Sharkfolk

FIERCE, POWERFUL, AN' HUNGRY; THAT'S HOW I'D

describe one o' them Sharkfolk. I'd seen one aboard the Queen's Cutlass. She was all teeth and fins, with a tail that could snap me in 'alf! I n'er seen a lass eat as much as she did; practically ate all the fish in the larder 'erself! Wouldn't want anyone else at me back in a tustle, though. I wager she had as many kills with those teeth o' hers as she did her cutlass.

> - Gimble, Notes from a Treasure Hunter

Deep below the rolling waves resides an ancient race of powerful predators. Though they call themselves the Carchari, the land-locked races of the world know them better as the Sharkfolk. Content to leave the political happenings of the topside world, they rove the seas ever in search of prey.

APEX PREDATORS

Sharkfolk are fearsome ocean-dwellers and near-perfect hunters. The mighty fin that sprouts from between their shoulders carves through the water as their powerful tail catapults them toward their prey. Each has a massive mouth filled with multiple rows of jagged teeth, able to take a chunk out of anything, or anyone, foolish enough to get in the way. Their skin is also extremely tough, composed of small, rough scales that cover their bodies like chainmail. This offers them more protection than softer-skinned races.

Sharkfolk vary in appearance as much as their primal cousins do; some having the stripes and wide mouths of a tiger shark, others with the strange snouts of hammerheads, and others still bearing the powerful jaws of a great white. Despite coming in this wide range of shapes, sizes, and colors, all share a fierce predatory instinct and thrill for the hunt.

RAIDERS AND ADVENTURERS

The one unifying characteristic that all Sharkfolk share is the innate, animalistic thrill of chasing prey. Many seek to indulge in this thrill by taking up the life of raiders or pirates. But prey need not be food or material gain; others seek inner solitude and long for a closer relationship to the ocean and nature as a whole, ever to wander the vast seas in quests of self discovery. And still others take to the land, living in the settlements of friendly races, where their innate abilities can be used for profit. Even these Sharkfolk, however, yearn for the sea, a feeling comparable to homesickness.

Sharkfolk rarely remain in large groups of their own kind. Few have familial connections with their kin, as parents do not stick around after their young are born. This matters little, as Sharkfolk pups emerge fully developed and ready to fend for themselves. This practice of solitude has, in many ways, led to the decline of their kind as young are left to their own devices and adults rarely come together to mate.

Despite the lack of an organized society, Sharkfolk do sometimes come together in small hunting groups called shoals. These shoals are often short-lived, giving the members enough time to complete some goal unobtainable by a single individual. Though rare, a Sharkfolk may remain with its companions for extended periods, often due to the benefits that numbers can provide. Sharkfolk are known to form strong relationships with others they respect, often gained by a showing of equal strength, skill, or wit. Indeed, once one has earned the respect and trust of a Sharkfolk, they never need fear becoming the next meal to pass into their wicked maws.

Background Credit: Sergey Zabelin www.artstation.com/sergejzabelin Sharkfolk Race v1.2 by Jeff "Hageshii01" Venancio and Daniel "Rottgut" Justice

A MISUNDERSTOOD PEOPLE

Many have come to fear the Carchari, leading to a deeply ingrained prejudice against their kind among most civilized peoples. In their view, the "Sharkmen" are nothing but a race of pirates. Although it is true that this lifestyle suits many of their kind, the notion that all Sharkfolk indulge in the life of thievery and slaughter is inaccurate and misplaced.

Regardless, the stigma remains, much to the detriment of innocent Sharkfolk trying to live a life of peace. "Shark Hunts" are not uncommon near the coast, where bands of angry townsfolk drive out individual Sharkfolk from their towns, fearing "the mindless Fin-folk's thirst for blood." To walk among the land as a Carchari is to carry a heavy burden, and to shoulder a tainted name.

SHARKFOLK NAMES

Given the lack of family ties, Sharkfolk do not hold any type of surname. Names are chosen by the individual, usually after a significant period of time surviving by themselves and the soul-searching that goes along with it. A name could be in the Sharkfolk's native Aquan, the individual particularly proud of their Carchari heritage. Others who find themselves working closely with other races might choose a name in Common. Whatever is choosen, a name usually has special meaning to the Sharkfolk in question, speaking to their outlook on life, preferred hunting strategy, or perhaps to strike fear in their enemies.

Aquan Names. Ahti, Agwe, Boann, Daucina, Hoyau, Imoogi, Kua, Kane'apua, Keali'ikau, Kokala, Lir, Lotan, Marduk, Mazu, Nommos, Rongomai, Seguana, Vedenemo

Common Names. Anchor, Bilge, Breach, Brutus, Chum, Frenzy, Gill, Goliath, Hammer, Hook, Jaws, Jetsam, Kraken, Mako, Ripper, Scar, Sinker, Slash, Spike, Thresh, White

SHARKFOLK TRAITS

Your sharkfolk character has the following racial traits. Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score increases by

1, and your Constitution score increases by 2.

Age. Sharkfolk reach full maturity around age 25, and usually live less than a century.

Alignment. Sharkfolk lean towards chaotic alignments, owing to their kill-or-be-killed upbringing and natural desire for fast-paced adventure.

Size. Sharkfolk are slightly taller and bulkier than humans, with more dense musculature. Your size is Medium.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 30 feet, and you have a swimming speed of 30 feet.

Amphibious. You can breathe air and water.

Bite. Your toothed maw is a natural weapon, which you can use to make unarmed strikes. If you hit with it, you deal piercing damage equal to 1d6 + your Strength modifier, instead of the bludgeoning damage normal for an unarmed strike.

Blood Frenzy. You have advantage on a single melee attack roll you make against a creature that doesn't have all of its hit points. Once you use this trait against a creature, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

Electroreceptors. You have proficiency in the Perception skill.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Common and Aquan.