the details of each specific mission, including whether or not enemy forces are encountered and where, how well NPC characters carry out orders, what unexpected difficulties such as mechanical failures, storms, or encounters with dangerous animals could occur, and, in general, what can possibly go wrong. Possibilities may be discussed by the players during the preparation for their mission. The referee should temper the application of the difficulties he has worked out by how well the players anticipate and prepare for them.

**Administration:** If the players' group is responsible for the entire planning of a given mission, they should anticipate the logistical and administrative problems posed by that mission. These problems include details such as the availability of supplies or reinforcements and the evacuation of casualties. If the player characters are *not* responsible for these details (that is, they are a small part

of a large mission planned and executed by others higher on the chain of command) the referee should still be aware of such possible problems, since a failure in mission planning (even one not the player characters' fault!) can drastically affect the characters and their mission.

During planning sessions for long-range patrols or search-and-rescue missions, the players should at least question the referee about provisions made for such mission elements as resupply, casevac (casualty evacuation), communications (possible on *Aurora* only through microwave or cable networks), and evacuation. In many cases, they will have to work out the details of such factors for themselves.

## REFeree's NOTE: RESOLVING MISSIONS

It is neither necessary nor desirable for the referee to resolve through detailed role playing every moment of any of the missions and assignments listed above. A soldier's lot in war has been described as endless and mind-numbing boredom relieved by a few brief moments of stark terror, and that principle should be applied by the referee who designs a military campaign. Most missions—security details, convoys, even patrols—will be uneventful. There should only be enough attacks to keep the players on their toes, providing an element of suspense and uncertainty with each new mission. Many missions can be resolved without role playing at all. The players can tell the referee their plans for—say—the next seven days, and the referee can determine whether or not enemy action occurs.

The secret to keeping play interesting is for the referee to keep the players in doubt as to what is actually going on. Dice can be rolled for no apparent purpose, orders can be issued and countermanded, and mission after mission can go by with absolutely no contact with the enemy, all of which will make actual contact with the enemy when it comes that much more unexpected, exciting, and realistic.

## THE UKRAINIAN ARMY

Novoa Kiyev was defended by a Ukrainian Civic Guard (*Ochrana*) consisting of colonists serving compulsory two-year



hitches in an organization similar to a national guard or reserve unit. The defeat of the militia at Stavyansk and in the streets of New Kiev virtually eliminated the Guard as a unified force. A resistance organization called the "New Guard" has been created around a cadre of Civic Guard veterans, mainly refugees and recruits from outlying settlements, equipped with salvaged Civic Guard weapons and vehicles. The Guard is organized as follows:

5 regiments, made up of a total of:

16 rifle companies

2 motorized rifle companies

30+ platoon-sized elite Ranger units

1 battalion of naval commandoes divided among various boats and bases

2 maintenance companies

1 medical company

1 ordnance company

2 engineer companies

A small Ukrainian "navy" consisting of hydrofoils, fishing craft, and marine hovercraft operates along the coasts of Novoa Kiyev and Zapad Zemlya and within the jungle delta of the Sene Dnepr.

The total number of men and women under arms is roughly 15,000. Their headquarters is hidden underground in a vast array of tunnels and caverns dug by the engineer companies and special volunteer battalions made up of commercial miners at Ostrov Kanev in the Sene Dnepr delta.

The Guard militia is short of heavy weapons, most of these having been lost at Stavyansk or lost to rust and corrosion in the swamps. Infantry weapons include the Ramirez-Abruggo BF-1, M-2 assault rifles, and some AS-89s. Vehicles include airfoil APCs and light hovercraft generally similar to the Bridgeport Swift Songbird, as well as numerous high-speed, shallow draft boats, hydrofoils, and fan-driven "swamp buggies." Camouflage has been developed to a high art, and all vehicles and watercraft are carefully painted or festooned with native vegetation, rendering them all but invisible at long ranges from air or land.

Ukrainian militia personnel consist of 20% Green, 30% Experienced, 40% Veteran, and 10% Elite troops.

In addition to the above, the three battalions of the Ukrainian regular Army's 4th Rifle Regiment (Strelkhovy Polk 4) were landed several months ago and have been infiltrated into Novoa Kiyev by the small guerrilla navy. The necessities of varied infiltration routes have left the regiment scattered, with no single element larger than a company in any one place. Although relations are cordial between Shklovskii, the Novoa Ochrana commander, and Colonel Demnyanskii of the 4th Strelkhovy, relations in the field between regular officers and guerrilla leaders are strained. The regulars tend to view the guerrillas as unprofessional, incapable of detailed planning, ignorant of the benefits derived from combined operations, undisciplined, and too inclined to cave in under pressure. The guerrillas view the regulars as lacking in initiative, unable to adapt to a quickly changing situation, unskilled at using ground, poorly trained in camouflage techniques and ambush discipline, too wedded to "the book," and largely ignorant of the unique strengths and weaknesses of their alien opponents.

Both are right, of course. Where local guerrillas and regulars have formed good working relationships they have enjoyed outstanding results, as both forces have been able to complement each other and draw on the other's unique strengths. Where local commanders have failed to establish a good relationship, both forces have suffered from the weaknesses of both groups.

## THE FRENCH ARMED FORCES

French military forces have evolved over the course of centuries

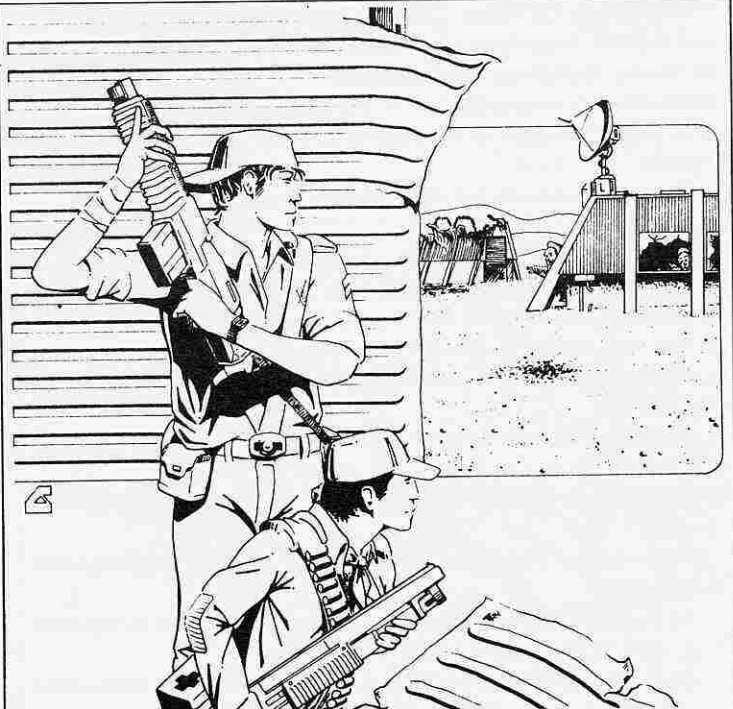
into several legally distinct organizations, each of which has certain limitations on the circumstances under which they may be deployed in combat. Each such service also has developed its own personality and esprit de corps. The five types of French ground units are Metropolitan, Marine, Foreign Legion, Colonial, and Militia.

Metropolitan units are troops belonging to the regular French Imperial Army. The Metropolitan units are recruited from among French *citizens* (rather than subjects) throughout the Empire and so include a mix of people from France, Burkina Faso, Provence Nouveau, the Waloon areas of northeastern France, and even Flemish troops who chose to remain in the Imperial Army after Flanders' independence. (Several old Belgian units continue to remain intact within the structure of the Imperial Army, despite the loss of Flanders and the absorption of the rest of Belgium into the Empire.)

French Imperial forces are never deployed outside of metropolitan France *except* during a declared state of war. In light of that deployment policy, the fact that three full regiments and several lesser units are serving on Aurore now is an indication of how seriously the Paris government views the Kafer incursion at Eta Bootis.

A French "Regiment de la Marine," contrary to what the name suggests, is not trained for amphibious warfare, but refers to the fact that it is administered by the French Bureaux de la Marine. This bureau originally administered all "overseas" possessions which were not part of metropolitan France, including colonies. Troops of the Bureaux de la Marine are recruited from French citizens, just as are Metropolitan troops, but legally may be deployed outside of Metropolitan French territory at any time deemed necessary by the government. To avoid abuses and retain the elite quick-response nature of the Marines, this is a deliberately small body of troops, seldom more than a dozen battalions.

The renowned French Foreign Legion, or Legion Etrangere, still exists as a French officered mercenary unit in the service of France. The French Foreign Legion has a glorious and venerable history with a long tradition as an elite and highly disciplined military unit. Its service history dates back to 1831, and it has seen nearly





continuous action since that time. Originally prohibited from serving within metropolitan France except during times of extreme crisis (such as WW II), this restriction was dropped after Algeria, location of the Legion's original headquarters at Sidi bel Abbes, won its independence in 1962. Recruits sign on for an enlistment period of five years, after which they are eligible for French citizenship. Their oath of enlistment swears allegiance not to France but to the Legion, and the Legion's unofficial motto is *Legio Patria Nostra*—"the Legion is our fatherland."

Because the Legion keeps secret details of each recruit's background or past, the Legion has the reputation of being a haven for criminals, forlorn lovers, and incognito noblemen. Among other professional military units, the Legion also has the reputation of being slightly crazy. Legionnaires themselves encourage both notions, and the second one, at least, seems to be generally true. They have over four and a half centuries of reputation to live up to.

Colonial units are troops raised on French colony worlds from among the populations of French protectorates or territories, rather than from metropolitan departments of France. They are designated as "Colonial Infantry," and are regular, standing military units intended as a second line of defense for any French territory *outside* of metropolitan France. Each regiment is designated Regiment Infanterie Coloniale (RIC) or Regiment Cavalerie Coloniale (RCC).

The local colonial militia forces, La Milice Coloniale, are raised from among the local colonist population. In most cases it is a body of part-time reservists called to duty only for periodic refresher training courses or in the event of an emergency. By law, colonial militias may not be deployed outside the territorial limits of their colony except during a declared state of war, and they may not be deployed to Metropolitan France except to repel an imminent foreign invasion.

## THE FRENCH MILITARY ON AURORE

The French have the largest, strongest, and best-coordinated military response to the Kafer invasion. They have also been the most successful to date in the campaign against the invaders. All five types of French ground forces are represented among the forces serving on Aurore.

## LOCAL COLONIAL MILITIA

On Aurore, La Milice Coloniale numbers about 14,000 men and women organized into battalions of infantry and squadrons of cavalry. Battalions are considered to be parts of regiments for administrative purposes, but in fact are deployed independently or as part of a brigade or a mobile strike force called a "Groupment Mobile," or "G.M."

Cavalry squadrons are company-sized units in French military usage. Unlike infantry, they are united into a regiment (actually a battalion-sized unit) which is deployed and fights as a unit.

Aurore's French colonial troops are arranged as 11 infantry battalions distributed among four regiments, and six cavalry squadrons in two regiments. These are:

Regiment Tirailleur d'Aurore: Battalions designated as I, II, and III/1 RTA

Regiment Vedette d'Aurore: Battalions designated as I, II, and III/1 RVA

Regiment de la File d'Aurore: Battalions designated as I, II, III, and IV/1 RFA

Regiment des Reserves d'Aurore: A single battalion designated as I/1 RRA

1e Regiment Cavalerie d'Aurore: Three squadrons designated I, II, and III Escadron Mobile

2e Regiment Cavalerie d'Aurore: Three squadrons designated

I, II, and III Escadron Mobile

After the Central Asian War and the War of German Reunification, the French Militia was strengthened in training and equipment. The Kafer invasion shattered the original militia, however, and many of its best troops have been transferred to other French units to bring them up to strength. Flooded with new volunteers to fill its depleted ranks, the militia infantry is now poorly trained and indifferently equipped. There is also a serious shortage of trained officers and NCOs because of the heavy initial casualties. Some units are led by French NCOs or officers assigned by one of the headquarters companies of the French metropolitan troops on Aurore. There are cases of companies led by sergeants and of one battalion (III/1 RFA) commanded by a captain.

The cavalry is also in generally poor condition at the moment, having borne the brunt of the mobile war of strike and counterstrike with the Kafers across the north Auroran plains. Most of their original vehicles are destroyed or show severe signs of wear and battle damage. The 1st Cavalry Regiment has been temporarily withdrawn from combat and is refitting at Port Loubet. Along with a number of obsolete French AC-8 gunsleds, twelve Mark IX Luftkissenpanzers (LkPz-IX) have recently been shipped to Port Loubet as a part of an unexpected lend-lease agreement between France and Germany, and German technicians are training the 1st Cavalry Regiment in how to handle them. It is hoped that these modern and sophisticated hover tanks will be in service in time to meet the next, long-expected Kafer offensive.

A number of native support units are also present, including:

1e Regiment d'Artillerie d'Aurore (RAA)

I Bataillon, 1e RAA

II Bataillon, 1e RAA

Compagnie Autonome de l'Artillerie

Compagnie Autonome Medical

Compagnie A de Genie

Compagnie B de Genie

Compagnie C de Genie

Compagnie A de Transport

Compagnie B de Transport

Compagnie C de Transport

Compagnie Autonome des Vivres

Each Compagnie de Genie is a separate engineering company charged with digging fortifications and building bridges, airstrips, and roads. They have also served valiantly as a front-line combat unit when needed. The transport and supply companies serve interchangeably in transporting non-mechanized infantry and supplies both on the front and behind the lines.

## COLONIAL REINFORCEMENTS

There are four battalions of colonial infantry on Aurore from three different colony worlds. Like local militia, they are deployed independently of one another. Each battalion is listed below, with its homeworld system following in parentheses.

I Bataillon, 6e RIC (DM+34 2342—Kimanjano)

III Bataillon, 9e RIC (DM+33 2269—Vogelheim)

II Bataillon, 10e RIC (Beta Canum)

V Bataillon, 10e RIC (Beta Canum)

Also on Aurore are three squadrons of Colonial Reinforcement cavalry. These are grouped into a temporary unit called "Regiment Cavalerie de la Marche d'Aurore" and deployed as a single unit. These units, too, are drawn from various French colonial worlds.

I Escadron, 1e RCC (Tirane—Alpha Centauri)

II Escadron, 3e RCC (Beta Canum)

II Escadron, 4e RCC (Eta Bootis)

Note that the homeworld for the 4e RCC is Eta Bootis, where the unit was originally recruited. Two other squadrons of the 4th RCC are currently deployed elsewhere, one at Provence Nouveau, Tirane (on Alpha Centauri), and one at the French colony at Queen Alice's Star (DM+46 1797).

## LEGION ETRANGERE

Four infantry battalions (one of them air-mobile) and one cavalry regiment are present on Aurore.

II Bataillon, 13e Demi-Brigade Legion Etrangere (DBLE)

I Bataillon, 4e Regiment Infanterie Etrangere (RIE)

III Bataillon, 5e RIE

I Bataillon, Regiment Infanterie Aero-Etrangere (RIAE)

2e Regiment Cavalerie Etrangere (RCE)

The Foreign Legion's cavalry is equipped with hovertanks and hover-mobile infantry. The aero-infantry uses tilt-rotor aircraft similar to the Military Liaison Transport and the Utility Light Transport described in the **Traveller: 2300 Player's Manual**.

The I/4 RIE is a combat walker unit equipped with BH-21 combat walker suits. This unit is usually broken up into platoon and company-sized strike units for special assaults, ambushes, and operations deep within Kafer territory.

Any given Legion unit will consist of 10% Green, 30% Experienced, 40% Veteran, and 20% Elite troops. Many special operations calling for volunteers or small, special units (such as a combat walker strike force) will consist entirely of Veteran or Elite troops. Perhaps 40 percent of all Legion senior NCOs are former Bavarian commissioned officers, most of them veterans of the Central Asian War and the War of German Reunification.

There are serious internal problems within the Legion troops on Aurore, however. The Legion, by tradition, is made up of volunteers from many nations, led mostly by French officers. This most famous of mercenary units has always included a high proportion of German professionals within its ranks. By the late 23rd Century there are a large number of Bavarian ex-patriots in the Legion, men who take strong exception to the Unificationist politics of those who consider themselves to be "German" in a nationalist rather than a cultural sense. Also in the ranks are numerous Flemish veterans who resent either the French or the Germans (or both) in an ongoing feud which culminated in the Flemish War of Independence in 2293, but which is not yet entirely forgotten. Discipline of late has been harsher than usual in order to contain this volatile mix of nationalistic feeling.

As a result, there have been numerous outbreaks of violence in the Legion barracks north of Lumiere d'Aube. Four German legionnaires of the II/13 DBLE were recently court martialed on charges of mutiny and murder and shot by firing squad for their part in the death of a German sergeant. Added to this has been the strain of additional harsh disciplinary measures due to incidents between the French colonial populace and the "foreigners" of the Legion. The legionnaires, for all of their discipline, are a rough lot, and their attentions toward local bars, shopkeepers, and daughters, to name three common examples, are appreciated less by the natives than are those of French colonial soldiers.

Discontent within the Legion's ranks, then, is high, and there are rumors of mutiny and plots against certain French officers and German NCOs. It is probable that there is no substance to these rumors beyond the normal grumblings of professional campaigners, but, currently, morale is low and discipline harsh.

**Referee's Note:** The Legion Etrangere is always looking for a few good men! Player characters of **Traveller: 2300** may join the Foreign Legion, if they choose, by looking up a recruiting officer in Lumiere d'Aube or La Cite d'Aurore. If they are in

reasonable health, they will be accepted and will be posted to a training company at the Lumiere barracks. After 16 weeks of training, they will be assigned to one of the units listed above (referee's choice, any unit *except* the I/4 RIE) and begin their first enlistment's service on Aurore.

Players are warned, however, that the enlistment period is five years, after which they may apply for French citizenship (a surprisingly common reason for enlistment). Characters who choose to terminate their career with the Legion before this five-year period is up are subject to long prison terms—or a firing squad—if they are caught.

## FRENCH METROPOLITAN FORCES

Regular Imperial units stationed on Aurore include the following:

Poste de Commandement and Groupe de Commandement de la Compagnie, 5e Division de la Marche

Poste de Commandement and Groupe de Commandement de la Compagnie, 6e Division de la Marche

2e Regiment Hussard

5e Regiment Chasseurs Blindes

7e Regiment Aero-Cuirasse

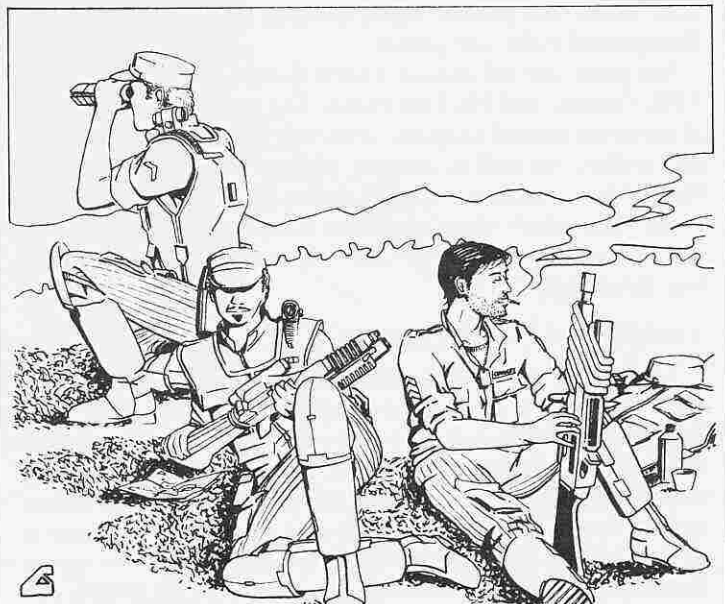
8e Chasseur Groupe

15e Chasseur Groupe

The 2e Regiment Hussard is a recon and patrol unit mounted in soft-skinned cross-country vehicles and wheeled armored cars. The 5e Regiment Chasseurs Blindes (Armored Chasseurs) is a heavy ground tank unit. The 7e Regiment Aero-Cuirasse are equipped with AC-10 hovertanks. The two chasseur groups are separate infantry battalions.

## MARINES

Only a single Marine battalion is stationed on Aurore, the I Battalion, 8e Regiment Parachutist de la Marine (RPM). The I/8 RPM is a combat walker outfit using BH-21 armored walker suits. The I/8 RPM is an elite unit trained in both airborne skills and in the use of combat walkers. Like the I/4 RIE of the Foreign Legion, they are usually deployed in small, special assault groups and combat strike teams for special operations deep in Kafer territory.





## MILITARY POSITIONS

The map on page 20 shows the approximate locations of the various French units in the Auroran colonial region and the known areas of Kafer activity.

This map is presented as a general basis for the start of a military campaign within French territory. Given units will change positions due to maneuvers and counter-maneuvers of the war and as various units are pulled into reserve for rest and refit. The major Kafer concentration close by the eastern shores of La Mer de Sel is judged to be the principal threat to the French colony, and thus is the objective of the majority of French forces in the area.

## TANSTAAFL

As an independent state, Tanstaafl is defended by the forces it can raise in its own defense. Two major forces are present.

## REGIONAL DEFENSE PARAMILITARY MILITIA

The militia consists of citizen soldiers, raised from among the population of a local region, and includes trained paramilitary forces such as local police. Training is generally poor, though a number of militiamen have seen considerable action. Their total forces number approximately 12,000, and consist of the following:

- Rural police: 300
- Metropolitan police: 1800
- Regional Militias: about 9000, consisting of:
  - 6 regional regiments, divided among:
    - 20 infantry companies
    - 7 motorized infantry companies
    - 28 platoon-sized mobile commandos
    - 5 motor transport companies
    - 2 hover transport companies
    - 2 maintenance companies
    - 4 medical companies
    - 7 engineer companies

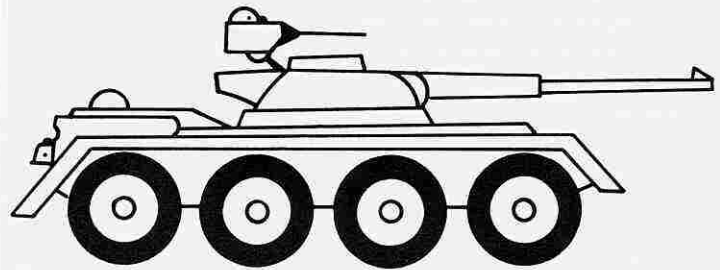
The regional "commandos" maintain watch at certain designated barracks throughout Tanstaafl territory, responding in hovercraft or helicopters on short notice to warnings through the ground radio or microwave tower networks of Kafer activity. News of a Kafer attack at an isolated settlement or farm can bring one or more 60-man platoons to the site within 10 minutes in most cases, a tactic which has proven highly effective against scattered and disorganized Kafer war parties.

Any given unit will consist of 60% Green, 30% Experienced, 15% Veteran, and 5% Elite troops. The paramilitary militias are all extremely short of weapons—especially heavy weapons and support artillery—as well as vehicles, transports, tanks, and aircraft. Most of their equipment was lost during the disastrous early days of the Kafer attack when numerous villages north and northeast of Tanstaafl were overrun by Kafer hordes, and Tanstaafl City itself was threatened.

## TANSTAAFL FREE LEGION

Tanstaafl's free-market economy has solved the ex-colony's principal defense problem; without a regular standing army to defend the territory, they have elected to hire mercenaries to serve as their main defensive force. The Tanstaafl Free Legion (TFL) consists of professional soldiers and adventurers from throughout human space, attracted to Aureore by high pay, booty, and a chance to fight Kafers. In fact, TFL pay is not exceptional, and the opportunities for booty from a foe as alien as the Kafers are limited, but, at least, chances to fight Kafers are certainly plentiful.

The TFL currently consists of about 2000 men, including:



*French ABR-76 Armored Car*

- 3 area headquarters, including HQ companies and staffs
- 3 hover infantry companies
- 5 motorized infantry companies
- 2 helicopter infantry companies
- 1 hovertank company
- 2 training companies
- 20 platoon-sized air-mobile infantry groups
- 3 artillery batteries

The air-mobile infantry groups serve the same purpose as the militia commandos, responding on short notice to local reports of Kafer activity.

Each company consists of a mix of green (20%), experienced (40%), veteran (40%), and elite (10%) troops. After several weeks with a training company stationed at the TFL barracks near Tanstaafl's airport, recruits are distributed among standing combat units, so that all companies include untried recruits steadied by experienced men. Since most TFL troopers are combat veterans already, training cadres and companies are primarily for familiarization with weapons and with the unit's order of battle and command structure. A majority of the troops are combat veterans from various Tanstaafl militias, and the TFL was raised and created on Aureore, but many of the unit's best troops have arrived on-world from as far away as Earth, Mu Herculis, and Beta Hydri.

Opposition to Tanstaafl's current civilian government is centered within the command staff of the Tanstaafl Free Legion.

About two-thirds of Tanstaafl's mercenary force is currently in the immediate area about Tanstaafl City, while the rest is deployed on a rotating basis to advance fire bases throughout the developed regions of the Tanstaafl state.

**Referee's Note:** Some players may wish to join the Tanstaafl Free Legion for a hitch in the Kafer War. Indeed, many of the TFL's best troops came to Aureore in order to sign on with the Legion. The guidelines below can be used to chart a player character's course as he enlists in the mercenary army.

Mercenaries sign a contract of service with the Legion, generally for periods of 300 Auroran days (761 Earth days, or about 25 months). They may, at any time after signing the contract, buy out of the regiment by paying an amount equal to their current pay times the number of Auroran days remaining on their contract divided by 2.

The Legion itself is under contract to the Tanstaafl government. The government pays the Legion a set amount from a cash trust established for the purpose at La Banque Premiere d'Aureore. In exchange, the Legion defends Tanstaafl territory, citizens, and property and puts into practice the general policy decisions and orders issued by the government. The Legion's command staff has the right to refuse commands it deems tactically unsound or unnecessarily hazardous, but the contract specifies cash penalties for contractual noncompliance, as adjudicated by a panel of officers



of La Banque Premiere d'Aurore in Tanstaaf's business district.

Mercenary pay for a line trooper is Lv50 per Auroran day, but meals, lodging, clothes, and equipment are provided free, as are ammunition and weapons if the character does not have his own. Booty taken from the Kafers may be sold, and the money divided among the takers as a bonus. (The market value of such booty is determined individually by the referee.) Generally, up to four-fifths of the bonus is distributed among the unit's officers or placed in a regimental fund, and the remainder shared by those who were actually present when the booty was taken. Some very special items of booty—a Kafer spaceship, for example—may be arbitrarily seized by the government without payment. There are also unusual instances of booty. There is, for example, a flourishing market in Tanstaaf for the heads or hides of dead Kafers.

Troopers who have served for one complete contract period may become noncommissioned officers and have command of units for pay ranging from Lv75 to Lv150 per Auroran day.

Newly signed mercenaries are assigned to a holding camp near the Tanstaaf airfield at Blackjack before being transferred to a line company somewhere in the countryside beyond Tanstaaf City. Units generally serve on the frontier (and in combat) for 10 to 30 Auroran days, followed by a similar period of time spent in training near Tanstaaf and in R&R.

This routine will be interrupted by major Kafer threats or by all-out mobilization for a special campaign.

Contract jumpers from the Free Legion are considered to be military deserters. When apprehended, they are subject to the

discipline of a military court and may be imprisoned, fined, discharged, or (if the desertion was in the face of the enemy) shot.

## MILITARY EQUIPMENT

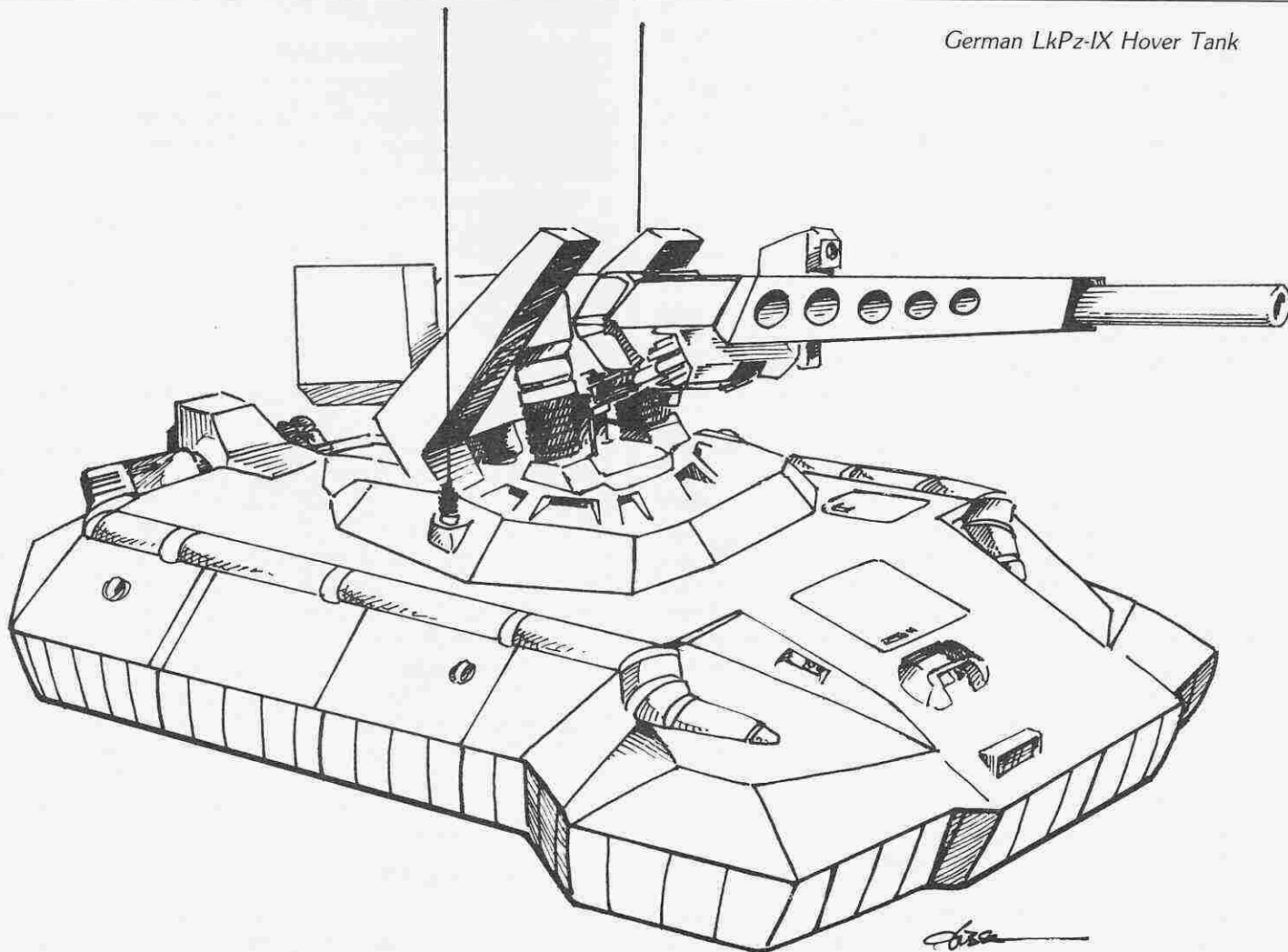
The following sections deal with the various types of equipment used by the armed forces on Aurore. Where the item in question is described in the basic game, a detailed explanation is omitted.

### VEHICLES—FRENCH

**AC-8 (Aero-Char, 8-ton):** This is described and illustrated in the player's manual in the basic game. Although the vehicle is officially obsolete, disruption of French military procurement in recent years has meant that not all first-line units have reequipped with the new AC-12, and all second-line units continue to use the older AC-8. Two French units on Aurore are equipped with the AC-8 gunsled: 1e Regiment Cavalie Aureorean and 2e Regiment Cavalie Etrangere. The 7e Regiment Aero-Cuirassiers was originally equipped with AC-8s but has since been reequipped with AC-10s, and its surviving AC-8s were turned over to the 1e RCA.

**AC-12 (Aero-Char, 12-ton):** The AC-12 enjoyed its combat debut during the War of German Reunification and racked up impressive kill ratios against German Mark VIII Lukis whenever it met them on relatively even terms. The vehicle uses vectored-thrust jets to give it a limited jump-jet capability, enabling it to negotiate cliffs and obstructions. Each minute in jump-jet mode uses 10 minutes of fuel, and speed is quartered. One unit on Aurore, the 7e Regiment Aero-Cuirassiers, is currently equipped

*German LkPz-IX Hover Tank*



with the AC-12 gunsled. This regiment is organized as a single-battalion cavalry regiment with three pure squadrons of gunsleds.

**Type:** Hovertank **Crew:** Driver, gunner, commander **Weight:** 12,000 kg **Armor:** Plenum: 20 **Front and Overhead:** 100 **Other faces:** 40 **Armament:** 6.5cm mass driver in remote overhead mount **Aimed Fire Range:** 2000 m **Range Finder:** +3 **ROF:** 6 **Rounds Carried:** 130 **DP:** 100 7.5mm machinegun coaxial with main gun. 25mm autocannon mounted on telescoping sensor pod. 1 Manta-1 missile launcher in hull with 4 missiles carried internally. 1 Martel missile launcher on either side of the remote turret. No reloads carried. **Signature:** 4 **Evasion:** 6 **Sensor Range:** 12 km (+2) **Cargo:** 500 kg **Max Speed:** 200 kph **Cruising Speed:** 180 kph **Combat Movement:** 413 m **Off-Road Mobility:** Full **Power Plant:** 2.4 MW MHD turbine **Fuel Capacity:** 385 kg **Fuel Consumption:** 55 kg/hr **Endurance:** 7 hours **Price:** Current French Army procurement price is Lv497,842 each.

**CC-21 (Char de Combat, 21-ton):** Heavy ground tanks are a rarity on the frontier and are much more common on the core worlds. On the low population density worlds of the frontier, mobility is generally more important than firepower. However, the heavy protection and long-range firepower of a track-laying tank is often handy. Currently there is only one battalion of tanks on Aurore, the French 5e Regiment Chasseurs Blindes. (The regiment is organized as cavalry and thus has a strength of one battalion.)

**Type:** Main Battle Tank **Crew:** Driver, gunner, second gunner, commander **Weight:** 21,000 kg **Armor:** Suspension: 8 **Front:** 250 **Overhead:** 100 **Other Faces:** 60 **Armament:** 1 Mark 17 high energy pulse laser in remote turret **Aimed Fire Range:** 4000 m **Range Finder:** +3 **ROF:** 1 **Rounds Carried:** Unlimited (runs off power plant) **DP Value:** 100 **Limitations:** May not fire in the same turn that the vehicle moved; 1 25mm autocannon in remote turret coaxial with main gun; 3 CLP-1A plasma guns, 1 in each of three ball mounts (one on front and one on each side of the chassis) **Aimed Fire Range:** 1600 m **Range Finder:** +1 **ROF:** 5 **Rounds Carried:** 150 (50 per mount); 3 7.5 mm machineguns (one in each plasma gun ball turret, mounted coaxially); 1 launcher for Guiscard Aero-12 missiles on chassis top with 10 reloads carried internally; Quad launcher for Guiscard Martel missiles on remote turret. No reloads. **Signature:** 10 **Evasion:** 0 **Sensor Range:** 20 km (+3) **Cargo:** 500 kg **Max Speed:** 100 kph **Cruising Speed:** 50 kph **Combat Movement:** 200 m **Off-Road Mobility:** Full **Power Plant:** 2 MW MHD turbine **Fuel Capacity:** 900 kg **Fuel Consumption:** 45 kg/hr **Endurance:** 20 hours **Price:** Current French Army procurement price is Lv919,640 each.

**"Bessieres" ACV-APC:** The "Bessieres" is the standard military air-cushion vehicle armored personnel carrier described in the basic game's *Player's Manual*. Although now considered second-line equipment, it continues to serve with aero-cavalry units equipped with the AC-8 gunsled. These cavalry regiments each have three mixed squadrons, with a squadron having two gunsled troops (platoons) of three sleds each and two cavalry troops of three Bessieres each. Each Bessieres carries a six-man section and the troop headquarters personnel are divided up among the three APC sleds. The squadron leader usually rides an AC-8 while the squadron combat staff is carried in another Bessieres.

Two cavalry regiments on Aurore have this organization: 1e Regiment Cavalrie d'Aurore and 2e Regiment Cavalrie Etrangere. The 1e RCA is seriously understrength, however, with only one gunsled and one cavalry troop active in its 1st and 3rd squadrons. The 2nd squadron is currently reequipping as a pure three-troop gunsled squadron with German Mark IX Lukis.

**ABR-76 Armored Car (Auto-Blindes de Reconnaissance):** This handy, little, wheeled armored vehicle combines

good cross-country mobility in most terrain with respectable firepower and light armored protection. Its excellent sensor suite further suits it to light wheeled recon and patrol missions. Three French wheeled cavalry units use the ABR-76 armored car: 2e Regiment Cavalrie d'Aurore, 2e Regiment Hussard, and Regiment Cavalrie de la Marche d'Aurore. Each regiment is organized as a three-squadron cavalry regiment. Each of the four troops in a squadron has two ABR-76 armored cars and two cross-country soft vehicles similar to the Range Truck described in the basic game.

**Type:** 8-wheel armored car **Crew:** Driver, gunner, commander **Weight:** 2500 kg **Armor:** Suspension: 0.3 **Front:** 8 **All Other Faces:** 4 **Armament:** 1 CLP-1A plasma gun in remote turret. **Aimed Fire Range:** 1600 m **Range Finder:** +1 **ROF:** 5 **Rounds Carried:** 30 **DP:** As tamped explosion (EP = 15); 1 coaxial 7.5mm machinegun **Signature:** 2 **Evasion:** 2 **Sensor Range:** 15 km (+2) **Cargo:** 250 kg **Max Speed:** 140 kph **Cruising Speed:** 100 kph **Combat Movement:** 300 m **Off-Road Mobility:** Halved **Power Plant:** 0.2 MW hydrogen fuel cell **Fuel Capacity:** 100 kg **Fuel Consumption:** 6 kg/hr **Endurance:** 16 hours **Price:** Lv35,000

## VEHICLES—GERMAN

**LkPz-IX:** This modern hovertank is described in the basic game. There are currently a total of 23 Mark IX Lukis on Aurore: twelve working up with the 2nd squadron of the 1e Regiment Cavalrie Aureorean, eight with the Autonomous Hovertank Company of the Tanstaaf Free Legion, and three with the German Kampfgruppe Reiner. Tanstaaf originally held a total of twelve Mark IXs, but four have been lost in combat.

## VEHICLES—TANSTAFLIAN

**Kangaroo IV ACV-APC:** The Kangaroo IV is an obsolete, but still serviceable, military ACV-APC based on an older Bavarian design. Originally produced to meet an Australian Army specification issued in 2264, the Kangaroo IV has since been replaced in Australian service by more modern types and is now widely exported as surplus. The variants in use by Tanstaaf have had a number of modifications made, the most notable of which is the installation of the French CLP-1A 175 megawatt plasma gun. The vehicle has limited jump-jet capability. Each minute in jump-jet mode uses 10 minutes of fuel, and speed is cut to one-tenth normal.

**Type:** Hover APC **Crew:** Driver, gunner, commander **Weight:** 4000 kg **Armor:** Plenum: 2 **All Faces:** 10 **Armament:** 2 DunArm-Co Mini-12 machineguns in ball mounts, one on either side of the forward hull. CLP-1A plasma gun in turret. **Aimed Fire Range:** 1600 m **Range Finder:** +1 **ROF:** 5 **Rounds Carried:** 30 **DP:** As tamped explosion (EP = 15); 25 mm conventional autocannon in remote turret on top of main turret. **Signature:** 5 **Evasion:** 6 **Sensor Range:** 10 km **Cargo:** 6 passengers and 2000 kg **Max Speed:** 200 kph **Cruising Speed:** 180 kph **Combat Movement:** 420 m **Off-Road Mobility:** Full **Power Plant:** 0.5 MW hydrogen fuel cell **Fuel Capacity:** 270 kg **Fuel Consumption:** 15 kg/hr **Endurance:** 18 hours **Price:** Average open market price for Kangaroo IVs with only twin machineguns and a 25mm autocannon mounted is Lv45,000. Average open market price of a CLP-1A is Lv9500. The CLP-1A fires 41 × 77mm 175 megawatt photonic core plaser cells from a 10-round hopper. Each 10-round disposable clip weighs 38 kg and costs Lv500.

## VEHICLES—KAFER

Like their weapons, Kafer vehicles are simple, rugged, and reliable. They are similar in design to human tracked and hover



vehicles, but tend to be larger and heavier. Three types have been widely encountered.

**“Crawler”:** A general-purpose enclosed, tracked APC. It is often equipped with a turret-mounted “Beamer” plasma gun.

*Type:* Tracked all-terrain personnel carrier *Crew:* Driver *Weight:* 4500 kg *Armor:* *Suspension:* 1 *All Faces:* 11 *Signature:* 8 *Evasion:* 0 *Sensor Range:* 6 km *Cargo:* 10 passengers and 2000 kg *Max Speed:* 80 kph *Cruising Speed:* 40 kph *Combat Movement:* 160 m *Off-Road Mobility:* Full *Power Plant:* Hydrogen fuel cell, approximately 0.2 Mw *Fuel Capacity:* 204 kg *Fuel Consumption:* 6 kg/hr *Endurance:* 34 hours

**“Bugbus”:** A general-purpose open-topped, tracked APC. A mounting ring to the left of the the driver frequently supports a “Beamer” plasma gun.

*Type:* Wheeled all-terrain personnel carrier *Crew:* Driver *Weight:* 5100 kg *Armor:* *Suspension:* 0.8 *All Faces:* 3 *Signature:* 8 *Evasion:* 0 *Sensor Range:* 6 km *Cargo:* 17 passengers and 2500 kg *Max Speed:* 90 kph *Cruising Speed:* 50 kph *Combat Movement:* 180 m *Off-Road Mobility:* Full *Power Plant:* Hydrogen fuel cell, approximately 0.2 Mw *Fuel Capacity:* 240 kg *Fuel Consumption:* 8 kg/hr *Endurance:* 30 hours

**“Deathsled”:** A large, extremely heavily armed hovercraft. It does not have jump-jet capability beyond a height of about two meters, barely enough to provide a reasonable obstacle-crossing capability. The turret is constructed so that the missile launchers face to the rear; however, the turret is often seen with the gun traversed to the rear and resting in a travel lock, which brings the missile launchers to bear forward. Likewise, the commander’s rotating cupola is mounted with a beamer facing in one direction and an autocannon and machinegun in the opposite direction. The design rationale for these decisions is unclear. By the same token, examination of destroyed vehicles reveals three identifiable crew stations (one each for the driver, turret gunner, and commander) and one other position. The fourth crewmember has neither controls nor vision apparatus at his station, and his function, if any, is a mystery. (This crewmember, for want of a better title, has been designated the “kibitzer.”)

*Type:* Hovortank *Crew:* Commander, gunner, driver, kibitzer

*Weight:* 23,000 kg *Armor:* Plenum: 35 *Front:* 120 *All Other Faces:* 40 *Armament:* 10.13cm mass driver gun in turret *Aimed Fire Range:* 2000 m *Range Finder:* + 1 *ROF:* 3 *Rounds Carried:* 62 *DP:* 110; twin antivehicle missile launcher mounted externally on turret side. Missiles appear to be roughly equivalent to French Manta-1. No reloads carried. One 40 megawatt plasma gun carried in commander’s cupola along with one 22.2mm autocannon (roughly similar in performance to the Type 12 autocannon) and one 12.1mm machinegun (similar to DunArmCo Mini-12). *Signature:* 8 *Evasion:* 4 *Sensor Range:* 8 km *Cargo:* 1000 kg *Max Speed:* 170 kph *Cruising Speed:* 140 kph *Combat Movement:* 320 m *Off-Road Mobility:* Full *Power Plant:* 3 Mw MHD turbine *Fuel Capacity:* 700 kg *Fuel Consumption:* 100 kg/hr *Endurance:* 7 hours

## AIRCRAFT

The extensive use of air defense missiles by the Kafers, particularly the remotely placed “Snapfire,” has severely restricted aerial operations. While some flights are conducted in secured areas, combat flights are not routinely flown. The one exception to this general rule is the 1e Bataillon, Regiment Infanterie Aero-Etrangere, a uniquely constituted force of X-wing gunships, light recon aircraft, and airmobile infantry carried in tilt-rotor utility transports.

**Aerofabrique Zephyr X-Wing Gunship:** This is the basic X-wing gunship described in the basic game. Each of the three companies of the 1e RIAE contains a platoon of four gunships and two scout aircraft, which are normally deployed as two sections, each with two gunships and a scout. Capable of carrying a variety of ordnance loads, the Zephyr platoons provide the main firepower for the battalion.

**Guerrin-Roussette AG-7 Tilt-Rotor Scout:** This is a militarized version of the basic VIP transport described in the *Player’s Manual*. It incorporates advanced sensors (*Sensor Range:* 200 km + 2) and a 25mm autocannon for close defense (50 rounds carried). There are two scouts in each gunship platoon and one scout in each infantry platoon. In addition, the battalion headquarters company contains a six-aircraft scout platoon and a two-aircraft command section. Each company commander rides in an



AG-7 scout as well.

**Aerofabrique Dragon IIIA Tilt-Rotor Transport:** This is the basic tilt-rotor utility light transport described in the basic game. Each of the three companies of the 1e RIAE contains two 35-man infantry platoons, each carried in two Dragon IIIA's. In addition, battalion headquarters includes a six-aircraft supply platoon and a four-aircraft ambulance section.

### INFANTRY WEAPONS—FRENCH

All French troops, with the exception of the militia and colonial troops, are equipped with the FAM-90 as their basic infantry weapon. A typical squad is built up from a number of "binoms" of two men each. (The standard infantry squad has five binoms, but this can vary considerably.) Each binom has a specific function, usually keyed to a particular weapon or piece of equipment. One member of the binom will operate the key weapon or equipment while the other is armed with an FAM-90 and is responsible for close defense of the key weapon operator. In the squad's command binom the squad leader carries the FAM-90 while his communication specialist operates the up-link communicator. Normally the other binoms of a squad are a sniper binom (one FTE-10 and one FAM-90), a heavy fire binom (one Quin-Darlan Mk 2-A2 PGMP and one FAM-90), an antivehicle binom (one Blindicide-9 launcher and one FAM-90), and an air defense binom (one Martel missile launcher and one FAM-90). Most squads on Aurore have replaced the Martel with an extra FAM-90, and understrength units have almost universally disbanded their air defense binom due to the lack of Kafer aircraft.

Although organized similarly, militia units are not nearly so well equipped. The standard assault rifle is the Wu-Beijing Type-49, captured in large numbers during the Central Asian War. Antivehicle binoms use the Blindicide-3 when available, but, on the average, there are only enough launchers to equip one binom per platoon. The other antivehicle binoms are equipped with 30mm grenade launchers (similar in performance to the GW-12 described in the *Player's Manual*) with high-explosive armor-piercing grenades. The sniper binom is equipped with FTE-10s when available, but, again, only about one binom per platoon has one. The others make do with civilian hunting rifles, the most common being the Rockwell Twelve-Eighty-One Magnum. The heavy-fire binom uses captured Manchurian equipment. About one binom per platoon has a Type 1 High-Energy Assault Gun while the others use the Wu-Beijing Type 381 Machinegun. Given the style of fighting experienced on Aurore, the machinegun is often the

weapon of choice. No militia squad on Aurore includes an air defense binom.

Colonial troops are organized similarly, but the standard assault rifle is the now-obsolete FAA-73. All antivehicle binoms have the Blindicide-3; all sniper binoms have the FTE-10; and all heavy-fire binoms have the Quin-Darlan Mk 2-A2. All air defense binoms have been reorganized as autofire binoms with captured Manchurian Wu-Beijing Type 381 machineguns. The FAA-73 has never been described, and statistics for it are below.

One uniquely French weapon in use on Aurore is the CLP-1A field-mounted plasma gun. The CLP-1A was the first field-mounted plasma gun to enter service with any country. It incorporated a large and fairly involved cruciform mount to allow stable rapid fire engagement of targets. While this certainly enabled it to deliver rapid and accurate fire for a weapon of this type, its mobility was so low as to render it virtually immobile on the battlefield once emplaced. It has since been withdrawn from front-line service but is often found in static roles guarding fixed installations, and it is in this role that it is often encountered in French service on Aurore. Large numbers of CLP-1A's were also sold on the open market and have been used as the basis of a number of light vehicle armament upgrades. Statistics for the CLP-1A field mount are listed below.

#### FAA-73 (Fusil Automatique d'Assault—22739):

Type: 7.5 mm conventional assault rifle Country: France Weight (empty): 3 kg Length: 83 cm (Bulk=2) Action: Single shots or bursts Ammunition: 7.5×40mm fixed cartridge ball Muzzle Velocity: 910 mps Magazine: 25 rounds Magazine Weight: 0.5 kg ROF: 2 Aimed Fire Range: 800 m Area Fire Burst: 10 (AFV=1) Area Fire Range: 600 m DP Value: 0.7 Price: Lv510 (Lv2 for 60 rounds)

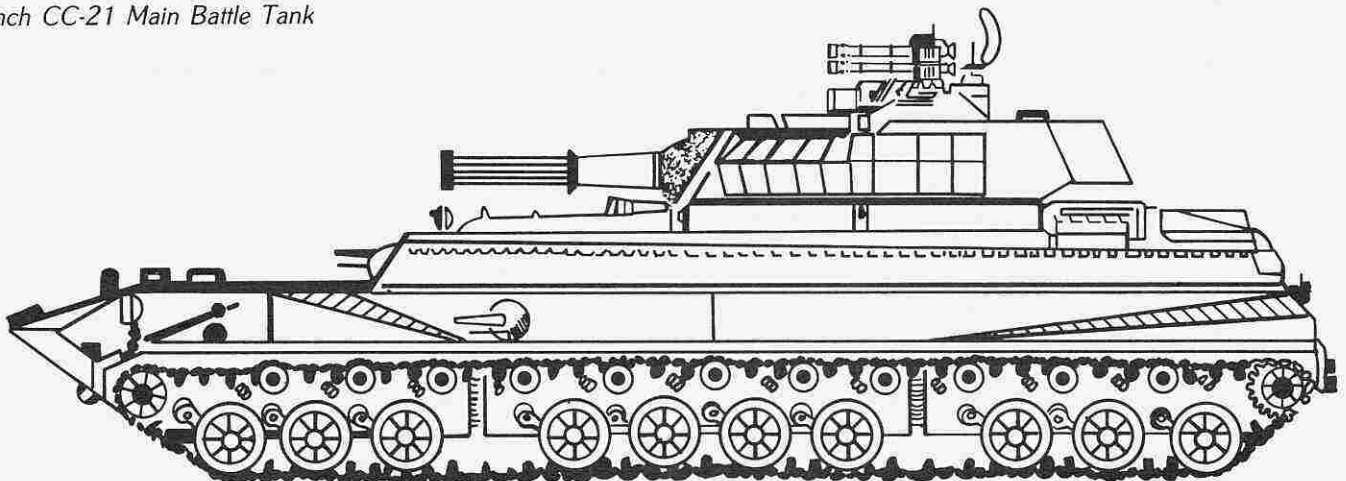
#### CLP-1A (Cannon Legere Pyrotechnique-1A):

Type: Field-mounted 175 megawatt plasma gun Country: France Weight (empty): 344 kg Length (gun tube only): 274 cm Action: Single shot Ammunition: 41×77mm 175 megawatt photonic core plaser cell Ammunition Weight: 3.5 kg Magazine: 10-cell clip fed into overhead hopper Magazine Weight: 38 kg ROF: 5 Aimed Fire Range: 1600 m DP Value: As tamped explosion (EP=15) Price: Lv9300 (Lv500 for disposable 10-cell clip)

### INFANTRY WEAPONS—UKRAINIAN

Ukrainian guerrilla fighters use a wide variety of civilian and surplus military weapons. Standard-issue Ukrainian weapons include the SG-77 assault rifle, Mueller-Rivera F-19 laser sniper

French CC-21 Main Battle Tank



weapon, GW-12 grenade launcher, Blindicide-3 antivehicle missile, and Martel air defense missile.

**M-19 Point Destruction Weapon:** Although technically a field-mount weapon, the M-19 can be fired by a single gunner using the weapon's integral monopod. The weapon system consists of a firing unit (sight, trigger, and monopod) and a 375 megawatt photonic core plaser cell which is attached to the back of the firing unit. Once fired, the expended cell is discarded and another attached in its place. Although capable of medium-range fire, the M-19 is considered a close-in defense weapon against vehicles since the pronounced flash and back-blast will invariably expose the gunner's position.

*Type:* Field-mounted 375 megawatt plasma gun *Country:* USA *Weight (empty):* 14 kg *Length (exclusive of plaser cell):* 163 cm *Length (with plaser cell):* 224 cm (Bulk=9) *Action:* Single shot *Ammunition:* 270×844mm 375 megawatt photonic core plaser cell *Ammunition Weight:* 15 kg *Magazine:* 1 cell attached to rear of weapon *ROF:* 1 *Aimed Fire Range:* 1200 m *DP Value:* As tamped explosion (EP=40) *Price:* Lv2200 (Lv650 per disposable cell)

## INFANTRY WEAPONS—TANSTA AFL

Between the militia and the mercenary troopers of the TFL, virtually any weapon of any human nation can be found somewhere in service in Tansta afl.

## INFANTRY WEAPONS—KA FER

If the Kafers have a precise organization, or standard equipment it has thus far eluded human understanding. It may be that such tables of organization and equipment exist but have become meaningless on Aurore due to the massive casualties and disorganization suffered by Kafer forces. Kafer units appear to be large bands of infantry armed with "thud gun" assault rifles. Each such band will have a small number of officers and a similar number of snipers armed with laser rifles. The snipers seem to exercise some authority over troops in some circumstances, but do not correspond directly to human NCOs as they often operate independently of the main body and in small groups exclusively formed from snipers and perhaps an officer. Officers are universally armed with heavy caliber revolvers. Most large parties of Kafers carry a number of robot missile launchers (nicknamed "Snapfires" by humans) with them which they emplace and carefully camouflage in seemingly random areas. Although a Kafer unit does not carry any antivehicle missiles with it, it attempts to draw hostile vehicles into ambush sites where Snapfires have previously been emplaced. Although Snapfires normally will only engage aircraft, Kafer officers apparently have the ability to override this by radio and can direct them to engage any vehicle-sized target. On at least two occasions Snapfires have been known to engage BH-21 Combat Walkers, but only when Kafer infantry was present nearby.

**"Horse Pistol:"** An extremely rugged, heavy revolver.

*Type:* 14.5mm revolver *Weight:* 1.3 kg (Bulk=0) *Length:* 31 cm *Action:* Single shots *Ammunition:* 14.1×31mm fixed-cartridge ball *Muzzle Velocity:* 490 mps *Magazine:* 6-round cylinder *Weight of 6 rounds:* 0.2 kg *ROF:* 5 *Aimed Fire Range:* 80 m *Area Fire Burst:* 3 rounds (AFV=0.25) *Area Fire Range:* 40 m *DP Value:* 0.9

**"Thud Gun:"** An assault rifle/grenade launcher similar in some respects to the German SK-19.

*Type:* 12.1mm assault rifle with integral 27.2mm grenade launcher *Weight (empty):* 6.5 kg *Length:* 76.2 cm (Bulk=2) *Action:* Single shot or burst *Ammunition:* 12.1×31mm HEAP *Muzzle Velocity:* 610 mps *Magazine:* 66-round box magazine

*Magazine Weight:* 2 kg *ROF:* 2 *Aimed Fire Range:* 500 m *Area Fire Burst:* 10 (AFV=1.5) *Area Fire Range:* 300 m *DP Value:* 1.1

*Type:* 27.2mm grenade launcher *Muzzle Velocity:* 375 mps *Magazine:* 9-round tubular magazine *ROF:* 2 *Aimed Fire Range:* 600 m *DP Value:* As explosion (EP=4)

**"Flashlight:"** A Kafer laser rifle with integral grenade launcher.

*Type:* 75-01 laser rifle with integral 27.2mm grenade launcher *Weight (empty):* 5 kg *Length:* 76.2cm (Bulk=2) *Action:* Single shot *Pulse Energy:* 0.7 mj *Muzzle Velocity:* c *Magazine:* A Kafer power cell with energy for 12 pulses. *Magazine Weight:* 1.8 kg *ROF:* 5 *Aimed Fire Range:* 1300 m *DP Value:* 2

*Type:* 27.2mm grenade launcher *Muzzle Velocity:* 375 mps *Magazine:* 9-round tubular magazine *ROF:* 2 *Aimed Fire Range:* 600 m *DP Value:* As explosion (EP=4)

**"Beamer:"** A vehicle-mounted, high-energy plasma gun.

*Type:* 40 megawatt vehicle-mounted plasma gun *Action:* Single shot *Ammunition:* Charged cells, 13.3×28.3mm, similar to Ter-ran photonic core plasma cells, but more compact *Ammunition Weight:* 0.2kg *Magazine:* 100 cells in detachable cassette *ROF:* 1 *Aimed Fire Range:* 200 m *DP Value:* As tamped explosion (EP=5)

**"Snapfire:"** A remote antivehicle missile.

*Type:* Remote emplaced air defense and antivehicle missile launcher *Launcher Weight:* 13 kg *Missile Weight:* 17 kg *Range:* 9000 m *Guidance:* Automatic Homing *Value:* 25 *Attack Angle:* Direct *Damage:* EP=6

**Hand Grenade:** A general-purpose explosive hand grenade. *Weight:* 0.4 kg *DP Value:* As explosion (EP=3)

## COMBAT ARMOR

The rules for personal armor use in the basic game are unclear, and the armor values listed are incorrect. The following rules cover both armor and close range damage, and should be used in place of those in the *Player's Manual*. These will be corrected in the *Player's Manual* in a later edition.

**Personal Armor:** There are three types of personal armor: nonrigid, rigid, and inertial. Nonrigid armor is made up of flexible material which is extremely tough and resists puncture by a bullet or energy beam. Since it is flexible, it does not inhibit movement by the wearer to the extent that rigid armor does. Rigid armor is made up of solid pieces of armor, such as a breastplate, and is more restrictive of movement. Inertial armor is flexible like nonrigid armor but becomes very rigid when struck by a fast-moving projectile (such as a bullet or piece of shrapnel). The difference between nonrigid, rigid, and inertial armor is only important when resolving blunt trauma injuries. In the case of normal damage, the armor value of the armor is subtracted from the DP value of the round, and the difference is used to determine the seriousness of the wound, as explained in the basic game rules.

**Nonpenetrating Kinetic Energy Rounds:** A kinetic energy round which has a DPV less than that of the armor will not penetrate but instead will cause either blunt trauma or stun damage. If the round hits rigid or inertial armor, it inflicts stun damage; if the round hits nonrigid armor, it inflicts blunt trauma damage. In all cases half of the armor value is subtracted from the round's DP value, and the potential seriousness of the wound is reduced one level.

**Close-Range Fire:** All fire combat weapons have their DP value doubled when firing at a target within close range.

**Armor Listing:** The following corrected armor values supersede those listed in the basic game's *Player's Manual*.

Helmet: 1

High-Threat Combat Helmet: 2

Steel Helmet: 0.2  
 Chainmail Vest: 0.1  
 Rigid Breastplate: 1  
 Nonrigid Vest: 0.6  
 Inertial Armor Vest: 0.8  
 Full-body Nonrigid Armor: 0.3  
 Full-body Inertial Armor: 0.4  
 Full-body Combat Armor: 1  
 BH-21 Combat Walker: 8  
 Kz-7 Combat Walker: 10

The following additional listings cover the specific types of combat armor in use on Aurore.

## FRANCE

Virtually all French combat troops wear the standard blue-colored ballistic fatigues with combat boots and knee protectors. This is a full-body nonrigid suit identical to that listed above. The reinforced boots and knee protectors protect the lower legs (hit locations 7 and 8) and count as rigid armor with a value of 0.6.

Most front-line infantry also wear the Cuirasse De Combat, a rigid breastplate covering the entire torso, with an armor value of 1.2.

Both the 2297-pattern and 2245-pattern helmets (so called for their year of introduction) are in use with combat troops. The 2245-pattern has an armor value of 1 while the 2297-pattern has an armor value of 2.

At one time the French manufactured a sort of half-torso rigid breastplate called vedette half-armor. Vedette half-armor is now widely available as surplus and is still used by some militia units. Specifications are: *Nation: France Weight: 2 kg Area Protected:*

*Upper torso (hit location 2) Armor Value: 1 Initiative Penalty: None Price: Lv20.*

The French have two battalions of BH-21 Combat Walkers deployed on Aurore: the 1st Battalion of the 4th Foreign Legion Infantry Regiment and the 1st Battalion of the 8th Marine Parachute Regiment. The smallest walker unit is the binom, which includes two soldiers trained to live, work, and fight together. Two binoms comprise a section (which includes four walkers). One binom is commanded by the section leader, a sergeant, while, on the other hand, the other binom is commanded by the assistant section leader, a corporal. Two sections and a command binom (including a lieutenant and a senior sergeant) make up a platoon. A total of two platoons and a command section (captain, adjutant, sergeant major, and guard) make up a company. Each of the two battalions on Aurore has four such companies plus a battalion headquarters section, for a grand total of 100 walkers each. The battalions also have significant transport, supply, and maintenance assets; a number of additional machines are usually held in the battalions' maintenance companies.

## UKRAINE

Ukrainian ballistic fatigues are identical to the full-body nonrigid suit described above. The Ukrainian helmet is a standard helmet with an armor value of 1.

## TANSTAAFL

Tanstaafl troops use a variety of surplus equipment. However, the most widely used combination consists of a standard set of ballistic fatigues worn with French surplus vedette half-armor and a 2245-pattern helmet.

## Guerrin-Roussette AG-7 Tilt-Rotor Scout

