

Races of the Bronze Sky: Tocarra

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The Tocarra are a winged race similar in appearance to gargoyles, though they are not as fearsome, monstrous or primitive as gargoyles proper. The Tocarra have a great degree of sexual dimorphism with the males trading the power of flight for greater strength and tenacity as warriors and protectors and the females trading combat prowess for greater flight and the ability to explore deeper into the mysterious undersides of the floating landscape.

The Tocarra are formed into large tribes and live a nomadic existence, following the seasons, plants and animals from one rocky island or landmass to the next in a great and constant migration, clashing with other tribes and – increasingly – with the colonists and explorers of the great powers as they move across the world.

Tocarra males are fierce and indomitable in battle and many have been co-opted into the navies of the various powers through a complex web of alliances that take advantage of tribal rivalries and bad blood and make promises that the powers have little or no intention of keeping. The Tocarra have value so long as their knowledge and their numbers make them useful, when the current conflicts come to an end so will the usefulness of the Tocarra and their fate is uncertain, something that hasn't escaped the notice of some of the wiser Tocarra shaman who are trying to forge a tribal alliance to safeguard their future against uncounted years of traditional hatreds and suspicion.

The Tocarra future might be uncertain but they are a part of the world more than, perhaps, any of the other peoples found across the skies, they feel it in their wings and in the rocks that they cling to, born to the air and the rock and the winds.



Personality:

The Tocarra are taciturn and contemplative, speech and movement are efficient and



when they see no need for either they are still and quiet. This can make them seem remote, aloof, wise or spiritual, even when these qualities are not genuinely present in an individual Tocarra. Many non-Tocarra take these qualities as arrogance or insolence but they're mistaken, it's just their nature. When times call for action or speech the Tocarra can be as energetic and as eloquent as anyone else, they're just creatures of reserved efficiency, like a hawk riding the thermals.

Traditionalist Tocarra have a great reverence and respect for their females and there are roughly twice as many female Tocarra hatched as males, who also suffer the greatest attrition in tribal conflicts and wars. Traditionalist Tocarra society is matriarchal with a council of womenfolk making most of the decisions for the tribe and a male war-leader making the military decisions in times of conflict, leading raids on his own authority.

The new Tocarra, influenced by the other societies have moved to a more male-oriented society, though this is a new development for their people as a whole. Without the need to defer to the women for flight the idea has taken root that they do not need the women for anything else either. War leaders have taken over these 'new' tribes and have lead them to become far more aggressive, both against other tribes and against the powers.

Tocarra travel light as they cannot carry much when they glide or fly, so they do not tend to place a great deal of value on material items, investing what they do earn in the best, small items that they can afford and wearing their wealth as jewelery. A Tocarra places a great deal more worth in a good knife or pistol, laden with enchantments, than almost anything else.

Physical Description:

Male Tocarra are muscular and powerful with patagia (*gliding wings*) extending, bat-like under their arms to their hips. Thanks to the relatively small size of these wings and their increased weight – thanks to their denser musculature – means they can only glide and are incapable of true flight though their greater strength and stronger claws compensate for this and are enough to move them around the undersides of the floating lands, it's just not enough to get them to other places. Male Tocarra are taller and stronger and tend to darker and craggier skin than their female counterparts.

Female Tocarra are leaner and rangier with longer arms and much larger wings making them capable of true flight and of carrying some weight with them. Two or three females working together are capable of helping a male through the sky from one land to another or carrying the light provisions and goods that the tribe needs. Their skins tend to be a lighter, smoother grey but, like the male Tocarra they are bald and hairless.

Migration

The Tocarra migrate from island to island and land to land but with the male's incapability to fly they have traditionally been reliant on the females to carry them from land to land. That's changed with the intervention of the powers and their flying ships, freeing many males from their traditional dependence and allowing males to act unilaterally in their raids on other tribes. An innovation that is sharply dividing the Tocarra tribes between traditionalists and raiders.

Relations:

The Tocarra are their own people and are divided into tribes but, unlike the Kaylethon their rivalries are normally limited to raids of honor to determine a pecking order rather than all out war. While this has changed as the 'new tribes' have emerged the Tocarra – mostly – still have a sense of themselves as a people, if not a nation.

The tribes all have different relationships with different powers and are exploited in different ways by them. Only a few tribes remain completely independent and untangled and they do their utmost to stay that way, violently resisting attempts to control them or corrupt them – as they see it.

Many Tocarra of dispossessed or annihilated tribes, as well as those who have become enamored of the 'new life', have joined pirate crews where they are much valued for their abilities and their special skills. Others who have joined the crews of pirates and privateers are spies for the free tribes, seeking to keep an eye on the powers for the sake of the free tribes.

Alignment:

The Tocarra drift where the winds and seasons take them and this applies as much to their moral stance as to anything else. While individual Tocarra can be found across the alignments the majority – as a race – are neutral in outlook. Nature is capricious, changeable, cruel and wonderful all at once and living with their faces – and wings – in the wind the Tocarra find themselves becoming like the elements that they live within.

Tocarra Lands:

The Tocarra live at the fringes and the undersides of the floating lands, a harsh, craggy and desertified landscape that most of the other peoples and powers do not bother with. It is only on the smaller islands and at the edges of the larger lands where they directly mix with the 'topsiders'. As mining and fleet operations have stepped up, as secret bases have been built on the undersides of the lands and as conflicts have escalated the Tocarra have been dragged into the wars and have found

themselves forced to interact with the great powers. Nowhere has this conflict become more apparent than in the colonies where the colonialists and The Monarchy vie for tribal allies to support their war by proxy.

The Tocarra cling to the undersides of the land by their claws and form temporary villages with pitons, ropes and slings of woven cloth where they can rest and huddle and conduct their tribal business. Other tribes use caves, carved out of the underside of the lands and rest there and it is in these inaccessible under-lands that they lay their eggs and hatch their young, well away from the vast majority of predators and other dangers that might otherwise harm them.

Tocarra Ships:

The Tocarra have no need for ships as they are capable of flight – or at least gliding. Those tribes that have bought into the culture of sky-ships still build no ships of their own, instead they rely on gifts, stolen vessels or privately purchased ships that come from other cultures and are often in a poor state of repair and operation, ragged and barely held together as the Tocarra have little concept of large scale machinery or anything, much, bigger than they can carry,

Religion:

Different tribes have different gods that go by any number of different names and are invoked by any number of different symbols but they are all reflections of the same forces that impact the lives of the Tocarra. This enormous pantheon provides a Tocarra cleric with access to any two of the following domains:

Air, Chaos, Community, Earth, Liberation, Luck, Plant, Sun, Travel or Weather.

Language:

Each Tocarra tribe has its own internal, tribal language particular to their own group. The lingua franca for the tribes when they meet or deal with people from above is Common, which is also rapidly becoming the natural tongue of the free and unaligned tribes.

Names:

Tocarra names are not divided by gender, they are two-syllable personal names that can be almost any combination of sounds. Every Tocarra parent strives to find a name that is not already present in the tribe so that their child can earn honor and recognition for their own deeds, even trying to avoid those names that belong to famous historical figures, the converse of the naming tendencies in many other peoples.



Examples: Arha, Boltar, Carnak, Dilda, Ekko, Fulan, Grigna, Hikku, Ilton, Jooti, Koltan, Lamu, Myna, Normi, Orton, Pini, Qualti, Rikrik, Sunwae, Toltan, Ukki, Vanar, Wicci, Xayla, Zoltak.

Adventurers:

The majority of Tocarra remain within their tribes and it is the few, the exceptions, the special cases that become adventurers. The remnants of war parties that have signed on as privateers and pirates, the survivors from destroyed tribes, spies and watchers and those who have been enamored by the power, strength and wealth of the great powers.

There are those amongst the tribes whose jobs within the tribe are to explore and to secure the safety of the tribe and these individuals sometimes explore the caves above and the boundaries of the islands in search of glory and to be sure nothing threatens their people. Sometimes lost or separated from their tribe they will become adventurers in order to live and in order to find their tribes again. Others become honor bound to adventuring parties who rescue them and take up the adventuring life as a way to pay back their benefactors.