

GALAXY PIRATES



ALIEN HAZARDS

Cascade Spores (Biological, CR 3)

The air around you shimmers and distorts, as though you are walking through a sheet of sparkling mist. Suddenly, your equipment starts to issue power warnings!

Cascade Spores are minuscule colony organisms, capable of trans-solar migration and expansion. They appear to originally hail from a world deep within Old Empire territory, but now can be found anywhere the stellar winds will carry them. On habitable planets, they tend to cluster in areas where solar radiation is highest, or where they can easily access magnetic fields (such as near poles or high atop mountain ranges). In space, they have been appearing with an increasing frequency on the exterior hulls of space stations, repair docks, and the like.

Cascade Spores feed on electromagnetic radiation, and have developed a strange method of “seeding” that radiation into objects they wish to feed from: by pushing power into an already powered object, they magnify the object’s food potential until such time as it is almost literally bursting with power. Numerous explorers, lacking knowledge or a healthy paranoia about the *Cascade Spores*, have found their battery packs exploding without warning as the hungry spore clouds feast on the literal bursts of energy. *Cascade Spores* can be mollified with small, disposable batteries in sufficient number, or temporarily chased off with applications of extreme artificial cold, such as from a fire extinguisher. The intense heat and cold of space do not seem to bother them in the slightest.

Cascade Spores have no hit points and can only be dispersed or starved, not killed via damage. They cause loaded energy weapons in a 30-foot radius to

overload and explode within 1d6 rounds of contact, unless otherwise nullified. Each weapon explodes for its maximum damage in a 10-foot radius (Reflex save DC equal to 10 + half the weapon’s item level for half). The weapon’s battery can be removed and disposed of to prevent damage to the weapon, but the battery is still destroyed unless the *Cascade Spores* are somehow chased off. The battery explodes as though it were an *Incendiary Grenade*, doing *Fire Damage* in a 10-foot radius. The Save DC for this grenade is treated as though the battery is a weapon equal to half the level of its parent weapon.

Indicators

Cascade Spores give off a faint glow, illuminating a 30ft. area around their cloud with the same effect as *Dim Light*. This glow is usually yellow, although recent sightings of space-borne colonies of the *Spores* report green, or even a red similar to most ship-board emergency lighting. In an atmosphere, the *Spores* also emit a faint hum, audible to a distance of 30 ft. (DC 15 *Perception* to notice) beyond the edges of the cloud.

Well-fed clouds exude a *petrichor*-like aroma, not unlike that of fresh earth after a rainfall. Hungry or starving clouds reek of ozone, while clouds that are near death give off an odor similar to that of rotting meat. Any of these aromas can be detected out to a range of 60 ft. with a DC 10 *Perception* check.

CASCADE SPORE LIFE SCIENCE SKILL CHECK DC'S

- DC 10** The minuscule creatures in the cloud are known as Cascade Spores, and feed on energy.
- DC 15** Cascade Spores feed mostly on electromagnetic and solar radiation. They are capable of draining batteries, often catastrophically.
- DC 20** Cascade Spores are not easily killed, but can be dispersed by the application of sudden, intense artificial cold. Fire extinguishers are the most common method of chasing them away.
- DC 25** Cascade Spores are not affected by hard radiation or vacuum, and are being found with increasing frequency on the hulls of space stations and starships.
- DC 30** Based on predicted stellar migration patterns, *Cascade Spores* appear to have originated on a world deep within Old Empire territory. No expeditions to this region of space have thus far been successful in finding any such world, however.

Cavern Bloom (Biological, CR 3+)

Small, luminous orbs cling to the surface of the smooth rock walls. As you enter the room, the light of the orbs seems to ripple, shifting color and intensity as you approach. One by one, the orbs detach from the rock and move away from you, some floating, others rolling along any available surface.

Cavern Bloom is a chimeric life form – part plant, part animal – that lives in cool, dark places. It appears to exist without feeding, gathering its sustenance from the numerous colonies of bioluminescent bacteria that inhabit its hollow, translucent abdomen. The bacteria absorb radiation of all kinds, turning the energy into fuel for the *Cavern Bloom*, while simultaneously rendering areas that would otherwise be dangerous into safe zones. Though this process takes decades, even centuries, *Cavern Bloom* do not seem to suffer the effects of aging, and colonies have been known to live so long as to become part of local lore. *Cavern Bloom* are found all over Civilized Space, and scientific research into their origins produces more mysteries than answers: they appear to be a constructed species, designed specifically to clean up radioactive fallout. Although who made them, and when, is unknown, *Cavern Bloom* share many biological similarities to creatures found in Old Empire space. *Cavern Bloom* have never thrived in captivity: attempts to relocate colonies to the Slavern home world, for instance, have always resulted in the death of the

colony within days of relocation.

When threatened, *Cavern Bloom* colonies generate intense fields of heat, as well as focused blasts of energy. The *Heat Field* is an area of *High Radiation* (Fort DC 22) that does not emanate, but instead merely fills the entire area in which the *Cavern Bloom* is found. If the *Cavern Bloom* fills a 60-foot area, the *Heat Field* fills that area with no additional range increment. The *Energy Blast* is a cone-shaped blast, focused from a point 10 feet away from the largest threat to the colony. The cone has a range of 30 feet, and does 2d6 (Fire) damage (Reflex save DC 15 for half) at CR 3. For every +1 CR, the *Energy Blast* does an additional 1d6, and the Reflex save DC increases by 2. *Cavern Bloom* fills a 60-foot area and has 30hp at CR 3, growing by 20 feet and 5hp for every +1 CR.

Indicators

Cavern Bloom colonies emit light in an area equal to ten times their CR in feet. At CR 3, this is equal to *Dim Light*. At CR 6, the illumination is equal to *Normal Light*, and at CR 12, the *Cavern Bloom* gives off *Bright Light*.

Cavern Bloom colonies over CR 5 make rhythmic sounds not unlike that of crickets, although as *Cavern Bloom* appear to reproduce asexually, the reasons for these sounds are unknown. The *Perception* DC to hear these sounds starts at 20 (CR 5), dropping to 15 at CR 7, and 10 at CR 9.

CAVERN BLOOM LIFE SCIENCE SKILL CHECK DC'S

- DC 10** The colony of glowing creatures is known by most species in Civilized Space as *Cavern Bloom*, and is mostly harmless.
- DC 15** *Cavern Bloom* is a chimeric life-form, sharing traits of both animals and plants. It is found throughout Civilized Space, although how it moves from world to world is unknown.
- DC 20** *Cavern Bloom* is sustained by the bioluminescent bacteria in its spherical abdomen, which absorbs dangerous radiation and turns it in to food for the *Cavern Bloom* organism.
- DC 25** When threatened, a *Cavern Bloom* colony generates a field of intense radiation, seeking to drive threats away from its colony site. If this fails to deter the threat, the entire colony can focus stored energy into a destructive blast, burning its attackers.
- DC 30** When a *Cavern Bloom* colony has finished devouring all of the radiation in a particular area, the colony simply vanishes in a matter of days. Other than a few dessicated husks, very few remnants of the colony remain.
- DC 35** No attempts to relocate *Cavern Bloom* colonies have ever been successful. Transplanted colonies die in a matter of days once placed into their new locations. Many exo-biologists believe this indicates that *Cavern Bloom* is an engineered species, specifically adapted to their targeted environments.

Constructor Hive (Technological, CR 4+)

A slight buzzing noise drifts into your surroundings as you approach this strangely opaque crystal. The shifting haze encompassing it expands as you get nearer, and you take note of the thousands of small, shimmering geometric shapes that make it up.

Constructor Hives are command and control nodes for large, autonomously volitional nanotech clouds known as *Constructor Motes*. They appear to be left over relics from a long-dead starfaring race, one that, in an effort to expand and colonize as quickly as possible, collapsed under its own weight and unsustainable growth. Most *Constructor Hives* are found dormant, having long ago used up the last of their power sources. In this state, the object is useful for little more than scrap or salvage, as all programming and data contained within the crystalline relic is lost. When destroyed or dormant, *Constructor Hives* are almost indistinguishable from smoothly polished, quartz crystals with minimal impurities.

Some *Constructor Hive* specimens still function, carrying out basic maintenance protocols on the various installations they were tasked with building: vast, empty constructs made of a smooth, rock-like material that shares properties with granite, volcanic glass, and plastic. Still other, rarer specimens of *Constructor Hives* are found in what is referred to as “lock-down mode,” wherein they aggressively attack any intruders into their zone of control using bug-like constructs made up of millions of their tiny assembler motes. Any functioning

Constructor Hive will aggressively defend itself if tampered with, and wipes all of its data immediately upon any compromise to its systems or attempts to remove it from its designated operations area.

CR 4 *Constructor Hives* have 10hp and 5 Hardness, and detonate in a shard-filled explosion when badly damaged. These shards are made of the same interlocking assembler motes as the rest of the *Hive* and its drones, and act as an aggressive, burrowing infestation in any living target they encounter. The *Self Destruct* blast is a 4d6 (Fire) damage explosion (20-foot radius, Reflex save DC 15 for half), and infests any targets who fail their save with *Constructor Motes*. Every +2 CR increases the blast by 1d6 and gives the Hive +10hp and +2 Hardness.

Indicators

Constructor Hives generate no sound, no heat, and do not – in themselves – move or otherwise interact with their environment. The only indicators of their presence are the hum of their *Constructor Mote* clouds, and the well-kept, fastidiously maintained, constructions and infrastructure within their control zones. Active *Hives* will not be found in run-down, lichen covered ruins: their maintenance and upkeep protocols would seem to have basic upkeep and appearance regulations at the forefront of their behaviors. Noticing the lack of debris and overgrowth near a *Hive* requires no *Perception* check: the areas are meticulously kept and well-ordered.

CONSTRUCTOR HIVE MECHANICS SKILL CHECK DC'S

- DC 10** This strangely smooth, diamond-shaped crystal formation is known as a *Constructor Hive*. They are almost always found inert and inactive, having long ago lost all power and wiped all of their data during final shutdown.
- DC 15** *Constructor Hives* are generally only found in the ruins of a long-dead or forgotten civilization, the creators of which are unknown. Active *Constructor Hives* generate clouds of nanotechnological assemblers known as *Constructor Motes*. Each *Hive* has an effective control range for its motes, and can be easily avoided.
- DC 20** *Constructor Hives* are useless when powered down, as they retain no data and become little more than inert crystal when shut down or destroyed. They also tend to explode, violently, when damaged. The motes have been known to burrow aggressively into flesh.
- DC 25** *Constructor Hives* and *Motes* seem to respond poorly to the presence of foreign machinery, such as drones, robots, and other technologies.
- DC 30** There is some evidence to indicate that the *Hives* are part of the Sagittarian invasion: their crystalline structure shares traits with the materials found in certain components in *Destroyer* robots. This evidence is circumstantial, at best.

Constructor Motes (Technological, CR 4)

Surrounding the control node of the Constructor Hive, the cloud of geometric motes convulses reflexively at your approach.

Constructor Motes are the nanotech assemblers given form and action by their control node, the *Constructor Hive*. When the *Hive* self destructs or is in danger, the *Motes* are tasked with nullifying any offensive intruders on the *Hive's* area of control – usually a 60-foot area around the main *Hive* crystal. The *Motes* coalesce into insect-like shapes, which they use to assault and infest any available target.

Against inorganic targets, *Constructor Motes* deal 1d3 damage every round until the target leaves the control area. This damage increases by +1 for every round the target remains in the control area, to a maximum of 1d3+10 per round. This damage counts as the *acid* type.

Against organic targets, the *Motes* become a more fearsome adversary, dealing not only 1d3 damage on the first round, but also burrowing in to the target's flesh, where they immediately attempt to bore through any bones, carapaces, or other structural support within the target's body. They are treated as an *infestation*, as follows:

CONSTRUCTOR MOTES

Type infestation; **Save** Fortitude DC 15

Onset immediate; **Frequency** 1/hour

Effect 1d6 hp damage + 1d3 Con damage

The *Constructor Motes* can be rendered inoper-

able by applying a focused electrical shock to the infestation points on the target (dealing 1hp of electrical damage to each of the 2d6 entry points is sufficient to halt the infestation). Some explorers have reported that super-cooling the target (or the *Motes*), or the use of a localized EMP device also proves highly effective. When nullified, the *Constructor Motes* disintegrate into millions of grains of the same type of quartz-like crystal as their parent *Hive*.

Indicators

Constructor Motes buzz like a swarm of insects, and can be heard up to 100 ft. away in the absence of background noise with a DC 10 *Perception* check. With an average amount of background noise (the sounds of wilderness, or even casual conversation), the DC increases to 20 after a distance of 50 ft. The *Motes* also generate a large amount of waste heat when going about their programmed duties.

Damaged or deactivated *Motes* are rapidly absorbed back into the *Hive* as additional construction mass for new *Motes*. *Motes* from a defunct *Hive* that were not reclaimed quickly break down into small piles of sand-like material, that may be found in the vicinity of the *Hive*.

CONSTRUCTOR MOTE MECHANICS SKILL CHECK DC'S

DC 10 The cloud of “dust” filling the roughly 60' area around the *Constructor Hive* is actually a semi-self-aware body of nanotech assemblers, known as *Constructor Motes*.

DC 15 *Constructor Motes* are only found near active *Constructor Hives*, and are usually tasked with construction and repair tasks around the *Hive*. They are not usually aggressive, unless their parent *Constructor Hive* is placed in danger or tampered with.

DC 20 *Constructor Motes* are capable of burrowing through any known material, given enough time. This includes bone, protective armor, and even the hulls of starships.

DC 25 *Constructor Motes* have been known to aggressively dismantle foreign technology straying too closely to their parent *Constructor Hive*, such as drones, robots, and weapons. They can even render heavy powered armor inoperable in a matter of minutes.

DC 30 Destroying the parent *Constructor Hive* is not enough to render the *Motes* harmless: when the *Hive* is damaged, the *Motes* often enter an aggressive state, combining into larger units to attack and destroy whatever harmed their *Hive* before they run out of power.

Vacuum Web (Biological, CR 2+)

As you enter the room, a strange, acrid tang fills your nostrils. The controls for the door are covered in a slippery, mucous-like substance that coats many of the surfaces in this area.

Vacuum Web is a quasi-organic material that exhibits numerous similarities to slime molds and the mucous generated by snails and mollusks, specifically their non-Newtonian qualities and their ability to resist the effects of extreme environmental conditions. *Vacuum Web* is frequently found in areas populated with *Voidborn*, and Xenobiologists are still uncertain whether the presence of one predicates the other, or if they are simply highly compatible life forms. Human scientists studying both phenomenon have discovered that *Vacuum Web* shares many of the same characteristics as the Nanotech virus that causes the *Voidborn*, and have confirmed the existence of a low-level energy transfer the *Web* can provide to *Voidborn* in prolonged contact with the *Web*. The *Web* covers vertical and horizontal surfaces with a thin, slightly tacky, film. Removed from a hard surface, the film is slippery and will easily fall through fingers or any porous collection medium. *Vacuum Web* breaks down and absorbs any inorganic material it is in prolonged contact with. The *Web* begins to form long, ropey strands of sticky, electrically charged material as it absorbs more raw materials.

The *Web* covers 20 sq. ft. in area, and absorbs 10kg of material every 24 hours at CR 2. The *Web*

increases by +1 CR for every additional 20 sq. ft. (3 CR at 40, etc). Beginning at CR 3, its absorption increases to +20kg per CR, and the *Web* delivers a *Shock* of 1d6 (Electricity, Reflex DC 15 for half) to unarmored targets for every +1 CR after 2. The *Web* gains +1 CR per 100kg absorbed.

Vacuum Web can repair *Voidborn* beginning at CR 3. At CR 8, the *Web* spawns a CR 6 *Consumption Jelly*, returning the *Web* to its basic CR 2 form. The CR 3+ *Web* has a pool of Hit Points equal to 1/2 the total kg of material it has absorbed in the past 24 hours, which it “feeds” to *Voidborn* it contacts at the rate of 1hp per CR/hour.

Vacuum Web has no HP, and can only be permanently damaged by way of *Plasma* or *Fire* damage. No other energy or damage types affect the *Web*.

Indicators

Vacuum Web gives off an odor similar to burning flesh, which is detectable with a DC 10 *Perception* check within 30 ft. of the *Web*. Within an enclosed environment, such as a derelict ship, the odor quickly permeates the vessel. On a ship with a working atmospheric system, the *Web* can only be detected at close range, as even simple filters will remove the odor from the air.

Vacuum Web also increases the humidity in the areas it has infested. On an average, every 2 CR worth of *Web* raises the humidity in the infested areas by approximately 10%.

VACUUM WEB LIFE SCIENCE SKILL CHECK DC'S

- DC 10** *Vacuum Web* is a thin, slime-like substance with non-Newtonian characteristics, often found forming a slightly tacky film on various surfaces in areas known to harbor *Voidborn*.
- DC 15** *Vacuum Web* can form long, sticky cobweb-like strands, which connect larger areas of the substance to one another. These strands carry a slight electric charge and can shock unwary explorers.
- DC 20** *Vacuum Web* appears to be able to break down both organic and inorganic matter. Research indicates that the mass it converts does not all go toward the *Web's* mass. The web is almost impossible to destroy, and can instantly repair cuts or tears.
- DC 25** Researchers have confirmed that the excess mass converted by the *Web* is somehow transferred to nearby *Voidborn* via unknown means, and can repair and revitalize the *Voidborn* to a small degree. This transfer is extremely inefficient. The organism can be destroyed by plasma energy, or by raw fire, such as from a torch or flamethrower. Lasers, ballistic weapons, and other energy types are ineffective against the *Web*.
- DC 30** If the *Web* is presented with enough raw material, up to and including inactive *Voidborn*, it can undergo a massive reorganization of its cellular structure, transforming into a *Consumption Jelly*.

Consumption Jelly (Biological, CR 6+)

Impossibly, the clear, gelatinous mass you trapped on the other side of the airlock has begun to seep through the still-sealed doors. With a chill, you realize that your spacesuit will fare no better.

Formed when a mass of *Vacuum Web* reaches a crucial volume, the *Consumption Jelly* is a mobile mass of the same quasi-organic fluid that comprises its *Vacuum Web* parent. It is immune to ballistic firepower, cannot be permanently cut, torn, or pierced, and is unaffected by energy types other than *Plasma* or *Fire* damage (as found in a flamethrower, a torch, a bonfire, and the like). Kinetic, bladed, and other weapons have no effect on the *Jelly*: only *Plasma* and *Fire* energy types seem to be effective.

Consumption Jelly is so named because of the transliteration from the first Old Empire science database the organism appears in. The *Jelly* was first recorded years before the first known encounter with the *Voidborn*, and as the *Jelly* has been seen consuming inactive *Voidborn*, the recent connection made by Human scientists showing that the *Jelly* and its parent *Vacuum Web* are connected to the undead scourge was not otherwise suspected.

Consumption Jelly will absorb anything it comes into contact with at a rate of 10kg/minute, including inactive *Voidborn*, radioactive materials, and otherwise dangerous objects. It does not absorb active *Voidborn*. The *Jelly* spreads itself evenly across surfaces when not in proximity to living creatures. When it detects living organisms, it gathers itself into a mass equal to 5 sq. ft. per CR (30 sq. ft. at CR

6), and actively seeks to absorb them, moving at a rate of 30 feet per round. The *Jelly* does not so much attack its prey as it attempts to smother and absorb them. Any creature touched by the *Jelly* suffers a 3d6 *Shock* (Electricity, Reflex DC 20 for half). This *Shock* increases by 1d6 and +2 DC per +1 CR.

The *Jelly* gains +1 CR per 200kg absorbed. It has the ability to repair *Voidborn* at a rate of 1hp per 10kg absorbed per minute. This mass comes directly from the *Jelly*, and can reduce its CR appropriately (but never below CR 6). *Consumption Jelly* can climb stairs, seep through all but the most effective seals, and sense targets up to 120 feet away. It has 10 Hit Points per point of CR (60hp at CR 6).

Indicators

Like *Vacuum Web*, the *Consumption Jelly* gives off an odor of burning flesh. Unlike the *Web*, the odor of the *Jelly* lingers in any room in which the *Jelly* has been present. The *Jelly* does not leave a residue or trail, so the method by which the odor lingers is currently poorly understood.

The *Jelly's* method of absorbing material means that objects such as the seals between compartments on ships, patches of flooring, and even normally sturdy bulkheads will show signs of deterioration, similar to exposure to an incredibly strong acid. These signs can be spotted with a cursory *Perception* check (DC 25), or after a concerted search for evidence of the *Jelly's* passing (DC 10).

CONSUMPTION JELLY LIFE SCIENCE SKILL CHECK DC'S

- DC 10** *Consumption Jelly* is always found in areas with a high incidence of *Voidborn*, either past or present.
- DC 15** *Consumption Jelly* can squeeze through almost any opening, even those that are normally impervious to intrusion, such as sealed airlocks, spacesuits, and the like.
- DC 20** *Consumption Jelly* carries an electric charge that is capable of killing fully grown Katar in short order. The organism is seemingly impervious to physical attacks, instantly repairing cuts, tears, and punctures. It appears to have no special aversion to the extremes of space.
- DC 25** *Consumption Jelly* has been documented as using its own mass to repair active, damaged *Voidborn*. It has also been documented consuming inactive *Voidborn* to add to its own mass. The organism can be destroyed by plasma energy, or by raw fire, such as from a torch or flamethrower. Lasers, ballistic weapons, and other energy types are ineffective against the *Jelly*.
- DC 30** While it is known that the *Jelly* can be formed from enough *Vacuum Web*, the opposite is not the case. *Consumption Jelly* will never disincorporate into *Vacuum Web*. The *Jelly* completely disappears when destroyed with fire or plasma energy.

ALIEN HAZARDS

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