

FERRAN FLYERS



Of all the people of the Known Lands, none are as adaptable, versatile, or determined as the ferrans. Created by arcane means almost a thousand years ago, the ferrans have gone on to become one of the most ubiquitous peoples of Aden, and have managed to find a home in virtually every corner of the Known Lands. It is a rare enterprise indeed that does not involve at least one ferran at some point during its undertaking; they are valued not only for their adaptability under adverse conditions, and their ferocity in battle.

The sneaks, brutes, and predators described in *Thunderscape: the World of Aden* represent the vast majority of all mammalian ferrans, just as mammalian ferrans represent the overwhelming majority of their race, with perhaps one in one hundred born of a different branch. Of those other mammalian ferrans that exist, one of the most common (although this is very much a relative term) are the ferran flyers. Bat-ferrans are the most common of this sub-species, although before the Darkfall the zoology department of the Celestial College in Aramyst had documented lemur-ferrans, phalanger-ferrans, and squirrel-ferrans who fell into the same category. Smaller and less physically hardy than brutes and predators, ferran flyers have more in common with ferran sneaks and are often paired with them due to their similar skills.

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TIMELINE OF MAJOR FERRAN EVENTS

YEAR 332 – After a lifetime of experimentation and failed attempts, a powerful wizard in Aramyst succeeds in her attempt to create a hybrid of men and animals. These creatures, which the wizard names ferrans, are intended to be like men in form, but slightly smaller and less intelligent, making them a perfect race of servants. The experiment is more successful than anticipated, however, and unbeknownst to their creator, the ferrans are longer-lived and more intelligent than first realized by their creator.

YEAR 336 – Octavia Belua, the creator of the ferran race, realizes the true depths of intelligence possessed by her creations and recants her desire to maintain them as servants and slaves. Her opportunistic son Contemtus, however, is far from compassionate, and has his mother committed to an asylum for the elderly where she lives out the remainder of her life.

Contemtus Belua soon increases the production of ferrans by a large degree, intending for them to serve not only as servants but as soldiers and laborers as well. He begins subjecting all ferrans to excruciating mental conditioning to break their will and strictly limits their interbreeding.

YEAR 416 – Nearly a century after their creation, much of which has been filled with oppression and subjugation by the people of Aramyst, the ferrans rise up and turn against their masters in a massive revolt that catches the nation's leadership completely unaware. The revolt spreads like wildfire, leaving the Celestial College afraid to turn their remaining ferran troops against the rebels for fear of losing them as well; this leaves them with virtually no options for defense other than hiring large numbers of mercenaries, a particularly expensive proposition.

YEAR 422 – With popular opinion turning against the Celestial College and its sponsorship of the Belua family as well as others responsible for overseeing the ferrans, family patriarch Luesti Belua takes drastic action. He enters into an infernal bargain and unleashes an arcane plague intended to devastate the ferran population. Unfortunately the plague is not as virulent as believed, and only truly affects the reptilian, amphibious, and avian branches of the race, leaving the mammalian branch largely unharmed.

YEAR 424 – With the attempt to purge the ferrans via disease having failed, the Celestial College offers peace to the ferran rebels in exchange for handing over their leader, the raven-ferran Sonerus, to be tried as a war criminal. Although Sonerus is willing, his people refuse and the war continues. Delegations from other nations, including Arasteen and Yzeem among others, make it clear that if the conflict continues, they will offer support to the oppressed ferrans. The Celestial College has little choice but to offer amnesty to Sonerus and his people, officially ending the War of Beasts and granting the ferrans full status as citizens of Aramyst.

A DIVIDED PEOPLE

The ferrans are Aden's most variegated people, a trait that was very much by design when they were first created centuries ago. Octavia Belua foresaw a race that was so diverse it could fulfill virtually every menial need in Aramyst society, freeing its citizens to focus on bettering themselves through education and arcane practices. Naïve but well-intended, Belua recognized that the ferrans would also finally give her homeland a strong military presence that could deter the constant threat of raiders from the Sundered Desert and the High Steppes to the west and north, respectively. Her original intent was to create a minimum of three separate branches of the ferran people, with different specific purposes in mind and suited to their physical capabilities.

Mammalian ferrans were the first to be successfully developed and were always intended to be the most numerous of their people. Adaptable and hardy, the mammalian ferrans would serve as the rank and file of Aramyst's new military forces, their savage fighting style and fearsome appearance making up for their lesser numbers than most other nations' armies. They were also suitable to a host of domestic duties, including but not limited to physical labor, household servitude, and bodyguards.

Reptilian ferrans were far fewer in number than their mammalian cousins, owing largely to their more limited range of possible roles. While some of the more powerful sub-species, such as crocodile-ferrans and the like, did serve a battlefield role, particularly along coastal regions or wetland areas, most were relegated more toward domestic roles. Their longer lifespans and cooler temperament made them suitable to roles as household servants and valets of various types, and soon became a symbol of status among the wealthier class in Regora and other major cities.

Avian ferrans were less numerous even than reptilian ferrans and were largely intended to serve as scouts or couriers. For reasons not fully understood, avian ferrans were psychologically much more capable of resisting the newborn conditioning the entire race was subjected to, and as a result a much higher percentage of their population flocked to the rebellion. The leader of the ferran rebellion, Sonerus, was a raven-ferran, which perhaps is one of the reasons that the plague so effectively targeted them, a failed attempt to kill the rebellion's leader.

Amphibious ferrans were by far the least numerous of all the different ferran branches, existing in very small numbers and created for special purposes. Most served the Celestial College along the Aramystian coastline, gathering rare materials from the ocean floor for use as arcane reagents and the like. There were rumors at some point early on during the War of Beasts that there had been an attempt underway to take the creation rituals of the amphibious ferrans and create fully aquatic ferrans, but if this was ever successful it never became public knowledge and it is assumed any precursors of this branch of the race died out during the conflict.

Those individuals labeled ferran flyers are a small subset of the mammalian branch of the ferran race. There is a tremendous amount of variability among ferran flyers, more so even than



the other types of ferrans that exist in large numbers throughout the Known Lands. Their name is something of a misnomer, as only a few are capable of true flight. Even among the most common manifestation of ferran flyers, bat-ferrans, some are born more humanoid with others, and thus with somewhat more limited capabilities in the air, while their more bestial kin have greater airborne ability.

CURRENT STATUS

Outside of humans, ferrans are the most populous race in the Known Lands, and have spread to virtually every corner since their liberation in Aramyst centuries ago. While there are some lands where they have never established themselves in any real number, such as the rather isolationist Le'Ciel, they have thrived wherever they have determined to make a home for themselves. Despite the lingering antipathy between ferrans and other citizens of Aramyst, their ancient homeland was one of the nations with the highest percentage of ferran citizens up until the Darkfall. The cataclysm that destroyed that nation also destroyed the last vestiges of animosity between its people, and no one who survived the Darkfall and remains within Aramyst has the luxury of prejudice against any other survivor, ferran or otherwise.

Vanora is home to a particularly high concentration of ferrans, likely owing to the Way of the Ten Beasts that is a combination of philosophy and religion held by the overwhelming majority of all native Vanorans. Perhaps because of this, a greater number of ferran flyers can be found in the Empire of Vanora, and often serve prestigious military positions where their talents are put to great use on behalf of their Emperor.

Ultimately there are very few corners of the Known Lands where ferrans are still treated as second class citizens, meaning that ironically the world after the Darkfall treats them better than before. There are perhaps a handful of noble Aramystians who survived and, because of their relatively sheltered existence, continue to hold on to old prejudices. Likewise, the nation of Le'Ciel was spared the worst ravages of the Darkfall

and, perhaps because it was founded by Aramystian expatriates, the wealthier castes there still remain disdainful toward the ferrans as a “false people” and treat them poorly in general. This is perhaps why the ferrans have such a limited presence within Le'Ciel.

NEW MECHANICS

Ferran Flyer Racial Abilities

Ferran Flyers emulate patagia-bearing mammals, including but not limited to bats, flying squirrels, phalangers, and certain breeds of lemurs.

- ❖ **BESTIAL NATURE:** Ferran flyers may select one bonus ability from the Bestial Nature list (found in *Savage Thunderscape: the World of Aden*).
- ❖ **SPRY:** Ferran flyers begin with a d6 in Agility instead of a d4.
- ❖ **LIMITED ATTRIBUTE (SMARTS):** Ferrans in general are slightly dim and their Smarts may not advance beyond a d6.
- ❖ **NATURAL WEAPONS:** Ferran flyers possess a bite attack, dealing Str+d4 damage.
- ❖ **PATAGIA:** Ferran flyers possess patagia that allows them to glide and sometimes fly, depending upon the circumstances. They may fly at Pace 6.

EXEMPLAR CHARACTERS

Hikaru Ba-tsun, Son of the Dragon

Hikaru was born nine years before the Darkfall to parents who were already in service to the Emperor of Vanora. Both were gamekeepers who aided in keeping the Emperor's forests clear of poachers and unnatural predators, but their duties were

not particularly dangerous compared to the lot of ferrans in many other nations. Hikaru was often ill as a child, as ferran flyers like his mother frequently were in their youth, and spent a great deal of his time alongside his mother during his childhood. Early on, he developed a deep love of both the wilderness and his personal freedom, traits that he inherited from both his parents. The young bat-ferran enjoyed an idyllic existence and looked forward to joining the ranks of the Emperor's gamekeepers himself when he came of age.

The Darkfall interrupted Hikaru's plans, as they did so much throughout the Known Lands. His mother died protecting him from nocturnals, and his father was likewise grievously wounded. Hikaru dragged his father to safety, but he was crippled as a result of his wounds and died shortly thereafter, never regaining consciousness in the wake of the attack that ultimately killed him. Hikaru's father was buried for as an honored veteran in service to the Emperor, and Hikaru immediately signed up to join the Sons of the Dragon and serve in a more military fashion than he had previously intended.

During training, it was discovered that Hikaru had an unexpected affinity for piloting, likely due to his natural flying ability. That, together with his slightly higher than typical gift for magic resulted in his assignment to join the Thunder Scouts. Over time, he became responsible for patrolling the same region that his parents once did, although much larger in scale. Presently, Hikaru spends most of his time ensuring the safety and security of the Vanoran citizens of Shang, a town that has frequently been plagued by the undead even before the arrival of the nocturnals. The young ferran still greatly enjoys his duties, but is far more somber and serious than he once was, because he has seen firsthand the terrors that can be inflicted upon others if he is not thorough in the execution of his duties.

✧ Hikaru Ba-tsun

Novice Ferran flyer (bat) Male

Attributes: Agility d8 Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d4, Piloting d10, Repair d6, Shooting d6, Survival d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 4; **Charisma:** +0

Hindrances: Small

Edges: Arcane Background (Thunder Scout), Luck

Gear: Handaxe, two pistols, leather armor, thunder cycle, survival rations, 3 gold crests

Grigorina Stanislav, Professional Infiltrator

A former member of the Carrite guardsmen who serve the Church of All Saints, Grigorina earned her retirement from that august body a few years after the Darkfall, once things in Caraway had settled into a tense but manageable routine. St. Chandrey, Grigorina's home and birthplace, was as stable as could be reasonably expected, and she her time expired during a period when reenlistment was not mandatory. She took her meager pension and entered the private sector.

As an ex-guardsman, Grigorina's militant mindset and strict code of conduct left her with fewer opportunities than those who might be less morally inclined. Her skills were perfect for illicit activities, but those who attempted to entice her into such things found themselves battered and bruised and left upon the steps of the local constabulary. She took a few jobs as a sentry or a bodyguard, but found them unfulfilling and largely unworthy of her talents. Grigorina soon became greatly dissatisfied with her life and was verging upon despair when a unique offer was presented to her.

In the wake of the Darkfall, the insidious nocturnals that accompanied it, and the desperation it fostered in others, crime was increasing in St. Chandrey and throughout Caraway, with burglary in particular becoming a significant issue. A former thief turned patriot had an innovative idea to aid in preventing this phenomenon. He offered the wealthy and various government buildings a service: they could pay him to locate weaknesses in their security so that they could be fixed, giving them a much better understanding of how thieves might target them. Unfortunately, he had come largely to the end of his ability to threaten new targets, and needed a new approach. After confirming that the Church of All Saints had authorized his business and that it was not illegal, Grigorina gleefully agreed and became his partner.

✧ Grigorina Stanislav

Seasoned Ferran flyer (bat) Female

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d8, Notice d8, Survival d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5; **Charisma:** +0

Hindrances: Code of Honor

Edges: Acrobat, Combat Reflexes, Dodge

Gear: Shortsword, leather armor, Caraway crossbow, thieves' tools

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