## Book of NEROIC Races advanced merfolk



JON BRAZER ENTERPRISES

# heroic Races advanced merfolk





CREDITS

Author Rachel Ventura **Cover Artist** Keith Curtis, Luis Salas Lastra

**Editor** Kevin Morris

**Interior Art** Brian Brinlee, Keith Curtis, Luis Salas Lastra

**President** Dale C. McCoy, Jr.

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## Introduction

In your hands is the fifth in a series of releases that will ultimately become the **Book of Heroic Races**: **Advanced Compendium**. This book is being designed for those who want to play something beyond those races included in the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook* which encompass over 30 years' worth of thoroughly covered ground. It is for those who, like myself, were introduced to fantasy by something other than *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. With it, we hope to bring some exciting new elements to your game.

To say merfolk were a controversial choice for inclusion in the Advanced Races series is understating the matter. Yet, each concern I have heard is one of the exact reasons why they should be included. From a source of inspiration standpoint, most stories focus on a mermaid with incredibly few being male and almost all of them are white. So, this creates an opportunity to present some diversity. Few gamers plays underwater adventures, but that could be because there is almost no support for underwater adventures and perhaps more people would play them if more support existed.

Additionally, had we decided not to include merfolk, we never would have gotten the chance to work with Rachel Ventura. If you are unfamiliar with her name, it is understandable. She has been with gaming companies for a while, but never as a writer. She currently is the Business Director of Legendary Games and before that was the Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Frog God Games. She also serves as the Treasurer for the RPG Creators Relief Fund, a nonprofit charity for game designers in need. She started gaming at age 6, a younger age than many of the gamers I know. Top all that off with a degree in Mathematics, and you have a resume that few others can top. Only recently did she start writing. Be sure to check out her work with TPK Games and Adventure A Week. You won't be disappointed.

The merfolk people are something akin to artists and scientists in a fantasy world. They are a curious people, always looking to explore new places and discover new kinds of life. This natural curiosity lends itself to everything from crafting new pieces of music to mixing together new alchemical materials. Bards and magi, alchemists and cryptics, merfolk desire to uncover hidden secrets and unlock the mysteries of the world around them. Be sure to check out the cyraniel archetype for a bard character.

If gadgetry and gear is more your speed, check out the equipment and magic item sections. Merfolk living in the ocean require a substantial amount of new mundane items. Between three different kinds of armor, a new weapon, and many types of plant life that grant bonuses to skill checks and saving throws, you will find something new for your character to try out. Ever wanted to throw an ink cloud grenade? Since they only cost 75 gold, why not give it a try? You can find them among the other magic items towards the end.

As Rachel is the first woman author to be published in the *Book of Heroic Races: Advanced Series*, I want to reiterate that we are looking for authors beyond caucasian men. We at Jon Brazer Enterprises believe in diversity and want authors from all walks of life. Whether this would be your first time or your 100th time writing, we are always looking for people willing write from the heart for a game they love. Contact us on Facebook, Twitter, over at the Paizo messageboards or another forum and let us know that you want to write for us.

Thank you for downloading **Advanced Merfolk**. We hope you enjoy it as much as we enjoyed working on it.

Dale C. McCoy, Jr. President, Jon Brazer Enterprises June 2015

## How to Use

This book presents a number of new options you can use to create catfolk characters for your game. However, your game master may choose to alter or disregard portions of this book, so it is best to ask him or her first before utilizing the options presented herein.

The classes and options presented here can be found in the following books:

**Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook:** barbarian, bard, cleric, druid, fighter, monk, paladin, ranger, rogue, sorcerer, wizard

**Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Advanced Players Guide (**<sup>APG</sup>**):** alchemist, antipaladin, cavalier, inquisitor, oracle, summoner, witch

**Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Ultimate Magic** (<sup>UM</sup>): magus

Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Ultimate Combat (<sup>uc</sup>): gunslinger, ninja, samurai

**Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Advanced Race Guide (**ARG): no new classes

Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Ultimate Equipment (UE): no new classes

**Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Advanced Class Guide (**<sup>ACG</sup>**):** arcanist, bloodrager, brawler, hunter, investigator, shaman, skald, slayer, swashbuckler, warpriest

**Dreamscarred Press' Ultimate Psionics (**<sup>UP</sup>**)**: aegis, cryptic, dread, marksman, psion, psychic warrior, soulknife, tactician, vitalist, wilder

**Rogue Genius Games' Genius Guide to the Time Thief**: time thief.

## The Rise of Alchemy

I wasn't always an investigator, but I was always curious, and that curiosity has taken me far in life. Although, for merfolk, that isn't saying too much, as we all have a certain amount of inquisitiveness. My desire for knowledge, however, took me to the deep depths, to the surface, and beyond. See, I had just finished my initial training. Being naturally gifted in stealth and strength, many of us become guards and assassins for the kingdom. It is essential that we keep our seas safe. You wouldn't believe the intruders we receive, not to mention the pollution and overfishing. We merfolk serve as the guardians of the seas, and we must strive for balance in all areas to maintain harmony.

Growing up, we are told stories of how the non-merfolk have destroyed their lands with war and greed. We take efforts to avoid such things while keeping those who might bring them to our waters at bay. Several non-merfolk have come to our territories looking for more than their own, whether it be territory or treasure, but they have always been met with deadly and sometimes silent persecution as they are dragged to their watery deaths. Our history has taught us well, so to avoid further conflict, we choose to discard our intruders by means of quiet disappearance, both from our waters and shorelines. We have practiced such means of disposal for all of our history, which does create a demand for manpower of certain skills, but you can find all types in our booming societies

While training to become assassins, we participated in many activities to further our skills. One of my favorite exercises involved patrolling some of the deepest waters. We often would find strange creatures feeding on the weak. We would practice our quick strikes on these foul monsters and train our bodies to become weapons. One particular time, we headed out in groups of three. Our group included myself, Kevyoon, and two of my pals, Gestic and Pulmet, that I had grown up with since we were merpups.

Gestic was the largest of us. His tail shone bright as silver in the sun but looked a deep black in the dark water. He was raised by his three brothers, who made him into quite the athlete. They went out weekly to wrestle monsters and hunt. As strong as his body was, he was gentle and kind to his friends. He often struggled in training, especially when practicing stealth. But he really shined in exercises like this, as his strength and quickness left prey unaware and unprepared.

Pulmet. A dutiful little anchovy—or so we all joked. Following orders was what he did best. He would have made for a better bard indeed, especially being such a music aficionado, but alas, he followed Gestic and I into the trade when our name day came. I often feel sorry for him, but nothing seems to make him happier than being with friends. Besides, he is quite good at following orders, and that has its benefits. As long as he has procedure to follow, he usually does quite well. It's the thinking on his feet and bluffing that he struggles with the most.

Pulmet's tail is such a deep blue that it is almost black. But in the sun, the brilliance of the blue shines against the black in his scales and is almost hypnotic. I have seen so few merfolk with tails as these. Rumors are his bloodline is that of the shark. Speaking of tails, you've noticed mine, I'm sure. This fiery red tail is one of my pride and joys. Although I have fun showing it off amongst friends, I prefer my camouflage algae brown while working.

Getting back to my story, it was on this particular trip to the sea floor when we were ambushed. A giant jellyfish laid waiting in these particularly cold waters. It was quiet, oh so quiet. We had even been on our guard. That we missed it was simply baffling. A shadow engulfed us on either side, and before we knew what was happening, it had all three of us in its tentacles. Gestic raised his side weapon quickly and sliced his way through the tentacle with shear force. He let out a powerful grunt as he pushed his way past the other tentacles on his way toward freedom. Pulmet was not as fortunate, being grabbed with an inner tentacle. The large thick tentacle let out a powerful sting that shocked through him. He pulsed slightly with each movement of the jellyfish—the poison had already started to take effect.

I struggled mightily as each sting coursed down my own spine. I clenched my teeth. My weapon had been knocked out of my hand, and I had little leverage against the beast. I twisted my upper torso, and the creature tightened around it, freeing my tail enough to make a powerful push away from it. But, as soon as I untangled myself from one tentacle I was wrapped in another. Like most merfolk, I was unarmored, but my skin helped keep most of the poison from seeping in. As I continued to struggle, I saw Gestic speed in, his fierce sword moving more quickly through the water than mine ever could. He sliced into another tentacle, freeing Pulmet, whose body floated limp in the water. Gestic slipped an arm around him and quickly swam out of evesight. Only when I noticed that I had stopped struggling did I realize that I had been staring. The poison had finally started to take hold. I was quickly losing this battle. I started to panic, and my body responded drunkenly to the toxins.

Just then I saw a strange, intensely warming light. It felt good. A strange tingling washed over me, and I couldn't look away. I felt drawn to it—I wanted it, needed to be near it. My vision began to blur just as I saw a strange merfolk in the shadow of the light. Then, everything went black.

I woke up to the face of an angufolk—a subrace rarely seen—named Sumar. Rumors have it that their numbers are dwindling from pollution, but I think they simply stay hidden because of their horrific appearance. Angufolk are closer to fish than human, with not only oversized mouths and eyes that protrude horrifically from their faces, but also prehistoric lighted antennae and fins at their sides.

Sumar enlightened me with the fantastic battle story of how he saved me and the other two from the jellyfish. He had lured the jellyfish toward a shallow crack in the rocks. Once the jellyfish was lodged between two rocks, he sliced me free. The jellyfish contorted its body quickly to free itself from the rocks just in time for Sumar to plunge his sword into the head of the creature, finally killing it. Then, with the help of Gestic, he removed the poison from Pulmet and myself. Sumar was such an amazing storyteller that we begged him to share more of his adventures, which were filled with excitement. His best story concerned a sunken pirate ship not far from the northern shores and how he outsmarted the giant octopus that guarded it so that he could get a look inside. He described strange orb-like containers, glowing treasure, and odd relics. Although he was disappointed to find little food and few weapons since Angufolk have little need for treasure, he happily told us the way to the ship. That night, the three of us headed off to explore the ruins of the pirate ship.

Following Sumar's directions exactly, we found it within an hour. The ship was mostly covered in sand, which kept its location hidden from the unmindful. The rusted grates on the upper deck of the ship allowed entrance to the hull. It was here that we found the treasure, just as he explained: small round containers, all filled with different colored liquids, strange roots, and jars of powders and dried plants in all sizes and colors, not to mention the unique tools.

I immediately became fascinated with these strange items and devices, so I sought out the only human interaction I had developed at that point in my life, a pirate—not just any pirate, but a sexy redheaded elf captain named Silver. From the moment I saw him on the rail of the pirate ship, I fell in love. It wasn't his dashing looks or muscles that caught my attention—although, admittedly, I noticed—but his voice. The confidence and strength in his command of the other crewmen was intoxicating. Such desire I had never before known overwhelmed me. It was easy to get his attention with a few flashes of my flame red tail. The test was on; would I become friend or prey? I should have known a man with such confidence wouldn't need trophies.

He shouted to the crew to look my way. Several rushed to the rail to gawk while others hooted and hollered. I took off in a playful swim and they gave chase. The boat tested its maneuvering around the sharp rocks to keep up. Once he had solidly proven himself a worthy seaman, I forfeited the game and invited them to come join me in the waters. His crew was well-mannered and surprisingly refined for pirates. We spent hours talking and swimming. We visited for days, and then months, until after years we had become close friends. Silver and I may have become close but a relationship beyond friendship would have never lasted. This urge for more devastated me. Although Silver spent much time at sea I could not join him for long periods of time on land. In addition, my vow to protect the kingdom kept me tied to the sea. So, tragically, a platonic relationship was all we were destined for. After this realization, I spent more time away. The desire was too great and the disappointment too strong.

It had been quite some time since we last spoke. I visited locations I knew he frequented and through allies I was able to track down his location. When I found him, I was so excited about the treasure that I immediately questioned Silver about them, foregoing any greeting. He laughed, joking that it was nice to see me again, too. Finally, after much taunting and joking he gave me the answers I desired—well, at least the ones he knew. His knowledge mostly pertained to the bombs and explosives. He explained how the potions worked but could not identify their properties. Most of the plants and powders were beyond his knowledge, except for the gun powder. Silver told me of an ally who would help me, an alchemist who had done a job with his crew years ago. He was old and rusty, a retired sea dog named Leonel.

It was Leonel who trained me in all the ways of alchemy, and his own work as an investigator piqued my curiosity, given my own training. Our training sessions mostly occurred in caves or ships, so we could experiment with different potions, with an emphasis on devising a way to drink the potions underwater. I started experimenting with different corks that would last in the water—the inner stem of sea bamboo worked best. The plant's fibrous makeup created a chewable cork while the waxy outer edge was perfect to create a waterproof seal, allowing me to drink potions underwater by sucking the cork in, drinking the potion, and swallowing the cork.

I trained for years and became great friends with Leonel. He was my mentor and so much more. He changed my life. This new knowledge began to take the place of the things I had learned in my youth. Over time, my knowledge of alchemy overtook my talents for skullduggery, with our research emphasizing the use of my mind over my body.

Over the years we spent together, Leonel's health began to decline due to his age. When we met for what would be our last visit, I was shocked to hear the depression in his voice, a quivering desperation for more time. He told me that I had learned all he could teach me and that he wanted to spend the remainder of his time alone. I was heartbroken and speechless. Leonel had become like a father figure to me. He had guided me through my young adult years and the pride he had for me shaped my decisions and made me a better mermaid. I cared for him in ways I had never imagined. He left me little choice in saying goodbye as he told me he would not be returning to the sea. It was indeed a disheartened goodbye—it was the first time my heart broke.

Land became my enemy that day. I cursed that I couldn't be with my friend, my mentor, in his loneliest moment. Silver promised to check in on him, and that he did. I continued my research and studies. I became obsessed. By the turn of the season, Silver brought me the news I dreaded: Leonel had passed. I was devastated. Tears streaked down my face and my eyes burned. Silver held me tight. My body went limp in his arms. In that moment, I felt betrayed by my body. Losing my mentor that day and knowing I could not be with the man I love awakened an anger in me. I had been so close to creating a potion to transform my tail into legs for a period of time, so that I could become a land walker. In fact, it was only a few days later that I managed to brew it successfully for the first time, my rage having provided a certain clarity. But the success was bittersweet. I had been too late.

By then I was quite an accomplished investigator. In my grief, I returned home for good. Land held emptiness and desolation for me, a type of betrayal. Instead, I used my new abilities and skills to create some of the most spectacular barriers around the kingdom. I was building these walls to keep others out as much as I was building them to keep me in. I would not be hurt again—an aspiration I would soon learn was foolish, but that is a story for another time. With my skills and talents, I quickly became one of the most important merfolk in the region. Before I knew it, I was training others to do what I had learned, changing the world of the merfolk one potion at a time.

## **Racial Traits**

Physical Description: Merfolk have a human torso, strong, muscular, and toned. Their lower half is either a sturdy singular tail with fins or eight appendages lined with suckers and smooth skin. The lower torso of these merfolk come in a variety of grays, browns, pinks, red and occasionally jet black. A finned merfolk on the other hand often has a tail of scales that vary in hues. Some merfolk have the natural ability to camouflage with their environment while others show off their tail with flashy bright colors and patterns. A few finned merfolk have smooth skin on their tails and they are always black or gray in color. Some deep ocean-dwelling merfolk have more perverse characteristics such as overgrown teeth and blackened eyes. Some rare merfolk still harbor fins along their backbone and appendages like antennas on their head. These merfolk are rare indeed; they are bigger in the

## **Merfolk Racial Traits**

Merfolk have the following racial traits.

**+2 Dexterity, +2 Constitution, +2 Charisma**: Merfolk are graceful, hale, and beautiful.

**Medium:** Merfolk are medium creatures and have no bonuses or penalties due to their size.

**Slow Speed**: Merfolk have a base speed of 5 feet. They have a swim speed of 50 feet.

Aquatic: Merfolk are humanoids with the aquatic subtype.

**Amphibious**: Merfolk are amphibious, but prefer not to spend long periods out of the water.

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**Low-Light Vision**: Merfolk have low-light vision.

**Armored Scales**: Merfolk have a +2 natural armor bonus.

**Legless**: Merfolk have no legs, and cannot be tripped.

**Languages**: Merfolk begin play speaking Common and Aquan. Merfolk with high Intelligence scores can choose from the following: Aboleth, Aklo, Draconic, Elven, and Sylvan. chest and stronger, but due to their appearance are loners. Generally, however, merfolk live in colonies and societies with one another.

**Society:** Merfolk are found in every body of water, and those who live in the same region tend to have similar coloring and traits. Merfolk are a proud race and find much value in art and music. They spend a great deal of time honoring one another in performances and other enjoyable activities. Merfolk are also natural explorers and driven by curiosity, often finding themselves accused of being nosey or worse, of theft. Their grace in the water can be trained to be used on land but only with great concentration and practice. Merfolk are cautious around other races. While capable of becoming great friends with individuals, they are guarded upon first approach.

Alignment and Religion: Although most merfolk have a strong inclination toward neutral alignments, some stray more towards chaotic alignments in their quest for knowledge and power. Since they are tied to the seas, they prefer aquatic deities and have a strong desire to protect nature, often times through the destruction or demise of others.

**Names**: Merfolk names generally have aquatic origins. Family names stem from the region where the first ancestors were born.

*Female Names*: Calypso, Cerulean, Cruis, Halae, Hydra, Orma, Squatina, Triakis

*Male Names*: Alceckii, Cylliidae, Emoterus, Krill, Ling, Rhea, Ulagen, Zeacher

*Family Names*: Antark, Arcad, Atiax, Bari, Doris, Embral, Okai, Scamander

#### **Alternate Racial Traits**

The following alternate racial traits may be selected in place of one or more of the standard racial traits above. Consult your GM before selecting any of these new options.

**Darkvision** Some merfolk favor the lightless depths over shallower waters. Merfolk with this racial trait gain darkvision with a range of 60 feet and light sensitivity. This racial trait replaces low-light vision.

**Insatiable Curiosity** Some merfolk are naturally inquisitive about shallow waters, abysmal depths, undersea caves, ancient wrecks, the open sky, and even the land. They gain a +4 bonus on Diplomacy checks to gather information, and Knowledge (history) and Knowledge (local) become class skills for them. If they choose a class that has either of these as class skills, they gain a +2 racial bonus on those skills instead. Merfolk with this racial trait do not have a racial bonus to their Constitution score.

**Seasinger** The beautiful voices of the merfolk are legendary. A merfolk with this trait gains a +2 racial bonus on Perform (sing) checks and a +1 racial bonus to the save

DCs of language-dependent spells. This racial trait replaces low-light vision.

**Siren** A few merfolk call to young sailors, singing them to their doom. Others can bewitch men to be their slaves. Merfolk with this trait add a +1 to their caster level when casting spells of the charm subschool, as well add +1 to the saving throws DCs for their spells and spell-like abilities of the enchantment school. In addition, merfolk with a Charisma score of 15 or higher gain the following spell-like ability (the caster level is equal to the user's character level): 1/day—*charm person*. This racial trait replaces armored scales.

**Strongtail** A few merfolk have broad, strong tails that are more suited for land travel than the typical merfolk tail. Merfolk with this racial trait have a land speed of 15 feet and a swim speed of 30 feet.

**Walk the Land** A few merfolk have the rare supernatural ability to take the form of a human, allowing them to walk on land. The form's appearance is static and cannot be changed. The merfolk gains a +10 racial bonus on Disguise checks made to appear as a human. Changing its shape is a standard action. This trait otherwise functions as *alter self*, save that the merfolk does not adjust its ability scores. This racial trait replaces armored scales. While in human form, a merfolk loses the legless racial trait and has a base speed of 30 feet.

#### **Racial Subtypes**

You can combine various alternate racial traits above to create subraces or variant races, such as the following:

#### Angufolk

Angufolk are a subrace that dwells in the deepest depth of the water. Considered more fish than human, they are unpleasant to look at. They have an oversized mouth with shark-tearing teeth and gigantic eyes that allow them to see deep into the darkness. They have fins along the sides of their lower backs and a lighted antenna that extends from their neck up over their heads, which they use as a lure to draw in creatures both to attack and to eat. They have the ability to turn the light off which gives them a certain advantage thanks to their darkvision.

## Angufolk, The Fishers – Aberrant Merfolk (The Sea is Life)

Except as noted below, the Angufolk are treated as merfolk.

+2 Constitution, +2 Wisdom, -2 Charisma: Angufolk are heardy creatures that can withstand the pressures of the deep sea and perceive their prey in the great dark, but they lack a forceful personality.

Type: Angufolk are aberrations with the aquatic subtype.

**Darkvision**: Angufolk have darkvision with a range of 60 feet.

**Bite**: Angufolk have long sharp teeth, granting a bite attack. This is a primary natural attack that deals 1d4 points of piercing damage.

**Deep Dwellers**: Angufolk do not take pressure damage from being in very deep water, nor do they take the nonlethal damage from hypothermia or exposure.

**Lighted Lure:** Angufolk are immune to light-based blindness and dazzle effects and are treated as one level higher when determining the effects of any light based spells or effects they cast (including spell-like and supernatural abilities). Angufolk with a Wisdom score of 10 or higher gain the following spell-like ability: at will—*light*.

**Water Dependency**: Since Angufolk are from deep waters, exploration on shore wears on them. They take 1 point of Constitution damage after every hour out of the water.

**Languages**: Angufolk begin play speaking Aquan. Angufolk with high Intelligence scores can choose from the following: Aboleth, Aklo, Common, Draconic, and Undercommon.

*Replaced Traits*: Angufolk merfolk lose the following racial traits: humanoid type, amphibious, armored scales, legless, low-light vision

#### Octopi

Octopi merfolk are a subrace with high Intelligence. Like normal merfolk, they resemble humans from the waist up, but their lower torso is comprised of eight strong tentacles not unlike those of an octopus. These tentacles have suction cups and can be used to grapple prey. Additionally, octopi merfolk have the ability to release ink clouds that aid in their defense and can feel the vibrations in the water around them.

Octopi merfolk gain the following racial traits in addition to the merfolk racial traits, except those listed under replaced traits. +2 Dexterity, +2 Constitution: Octopi are graceful and hale like most merfolk but lack their enchanting beauty.

**Base Speed**: Octopi merfolk have a base speed of 15 feet. They have a swim speed of 30 feet.

**Type**: Octopi are monstrous humanoids with the aquatic subtype.

**Darkvision**: Octopi have darkvision with a range of 60 feet.

**Watersense**: Octopi can sense vibrations in the water, granting them blindsight to a range of 30 feet against creatures that are touching the same body of water.

**Octopod**: Octopi merfolk gain a +12 racial bonus to CMD against overrun and trip attempts.

**Ink Cloud (Ex)**: One per day, an octopi merfolk can release an ink cloud. Treat this as an underwater *obscuring mist* using the octopi merfolk's character level as her caster level.

**Camouflage**: Three times per day, an octopi merfolk can adjust the color of her body to blend in with her surroundings, granting a +4 racial bonus to Stealth checks. The octopi merfolk can make Stealth checks without cover or concealment when using this ability, but cannot move more than 5 feet per round

*Replaced Traits*: Octopi merfolk lose the following racial traits: humanoid type, armored scales, legless, low-light vision

#### **Society and Lands**

**Aging and Death:** Merfolks age similarly to humans with a life expectancy maxing out just around 110 years. Most merfolk live to 90 or 100.

**Language and Script**: Merfolk speak Aquan but are also very fluent in the Common tongue, with their dialects varying by location, as many merfolk spy on and otherwise

Gender	Base Height	<b>Base Weight</b>	Modifier	Multiplier
Male	5 ft. 10 in.	143 lbs.	+2d10	x5 lbs.
Female	5 ft. 8 in.	135 lbs.	135 lbs. +2d10	
	Table 2: R	Random Start	ting Age	
Adulthood	Intuitive	Self	Self Taught	
15 years	+1d4	Server and Server	+1d6	
	Tahle	<b>3: Aging Eff</b>	oota	
	Table	J. Aging En	ects	
Middle Age	Old Age	00	nerable	Max Age

## Table 1: Height/Weight Table

observe land-walkers. They also learn from their books, scripts, and storytelling. Aquan script is derived originally from a mix of the Elven alphabet and an ancient version of common tongue but has evolved its own unique system of writing. Sea elves have also shared their language with the merfolk so it is not uncommon for some merfolk to speak fluent Elven. Most merfolk branch out from Elven though, with those who encounter sea faeries learning Aklo, Sylvan, or both. Merfolk who trade with gillmen are quick to learn Aboleth as well. Of course, because the merfolk are natural investigators due to their curiosity, many find themselves learning ancient tongues from scrolls long lost by the sea. Draconic, being the eldest of the languages, is commonly found on such scrolls, and so many merfolk speak it as well.

**Relations**: Merfolk have interacted with many races over the centuries and possess different relations with each.

*Angufolk*: This subrace generally keeps to itself, avoiding both merfolk and even other angufolk. They are loners and highly suspicious. Most have been trained as deadly

assassins by the single family member that raised them. Once proficient, they are left to their own devices, usually never seeing any family again. However, on rare occasions, they become curious, like all merfolk can, and they will develop short term relationships with other merfolk, usually for breeding purposes. These relationships never last long, as eventually the angufolk will return to the deepest parts of the seas.

*Elves*: Merfolk have shared the waters with many species and races. Sea elves have an unsurpassed relationship with merfolk since they have coexisted peacefully throughout the ages and have learned from one another. This strong trustworthy relationship has flourished to also include other elf varieties. Many elves approach merfolk seeking the guidance and wisdom of the waters. Some merfolk even spend time learning trade skills from the elves on land. Merfolk and elves share a love of many things, including their language, their world, and protecting those they love. It is not uncommon to find merfolk-elven couples, with such pairings occasionally producing merfolk children.

Gillmen and Aboleths: The merfolk's relationship with the gillmen can be a complex one. Although merfolk cohabitate peacefully with other water folk, they mostly pity the gillmen and look down on them because of the myths and rumors of them being controlled by the aboleths. Merfolk have a negative relationship with aboleths because of the destruction and chaos they cause. The control they exhibit over the gillmen has long angered the merfolk, as they abhor slavery. This friction has caused wars over the years between the three races. Even so, some merfolk communities believe that they and the gillmen descend from humans who were saved and transformed by the gods before their homeland sunk. These merfolk help the gillmen, befriending them, and even sometimes living amongst them. Unsubstantiated rumors claim that the two races can even produce offspring together.

Humans: As humans are everywhere, it is no wonder merfolk that have complex relationships with them. Over the centuries, humans-especially pirates, islanders, and fishermen-have sought out merfolk for various reasons, ranging from obsession and desire to hatred and fear. Some humans love merfolk while others hunt them as trophies and kill them indiscriminately. Others over-fish the seas, causing problems for many species, merfolk included. Humans also surpass all other races in their pollution of the seas, giving many merfolk reason to dislike or even target humans. But this distrust is mutual, as humans have uncovered the truth that merfolk build armies and cultivate leagues of assassins beneath the waves. Intelligent and well-read humans know to be cautious of merfolk. But just as there is hate between merfolk and humans, so too is there love and curiosity. Some humans are so enthralled by merfolk and vice versa that they devote their lives to one another, and so sometimes, merfolk and humans fall in

love. If such pairings produce offspring, normally through supernatural means, the children are always merfolk. Since merfolk are collectors of all things, they also make great partners for trade. Humans and merfolk also have a strong and positive trade relationship, despite the unease that sometimes exists between them. Whole ports are devoted to the food, items, and weapons offered by both species, though merfolk never traffic in slaves.

*Octopi*: Octopi foster constructive relationship with others. These strong, tentacled merfolk have few worries since strength, wits, and magic are on their side. Octopi are rare, however, as the can only breed among their own kind. Their versatile skill set places them in high demand and they are often paid very well by merfolk and other races for their unique talents. Octopi are extremely diplomatic and sophisticated, so they are generally well-received socially, and they use these skills to attain what they desire, which in most cases comes down to power.

*Undines*: The undines usually act favorably with other water-dwellers but can also present competition for location and food. Generally merfolk have little conflict with undines, as they build large kingdoms and communities with trained guards and warriors far beneath the water's surface. However, smaller, less developed merfolk clans will occasionally have turf wars with undines on the lands near their waters.

**Adventurers**: Merfolk are naturally experimental, venturesome, and daring. The slightest whisper of an adventure persuades them. Knowledge and relics are often the driving force behind their travels but danger and gold are often persuasive as well.

*Barbarian*: The anger of a merfolk should never be underestimated. While the sea may be cold, it knows the boiling anger of a merfolk angered into fighting.

*Cleric*: Water has long been associated with healing and for good reason. To become a cleric among merfolk is to be honored.

*Investigator*: The sea holds many secrets. Merfolk investigators specialize in uncovering those secrets and sharing their findings with the whole clan.

*Magus*: Forming the backbone of the merfolk cavalry, these mage fighters wield magic to devastate their enemies. Some stories say that Neptan Rao was a magus in his mortal life.

*Slayer*: These sea hunters keep territories safe from intruders and help supply the community with food. Slayers also serve their clan as lone scouts and sentries.

## **Racial Options**

#### **Racial Archetypes**

Merfolk can make use of this archetype.

#### Cyraniel

The cyraniel is a highly charismatic and stunningly beautiful merfolk performer. They have a love of music and use rhythmic tunes to lure, persuade, and control others. They are collectors of the sea, both in items and secrets, and although their knowledge is seldom shared, it is in high demand.

Associated Class: bard

Associated Race: merfolk

**Replaced Abilities**: bardic knowledge, lore master, jackof-all-trades

Modified Abilities: spellcasting

**Diminished Spellcasting**: A cyraniel casts 1 fewer spell of each level than normal. If this reduces the number to 0, she may cast spells of that level only if her Charisma allows bonus spells of that level.

**Inspiration (Ex)**: A cyraniel uses her force of will to influence events around her, augmenting skill checks and ability checks. The cyraniel has an inspiration pool equal to 1/2 her cyraniel level + her Charisma modifier (minimum 1). A cyraniel's inspiration pool refreshes each day, typically after she gets a restful night's sleep. As a free action, she can expend one use of inspiration from her pool to add 1d4 to the result of that check, including any on which she takes 10 or 20. This choice is made after the check is rolled and before the results are revealed. A cyraniel can only use inspiration on any Knowledge, Linguistics, Performance or Spellcraft skill checks without expending a use of inspiration, provided she's trained in the skill.

Inspiration can also be used on attack rolls and saving throws, at the cost of expending two uses of inspiration each time from the cyraniel's pool. In the case of saving throws, using inspiration is an immediate action rather than a free action.

**Investigator Talents (Ex) or (Su)**: At 4th level the cyraniel gains an investigator talent from the list of those available to investigators. She gains an additional investigator talent forevery 4 levels of cyraniel gained after 4th level. The following investigator talent is modified when taken by a cyraniel:

*Amazing Inspiration (Ex):* When using inspiration, the cyraniel rolls a d6 instead of a d4. At 20th level, the cyraniel rolls 2d6 and adds both dice to the result. A cyraniel must be at least 8th level to select this talent.

The following investigator talents complement the cyraniel archetype: applied engineering, eidetic recollection, empathy, expanded inspiration, hidden agendas, item lore, tenacious inspiration, and unconventional inspiration.

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#### **Rac**ial Class Options

#### New Rogue Talents

Merfolk can take the following rogue talents.

Assassin Sink (Ex): A rogue with this talent does not provoke a free attempt to break a grapple when moving through the water or ending its movement in water with a grappled opponent.

#### Sorcerer Bloodline: Aegean

Descendants of the Great Sea King, these merfolk have the ability to call upon their inner nature and harness the power of the oceans. They can cause destruction and chaos but also command those who swim in their waters.

#### Class Skill: Swim

**Bonus Spells**: aqueous orb <sup>APG</sup> (3th), slipstream <sup>APG</sup> (5th), hydraulic torrent <sup>APG</sup> (7th), control water (9th), geyser <sup>APG</sup> (11th), fluid foam <sup>APG</sup> (13th), vortex <sup>APG</sup> (15th), seamantle <sup>APG</sup> (17th), tsunami <sup>APG</sup> (19th)

**Bonus Feats**: Arcane Strike, Dodge, Empower Spell, Elemental Focus, Greater Elemental Focus <sup>APG</sup>, Sorcerous Bloodstrike <sup>UM</sup>, Spell Focus, Greater Spell Focus

**Bloodline Arcana**: Whenever you cast a spell with the water descriptor, your effective caster level is increased by one, and summoned creatures with a swim speed or the aquatic or water subtypes gain a +1 morale bonus on attack and damage rolls.

#### **Bloodline Powers**:

Weight of Waves (Sp): At 1st level, as a standard action, you can control a wave of water that attacks any creature within 100 feet. The wave attacks as if it were you making a slam attack (typically 1d8 damage for a Medium creature), and gains a +1 size bonus on damage rolls. Alternatively, it can perform bull rush, drag, reposition, or trip combat maneuvers, during which it gains a +1 size bonus on its combat maneuver check. After making its attack or combat maneuver, the wave dissolves once more into normal water. This ability can be used a number of times per day equal to 3 + the sorcerer's Charisma modifier.

*The Sea Whisperer (Su):* At 3rd level, you can communicate telepathically with animals to a distance of 150 feet. This communication is limited to simple concepts, such as "come here," "defend me," or "attack this target."

Aquatic Telepathy (Sp): At 9th level, you gain telepathy (100 feet) and can communicate with creatures with a swim speed or the aquatic or water subtypes regardless of Intelligence. You may cast *suggestion* on such creatures a number of times per day equal to your Charisma modifier. This ability is telepathic and does not require audible or visual components. At 16th level, once per day you can telepathically call and request a service from an aquatic, water, or swimming creature as if using *demand* or *greater* planar ally.

*Call of the Seas (Su):* At 15th level, you gain the ability to change shape into a Medium water elemental once per day (+4 size bonus to your Constitution, +5 natural armor, darkvision, ability to create a vortex, swim speed +20 feet; duration 10 minutes/level; otherwise as *elemental body I or II*). At 17th level, you can use this ability twice per day.

*Water Gate 20th (Sp)*: You can call an extraplanar creature with the aquatic or water subtype to your aid. By naming a particular being or kind of being as you cast the spell, you cause the gate to open in the immediate vicinity of the desired creature and pull the subject through, willing or unwilling. Deities and unique beings are under no compulsion to come through the gate, although they may choose to do so of their own accord. This creates a gate that remains open just long enough to transport the called creature. A creature with more HD than your caster level can't be controlled. Deities and unique beings cannot be controlled in any event. An uncontrolled being acts as it pleases, making the calling of such creatures rather dangerous. An uncontrolled being may return to its home plane at any time.

#### **Bloodrager Bloodline: Carcharodon**

This bloodline is long derived from the essence of ancient megalodons, which were extremely dangerous and highly intelligent, always hungering for blood. Tribal to an extreme, bloodragers with this bloodline see most non-merfolk as enemies.



**Bonus Feats**: Athletic, Combat Reflexes, Defensive Combat Training, Dodge, Mobility, Stealthy, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite)

**Bonus Spells**: *magic fang* (7th), animal aspect <sup>UC</sup> (10th), greater animal aspect (13th), feast on fear <sup>ACG</sup> (16th)

**Bloodline Powers:** In the darkest places of the oceans you will find power. But that power comes with a cost. A bloodthirsty desire drives you; its demands build you up but haunt you at night. You are famished for blood and power.

*Savage Bite Attack (Ex):* At 1st level, you gain a savage bite attack. This is a primary natural attack that deals 1d6 points of damage. At 10th level, the damage from a savage bite increases to 1d8 and it deals x3 damage on a critical hit.

*Scent (Ex):* At 4th level, you gain the scent ability and can use this ability to locate unseen foes and identify familiar odors just as humans do with familiar sights. You can detect opponents within 30 feet by sense of smell. You can detect bleeding creatures out to 60 feet instead.

*Depth Adaptation (Ex):* At 8th level, you develop a fat layer that grants a +1 natural armor bonus and cold resistance 5. Additionally, you gain blindsense out to a range of 60 feet.

*Stalking (Ex):* At 12th level, while bloodraging, you can move at full speed when using Stealth and gain concealment, providing a 20% miss chance on attacks against you. At 16th level, this miss chance increases to 50% (though you are still treated as though you have concealment, not total concealment).

*Feeding Frenzy (Su)*: At 16th level, as a standard action, you transform into a shark hybrid. This functions as a barbarian's rage, except you also gain a +2 natural armor bonus to AC, a +10 foot bonus to your base speed, and 2 claw attacks (1d4). You possess a number of daily rounds of this rage equal to your bloodrager level + your Charisma modifier. These rounds do not need to be used consecutively.

*Deep Predator (Ex)*: At 20th level, you gain blindsight out to a range of 90 feet, and your body is covered with rough scales, granting you DR 10/piercing, and cold resistance 20. Additionally, you are protected from restraint as though under the effects of a continuous *freedom of movement* spell. Underwater, you gain evasion (as the rogue ability), and you are immune to pressure damage from deep water.

#### **Racial Feats**

Many merfolk make use of the following feats.

#### **Clear as Mud**

Your eyesight is especially keen, such that even the murkiest of waters seem clear to you.

#### **Prerequisite**: merfolk.

**Benefit**: You can see 4d12 x 10 feet in clear water and 1d12 x 10 feet in murky water

**Normal**: A creature can see 4d8 x 10 feet in clear water and 1d8 x 10 feet in murky water.

#### **Octolegged (Combat)**

Wriggling and twisting, your eight legs can't seem to stay in one place making it difficult for others to get around you.

Prerequisite: Octopi merfolk.

**Benefit**: You can make a single trip attack against any adjacent foe as a swift action. You gain +4 racial bonus on trip attacks made with octolegged, and if you fail to trip a foe, that creature can't attempt to trip you in retaliation.

#### **Improved Sea Hunter (Combat)**

Your underwater blows are as accurate as they are powerful.

Prerequisites: Sea Hunter ARG, merfolk.

**Benefit**: You gain a +2 bonus on all attack rolls made while underwater.

#### Water Aerobics

You are skilled at flipping, twirling, and diving.

Prerequisite: merfolk.

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 bonus on Acrobatics checks and Swim checks. If you have 10 or more ranks in one of these skills, the bonus increases to +4 for that skill.

#### **Racial Equipment**

Many merfolk make use of the following equipment.

**Coral Armor**: This colorful medium armor is relatively light weight when compared to steel but structurally very strong. Made from harvested coral, coral armor has a hardness of 8 and only half the normal armor penalty check on Swim skill checks (-2 instead of -4). While worn in the water it is treated as light armor rather than medium armor. Outside of the water, coral armor has the fragile armor quality.

**Edible Cork**: This edible cork is made from the inner stem of a sea bamboo plant. The plant's fibrous makeup creates a chewable cork while the waxy outer edge creates a waterproof seal. This cork is used in bottles and vials for underwater liquids and powders. The cork can be made into several sizes to fit most containers. These corks are easily made and come with most underwater vials. **Cost** 1 cp, **Weight** 0.10 lbs.

**Great Trident**: Similar to a regular trident but the size of a ranseur, the great trident has a long middle tine and

two shorter tines, which keeps the weapon from becoming stuck in a foe's body. The great trident's size prevents it from being thrown but grants the wielder greater reach in combat. Some great tridents are sharpened at the aft end. These great tridents lose the brace special quality but are treated as double weapons, with the other end having the statistics of a longspear. **Cost** 25 gp/30 gp, **DMG** 1d10, **Critical** x3, **Range** 20 feet, **Weight** 12 lbs., **Type** P, **Special** brace or double, reach, disarm.

**Kelp Armor**: This light armor is sewn together using large kelp leaves. The leaves are flexible and thick and provide an excellent form of protection in the water. As long as the kelp armor is submerged in the water it is treated as having the masterwork quality, but after a minute out of the water it loses the masterwork quality and gains an armor check penalty of -1. If the armor is out of the water for more than 24 hours, it completely dries out, reducing its maximum Dexterity bonus to +2 and increasing the armor check penalty to -2. Masterwork kelp armor does not dry out.

**Kelp Rope**: This 50-foot length of dark green woven kelp strands has 4 hit points and a tremendous strength while it is submerged in the water; it is has a hardness of 5 and can be broken with a DC 25 Strength check. If kelp rope is removed from water for more than one minute, it loses its hardness and can be broken with a DC 15 Strength check. **Cost** 10 gp, **Weight** 4 lbs.

**Marine Algae:** Seaweed and algae are known by the merfolk to have incredible properties when eaten. Different varieties can prevent disease and impart health. Knowing the proper steps of identifying and preparing the plants requires a successful DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check. There are several types of marine algae.

Nori is found often in sheets, strips, or flakes. It is dark green and thin. This plant is used to heal the skin from acid, fire, and steam burns. It is applied directly as a bandage, granting a +2 alchemical bonus on Heal checks made to treat wounds from acid, fire, and steam burns. **Cost** 10 gp per dose. Wakame is a slippery, dark green smallish leaf. When eaten, it can remove poison from the blood and reduce inflammation from injury, granting a +1 alchemical bonus to Fortitude saves vs poison and a +1 alchemical bonus on Heal skill checks. **Cost** 15 gp per dose.

Kombu comes in long, thick brown strips and restores energy. After ingesting a dose of kombu, one can rest for only 2 hours and be rested as from a full night's sleep. This does not give enough rest for spellcasters to prepare their daily spells. Sustained use (consecutively 2 days or more) causes a creature to become sickened. **Cost** 50 gp per dose.

Whole dulse leaf is soft and chewy, with a distinctive taste and a rich red color. When consumed, the leaf grants a +2 alchemical bonus on Fortitude saves to resist diseases. **Cost** 10 gp per dose.

**Mermaid Weed**: This green-to-brown plant is found only in shallow waters, such as bogs and marshes, frequented by the fey. The plants have long stems that trail into long slender leaves. Grown using using fey magic, the plant causes a creature to form gills ingested, allowing the creature to process oxygen under water. It also creates webbing between fingers and toes, granting a Swim speed of 30 feet. These effects last 1 hour. **Cost** 750 gp, **Weight** 0.5 lbs.

**Sea Charts:** The merfolk have collected sea charts from sunken ships over the years. They often sell or trade them to non-merfolk. Anyone referencing one of these charts can attempt a DC 20 Knowledge (geography) check to locate a treasure or an interesting location nearby. In addition, these charts grant a +2 circumstance bonus on Survival checks made to avoid getting lost at sea. **Cost** 50 gp.

**Shark-Skin Leather Shirt**: This black shirt and shoulder covering is made from the hides of sharks and provides great mobility. Its armor check penalty does not apply to Swim checks.

## **Table 4: Equipment**

		Armor	Max Dex	Armor Check	Arcane Spell	Spe	eed	
Armor	Cost	Bonus	Bonus	Penalty	Failure Chance	30 ft.	20 ft.	Weight
Coral (medium)	50 gp	+5	+3	-4	25%	20 ft.	15 ft.	20 lbs.
Kelp (light)	50 gp	+3	+5	o (special)	10%	30 ft.	20 ft.	10 lbs.
Shark-skin leather shirt (light)	20 gp	+3	+4	-1	15%	30 ft.	20 ft.	15 lbs.

## **Table 5: Deities**

Deity	AL	Are <mark>a of Concern</mark>	Domains	Mysteries	Favored Weapon
Neptan Rao	N	sea life, <mark>storms, tide,</mark> unde <mark>rwater</mark>	Animal, Destruction, Nobility, Water	Ancestor, Apocalypse, Waves	trident

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## Religion

#### **Deities/Philosophies**

#### Neptan Rao, Lord of the Waves

N god of the sea and its bounty, patron of the destroyed **Priests** clerics, druids, hunters, oracles, warpriests **Domains** Animal, Destruction, Nobility, Water **Subdomains** Feather, Catastrophe, Aristocracy, Ocean **Mysteries** Ancestor, Apocalypse, Waves **Inquisitions** Anger, Fate, Heresy, Valor **Favored Weapon** trident

#### FAITH

**Sacred Animal** horse or sea-horse; hippocampus; **Symbol** trident emerging from a wave

**Sacred Texts** *The Blessings and Bounty of the Sea King*, usually inscribed on clay tablets; *The Devouring Wave*, an epic poem describing the last days of a doomed city state lost beneath the waves.

A primordial deity, the embodiment of the original oceans and seas of the multiverse, the Lord of the Waves is known by many names, but to the merfolk, he is called Neptan Rao. He is the patron deity of many seafaring cultures, island city-states, sailors, fishermen, and underwater races. His followers wax and wane in their devotion through time, just like the tides themselves. A fisherman or sailor might go decades without praying to Neptan Rao, but in desperation will always turn to him.

Tales from times gone by tell stories of ancient and powerful island kingdoms being devastated before sinking



into the oceans, with Neptan Rao's ire, provoked by ignoring his warnings, to blame. Legend has it that he has saved many a faithful member in these kingdoms by turning them into merfolk, so many merfolk and gillmen claim descent and divine favor from Neptan Rao.

Priests and devout followers of the Lord of the Waves wear shells and corals about their heads and necks. Annually, they celebrate the changing of the currents. During this celebration the priests and magic-users expel their powers to slightly change the temperature of the water, ever so slightly shifting the currents. With the change comes a new harvest of fish and sea creatures, which followers see as approval from Neptan Rao.

With his many consorts and lovers, Neptan Rao has fathered many children both divine and mortal. Most of his divine offspring have characteristics that relate to specific oceans, rivers, and other bodies of water, while others embody elements or creatures of the seas. Two of his most recognized children are Triton and his sister Rhodes.

The horse and related creatures have long been the sacred animals and totem of Neptan Rao. According to scriptures, the Lord of Waves created the land animal so that the galloping of herds across the plains would resemble the majestic thundering of the waves.

Neptan Rao is depicted as a mature merman with a full beard, a crown of coral and shells, and a trident.

## **Racial Magic**

Many merfolk use these spells and powers, as do others who learn them.

#### Adapt Fin

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Discipline psychometabolism; Level cryptic 2, psion/ wilder 2, psychic warrior 2, tactician 2
Display visual
Manifesting Time 1 standard action
Range personal
Target you
Duration 1 hour/level (D)
Power Points 3
Your body automatically adapts when on land, forming legs

that allow you to survive as if you were a creature native to that environment. You can move 30 feet per round.

**Augment** If you spend 5 additional power points, this power protects you from the harmful effects of your environment. If you would take damage every round from the environment, such as from acid or lava, you take only half the usual amount of damage. This does not reduce damage from magical sources such as spells or powers, nor does it reduce instantaneous damage such as from falling damage or weapon damage.

#### Fish Breath

School conjuration; Level antipaladin 1, arcanist/ sorcerer/wizard 1, bard/skald 1, bloodrager 1, cleric/ oracle/warpriest 1, druid/hunter 1, inquisitor 1, magus 1, paladin 1, ranger 1, shaman 1, summoner 1, witch 1

**Casting Time** 1 standard action

**Components** S, M (a small bladder filled with air) **Range** touch

Target one creature

Duration 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless); Spell

**Resistance** yes (harmless)

A small pocket of breathable air surrounds the touched creature's head. The air bubble allows the creature touched to breathe underwater or in similar airless environments.

#### FISH FINS

School transmutation (polymorph); Level arcanist/ sorcerer/wizard 2, druid/hunter 2, magus 2, ranger 2, shaman 2, summoner 2, witch 2
Casting Time 1 standard action
Components S, M (fish scales)

Range touch

**Target** one creature

**Duration** 1 minute/level

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless); Spell Resistance yes (harmless)

The creature's legs merge together, forming a single tailfin, granting it a Swim speed of 30 feet. The creature also gains a +2 enhancement bonus to all Acrobatics and Stealth checks while in water. This spell ends if the creature attempts to walk on land.

#### PROSERPINACA

**School** transmutation (polymorph); **Level** alchemist/ investigator 3, arcanist/sorcerer/wizard 3, druid/hunter 3, magus 3

Casting Time 1 standard action Components V, S Range touch Target one creature

Duration 10 min/level

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless); Spell Resistance yes (harmless)

The target creature grows gills and its fingers and toes become webbed, allowing it to breathe underwater and granting it a Swim speed of 30 feet.

#### SONAR

School divination; Level alchemist/investigator 2, arcanist/sorcerer/wizard 2, bard/skald 2, bloodrager 2, magus 2

**Casting Time** 1 standard action

**Components** V, S, M (a sliver of dolphin brains) **Range** personal

#### Target you

**Duration** 10 min/level

You can hear everything that moves in the water and pinpoint it with perfect accuracy. While underwater, you gain the blindsight ability out to a distance of 30 feet. This blindsight is suppressed when you are not underwater, but the effect persists and will resume if you enter the water again within the spell's duration.

## **Racial Magic Items**

The following magic items are made by merfolk spellcasters.

#### Belt of the Land Walker

Aura faint transmutation; CL 5th Slot belt; Price 11,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

#### DESCRIPTION

This thick and heavy belt is made from the skin and green scales of a large lizard. Its clasp of coral shows a tail fin crossed with a human-looking leg. Whenever its wearer emerges from water, their fins, flippers, or tail transform into legs and feet, allowing them to walk on land. The wearer loses any swim speed while on land but gains a base land speed of 30 feet. If the creature is immersed in water for 1 round, the transformation reverts, allowing it to swim normally.

This item only works on merfolk, tritons, seals, fish, and other creatures whose bodies or limbs are used mainly for swimming and are not suitable for walking. It does not give the wearer the ability to breathe air.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *fins to feet* <sup>ARG</sup>; **Cost** 5,500 gp

#### INK CLOUD GRENADE

Aura faint conjuration; CL 1st Slot none; Price 75 gp; Weight 0.5 lbs.

#### DESCRIPTION

This grenade is a small clear potion filled with black ink. When the vial shatters in water, a cloud of black ink erupts around it, obscuring all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. A creature 5 feet away has concealment (attacks have a 20% miss chance). Creatures farther away have total concealment (50% miss chance, and the attacker cannot use sight to locate the target).

A moderate current (11+ mph) disperses the ink cloud in 4 rounds. A strong current (21+ mph) disperses the ink cloud in 1 round.

#### CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Brew Potion, obscuring mist; Cost 50 gp

#### STAFF OF THE TWISTED FORM

**Aura** strong transmutation; CL 9th Slot none; Price 19,950 gp; Weight 5 lbs

#### DESCRIPTION

This shoulder-high length of driftwood has been carved and stained to look like an octopus tentacle. When submerged in the water, the staff seems to twist slightly as though moved by a light current. It allows the use of the following spells:

- extended *polymorph familiar* <sup>ACG</sup> (1 charge)
- persistent <sup>APG</sup> excruciating deformation <sup>UM</sup> (2 charges)
- baleful polymorph (3 charges)

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Staff, *baleful polymorph*, *excruciating deformation*, *polymorph familiar*; **Cost** 9,975 gp

#### TRIDENT OF THE SEVEN SEAS

**Aura** overwhelming conjuration, evocation and transmutation **CL** 20th **Slot** none; **Weight** 4 lbs.

#### DESCRIPTION

The priceless trident of the seven seas is believed to control the seas and those within them. Its 7-foot carved, wooden shaft is plated in gold. The carvings at its base depict sea floor creatures, but as the carvings go up the shaft, they depict creatures of the various levels of the ocean, and then finally, at the top, surface sea life. The highest carvings depict surface storms and vortexes. This +5 shock trident can unleash a *hydraulic push* three times per day, once from each tine; alternatively, their power can be combined to release a single hydraulic torrent once per day. The CMB for either effect is +6. The magical properties also enable its wielder to charm up to 14 Hit Dice of aquatic animals as per the spell charm animal (Will DC 16 negates, animals get a +5 bonus if currently under attack by the wielder or her allies), no two of which can be more than 30 feet apart. The wielder can use this effect up to three times per day. The wielder can communicate with the animals as if using a speak with animals spell. Animals that successfully make their saving throws are free of control, but they will not approach within 10 feet of the trident. Lastly, once per day, the wielder can utter a command word to create one of the following effects: vortex or control weather. If the wielder uses a *polymorph* or supernatural effect to take the shape of a creature with a natural bite attack, the trident of the seven seas vanishes and the wielder's bite attack gains a +4 enhancement bonus until the shapechanging effect ends and the trident reappears. The wielder cannot use the trident's other abilities while shapechanged.

A creature with the aquatic subtype must hold the *trident of the seven seas* under molten lava from the Plane of Fire for a year, and then, on the next day, the *trident* must be struck by a bolt of lightning, which shatters it.

## **New Spellblight**

The following spellblight can affect merfolk characters.

**Landwalker**: A creature with the aquatic subtype affected by this spellblight has its fins split into a pair of legs. The creature gains a base land speed of 30 ft., losing the legless ability and any swim speed it possesses. If the creature already has legs, this spellblight does not affect it.

## In Your Campaign

The best way to incorporate merfolk into your game is to run an underwater campaign. Also including aquatic races such as gillmen can make this simple, but incorporating other races and using ships and ports can make for a more interesting game. This creates a challenge for the players to overcome, moving between land and sea, finding ways to delve deeper into the ocean to find lost treasures or conquer monsters of the deep and similarly planning expeditions on land to test the abilities and problem solving of the players.

In a campaign already in progress, especially one designed along a shoreline, where the players may need an assassin, kidnapper, or torturer, have the players recruit or hire a merfolk to do the job. He might only work for a favor, which could require an underwater adventure for landwalking PCs.

When running dungeon or wilderness adventures, you can use merfolk NPCs whereever there is water, surprising players that might not expect them. In a dungeon with a deep dark pool, for example, an angufolk might use her lure to draw the players into the water, only to then distinguish the lamp and drag the players to their watery deaths. Along a river bank, a merfolk could answer riddles, share myths, or provide magical assistance for a cost. Use rumors to reveal the existence of the merfolk and what cost the merfolk would demand for assistance.

In a high seas adventure or ship-centered campaign, you could use sirens and cyraniels to distract the players or outright attack them. Devious cyraniels might charm their way onto the party's vessel and then convince the captain to wreck the ship in treacherous waters.

In an underwater campaign, rebel merfolk clans might instigate a territorial or social war with an established kingdom. The players will have to choose a side in the conflict and resolve it, whether through battle or diplomacy.

If your campaign also makes use of the gillmen and the PCs are themselves merfolk, they might act as freedom fighters working to free the gillmen from the clutches of the aboleths. Not all of the gillmen would appreciate

**Destruction** 

such attempts to liberate them, however, creating potential for conflict.

For a seafaring campaign, a foolish pirate captain could kidnap a merfolk, having heard tales that her tears will provide him with eternal life. With the merfolk maiden encased in enchanted glass, he bears her across the seas to the site of a hidden relic. The players have to track him down and rescue the girl in an adventure that would have extra challenge with a party of both merfolk and nonmerfolk.

For fun, you can use the merfolk to recreate a famous mermaid story: a foolish merfolk falls in love with a sailor, trading her (or his) voice to an octopi sea witch for a pair of legs. The merfolk's father, a king beneath the waves, hires the players to recover or even aid his child.

If a player wants to play a merfolk character in a landbased campaign, consider allowing a merfolk with either the walk the land alternate racial trait or the landwalker spellblight. Players may want to play a merfolk that cannot return to the water, such as from Anderson's *The Little Mermaid*. These options still gives the character the flavor of the merfolk race without limiting the campaign to watery regions.

## NPCs

CR 1/2

#### SIVAS

#### XP 200

Male merfolk warpriest of Neptan Rao 1 LN Medium humanoid (aquatic) Init +2; Senses Perception +2

#### DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +2 natural) hp 10 (1d8+2) Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +4

#### Offense

Speed 5 ft., swim 50 ft.
Melee great trident +3 (1d10+3/x3)
Special Attacks blessings 3/day, sacred weapon (1d6, 1 round/day)
Warpriest Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +3)
1st-bless, cure light wounds

o (at will)-light, stabilize, virtue

#### **S**TATISTICS

#### **Str** 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** 15, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +0; CMB +2; CMD 14 (can't be tripped) Feats Skill Focus (Handle Animal), Weapon Focus (great trident)

Skills Handle Animal +7, Perform (sing) +3, Sense Motive +6, Swim +9; Racial Modifiers +2 Perform (sing) Languages Aquan, Common



**SQ** amphibious, blessings (3/day, animal: animal fury; nobility: inspiring word), sea singer

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure light wounds* ; **Other Gear** masterwork kelp armor, light steel shield, great trident, backpack, belt pouch, holy symbol of Neptan Rao with potion compartment <sup>UE</sup>, marlinspike <sup>ACG</sup>, mess kit <sup>UE</sup>, kelp rope (50 ft.), wineskin, 60 gp

CR 2

#### Merfolk Guard

#### XP 600

Male merfolk warrior 4 LG Medium humanoid (aquatic) **Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +0

#### Defense

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, +2 natural) hp 32 (4d10+8)

#### Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +3

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 5 ft., swim 50 ft. **Melee** mwk trident +8 (1d8+3)

#### **S**TATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 11 Base Atk +4; CMB +6; CMD 18 (can't be tripped) Feats Iron Will, Weapon Focus (trident) Skills Intimidate +5, Swim +12 Languages Aquan, Common

#### SQ amphibious

**Gear** ink cloud grenade; **Other Gear** +1 coral armor, mwk trident, 10 gp

#### Kevyoon

#### **CR 4**

#### XP 1,200

Female merfolk investigator 4/rogue (investigator APG) 1 NG Medium humanoid (aquatic)

**Init** +0; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +9

#### Defense

**AC** 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +2 natural) **hp** 31 (5d8+5)

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5; +2 bonus vs. poison **Defensive Abilities** trap sense +1; **Resist** poison resistance

#### OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft., swim 50 ft.

- **Melee** mwk rapier +6 (1d6+2/18–20) or mwk silver dagger +6 (1d4+1/19–20)
- **Special Attacks** sneak attack +1d6, studied combat (+2, 3 rounds), studied strike +1d6
- **Investigator Extracts Prepared** (CL 4th; concentration +7)
- 2nd—detect thoughts (DC 15), perceive cues <sup>APG</sup>
  1st—cure light wounds, endure elements, heightened awareness <sup>ACG</sup>, vocal alteration <sup>UM</sup> (DC 14)

#### **S**TATISTICS

#### **Str** 14, **Dex** 10, **Con** 12, **Int** 16, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +3; CMB +5; CMD 15 (can't be tripped)

Feats Clear as Mud, Extra Investigator Talent  $^{\rm ACG}$  , Voice Of The Sibyl  $^{\rm UM}$ 

- **Skills** Appraise +11, Bluff +11, Craft (alchemy) +12 (+16 to create alchemical items), Diplomacy +11, Disable Device +12, Perception +9, Perform (oratory) +11, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +8, Swim +14, Use Magic Device +10
- Languages Aboleth, Aquan, Common, Elven, Sylvan
- **SQ** alchemy (alchemy crafting +4), amphibious, follow up, inspiration (5/day), investigator talents (extend potion, mutagen[+4/-2, +2 natural armor, 40 minutes]), keen recollection, poison lore, swift alchemy, trapfinding +2
- **Combat Gear** *mutagen, potions of cure light wounds,* alchemist's fire (3), healer's kit; **Other Gear** +1 wooden *armor*, mwk rapier, mwk silver dagger, masterwork thieves' tools, portable alchemist's lab

CR 7

#### SIREENA

#### XP 3,200

Female merfolk bard 8 CN Medium humanoid (aquatic) Init +3; Senses low-light vision; Perception +1

#### DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +3 Dex) hp 63 (8d8+24) **Fort** +6, **Ref** +10, **Will** +8; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

#### OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 50 ft.

Melee +1 shortsword +10/+5 (1d6/19-20)

**Special Attacks** bardic performance 22 rounds/day (move action; countersong, dirge of doom, distraction, fascinate [DC 18], inspire competence +3, inspire courage +2, *suggestion* [DC 18])

**Bard Spells Known** (CL 8th; concentration +12) 3rd (3/day)—*dispel magic, glibness, haste* 

2nd (5/day)—heroism, hold person (DC 16), suggestion (DC 16), summon monster II

1st (5/day)—charm person (DC 15), comprehend languages, cure light wounds, fish breath, touch of gracelessness APG (DC 15)

o (at will)—*daze* (DC 14), *detect magic, ghost sound* (DC 14), *know direction, light, mage hand* 

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 8, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 18 **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 18

**Feats** Combat Casting, Extra Performance, Magical Aptitude, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Diplomacy +15, Disguise +4 (+14 to appear human), Knowledge (nobility) +15, Perform (percussion, sing) +15, Spellcraft +13, Swim +18, Use Magic Device +17; Racial Modifiers +10 Disguise to appear human

Languages Aquan, Common

**SQ** amphibious, bardic knowledge +4, lore master 1/day, versatile performances (percussion, sing), walk the land

**Combat Gear** *elixir of love, feather token (anchor);* **Other Gear** +2 *kelp armor, +1 shortsword, cloak of resistance +1, 90 gp* 

#### Orsolya

#### XP 19,200

Female octopi merfolk arcanist (blood arcanist, unlettered arcanist) 11/witch (sea witch <sup>UM</sup>) 2

**CR 12** 

NE medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., water sense 30 ft.; Perception +0

#### DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +2 Dex) hp 87 (13d6+39) Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +12 Defensive Abilities ink cloud

#### Offense

**Speed** 15 ft., swim 30 ft.

**Special Attacks** arcane reservoir (6/14), arcanist exploits (greater metamagic knowledge, metamagic knowledge, school understanding [manipulator <sup>APG</sup>]), consume spells, hexes (cauldron, evil eye)

Arcanist Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration

#### +19)

5/day—beguiling touch, weight of waves 2/day—aquatic telepathy

#### Blood Arcanist Spells Prepared (CL 11th;

concentration +17)

- 5th-cloudkill (DC 21), major curse <sup>UM</sup> (DC 22)
- 4th−curse of magic negation <sup>UM</sup> (DC 20), lesser geas (DC 21), volcanic storm <sup>UM</sup>
- 3rd—bestow curse (DC 20), dispel magic, lightning bolt (DC 19), share senses APG (DC 19)
- 2nd—alter self, daze monster (DC 19), euphoric cloud <sup>ACG</sup> (DC 18), perceive cues <sup>APG</sup>, steal voice <sup>UM</sup> (DC 19)
- 1st—charm person (DC 18), cure light wounds, earpiercing scream  $^{\text{UM}}$  (DC 17), enlarge person (DC 17), wave shield  $^{\text{ACG}}$
- o (at will)—daze (DC 17), detect poison, guidance, mending, message, read magic, resistance, stabilize, touch of fatigue (DC 17)

#### Bloodline aegean

## Witch (Sea Witch) Spells Prepared (CL 2nd; concentration +8)

- 1st—*hex ward* <sup>UM</sup> (DC 17), *inflict light wounds* (DC 18), recharge innate magic <sup>ARG</sup>, touch of the sea <sup>APG</sup> (DC 17)
- o (at will)—arcane mark, bleed (DC 17), dancing lights, detect magic

#### Patron Trickery

#### **S**TATISTICS

18

Str 8, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 22, Wis 10, Cha 14
 Base Atk +6; CMB +5; CMD 17 (29 vs overrun, trip)
 Feats Bouncing Spell <sup>APG</sup>, Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Extra Hex <sup>APG</sup>, Lightning Reflexes, Persistent Spell <sup>APG</sup>, Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Focus (necromancy), Spirit's Gift <sup>ACG</sup>, Toughness

- Skills Bluff +17, Knowledge (arcana, history, nature) +22, Knowledge (nobility) +20, Sense Motive +13, Spellcraft +22, Stealth +6, Swim +23, Use Magic Device +18; Racial Modifiers +4 Stealth
- Languages Aboleth, Aklo, Aquan, Common, Draconic, Elven, Sylvan, Undercommon
- **SQ** amphibious, beguiling touch, bloodline arcana (water spells effective caster increased by one, summoned creatures of aquatic type gain a +1 morale bonus on attack and damage rolls), camouflage 3/day, know direction, sea creature empathy, sea whisperer, witch's familiar (blueringed octopus named Blue)
- **Combat Gear** wand of cure moderate wounds; **Other Gear** bracers of armor +2, cloak of resistance +2, headband of vast intelligence +4

# book of heroic Races compendium



JON BRAZER

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• **4 New Character Class Options** including a new archetype, a new rogue talent, and new bloodrager and sorcerer bloodlines

- **4 New Feats** granting you superior maneuverability and perception underwater
- 5 New Aquatic-Themed Spells and Psionic Powers
- 13 New Mundane Items, Alchemical Items, Magic Items, and Artifacts

• A New Deity, dedicated to undersea life, the bounty of the sea, and the destructive power of the waves

• Details on merfolk adventurers as well as suggestions on how to incorporate this race into your world



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