

The Genius Guide to: RACES OF HOOF AND HORN



PATHFINDER
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

Fantasy should be fantastic (and by “fantastic” we mean the dictionary definition—conceived by unrestrained fancy; beyond the realm of the ordinary). That might seem like an obvious thing to say, but fantasy fiction has become so common in popular entertainment that in many ways it has lost its sense of fancy. Elves and dwarves and orcs ... we’ve seen them all before. They’re as familiar to the modern audience as private eyes, foreign spies, and femme fatales were fifty years ago. What was once fantastical now represents the status quo, and we have to look further abroad if we truly want to find something beyond the realm of the ordinary.

As a small offer in that regard, *The Genius Guide to Races of Hoof and Horn* presents a trio of new fantasy races—the asterion, the lapith, and the pipers—suitable for use as player characters or NPCs. These races share a common trait of sporting hooves and/or horns, a small connection but one not found in any of the standard races. They also all hail from remote, some might even say exotic, locales, making it sensible that encountering them would be a rarity in almost any world (and making it easier to incorporate them into existing campaign).

Of course, it takes more than just a few cosmetic peculiarities to make a creature feel truly fantastic. Like the elves, dwarves, and the other classic character races, each of the new races comes from a culture with its own unique perspective on life and their place in the world—a set of cultural norms that GMs and players can use to understand how the group would fit into a campaign and build characters that fit within (or purposely stretch themselves beyond) those expectations.

Like any good rules expansion, *The Genius Guide to Races of Hoof and Horn* is meant to introduce new possibilities to your *Pathfinder* campaign and give everyone at the table a chance to expand the horizons of the game and create adventures that are truly fantastic.

ASTERION

Because of their size, build, and the horns that grow from their heads, asterion are presumed by most sages to be the offspring of minotaurs and some other humanoid race. (For example, human sages suggest a minotaur/orc heritage while orcish shamans claim asterion are minotaur/human crossbreeds.) This belief is also widespread among common folk of most societies, resulting in a strong distrust of asterion in cities and foreign lands, where they are seen as savage, honorless raiders just one step up from beasts.

This view has nothing to do with how asterion think of themselves, and the stereotype itself is often a source of conflict between asterion and other groups. According to their own creation myths, asterion are not related to minotaurs at all. Their shamans speak of an ancient chieftain (most agree he was a northern barbarian, though some describe him as human, others as an ogre, and a few even call him a dwarven warlord) who found himself waging an impossible war against raiders who used horseback archers to ravage his lands.

Outnumbered and outmaneuvered, the chieftain went to the river's edge on a holy night to pray for aid in his battle. Unwilling to depend on just one god for his salvation, the barbarian chief directed his attention to the constellation of his birth, the Bull's Head, and promised to show loyalty and respect to whatever deity would send him the power to defeat his enemies. As soon as his prayer was done, the chieftain was amazed to see mighty cattle emerge from the river's edge, all females with star marks on their heads and gravid with

young. Knowing these were the answer to his prayer, the chieftain brought the cattle to his village. Each of the cattle birthed four young, strapping youths with hooved feet and small horns atop their heads.

By morning, the youths were young men and women of full stature. When next the horse-archers attacked, they faced not just the chieftain's people, but an army of supernaturally strong and swift warriors born of the star cattle. The horned warriors defeated the archers, and were welcomed into the chieftain's tribe. Because they came as an answer to a prayer to the night sky, the new members of the tribe were called asterion, or the star-born.

Physical Description: Typical asterion are powerfully-built humanoids, standing nearly 7 feet tall. They have roughly human features, though tend to have thicker, wilder hair and broader, flatter faces. Two horns grow from all asterion's heads, beginning around the ear and jutting forward toward the cheek or jaw. These horns range from short spikes of just a few inches to mighty curved horns curling up and forward (though some rare individuals can be found with horns that curl downward). While males generally have larger horns than females, that isn't always the case. From the knee down, asterion legs are covered in hair (ranging in texture from shaggy wool to fine fur), and their feet are digitigrade and end in hooves. Most asterion have a stout tails, like those found on cattle, though this is not a universal trait.

Though many think of them as a dusky race, in truth there are many lighter-haired and lighter-skinned asterion. They have a much broader range of skin and hair color than most races, and individuals may be white, cream, tan, brown, yellow, golden, bronze, red, brown, black, or even blue. More rarely some asterion tribes have members that are green or purple, which is often perceived by outsiders as a sign of orcish crossbreeding. In most cases, an asterion's fetlocks and manes will match, as will its hoof and eye color.

Society: Asterion tribes are usually small and located in inhospitable territories such as frozen mountains, barren plains, deserts, and swamps. They are often part of larger racially-mixed tribes that include humans, orcs, and half-orcs who band together for survival in lands ruled by ogres, giants and dragons. Life in these societies is harsh, brutal, and often short. Since any group of asterion must repeatedly face the loss of one or more of its members every few months, ties of friendship and family are considered ephemeral and impermanent—to be appreciated while they exist but not important factors when weighing major decisions. However, these same cruel conditions make it crucial that every asterion feel responsibility for and loyalty to the tribe as a whole. An asterion will not think twice about leaving a wounded childhood friend to die, but he would freely give his own life if it meant giving his whole village a chance to survive.

Asterion appreciate things that are simple, easy to make, and easy to maintain. Things that appear more complex than necessary, too delicate, or purely ornamental are seen as useless and distasteful. Their vision of beauty matches closely with other races' idea of functionality. An asterion does not care what a prospective mate looks like, but can quickly become enamored of a suitor who demonstrates a useful skill, power, or talent. There are two areas where asterion appreciate artistic efforts and skill—good music and fine foods, which they admire for combining functionality with pleasant aesthetics even though, from a practical standpoint, their artistic rendering does not have any material benefit.

Relations: Asterion form opinions about those they meet very quickly, and thus often have the best relations with those who are straightforward and do not stand on ceremony, observe rigid protocol, or practice stylish etiquette. They generally get along well with dwarves, humans, orcs, and giants, and have a difficult time understanding why those groups often do not get along with each other. Asterion don't react as well to elves, whom they see as wasteful and flighty. Asterion are surprisingly accepting of gnomes and halflings, despite the often less-than-pragmatic attitudes of members of those races. Asterion seem to feel that since gnomes and halflings are small and weak, any off-putting behavior they engage in is part of some clever deception designed to help their fragile races survive.

Asterion communities are not exclusionary, this includes a noticeable lack

of taboos regarding mating between asterion and humans, orcs (or other races, as long as they are members of the tribe). Such unions can be productive, through the offspring are invariably infertile. An asterion/human union produces short asterion, but asterion/orc unions produce tall half-orcs.

Alignment and Religion: Asterion have a very black-and-white view of the world. Once they identify someone as a foe, they rarely change their minds. They display emotions openly, seeing no point in concealing their feelings, but refuse to allow such sentiments cloud their devotion to doing what is right and necessary. They can be steadfastly pragmatic, and may consider certain actions imperative while others find them cruel or even evil.

Because of their origin myth, asterion tend to revere gods of the night, stars, and rivers. They also favor gods of war, battle, and craftsmen.

Adventurers: Heroes in asterion folklore often leave home to find and confront powerful foes from distant lands, fighting for the glory of their tribe, and earning eternal glory by dying in bloody battle. This tradition, coupled with the fact that most asterion homelands are barren and inhospitable, means it's fairly common for young asterion to leave their tribes and seek their fortunes elsewhere. Many civilized nations hire asterion warriors, to serve either in the rank and file of armies headed to war or as elite guards for the noble families.



Female Names: Arianah, Asikah, Ehn, Kitain, Mijari, Nashe, Pitajah, Pureh, Samah, Yishahr

Male Names: Aranar, Bansab, Jadakir, Kikeru, Minjaros, Nashu, Pitaj, Rus, Tarin, Tikaku

ASTERION RACIAL TRAITS

+2 Strength, +2 Constitution, -2 Intelligence: Asterion are powerful and hardy, and see their somewhat limited imagination as a boon (preventing them from being easily bored or distracted) rather than a drawback.

Medium: Though tall and broad by the standards of most Medium races, asterion aren't big enough to qualify as Large.

Fast Speed: Asterion have a base speed of 40 feet.

Low-Light Vision: Asterion can see twice as far as humans in conditions of dim light.

Endurance: Asterion receive Endurance as a bonus feat.

Racial Feats: Asterion have access to a set of racial feats, abilities often associated with great asterion heroes and exceptional adventurers. These are detailed below. Due to their hefty size asterion may also select the Lunge feat without meeting its normal prerequisites.

Stand On Your Own Feet: Asterion do not do well when traveling by means other than their own two hooves. Asterion take a -2 penalty to all Fly and Ride checks.

Vigorous Charge: Asterion take only a -1 penalty to AC when charging, and deal

+1d6 damage to any melee attack made as part of a charge.

Wild Instinct: Asterion receive a +2 racial bonus to Survival checks.

Languages: Asterion begin play knowing Common and Giant. Asterion with high Intelligence scores can choose from the following: Abyssal, Aquan, Gnoll, Goblin, and Orc.

ASTERION RACIAL FEATS

All asterion are powerful and sturdy when compared to most races, but some asterion take these traits to exceptional lengths.

GORE

You have learned to attack with your horns in combat.

Prerequisites: Asterion, Con 13, base attack +1.

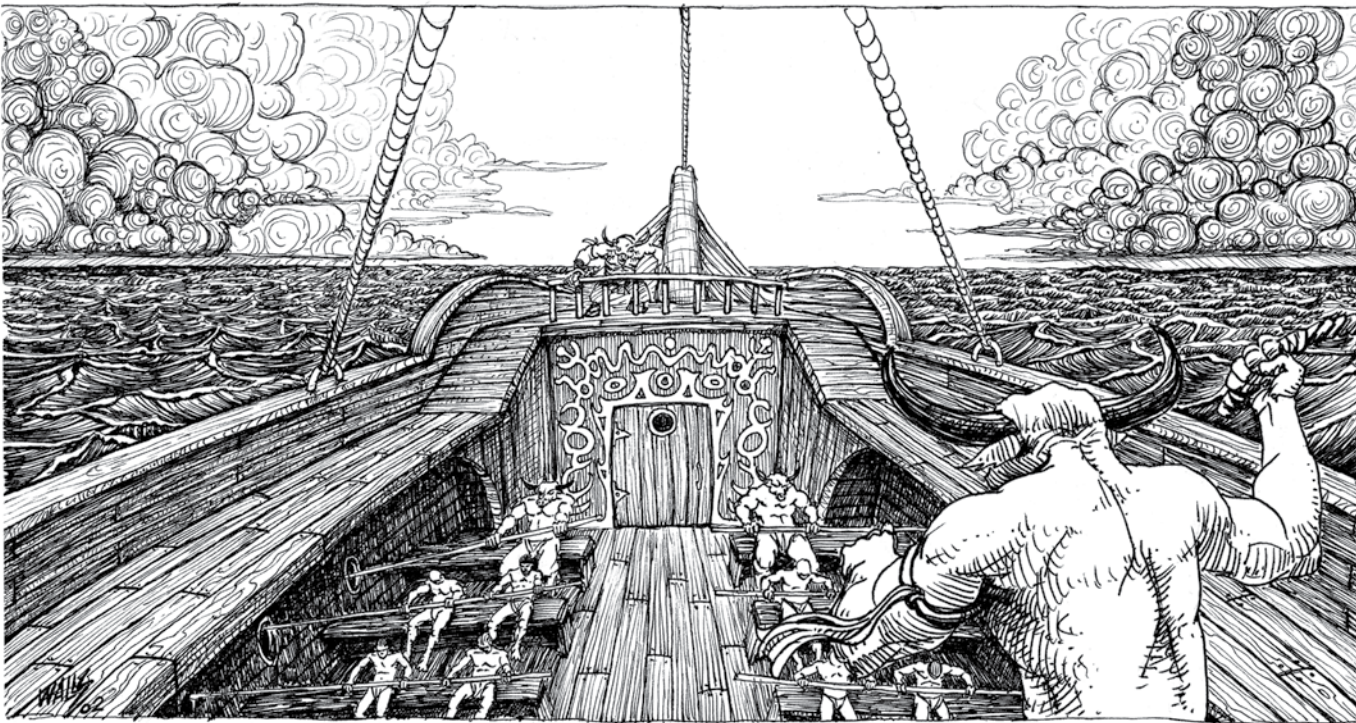
Benefit: You are able to make attacks with your horns as a natural primary attack, or as a natural secondary attack if you are armed with manufactured weapons. (For more detail on natural, primary, and secondary attacks, see the "Natural Attacks" section of Appendix 3 in the *Pathfinder Bestiary*.) Your horn attacks deal a base 1d4 piercing damage. You suffer a -1 penalty to AC on any round you make an attack with your horns.

IMPROVED STABILITY

Your heavy frame and firm footing make you difficult to move or knock over.

Prerequisites: Asterion, Con 13, base attack +1.

Benefit: You gain a +4 CMD against bull rush, trip, and overrun attacks.



UNPHASED

While all asterion are somewhat stubborn and uncreative, you take the traits to heroic levels.

Prerequisites: Asterion, Wis 13.

Benefit: Whenever you are the subject of a (compulsion) spell, you may choose to ignore the compulsion to instead repeat the same action you performed on your last round. If you attacked a target last round, you must attack the same target with the same attack. If you moved last round, you must move the same distance in the same direction. If you readied a piece of gear, you must ready a similar piece of gear. If these acts contradict each other (such as if you moved up to a target and attacked it, making it impossible for you to both keep moving and keep attacking the same target) randomly determine which element of the previous turn's action you perform. The GM has final discretion over what action must be repeated.

VICIOUS

Like the mightiest of asterion heroes, you can attack with such vigor you hurt yourself.

Prerequisite: Asterion, Con 15, base attack +1.

Benefit: Whenever you make a melee attack, you may choose to deal an additional 2d4 points of damage on a successful hit. Whenever you do this, you also deal 1d4 damage to yourself. The damage you take from this feat bypasses all defenses, protections, DR, and effects that reduce the damage you would take.

OTHER OPTIONS

If a GM chooses not to use asterion as an independent race, there are numerous other options for a race with the same approximate appearance and game rules.

Asterions are obviously designed with many similarities to minotaurs, and could be linked more closely to that monstrous race. Asterions can simply be considered a sub-species of minotaur, or could represent half-minotaur crossbreeds.

LAPITH

Lapith are bipedal humanoids with the innate ability to assume a quadrupedal form very similar to a centaur. They are the result of arcane experimentation by centaur and elf sorcerers, who used powerful magics to blend the power of centaurs with the adaptability of humans and elves. (The race's name is, in fact, the tribal name of the centaur sorcerers who first attempted this process.) The sorcerers undertook this dangerous project in the hopes of creating a race that was able to bridge the social chasm between the ancient centaur tribes, the isolated elven kingdoms, and the ever-expanding human frontier lands. Though the intent was born of noble motivations, the results have thus far been far more negative than positive.

In a few isolated communities, lapith are accepted by centaur, elf, and human alike. In these regions, they often act as go-betweens and diplomats among these vastly different cultures. Where they are trusted and respected, lapith often find ways to

delineate the woods, rivers, plains, and urban borders in ways that satisfy and benefit the races co-inhabiting them.

The most robust lapith communities can be found in areas where centaurs have begun to trade with and even live among humans. Often in these places, lapith will have risen to positions of great respect and authority. Sadly, situations like this remain very uncommon.

However in most communities, elves consider lapith to be freaks, humans see them as centaurs with magic, and centaurs think of them as cripples with a horrendous weakness for becoming bipedal. While human settlements allow lapith to live among them, they don't trust them or value their input, and often value them as little more than talking animals. Elves understand the lapith's true nature better, but believe they are abhorrent violations of the laws of nature. They do not generally permit them to live in elvish enclaves and, in extreme cases, may think it is best to kill them, simply as a mercy. Centaurs accept lapith in their ranks, but treat them as second-class citizens. Faced with these unpleasant options, some lapith move to new lands and try to conceal their dual nature, but inevitably they are seen switching forms at some point and must reveal the truth about themselves.

Lapith can adapt to live among nearly any humanoid or monstrous humanoid race (though their size simply doesn't lend itself well to predominantly halfling or gnomish communities). They often take the roles of scouts, their dual forms allowing them to pass through places larger creatures couldn't and move faster than most Medium creatures could,



when need calls for it. They slip easily into family and social groups that accept them, as lapith themselves don't care much about the race of a potential friend, ally, or lover is. Lapith can interbreed with elves, half-elves, humans, and centaurs, and the resulting offspring is always a lapith.

Physical Description: In their bipedal forms lapith appear to be humans, half-elves, or (more rarely) elves. They often have thicker hair than the race they resemble, and are always broad of shoulder and hip with long, lean legs. In spite of these minor differences, they easily pass for one a natural member of the race they resemble.

In quadrupedal form, they retain most of the same appearance from the hips up, and gain a quadrupedal body (most often that of a horse) from the hips down giving them the same general appearance as a centaur. Those lapith with half-elven or elven features may instead gain the quadrupedal body of a deer or antelope (and may have the horns of that animal growing from their foreheads while in quadrupedal form). Human-looking lapith on rare occasions have the quadrupedal body of a moose, buffalo, or bison. The coloration of lapith skin runs the same range as the races from which they are drawn, and the coloration of their quadrupedal body roughly matches this.

Society: Even in places where they are well accepted, lapith stand somewhat outside whatever community they are part of. Lapith embrace their dual-natures and

have no trouble seeing that other creatures, and even social institutions, may have more than one nature as well. Lapith do not accept the elements of their societies without question. They always seek to find what variations of form or function may exist within families, businesses, guilds, legal systems, and clans. A lapith often does not see himself as wholly part of a society, but rather as standing just outside it to act as an unbiased observer.

In some communities this constant observation and consideration is accepted and valued. In most, it is a source of friction. Lapith are often thought to be overly critical, insincere, untrustworthy, and flighty. They can earn grudging acceptance because of their willingness to work within systems even if they aren't treated as equals (as lapith can see the value of the system even while they experience its failings), but are more likely to be treated as advisors hired for specific tasks than true members of a town or clan. While lapith are no happier than any other group to be abused by the prejudice and fear of others, they often willingly stay in lands that don't grant them equal status, preferring to work for change than abandon the positive elements of a culture.

Relations: Lapith can get along with anyone, and do get along with everyone who treats them with respect and trust. Because of their origins, lapith are often mistrusted by elves, centaurs, and humans but find kindred spirits in half-elves and half-orcs. Oddly enough, many dwarves are accepting of lapith, though not generally at

first contact. But a lapith's willingness to work to earn respect, not to mention their appreciation of the practical elements of dwarven culture, allows dwarves to accept individual lapith after they've proved their mettle.

The down side of the lapith ability to see the benefits of any system is that they can be seduced by cultures of tyranny and oppression when they come to appreciate how efficient dictatorship and rule through fear can be. Lapith are sometimes found as agents of evil dragons, giants, and wizards who reward dedicated devotion to their despotic rule. As long as the lapith see there is a practical benefit in following a given system, they can be drawn into ways of life that promote abuse and cruelty, both as victims hoping to earn a better place and as overseers who see how oppressing certain individuals benefits the society as a whole.

Alignment and Religion: Their dual nature and open acceptance of many different ways of doing things makes most lapith neutral in at least one aspect of their alignment. Lapith frequently find themselves playing devil's advocate for the actions of both their allies and their enemies, and sometimes talk themselves into a world view so different that their own alignment changes. Lapith are drawn to gods with two (often opposed) aspects, such as gods of birth and death, night and day, or farming and hunting.

Adventurers: As a race created to bring together opposing cultures, it's

unsurprising that most lapith spend at least some of their lives as adventurers. Some continue to seek to succeed at their racial purpose, seeking to gain the respect, power and contacts needed to forge peace between different cultures. Others simply spend lives as traveling mercenaries so they can find a place to settle down, comfortable with the idea of wandering to find a place to settle down. Lapith may also be drawn into a life of danger to protect the communities or friends they have come to trust and depend on, seeing no conflict with the idea of killing and existing with danger in order to preserve the lives and safety of others.

Female Names: Agava, Baurbet, Dahla, Gaia, Gauda, Heimsa, Kahina, Mauret, Thabet, Umidia

Male Names: Aberdal, Avussan, Banos, Galuss, Iscalas, Mastan, Oesalecs, Oxynt, Tabat, Zalesan

LAPITH RACIAL TRAITS

No Ability Modifiers: In their biped form, lapith have no particular strengths or weaknesses.

Medium: In their bipedal form, lapith are Medium and have no bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Norman Speed: In their bipedal form, lapith have a base speed of 30 feet.

Adaptable: Lapith are born able to see multiple points of view, in part because they themselves experience life in two different ways. As a result, lapith are good at understanding the motivations of others, and finding common ground with them.

Lapith gain a +2 racial bonus to all Diplomacy and Sense Motive checks.

Unmounted: Lapith never receive Ride as a class skill. If a class would give a lapith Ride as a class skill, the lapith instead receive Acrobatics or Swim as a class skill (player's choice).

Racial Feats: Lapith have access to a set of racial feats, abilities often associated with great lapith heroes and exceptional adventurers. These are detailed below.

Formshift (Sp): As a standard action, you can assume the form of a centaur (though your appearance may vary from a typical centaur, as noted under Physical Description, above). This acts as a transmutation (polymorph) spell with a spell level equal to half your character level. You retain the quadrupedal form until you take a move action to change back to your normal shape. You may use this ability once per day, plus once for every four full character levels you possess. The head and torso of your quadrupedal form matches the head and torso of your bipedal form.

While in quadrupedal form, unlike a normal centaur, you do not have a natural hoof attack and have only a 40-foot move rate (though you can change this with the Stamp and Swift Form feats detailed below). You retain all your racial lapith abilities and gain a +2 bonus to Strength and Dexterity, plus darkvision with a range of 60 feet. You also automatically gain the centaur Undersized Weapons ability.

LAPITH RACIAL FEATS

Though all lapith can assume a centaur form, some have greater command of their quadrupedal form than others of their kind.



CENTAURIAN COMBAT

You are adept at moving through combat in your quadrupedal form.

Prerequisites: Lapith, Acrobatics 1 rank.

Benefit: When you are in your quadrupedal form, once per round when you are hit by an attack of opportunity in combat, you may attempt an Acrobatics check (as an immediate action) to negate the hit. The hit is negated if your Acrobatics check result is greater than the opponent's attack roll.

Special: This feat counts as Mounted Combat for feat prerequisites. Any feat you take that has Mounted Combat as a prerequisite you may use when in quadrupedal form, but not when riding a steed. (If you have both Centaurian Combat and Mounted Combat, you may use mounted feats both in quadrupedal form and when riding a steed.)

EXTRA FORM SHIFT

You can change forms more often than most lapith.

Prerequisites: Lapith.

Benefit: You gain one additional use of your racial formshift ability each day.

Special: You may take this feat more than once. Its effects stack.

IMPROVED STAMP

You have improved your ability to fight using your hooves.

Prerequisites: Lapith, Str 13, base attack +1, Stamp.

Benefit: The base damage of your natural hoof attack increases. You can either make

two natural secondary attacks with a base damage of 1d6, or a single natural secondary attack with a base damage of 1d8.

MIGHTY FORM

When you change shape, you become a powerful version of your new form.

Prerequisites: Wildshape class ability or lapith race.

Benefits: When you take on a new form with the wild shape class ability or the formshift lapith racial ability, your new form has a +2 bonus to Strength.

Special: You may select this feat once every eight levels (once when you are 1st–8th level, again when you are 9th–16th level, and so on). Its effects stack.

STAMP

You have learned to attack with your hooves in combat.

Prerequisites: Lapith, Str 13, base attack +1.

Benefit: You are able to make an attack with your hooves as a natural secondary attack. Your hoof attacks deal a base 1d6 bludgeoning damage.

STOUT FORM

When you change shape, you become a resilient version of your new form

Prerequisites: Wildshape class ability or lapith race.

Benefits: When you take on a new form with the wild shape class ability or the formshift lapith racial ability, your new form has a +2 bonus to Constitution.

Special: You may select this feat once every eight levels (one for characters 1st–

8th level, twice for characters 9th-16th level, and so on). Its effects stack.

SWIFT FORM

When you change shape, you are as swift as a true centaur.

Prerequisites: Lapith.

Benefit: When in quadruped form, you have a base move of 50 feet.

OTHER OPTIONS

Lapith can be presented as the natural result of interbreeding between centaurs and humanoid races, or as a totally separate species that simply has a shapeshifting ability. Also, rather than being the product of mortal arcane magic, lapis could be the result of some god or powerful angel's efforts to bring together worshipers of differing races. Alternatively, lapith might just be a group of centaurs with a long tradition of arcane magic use or druidic religion, where the ability to change shape has over time bred into their bloodline.

PIPER

Pipers are the offspring of satyrs that, for various reasons, aren't full-blood satyrs. Most pipers are the children of druids who had dalliances with satyrs, which leads many to speculate that their hybrid appearance is a result of the druids' shapeshifting abilities instinctively attempting to make the new life match the mother's form. A few other pipers are known to have come from satyrs who were transformed into females and then gave birth, suggesting that a female satyr isn't quite the same species as a male

satyr. Perhaps this very difference in gender is why 75% of all pipers are female, and often born as twins.

Physical Description: Pipers are generally similar in appearance to short elves, with only a few important differences. Most notably, pipers have two small horns growing from their foreheads, and their feet are hooved. Unlike many hooved humanoids, piper's general leg structure is not changed, appearing elven all the way down to the ankle. The foot itself is a bit leaner and, rather than ending in toes, ends in a delicate, curved, split hoof. Piper's naturally walk in a tiptoe stance, as if always lifting themselves onto the balls of their feet. Pipers can easily and safely run over rough terrain barefoot, but some prefer to conceal their hooves in specially constructed boots or shoes. (Such footwear cost 5gp extra, and must have a very tall heel to keep the piper's foot comfortably elevated. Pipers wearing these often claim they are cavalry boots—designed to keep their feet in stirrups—or dancer's boots).

Society: Like half-elves, pipers rarely gather in large enough numbers to form their own societies. They most often settle in small, loosely-knit groups such as clans of druids or elven scout outposts. These groups have strong interpersonal relationships and an abiding respect for independence, traits that pipers strive to maintain even when they travel into the broader world. Pipers are, in some respect, always seeking to build tiny communities around themselves



and populate it with friends and loved ones. Acceptance with and loyalty to a small community is the norm for pipers, and they generally assume those qualities will be echoed in anyone they choose for their surrogate family as well.

Relations: Pipers are well accepted by elves, half-elves, gnomes, and halflings. Indeed, pipers and gnomes get along so well that more than one scholar has sought in vain for some indication their origins are somehow connected. Pipers often suffer unfortunate fates at the hands of orcs and half-orcs, who for some reason find them particularly objectionable. Pipers forced to spend time with such groups, though, still struggle to find acceptance and forge some kind of family unit.

Dwarves and humans are often wary of pipers, but outright hostile toward them. Because pipers have a natural knack for music and are often spellcasters, humans and dwarves tend to see them as potential troublemakers. Dwarves, on the other hand, see pipers as naive (or worse, stupid). This stems from pipers' tendency to assume that they are trusted and loved to the same degree they trust and love their own companions. The effort that pipers immediately put into forging close relationships with their neighbors and business partners often exacerbates these stereotypes, and can result in dwarves and humans to find a piper to be clinging and petulant.

Whenever a piper gains the trust and friendship of another person, no matter what race, the piper considers that bond as strong as if the two were flesh and blood kin.

Alignment & Religion: Pipers can be very strongly shaped by the beliefs and ethics of those who raise them, so most worship gods that attract many druid followers—those that seek a balance between the elements of civilization and nature, as well as law and chaos. However, not all pipers are raised in such rural environments, and some pipers leave their homelands precisely because they never feel they fit in. While most pipers are essentially good-hearted, those who give up on ever finding the acceptance they crave can become dangerously bitter. Some give up the cause of good in an effort to bond with companions who are, themselves, cloaked in darkness.

Music is another strong motivator for pipers, and many end up worshiping gods of song, dance, and drum even if, in their youth, they favored more nature-oriented gods. Music can also draw pipers along moral paths, depending on what crowd they fall in with. A piper spending time with good-aligned bards or lillends is very different than one drawn to the fell song of banshees and harpies.

Adventurers: Pipers are, at heart, musicians. They often leave their homes in search of inspiration (if performers) or new sights and sounds (if devotees). Coupled with this search is a largely subconscious desire to forge a new family group that is better in synch with the piper's personality than the friends and neighbors at home (who, while beloved, never really understood the young piper). Some pipers feel a need to prove themselves—to take up



careers such as gladiators or bodyguards just to prove they are not bound by the natural inclinations of their heritage.

Female Names: Aedynn, Branwyn, Brenci, Esselt, Gwencyn, Keyna, Llyrann, Perem, Rhiann, Urielle

Male Names: Aineyr, Cador, Drustan, Gest, Hael, Maelhoc, Myrdden, Rhyydech, Taliesin, Vorcant

PIPER RACIAL TRAITS

+2 Dexterity, +2 Charisma, -2 Wisdom: Pipers are lithe and personable, but tend towards rash and impulsive actions.

Medium: Pipers are short by human standards, but not short enough to qualify as size Small.

Normal Speed: Pipers have a base speed of 30 feet.

Born Performer: A piper gains a +2 bonus to any two Perform checks of the player's choice.

Racial Feats: Pipers have access to a set of racial feats, abilities often associated with great piper heroes and exceptional adventurers. These are detailed below.

Mystic Voice (Su): Piper spellcasters have a natural magic in their voice and must use it as an element of all their spellcasting. The additional magic imbued in their voice means a spellcasting piper never has to worry about somatic components, and ignores the somatic component of any spell. However, pipers cannot cast spells without singing out verbal components. Even spells that normally do not have verbal components gain them when cast by a piper, and pipers

cannot use the Silent Spell feat. Further, a piper cannot cast such spells quietly. It is not possible for a piper to make a Stealth check when casting.

Soul of Music: Music is part of a piper's sustenance as surely as food, sleep and air. A piper must have music. Being prevented from performing or listening to music has the same effects as starvation. (Details on starvation can be found in the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*.)

Languages: Pipers begin play speaking Common and Sylvan. Pipers with high Intelligence scores can choose from the following: Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Gnomish, Goblin, and Orc.

PIPER RACIAL FEATS

Though all pipers have a mystic connection to music and enchantment, they can expand the power of this connection with practice and devotion.

COMPELLING

Weaving tall tales and spinning yarns is something you do quickly and naturally.

Prerequisites: Piper, Deceitful.

Benefit: You can make a Bluff check that would normally be a standard or full round action as a move action. You may do this a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Charisma modifier (minimum 1).

CHARMING

Your natural power to charm is considerable.

Prerequisites: Piper, Cha 17.

Benefit: You gain the domain powers (though not the spells) of the charm domain.

For purposes of these powers, treat your character level as your cleric level.

ENCHANTING VOICE

Your voice magnifies the power of your enchantment spells.

Prerequisite: Piper, Cha 15.

Benefits: You gain a +4 bonus to all Charisma-checks and Charisma-based skill checks made against subjects currently affected by an enchantment (charm) or enchantment (compulsion) spell you cast.

SPELLSINGER

You can funnel magic back into your song or other performance.

Prerequisite: Piper, Cha 13, able to cast 1st level spells.

Benefit: As part of the action to make a Perform check, you can channel the power of a spell into your presentation to magically augment it. Expend a prepared spell or spend a spell slot. Your Perform check gains an enhancement bonus equal to the level of the spell or spell slot expended.

STATUESQUE

The magical, fey power of your perfect and dramatic proportions, along with your grace and assurance, allow you to cause observers to pause just by striking a pose.

Prerequisites: Piper, 13 Con, 13 Dex, 19 Cha.

Benefit: As a move action, you can strike a pose. (While this is clearly a conscious choice on the part of the player, pipers often strike a pose as a subconscious preparation for further action.) Any foe with an Int of 3 or more that is able to see you must make a Will save with a DC of 10 + your Charisma modifier + 1/4

your character level. On a failed save, the foe is staggered for 1 round. An individual can only be forced to make a single saving throw every 24 hours by this feat—after that it is immune to further exposure for 24 hours.

You may use this feat a number of times per day equal to your Charisma modifier.

OTHER OPTIONS

Pipers can have fiendish origins just as easily as fey ones. It's not hard to see how small horns, hooves, and alluring voices could come from succubi or other demons of temptation. Indeed, such fiendish individuals might claim to have satyr ancestry just to deflect investigations into their true background. Pipers might also be the natural result of druids shapeshifting while pregnant, with no interaction by satyr parents at all. Given that polymorph spells generally lack the power to create fey, pipers could also be a mad wizard's experiment, a stepping stone in his quest to transmute people into dryads, sprites, and brownies.

HOLY HORN CAPS AND MAGIC HORSESHOES

Both asterion and lapith can gain natural attacks, which will inevitably lead players to seek to increase the effectiveness of such attacks with magic items. Leaving aside the practical impact that wearing +1 *flaming horn caps* might have on a character's coiffure, this is a reasonable desire. Magic items of this type are placed on the character's natural weapon and grant attacks made with that weapon the benefits of enhancement bonuses to attacks and damage, and other special weapon abilities. A GM wishing to balance such items can take one or two routes when pricing them.

The first is to have such items count against a specific body slot, then price them as magic weapons. Taking this route, a set of +1 *flaming horn caps* counts against the head slot and cost 8,000 gp. Similarly +2 *holy horseshoes* take the feet slot, and cost 32,000 gp. It's important to note that the

benefits of these items apply only to the specific natural attack they are mounted on. An asterion monk with +1 *flaming horn caps* gains no benefits from the horn caps with any unarmed attacks other those made using his horns.

The other option is to simply have characters buy an *amulet of mighty fists*, which applies to both unarmed and natural attacks. While this is more expensive and not particularly cost-effective for most characters (monks being the obvious exception), it's more consistent with the standard game rules.

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