

HELLFROST LAND OF FIRE

• REALM GUIDE #5 •

THE SOUTHERN OCEANS

Introduction

Due to the geographic layout of Al-Shirkuh, trade between the disparate major regions is carried across the burning interior. Yet the turbulent seas remain a vital link between cities sharing the same coastline, well-travelled routes along which men and cargoes are ferried. Despite their skill as navigators, the mariners of Al-Shirkuh avoid the deep ocean, for here dwell fearsome giants, voracious sea serpents, bloodthirsty pirates, and renegade marid jinn. For all the storytellers' tales of islands littered with gems and ancient ruins stacked with gold, only the brave or foolish set sail out of sight of land. This product's primary purpose is to provide GMs with tools for running nautical and sea-themed adventures.

Major Locales

Technically there are just three seas off Al-Shirkuh—the Southern Ocean on which lies the Caliphate and Sultanate, the Western Ocean off the Free Emirates, and the Sphinx Sea. Yet within each watery region are numerous smaller seas, their boundaries indefinable by cartographers yet well-known to mariners by their distinctive traits.

THE BLOOD SEA

Mazar, City of Eyes, is an important trade city, supplying the Caliphate with valuable pearls and jewelry, and importing gold and silver to feed its craftsmen's insatiable demand. Such rich cargoes are an irresistible lure for pirates, especially the seaborne brigands of Al-Korsar, City of Corsairs, and rapacious orcs who make their homes on remote islands. Ships heading to and from the city wait in port, forming a flotilla before braving the journey. Warships accompany each fleet, paid for by the Caliph from the taxes raised from the sale of the cargoes. Rightfully wary of engaging a heavily defended fleet, pirates shadow the ships' passage at a safe distance, waiting for a lone vessel to become separated in a storm or fog (magical or mundane), or luring away the warships with a feint while a second pirate fleet strikes at the lumbering merchantmen.

THE BOILING SEA

Although the mariners of Rassilon speak in hushed tones of the Burning Sea that

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UNDERWATER COMBAT

Unless the heroes intend to spend just a few minutes underwater, any aquatic expedition is going to require *environmental protection* spells or alchemical devices. Thanks to this handy spell, pressure, temperature drop, and holding your breath can be ignored (should the spell expire while the hero is exploring deep beneath the water he is probably doomed).

Characters under the effects of the spell move at their full Pace and can run—the Swimming skill is not required. However, there are a few minor changes to keep in mind.

- * Acid, coldfire, fire, and heat spells do not function as effectively. Reduce damage dice by one die type (so 2d6 becomes 2d4, for example) and burst templates by one step. A Small Burst Template affects a single 1" square.

- * Electrical and sound trappings increase the damage die one step (so 2d10 becomes 2d12, for example). Templates also increase one size, to a maximum of Large. *Bolt* spells using these trappings affect a Small Burst Template underwater. Touching an electrical *barrier* requires a Vigor roll at -2 to avoid being knocked back.

- * Ice trappings do not make an area slippery. Instead, they freeze an area of water into a solid sphere (Toughness 10). These remain *in situ* for 3 rounds before melting or floating away.

- * Movement can, if the GM wishes, be handled in three-dimensions. For any encounter there will be a baseline. In many instances this will be the ocean floor. Simply use dice or poker chips to mark the number of inches a creature is above the baseline.

- * Ranged weapons or spells which launch a physical missile have their Range halved.

- * Lighting conditions drop one level (to a maximum of Pitch Black) for each 100 feet of depth below the surface if the water is clear and every 50 feet if murky. *Light* spells are the only reliable form of illumination. In murky water, the spells illuminates only a Medium Burst Template.

separates their winter-locked land from Al-Shirkuh, such stories pale in comparison to those of the Boiling Sea. Sail south from the Caliphate far enough and the temperature rises dramatically. Skin blisters, wood chars, metal soften and becomes too hot to handle, sails spontaneously combust, and the sea literally boils. Food is plentiful on the outskirts, for fish that enter the region are literally cooked alive, their lifeless bodies rising to float on the simmering surface.

Within the Boiling Sea proper, there is no sea life, at least not close to the surface. The area the sea encompasses is said to be vast, an impenetrable barrier to southerly exploration.

THE CITY OF PEARLS

Sinbad recounted how on one of his lesser voyages his crew caught a huge fish. When it was gutted, it was found to have a pearl the size of a man's fist in its stomach. That night, a terrible storm rose from nowhere, and the ship floundered. The only survivor, Sinbad was pulled down into the cold deeps by unseen hands.

On waking he at first thought himself in paradise, such was the beauty and opulence of his surroundings. Refreshed, he explored the palace in which he found himself, noting the many aquatic-themed murals, mosaics, and reliefs, as well as the abundance of pearls. Eventually he found himself in a throne room. Seated upon a throne carved from a single pearl larger than a man was a king of the deep, resplendent in robes spun from the finest colored seaweed, and holding a coral scepter tipped with a pearl sculpted to resemble a horse's head.

Bowing low and reciting many fine titles, Sinbad thanked his host for saving him from the sea's embrace. The king replied that Sinbad was his prisoner, for he had stolen an object of great value from the sea. Sinbad eventually escaped of course, and the tale of how he seduced the king's mermaid daughter and stole a sea horse, on which he returned to the surface, is a favorite among audiences. That Sinbad returned from this voyage with pockets full of pearls is well documented. Some historians of Sinbad claim this marked his last adventure, for the unnamed sea king cursed the mariner, though others say Sinbad continued to sail for years afterward, always remaining one step ahead of the king's vengeance.

Mariners have oft claimed to have seen lights beneath the sea, and more than one has spoken of witnessing a city bedecked in glistening pearls far beneath the waves. All fear to fish the water after seeing such visions, for what lies in the ocean belongs to the sea-king, and his has no love for air-breathers since the days of Sinbad.

THE DEAD SEA

Between the northern tip of the Horns and the islands south of Fashir, City of Water, lies the Dead Sea. It is greatly feared by mariners, but not for the countless reefs that lurk just below the surface, though these are a serious danger, evidenced by the many skeletal shipwrecks. No, the Dead Sea is feared for the undead corsairs that haunt the waters (see page 11). All mariners agree the waters are cursed, but the source of the blight exists only in legends, not proven facts.

Various tales recount the story of renegade jinn who, driven by their hatred of humans, swore allegiance to Iblis after escaping Suleiman's purge, gaining terrible powers in return for fealty to the dark deity. Others date back to the age of Hekata, when it is said one of the corrupt pharaohs sent a trade delegation to whatever lands lie to the far south. Heavily laden with gold and gems, which Hekata had aplenty, the fleet floundered in a storm and sank. In order to stop plunderers stealing his wealth, the pharaoh invoked a terrible curse on the region.

Mariners who sail along the coast keep a weather-eye out, rapidly changing course and heading for the coast as soon as an offshore wind begins to blow hard, lest they be blown into the Dead Sea and fall prey to the spectral marauders or jagged reefs.

DERIABA, THE GOLDEN ISLE

Another location known only in the stories of Sinbad, Deriaba supposedly lies somewhere at the edge of the expansive Southern Ocean. Its citizens, long vanished by the time the roguish mariner visited, lived in houses and palaces covered in beaten gold, ate off solid gold plates using gold cutlery, drank from golden goblets, wore garments spun from gold threads, and so on. Sinbad's account makes it crystal clear that gold was more abundant than any other material, and was worked with a degree of skill not found in the great cities of his time.

Those inclined to treat the wondrous tales of Sinbad with scepticism argue the story relates not to a fabulous, treasure-laden city, but to an island boasting a productive gold mine. Who may have built the mine is open to debate, but the Kingdom of Magor is the most likely candidate, for its mighty rulers held power along the southern coast before the jinn came and were said to be rich beyond measure.

Reaching the island pushed Sinbad's nautical skills to the limits, for the winds and currents were fierce, and would irresistibly drive ships onto the jagged rocks that surrounded Deriaba. Scores of wrecks protruded from the ocean, testament to the greed of men and the dangers of the waters off Deriaba.

While Sinbad returned richer than ever, he spoke of a terrible curse laid down long ago. Such are the riches of Deriaba that greed strikes the hearts of even the most modest man, consuming them with a lust for gold that breaks the strongest bond between friends, and turns thieves into murderous jackals. Thus, the natives of Deriaba needed no traps or monsters to guard their precious gold, for the curse would turn brother against brother, and ensure none survived to tell of the island.

THE GELATINOUS SEA

Off the shores of the eastern Salt Marsh, in the western waters of the great bay on the shores of which sits Muglad, City of Woes, the sea grows steadily thicker and thicker, eventually becoming an impassable obstacle to ships and firm enough to walk on. The surface is not truly solid, wobbling and sinking underfoot, but passage is possible. Rising above the center of the spongy mass is a rocky island, atop which stands a tall tower of ancient origin, a pillar of coral extended skyward with great blocks of blue stone not found anywhere in Al-Shirkuh.

The natives of Al-Shirkuh rarely dare to investigate the structure, for there are many stories of adventurers who tried to cross the spongy water and failed. The fortunate ones were struck dead, poisoned by slimy tentacles that sprouted from the "water;" the unfortunate ones were

NEW PROFESSIONAL EDGE

BROTHERHOOD OF SINBAD*

Requirements: Novice, Agility d6+, Smarts d8+, Spirit d6+, Boating d6+, Persuasion d6+, Survival d8+

The hero is a member of the Brotherhood of Sinbad, an organization of mariners, explorers, storytellers, rogues, and swashbucklers.

Considered to be among the finest mariners, Wild Card members roll a d8 Wild Die with Boating (Extras roll a d6). In addition, the hero has +1 to Persuasion rolls when recounting stories concerning his exploits, +1 to Survival rolls in the wilds, and +1 to perform Tricks.

grappled and pulled into the gelatinous mass to die a slow death by suffocation. One story claims the tower is the refuge of a noble marid, the thick water and tentacles a deterrent to those who would disturb its sanctuary.

ISLE OF APES

According to mariners, the Isle of Apes is inhabited by simple fishermen who live in the ruins of an ancient city. By all accounts they are peaceful and friendly, tolerant of all creeds (save that of Iblis), and welcoming of strangers. Besides fresh water and dried fish, they have little to offer visitors. By day the settlement runs at a sedate pace, yet as the sun sets the inhabitants rush hither and thither, collecting their few belongings and rushing to the harbor. Here they jump into their fishing boats and rapidly row a few hundred yards out to sea, weighing anchor and lighting no lamps. Under no circumstances will they return to the island until the sun has risen.

Once the sun has passed below the horizon, strange sounds begin to emanate from the wilderness surrounding the city, the cacophony growing steadily louder as the darkness grows. From dusk to dawn, violent carnivorous apes take control of the city, smashing and destroying everything they find, and feasting on the flesh of anyone who failed to reach the safety of the open sea in time.

The natives believe the vicious apes are the descendants of the original inhabitants of the city, their line cursed by the gods in antiquity for some heinous act. By day, they lurk beyond the city walls, unable to step foot beyond the broken walls, but at night they return to take out their fury on those who have intruded into their former domain.

ISLE OF THE ELEPHANT GOD

The Isle of the Elephant God is widely regarded as a myth, for its description seems too fanciful to believe. The first tale regarding the island dates back to the time

CLERICS OF UPUAUT

The Faithful chapter in *Land of Fire* details the core aspects of the greater gods, and provides information on the clergy's duties. This entry is an expansion for the cult of Upuaut.

Training: Suleiman once said that one knows the final destination on the journey of life, but not the route one will take to get there. From the moment a novitiate joins the cult his life will be one long journey.

Novitiates are apprenticed to a cleric, following them on their travels and learning the tenets of the faith. They learn the byways and hidden routes of Al-Shirkuh, the languages and customs of the various peoples they meet, how to control a camel, sail a boat, and swim the mighty rivers.

A novitiate's final test is long and arduous. He is carried deep into unfamiliar territory through his master's *teleport* spell and abandoned. In order to earn his place as a fully-fledged cleric he must reach a predetermined distant point in a set time. Death is not unusual for those who failed to grasp the basics of their master's teachings, but the cult does not mourn them—death is just the beginning of another journey.

Prayers: Clergy are fond of sayings that involve movement. Examples include, "If the wind blows, ride it" (take advantage of your opportunities), "I am the hurricane to your wind" (an insult), "Don't fall into the sea if you can't swim" (don't start something you can't end), "Winds blow counter to what ships desire" (you don't always get what you want), "He walks like the wind" (his life has no direction/purpose), "He swims like a fish in water" (he's in his element), and "He who walks slowly arrives first" (think before you act).

Adventures: In their role as clerics of the god of travel, missions such as carrying missives between cities, guiding caravans, blazing new routes through the desert, and exploration of ancient ruins unseen by living eyes in centuries have a strong appeal. Raids against slavers, who deny others freedom, and bandits and pirates, who hamper free movement, are popular combat adventures.

Character Guidelines: Clerics of Upuaut are very much wanderers, accustomed to life and travel in the hostile wastes. Vigor is the dominant attribute, for it helps one cope with the many rigors of long-distance travel. Knowledge (Area) represents the places you have visited, and a few skills at d4 are often more use than a single focus. While combat skills are vital for fending off the many dangerous denizens of the desert, Survival will keep you alive longer. As worshippers of the god of travel, Fleet Footed is a perfect Edge, and a few dice in both Boating and Riding will make journeys less arduous.

of Sinbad the Sailor, who set foot here during his third voyage. According to Sinbad's chroniclers, who recorded his fantastic adventures, he was shipwrecked in a storm. The sole survivor among the crew, Sinbad explored the island on which the gods had mercifully decreed he be washed up.

Deep within the jungle that swathed the entirety of the island save for a thin strip of sandy beach, Sinbad discovered an enormous structure made out of countless elephants' tusks fixed together with nails made of the same valuable material. Daring to penetrate the interior, ignoring the gaze of towering, armored, elephant-headed statues armed with vicious-looking weapons, he found a colossal statue of a four-armed, elephant-headed figure in a seated position, no doubt the focus of worship for an ancient and long-forgotten cult. Several days later, Sinbad set sail on a raft made of elephants' tusks, his shirt acting as a sail. Although he had several more adventures before he finally made safe port, his raft eventually bore him home, whereupon he sold the ivory for a small fortune.

ISLE OF SCHOLARS

Sinbad's story makes it clear this island lay in the Southern Ocean, somewhere "beyond the charts of men." Given that mariners in his day preferred to stick close to land, this vague reference could mean the island lies as close as 50 miles off the shores of the Caliphate or Sultanate.

Driven south by a storm, the ship eventually reached calm waters near an island bedecked in trees. Seeking fresh provisions and timber with which to make repairs, the crew landed and began to explore. Hacking through the dense undergrowth, they found a stone temple of uncertain age. Inside was not treasure, but hundreds of glass jars, each containing a brain suspended in a thick fluid. The men were rightly afraid, for they feared cannibals and head-hunters. Sinbad told them the brains were naught but the remains of scholars long dead, and that they rested here out of honor for their great minds, though he knew not the truth, and spoke only to allay their rising panic.

In the center of the temple was a circular hole, stone-lined and fathomless. Of this the men were more afraid, for the stone carved tentacles that surrounded the dark void spoke of horrors known only to the gods. So it was the men returned to the ship, leaving only a small party ashore to fell and prepare timbers.

Come morning, the work party could not be found at their camp. After a lengthy search, their lifeless bodies were discovered outside the temple. Each had its cranium carefully cut open and its brain removed. The marks on their faces spoke of tentacles gripping them tight while the surgery was performed. Venturing into the temple, Sinbad discovered a dozen new jars, each containing a fresh human brain. With that, the mariner ordered his crew to depart the island, for the foe they faced was no doubt keen to make trophies of them all.

Considered the most horrifying of Sinbad's tales, and widely regarded by modern audiences as a warning not to sail too far into the oceans, it is made worse by the epilogue, in which Sinbad proved the veracity of his story by revealing the only artifact he had claimed from the island—a human brain in a glass jar (supposedly that of his first mate). By all accounts, the Sultan had it destroyed soon after, saying that no good could ever come of possessing such a thing.

THE SEA OF FEAR

From the island of Hillah to the eastern edge of the jungle-infested coast is a line, visible on no map, yet all mariners know when it has been crossed.

At first sailors who sail this far west feel uneasy, glancing nervously over their shoulders or shuddering without reason. Should they continue westward, the uneasy feelings turn to unexplained fear, finally becoming sensations of utter terror, the uncontrollable sensation stripping away the fragile wall of sanity behind which men shield their minds. Most turn back long before this point, for once the first touch of fear is felt, mariners know that to continue onward is to invite insanity, perhaps even death. More than one captain desperate to plunder the fabled cities of gold that lie within the jungle has died at the hands of a mutinous crew.

In game terms, for every 100 miles the ship sails beyond the imaginary line, all crew must make a Spirit roll to avoid Fear at the next sunset. Extras make a Group roll. For each additional 100 miles after the first, a cumulative –1 penalty is applied. Those who fail are subjected to Fear until they set foot on land and remain out of sight of the ocean for 24 hours or flee eastward beyond the so-called Sea of Fear. Once a mariner is subjected to Fear, subsequent Spirit rolls are made to avoid Terror, the penalty increasing *ad infinitum* until the unfortunate mariner dies of heart failure from the unnameable terrors that plague his mind.

The origin of the fear has long been debated by sages and mariners. Jinn are frequently blamed, though none have ever been encountered in the deep ocean. Others suspect there is a curse on the sea, laid down long ago by the lizardmen who call these waters home. Certainly, they seem unaffected by the terrors that other races feel.

THE SEA OF GRASS

South of Cannibal Island, the sea is covered in a thick tangle of slimy weeds. Navigation through the Sea of Grass is next to impossible, the weed fouling the rudder and acting as a barrier to forward motion, but mariners are still drawn here. Storytellers recite that sea horses (see page 12) graze on the thick vegetation, and that beneath the waves are many sea giant palaces, the latter bedecked in perfect pearls and exquisite shells.

Eternally ensnared in the morass are dozens and dozens of ships, their unfortunate crews dead of thirst or slain by their own hand before the madness that pre-

cedes thirst claimed them, the hulks slowly rotting, their non-perishable cargoes just waiting to be plundered. Unfortunately, these ships are not on the fringes of the Sea of Grass, for overtime they are drawn inexorably toward the center, clumping together in a ship's graveyard. Stories of seaweed monsters and animated tendrils of vegetation are plentiful among mariners.

THE SEA OF SONGS

Mariners traveling to Jirja, City of Colors, take painstaking care to avoid sailing too close to the small cluster of islands that lie west of Djanet, willing anchoring for days on end or taking a lengthy detour if the winds are blowing in the wrong direction. Few will even sail within sight of the rocky islands without first blocking their ears with plugs of wax. It is claimed that unearthly singing can be heard drifting on the wind, the lilting tones sapping the will of men and luring them to sail toward the razor sharp reefs that surround the barren outcrops.

Some say the singing is the lure of a rogue jinni (the species varying between a khamsin or marid depending on the storyteller). Other tales speak of mermaids who feast on the flesh of shipwrecked sailors

THE SEA OF STEAM

Traditional trade routes from the Free Emirates to Rassilon follow the coastline up past the Grazelands, and skirting the Great Swamp, Midmark, southern Vestmark (now Orcmark), and finally the Magocracy. The recent privations of orc pirates in Crystal Sound has led most merchants to head straight for the ports of the Magocracy, braving the open sea.

Unfortunately, their route takes them though the Sea of Steam, an expanse of water swathed in near-permanent mist. On a good day, the mist is light and no major hazard to navigation. On a bad day, though, it envelops ships in murky gloom as dark as a moonless night, making navigation all but impossible. Each day a ship is within the Sea of Fog, the GM should draw a card. A Club means the fog is dense. Treat it as Pitch Darkness (–4). A Diamond or Heart means lighting conditions are Dark (–2). A Spade means the lighting is Dim (–1). On a Joker, the fog has failed to form and the sky is clear. These penalties apply to navigation rolls (see below).

Mariners native to Al-Shirkuh claim that Suleiman bound a powerful khamsin jinn in a copper jar and threw it into the bottomless depths. Although still bound, out of endless spite it uses its mastery over the air to confound mariners. Another tale, considered heretical by Devoted and Faithful, tells that in his dotage Suleiman made a pact with an ifrit noble he had previously imprisoned, releasing it from its shackles on the condition it warred against the strange ice jinn native to the northlands,

Innumerable pinnacles of rock jut from the water, tearing the hulls of ships that lose their way in the steam to kindling, and scattering their crews into the water to be eaten by sea serpents or taken by ferocious kreana.

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THE TRACKLESS SEA

Tales of islands covered in ancient ruins boasting fabulous treasure are as common as sand in the ports of Al-Shirkuh. Several are said to lie west of the Free Emirates, but these waters are generally avoided by wise or cautious mariners.

Nothing seems amiss about the ocean—although violent storms are frequent—until, without warning, the heavens appear wrong. The sun rises in the wrong place, the constellations are alien, and the passage of time seems erratic, with days lasting a few hours followed by the sun never setting the next. Great islands appear on the horizon, only to break up into ephemera as ships draw closer. With no reliable navigation aids to guide them, ships risk sailing around in circles until the water and food run out. No living mariner has actually encountered these conditions, but the stories continue generation after generation.

TURTLE ISLE

Turtle Isle lies in the Southern Ocean. Its exact position is open to much speculation, for there are many islands home to giant turtles—at least a dozen islands boast that name. However, when most mariners speak of Turtle Isle they are referring to a specific island, one visited by Sinbad during his second voyage.

According to the tale, Sinbad's crew mutinied. Unwilling to commit murder, they set him down on a small island on which turtles were common. Here he would live until the gods saw fit to bring him another ship.

Seeking fresh water, Sinbad journeyed into the interior. There, in a hidden valley amid the mountains, he discovered ancient ruins adorned with motifs depicting bipedal turtles. Curious (his major flaw, and the reason many of his stories occur), the fabled explorer delved deeper into the ruins, eventually finding a stairwell that descended deep beneath the earth. Amid a maze of worked corridors and chambers he discovered human-sized statues similar in form to the surface carvings, as well as a room stacked full of turtle shells made of solid gold and studded with gems.

As darkness fell strange sounds began to echo around the catacombs. Sinbad fled, taking but one golden shell with him. Fearing some supernatural menace, he quickly fashioned a rope out of vine, lashed four giant turtles together, and set to sea, using his treasure as a makeshift sail. While the latter may seem fanciful, Sinbad's wealth did grow considerably on his return.

Why Come Here?

In other Realm Guides, “here” correlates to a specific geographic region or individual city. In this supplement it refers to any of the seas and oceans of Al-Shirkuh. Unless the heroes have invested in Boating, thus implying they wish to set sail regularly, what reasons might they have for hoisting sail or manning the oars on dangerous water?

* **Travel.** While ocean travel is not without its risks, it is more bearable than trudging through the burning sands. Unfortunately, Al-Shirkuh's oceans do not connect, at least not without entering uncharted waters and sailing a lengthy circumnavigation of unexplored landmasses. Water travel is, however, a common means of transportation for heroes wishing to travel between cities in the same geographic area.

* **Orders.** Any hero might find himself aboard a ship because someone he answers to has ordered it. The character might have to escort an emissary to a neighboring city (or be the actual emissary) or deliver a message in person, guard a precious cargo, wage war against enemies, set out in pursuit of pirates plaguing the local waters, or explore a remote island on behalf of a patron, cult, or organization.

* **Duty.** This option is unlikely to occur unless the GM plans on making regular use of nautical adventures. Parties working for a merchant, hunting pirates for a living, or serving a nobleman who owns coastal lands may find their feet getting wet on a regular basis.

* **Running Away:** Some adventuring parties will make powerful enemies. Since few realms command a powerful navy, and the sea is a large place to search, the best way to escape unwanted attention is often to set sail.

Exploring

GMs looking to include nautical in their campaign should read up on the vehicle and chase rules in *Savage Worlds*. The following additional rules can also be implemented.

KNOWLEDGE (THE SEAS)

This variant of the Knowledge (Area) skill covers an understanding of currents and winds, fixed hazards such as submerged rocks or monsters' lairs, legends concerning the sea, and coastal communities and customs. As with any Knowledge (Area) skill, the wider the area covered, the more penalties are incurred when trying to use the skill to know specific details.

NAVIGATION

The seas around Al-Shirkuh are littered with wrecks, testimony to the submerged reefs that lie offshore and the terrible storms that batter the coasts. Despite these hazards, wise crews keep close to the coast, except when a storm rages, when deep water is safer territory.

Each day the captain must make a Boating roll for each day of travel. Add +2 if the ship is hugging the coast. Since all navigation requires using the sun and stars, modifiers for poor lighting also apply. The crew may make Group Cooperative Boating rolls to aid the captain.

With success, the vessel moves as expected (see be-

low). A raise increases the ship's average speed by an additional 0.5 knots thanks to good currents and wise use of wind and oars. Failure means the ship moves only half the distance—the captain may have misjudged the wind or currents, steered the ship the wrong way, before discovering his mistake or driven the crew too hard and caused them to require extensive rest breaks.

SHIP DAILY MOVEMENT RATES

Some ships use solely sails, while others employ both sail and oar for propulsion. The average speed of typical ships in nautical miles per hour (knots; equal to 1.15 land miles) is given below. This figure should be used to calculate overseas travel times. It takes into account thing such as variable wind strengths and direction, rest breaks for oarsmen, and favorable and adverse currents.

If you've created your own ships, or an Edge or spell modifies a vessel's speed, use the calculation below to work out the new average rate of hourly travel. Over short distances in known waters, the speed is double that listed as the crew can be pushed harder and the weather is more predictable.

Knots = (half rowed Top Speed + half sail Top Speed) divided by two. Retain all fractions.

For example, a galley has Top Speeds of 8 and 3. Taking half each value we end up with 5.5, which when halved equates to 2.75 nautical miles per hour.

Vessel	Knots	Vessel	Knots
Baghlah	3	River barge	1
Boom	2.5	Rowboat	1
Galley	2.75	Warship	4
Jalibut	2	Warship, Heavy	2.5

Ships

This section details ships commonly used by the mariners of Al-Shirkuh. Stats for galleys and river barges can be found in the *Hellfrost Players' Guide*. Availability codes apply to coastal and riverside communities.

BAGHLAH

The baghlah is a large, two or three-mast, lateen-rigged ship designed for deep sea travel. It has a covered cabin and hold.

Acc/Top Speed: 4/12; **Handling:** -1; **Toughness:** 16 (2); **Crew:** 30+20; **Cost:** 12,000; **Availability:** C
Notes: Heavy Armor

BOOM

The boom is a smaller, two-mast version of the baghlah, slightly slower in open waters, but more stable.

Acc/Top Speed: 4/10; **Handling:** +0; **Toughness:** 14 (2); **Crew:** 12+15; **Cost:** 8,000; **Availability:** T
Notes: Heavy Armor

FESTIVAL TO UPUAUT

COLORED SAILS DAY

Amt Yaus al-Nefar Baot Alak Arkbet

During the summer months, the prevailing winds along the coast of the Caliphate are southerlies. The hot, moist wind makes sailing difficult, for storms are frequent and the wind tries to smash ships against the towering cliffs. But as the new year begins, so the winds turn to blow from the north. Blocked by the desert, they are cool, gentle breezes rather than raging storms. This time also coincides with the start of the new fishing and trading season.

As the sun rises across the Caliphate, the local high priest rows out into the harbor or onto the river. He then drops anchor and prays to Upuaut to turn the wind in a favorable direction. Then he waits patiently for his god to grant his request. Once he feels the cool north wind, he hoists a brightly colored sail. Within minutes the wharves and jetties are shrouded behind a huge mass of brightly colored sails, flags, and pennants hoisted by their crews. Images of birds, animals sacred to Upuaut, and passages of holy texts adorn the fluttering silk and cloth. Mariners quickly set sail onto the ocean to test their crews and ship after the summer lay up in preparation for a busy year. Worshippers living inland fly colored kites to honor Upuaut.

In the Free Emirates, Colored Sails Day occurs on Amt Yaus-al-Nefar Baot Alak Paret. In summer merchant mariners rely on the warm southern winds to blow them to the ports of Rassilon, while in winter they need the howling north wind to blow their heavily-laden ships home to warmer climes.

JALIBUT

The jalibut is a small lateen-rigged ship, the type used by Sinbad in the movies. It is commonly used by merchants when coastal trading across the ocean, as it handles poorly on the open seas. Reduce Handling by 1 when more than 10 miles from the coast.

Acc/Top Speed: 3/8; **Handling:** +1; **Toughness:** 12 (2); **Crew:** 4+10; **Cost:** 3,000; **Availability:** T
Notes: Heavy Armor

WARSHIP, HEAVY

This is a large, sleek, three-mast ship, designed for ferrying troops across oceans or up rivers.

Acc/Top Speed: 4/12; **Toughness:** 20 (4); **Handling:** +0; **Crew:** 30+200; **Cost:** 35,000; **Availability:** C
Notes: Heavy Armor

Weapons:

* Trebuchet (mounted forward)

* Four ballistae (on swivel mounts)

Gods & Monsters

This section details three minor deities, eight creatures, and one NPC archetype suitable for nautical and aquatic themed adventures. See *Hellfrost Creature Guide: Kreana* for information on and stats for the shark-men, their fell deity, Carcharas, and mundane sharks.

BAKHA

Titles: Pathfinder, Walker in the Wilds, He Who Goes Before Others, the Celestial Guide, the Curious One.

Aspects: Exploration.

Affiliation: Duamutef, Upuaut.

Symbol: A map, with one half left blank.

Priesthood: Wanderers (priests); Trailblazers (paladins).

Herald: None.

Holy Days: First and last Yaus al-Nefar of each season are holy days, with those of Alak Neteru being high holy days.

Duties: To travel and explore.

Sins: (Minor) using a map, failure to travel at least 50 miles per week; (Major) misdirecting a traveler, failing to travel at least 200 miles per month; (Mortal) failing to travel at least 1,000 miles per season (200 miles in Alak Neteru).

Signature Power: *Wilderness step.*

Powers: *Bridge, environmental protection, fly, speak language, speed, teleport, water walk.*

Trappings: Air, earth, or water only.

While Upuaut enjoys all forms of travel, Bakha is the aspect drawn to explore, map, and record information about new places. In the Caliphate, he is simply a curious deity, keen to learn all he can about the universe. Cakali myths tell a different story.

In their tales, Bakha was a proud god, who boasted that he would visit and map every location in the universe. Knowing that sooner or later Bakha would discover his many secret lairs, where he was planning all manner of evil, Iblis accepted the challenge. As fast as Bakha visits new places, Iblis creates new ones or changes old ones, thus requiring the god to back over old ground. Some clerics hold that when every inch of Al-Shirkuh is mapped, Iblis will finally be brought low and made to pay for his crimes.

Bakha has no temples, and very few shrines. Worshipers use holy places of Upuaut as the focus for their faith, though this is not a requirement of the faith. Most times, a map flanked by a pair of sandals serves as a makeshift shrine. Clerics learn a variety of secret signs. These are used to mark rocks, and are most commonly employed to warn fellow clerics of dangers ahead, or to stake claims as the first cleric to reach a specific location.

The cult appeals to individuals who do not feel comfortable in society, exiles and outcasts, those stricken by wanderlust, and the naturally curious. Priests typically travel to seek new friendships, see the wonders of the

desert, or to learn new stories. Paladins, ever the more militant, offer their services to caravans as guards, go in search of monsters or treasure, investigate ancient ruins, or forge new routes through inhospitable territory. Both sects typically write travelogues of their journeys, freely donating their notes to a shrine of Upuaut or temple of Qedeset as an aid to other wanderers.

Traditionally, ceremonies take one of two forms. When receiving hospitality, the cleric is expected to grace his hosts with stories of his travels. On leaving his hosts, he is expected to give them a small gift, a memento of his visit, offered in the hope that he will one day return with new tales. To ensure they find their way back, clerics often leave a pair of sandals with their host.

Character Guidelines: To survive the rigors of travel, clerics should invest in Vigor and Survival as priorities. Boating, Climbing, Riding, and Swimming all have their uses, but none are absolutely essential. A smattering of Knowledge (Area) skills never hurts, for wise clerics learn something of distant regions before leaving home.

NU

Titles: The Old Man of the Sea, Watery One, Dweller in the Deep, Lord Beneath the Ocean, Enemy of Sharks.

Aspects: Underwater realms.

Affiliation: Apsu, Upuaut.

Symbol: A merman or mermaid.

Priesthood: Guardians of the Deep (priests); Warriors of the Deep (paladins).

Herald: None.

Holy Days: Amt Yaus al-Ittrou of each month. The day after a kreana settlement is raided is a high holy day.

Duties: To protect underwater realms against evil beings and plundering.

Sins: (Minor) harming a non-evil aquatic creature except in self-defense (except sharks, which are considered evil creatures), eating fish more than once per week, despoiling submerged ruins; (Major) killing a non-evil aquatic creature except in self-defense, taking precious objects from the sea without leaving a tribute of similar value; (Mortal) suffering Fatigue through drowning.

Signature Power: *Environmental protection* (water only).

Powers: *Altered senses*, boost/lower trait* (Agility, Vigor, Fighting, Notice, Riding, Shooting, Survival, Swimming, Throwing, and Tracking only)*, *refuge*, speed*, water walk.*

Trappings: Air and water only.

Special: Spells marked “*” only provide benefits while at least half submerged in water. If the target steps out of water, the spell’s benefit is lost, though the spell remains Maintained. A cleric who takes the Beast Master Edge may, at the GM’s discretion, be granted a sea horse (see page 12) as a companion.

A son of Apsu and Ashtart, Nu found his father’s watery realm too limited, for it comprised only freshwater. After hearing of Upuaut’s travels over the ocean, Nu decided he would follow the god of travel, exploring beneath

the waves rather than upon them. Angered that his son sought the comfort of salt water, Apsu banished Nu.

Nu expected to find an unspoiled wilderness beneath the waves. Instead, he discovered a wasteland ravaged by the servants of Carcharas, the Great Shark, who had ruled here unchecked since the dawn of time. Nu at once declared war on Carcharas and his brood. The two gods fought bitterly, for they were evenly matched. At last, Nu gained the upper hand. He was unable to kill his foe, but he did manage to imprison him in an abyssal cavern.

In honor of his victory, Upuaut granted him control over underwater movement, while Apsu forgave his son and bade him take up protection over all underwater realms. The sentient aquatic races, such as reef and sea giants, mermaids, and even sea dragons, took Nu as their patron, for he has saved them from the privations of the fearsome shark deity.

Nu has no temples or shrines on the surface world. Beneath the waves stand temples of living coral honoring the Old Man of the Sea. Here, sea and reef giants, mermaids, and other benign, intelligent aquatic races worship. Clerics of Nu are welcomed to join ceremonies, though they must personally vouch for any other air-breathers in their company.

The Old Man of the Sea, as he is most commonly called, is always depicted as a merman with a kelp beard. In his right hand he holds a trident. Around his neck he wears a necklace of shark's teeth, trophies torn from the mouth of Carcharas eons ago.

Nu's clergy protect the aquatic realm from despoilers. Their greatest foes are kreana, the rapacious shark-men who plague the warm waters in great numbers, though they may have cause to engage rogue reef and sea giants, and even renegade sea dragons on occasion. Priests are defenders of the aquatic realms, protecting benevolent beings and submerged ruins. Paladins are more aggressive, actively taking battle to those who would despoil the natural beauty of the realm. A small few are violently opposed to pearl diving.

Note that Nu's clergy have little interest in harming natural creatures—there is a natural order at work underwater as well as on land, and predation is natural. The sole exception is sharks, creatures servile to the kreana's foul deity. Similarly, a sea creature attacking air-breathing races because they have trespassed or offended Nu is not considered an enemy of the cult. Indeed, the air-breathers may well be in line for punishment from the clerics.

Ceremonies are usually held underwater. A cleric away from a pool, river, or the ocean may appease his god by pouring at least a gallon of water over his head on holy days (failure to do so is a major sin). They comprise singing and offerings of goods, the former pleasing to the ears of Nu and the latter furnishing his palace.

Character Guidelines: Clerics are most at home beneath the waves. Despite knowing *environmental protection*, clerics should have a high Swimming skill, both to avoid drowning and give them a decent underwater movement rate. Vigor is important as it aids in holding one's breath. Combat skills and Edges are essential, as the cult is primarily militaristic, despite its lack of offen-

sive and defensive spells. Alchemy, while not essential, is an Edge worth taking as it allows the cleric to provide he and his companions with the means to operate underwater without having to Maintain multiple spells.

SIRSIR

Titles: Lord of Ships, Upuaut's Ferryman, Father of Sinbad, Celestial Navigator.

Aspects: Sailors.

Affiliation: Apsu, Upuaut.

Symbol: An anchor.

Priesthood: Sea Captains (priests); Master Mariners (paladins).

Herald: None.

Holy Days: The start and end of any sea voyage is a holy day. The Day of Colored Sails (see p. 7) is a high holy day.

Duties: To steer and crew ships.

Sins: (Minor) using another form of transportation if a ship is available, getting lost at sea; (Major) committing mutiny, deliberately sinking a ship; (Mortal) being shipwrecked.

Signature Power: *Zephyr*.

Powers: *Becalm*, *boost/lower trait* (Strength, Vigor, Boating, Climbing, Swimming only)*, *environmental protection* (water only), *gift of battle**, *mend* (ships only).

Trappings: Air and water only.

Special: Spells marked "*" only provide benefits while on a ship. If the target leave the ship, the spell's benefit is lost, though the spell remains Maintained.

Upuaut's ceaseless wanderings eventually brought him to the edge of the desert and the start of the endless ocean. He greatly desired to explore the vast expanse, but knew nothing of boats or the skills required to sail them. Spying Sirsir, a fisherman, mending a net, the god asked to be ferried out to sea so that he might see what lay beyond the horizon. The fisherman at first refused, claiming that terrible storms would sink his small vessel. Upuaut allayed his fears, for he was also the master of wind, and taught him charms to calm the storms. When the epic voyage finally ended, Upuaut rewarded Sirsir's loyalty and skill by appointing him god of mariners.

Unlike Upuaut, Sirsir has temples. These are found only in the great coastal cities, and are always located close to the water. As well as centers of worship, they serve as meeting places where mariners can swap stories, hiring halls where merchants can find a ship, passengers a berth, and sailors a new captain, and as accommodation halls for clerics while in port. Shrines stand in most settlements located alongside rivers or the great oceans. The god's holy symbol is often engraved on ships' keels and emblazoned on the sails. Traditionally, any ship marked in such a manner is considered a shrine, and thus holy ground.

Unlike in the northern lands, Al-Shirkuh's god of sailors does not patronize marines. Priests are either ship captains in their own right, or are hired to captain, pilot, or navigate a vessel by a shipowner. Paladins serve

FESTIVAL TO UPUAUT

FREE CITIZENS DAY

Baot Yaus al-Nefar Tamith Alak Shemu

In days of yore, slavery was common across Al-Shirkuh. Men, women, and children of all races were bought and sold like camels, forced into a life of bondage against their will. Considering the practice abhorrent, the cult of Upuaut eventually convinced many nobles to grant one slave in their possession freedom. Although slavery continues, among most civilized cultures it is a punishment for crimes.

Keeping to the time-honored tradition, the ruler of each Faithful city releases one legally enslaved soul, granting him or her freedom. The lucky few are usually guilty of only minor transgressions (such as debt), and are usually nearing the end of their sentence or too sick to be of any use to the state. Many rich citizens honor Upuaut by giving their servants the day off. These are usually paid employees, albeit on a subsistence wage, and the act is purely symbolic of days when actual slaves were kept.

Nomad tribes who engage in slavery and private citizens who still keep slaves often lock them up on this day, for the cult of Upuaut is prone to launching liberation raids. Slavers are especially targeted, and shown little mercy, for they make a living from the misery and false imprisonment of others. Although technically murder, the state usually turns a blind eye to the killing of slavers by clerics on this day.

as master mariners, usually the captain's second in command. More militaristic, they are expected to fight when necessary in defense of the vessel, using their leadership skills to spur the crew into action.

Ceremonies are considered to honor Sirsir only if performed in one of his temples or aboard a ship. Ritual coins stamped with the god's holy symbol (purchased from any temple at the rate of one sacrificial coin per dinar) are thrown overboard to sate the rapacious creatures of the deep, while birds carrying small strips of parchment on which are written prayers are released (the birds carry the prayers to Upuaut).

Character Guidelines: As master seafarers, Boating rivals Faith as the cleric's most important skill. All clerics need to understand the winds and currents, know the location of reefs, and so on. A few dice in Knowledge (Area) will prove useful. Given that navigation between the three major seas is impossible, a cleric need only pick one region. Leadership Edge are useful for both priests and paladins. Swimming is not a required skill, but those who wish to survive in the ocean should invest in a few dice. Steady Hands is a very useful Edge for those who must fight at sea.

AL MIR'AJ

Those who have never seen an al mir'aj scoff at its existence, putting the stories of marines down to dehydration, sunstroke, or attempts to make landlubbers look foolish. After all, what right minded soul would believe stories of a vicious yellow-furred rabbit with a 2' long, black, spiraled horn protruding from its forehead? But as humorous as the description sounds, al mir'ajs are very real creatures.

They inhabit at least one of the countless islands in the Southern Ocean (various mariners report them on different islands). Extremely territorial, they attack any creature that enters their realm, stabbing at them relentlessly with their long, sharp horn. Unlike normal rabbits, al mir'ajs are carnivorous. Possessed of immense appetites, they are capable of devouring many times their body weight in meat in a single sitting.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

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

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 3

Treasure: None, but often Rich scattered around their territory

Special Abilities:

- * **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- * **Horns:** Str+d4.
- * **Size -2:** An al mir'aj is the same size as a rabbit.
- * **Small:** Attackers are -2 to attack rolls against these creatures because of their size.

APE, CANNIBAL

Stories of cannibal apes are nothing new in Al-Shirkuh, the legends going back millennia. But known have been encountered since the days of Sinbad, who claimed to have run across them several times while exploring the Southern Ocean. Devoted hold the ape were men who became so debased with lust for material wealth that they devolved into a lower form driven by primal urges, while Faithful point to wickedness and disobedience before the gods as the cause of their creation.

Cannibal apes appear much like large chimpanzees, save for their pointed teeth and long claws. Although the name given them implies they feast on their own kind, cannibal apes enjoy human flesh. Lacking tools or the ability to make fire, they pelt prey with rocks before falling on their victims in great numbers, rendering and tearing with wild abandon, then stuffing their mouths with raw, bloody flesh.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d12, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Stealth d8, Throwing d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 4

Gear: Thrown rocks (Range: 3/6/12; Damage: Str+d4)

Treasure: None

Special Abilities:

- * **Bite/Claws:** Str+d4.

- * **Dodge:** Attackers subtract -1 from Shooting and Throwing rolls to target an ape.
- * **Leap:** Cannibal apes can leap 4" from a standing start and 6" from a running start.
- * **Size -1:** Cannibal apes are smaller than humans.

BROTHER OF SINBAD

Part mariner, part explorer, part storyteller, and part rogue, the Brothers of Sinbad seek to push back the frontiers of knowledge by exploring and mapping the uncharted waters and islands off the coast of Al-Shirkuh. See page 14 for more information.

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

Skills: Boating d8, Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Stealth d8, Survival d8, Taunt d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7 (1)

Hindrances: Varies

Edges: Acrobat, Brotherhood of Sinbad, Sea Legs

Gear: Leather shirt (+1), scimitar (Str+d8), dagger (Str+d4)

Treasure: Worthwhile

DEAD SEA CORSAIR

What curse befell the Dead Sea, a stretch of water off the coast of the Caliphate, is unknown, but it has given rise to undead mariners commonly known as Dead Sea corsairs. Rotting, worm-eaten, and perpetually wet, the corsairs are a form of zombie, though far more intelligent and agile, and not affected by blows to the head.

They sail the waters of the Dead Sea in rotting hulks, tattered corsair flags fluttering proudly from the masts. They have no interest in plundering vessels that enter their domain of their precious cargoes—they take only the living, who they drag down into the warm waters. Once death claims their victims, they rise again, ready to serve their captain in eternal damnation.

A typical Dead Sea corsair ship is commanded by a captain, with a khamsin jinn mage as his second-in-command. Against smaller crews, corsairs typically invoke *becalm* on the enemy vessel, then close and board, overwhelming the mortals with strength of numbers and undead resilience. Against heavily protected ships, the corsairs favor stealth. Under cover of darkness, they anchor within a few miles of their target, and then slip into the water. Incapable of drowning, they swim beneath the surface, quietly clamoring aboard the ship and killing any sentries.

TYPICAL CORSAIR

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

Skills: Boating d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Swimming d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5/6; **Toughness:** 8 (1)

Hindrances: —

Edges: Sea Legs

Gear: Leather shirt (+1), short sword (Str+d6) or short spear (Str+d6, +1 Parry)

Special Abilities:

- * **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; No additional damage from Called Shots; Immune to disease and poison.



CORSAIR CAPTAIN

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Boating d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Stealth d6, Swimming d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9 (1)

Hindrances: —

Edges: Command, Fervor, Master Mariner, Sea Legs

Gear: Leather shirt (+1), scimitar (Str+d8)

Special Abilities:

- * **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; No additional damage from Called Shots; Immune to disease and poison.



CORSAIR SHIP'S MAGE

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

Skills: Boating d8, Fighting d6, Intimidation d10, Jinn Magic d8, Notice d6, Swimming d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8 (1)

Hindrances: —

Edges: Arcane Background (Jinn Magic: Air), Sea Legs

Powers: *Bolt*, *becalm*, *deflection*, *elemental manipulation* (air only), *sanctuary* (aboard ship), *storm*, *zephyr*.

Gear: Leather shirt (+1), short spear (Str+d6, +1 Parry)

Special Abilities:

- * **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; No additional damage from Called Shots; Immune to disease and poison.

GIANT, REEF

Reef giants live in the warm shallow coastal waters of Al-Shirkuh. Standing over three times the height of a man, clad in coral or shell armor, and clutching a monstrous spear capable of rupturing a ship's hull, they are a fearsome sight with an equally fierce reputation. But their status as vile monsters is not entirely deserved.

Many are indeed wicked of heart, for such is the way of most giants. They plunder clumsy merchantmen laden with cargo, tossing mariners into shallow but shark infested waters and sinking ships, and wade onto shore, demanding tribute in coin and livestock from terrified villagers. What they steal or take in tribute they used to furnish their vast homes.

Others, though, are quite benevolent. While they value their privacy, they have been known to guide ships through treacherous reefs on fog-shrouded nights and

FESTIVAL TO UPUAUT

LIBERATION DAY

Amt Yaus al-Nefar Alak Neteru

According to Faithful tradition, this day marks the day Suleiman finally defeated the jinn and liberated the enslaved races. The night before, actors dressed up as comical-looking jinn prowl the streets, cracking whips and banging on doors, ordering bleary-eyed citizens into the street. The jinn then march the wailing crowd toward the nearest temple or shrine of Upuaut, the procession timed to arrive an hour or so before dawn. Here they wait patiently while menaced by their cruel masters, who demand tribute. These donations go to support the temple when the festival ends.

As dawn breaks, the highest ranked cleric emerges from the temple or from behind the shrine dressed as Suleiman. Flanking him are other clerics, representative of the great prophet's first disciples. Suleiman orders the jinn to release their captives, a demand met with howls of laughter and mockery from the jinn and cries of anguish from the crowd. The two sides then engage in a mock battle, corrupt jinn falling left and right in comic death throes while Suleiman's army remains tall and proud, its cause righteous and just, all to the cheers of the boisterous crowd. The last jinni to fall does so the instant the sun breaks the horizon, the light of a new dawn symbolizing the freeing of the slaves' shackles and a new beginning for the Faithful races.

The day is a time of wild celebration, with much feasting, dancing, singing, and praising Suleiman's name. Storytellers retell the tales of Suleiman's epic battles, while actors put on elaborate performances. Even Devoted living among the Faithful join the party, for despite their current differences, all were equally enslaved by the jinn.

Unfortunately, the festival has a darker side. Jinn Slayers, whipped into a more fanatical state than usual by the symbolic destruction of the jinn, believe this is an auspicious day to murder jinn mages and jinn blooded. Despite the protestations of the Sultan, few murders committed in the Caliphate on this day are ever properly investigated—the Jinn Slayers may be a small band of zealots, but they have powerful allies.

come to the rescue of pearl divers molested by sharks. Suleiman, it is said by storytellers, once appointed a reef giant to command a warship, though whether this was done as punishment or reward is unclear. Friendly reef giants have equally well-appointed home, but their furnishings come from trading pearls with air-breathers, or salvaging old wrecks.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d12+3, Vigor d10

Skills: Boating d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Knowledge (Area: specific part of ocean) d8, Persuasion d8, Spellcasting d8, Survival d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 14 (2)

Gear: Huge spear (Str+d6, Reach 2, +1 Parry, Heavy Weapon)

Treasure: Treasure trove, in lair

Special Abilities:

- * **Aquatic:** Pace 8. Reef giants can breathe in air and underwater.
- * **Armor +2:** Coral or shell armor.
- * **Large:** Attackers gain +2 to attack rolls against reef giants due to their size.
- * **Powers:** *Becalm* (water grips ship), *knockdown* (wave), *mend* (ship's only), *water walk*.
- * **Size +5:** Reef giants average 20' tall.
- * **Whirlpool:** As an action, a reef giant can make a Strength roll to create a whirlpool. It fills a Medium Burst Template placed adjacent to the giant. Any creature coming into contact with it must make a Strength roll (modified by Size) against the giant's roll or be sucked into the vortex. If the Strength die comes up 1, regardless of Wild Die, the victim is also Shaken. Creatures inside the whirlpool must make a Strength roll at -2 as an action to escape. Air breathers caught in the turbulent water must make a Swimming roll each round to avoid drowning. The giant can move the whirlpool (and any creatures trapped in it) up to his Smarts die in inches each round, but doing so is an action. If the center of the whirlpool is moved out of the giant's line of sight, the effect is automatically ended.

HORSE, SEA

Sea horses are quite literally horses that live beneath the surface of the sea. Their skin color varies, ranging between storm-tossed gray, tropical shallows blue, and deep sea green. Instead of a hairy mane, strands of slimy seaweed grow from their necks. Sea horses can move beneath and on the surface of the sea, but cannot cross land. As with many things, the Devoted and Faithful have differing opinions regarding these beasts. The former believe they were created by marids, bred to carry faithful mortal servants on underwater errands. The latter hold sea horses were created by Upuaut, so as to allow his mortal worshippers to explore beneath the ocean.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d4, Notice d6

Pace: —; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 8

Treasure: None.

Special Abilities:

- * **Aquatic:** Pace 10.
- * **Environmental Protection:** Anyone mounted on a sea horse gains the benefits of *environmental protection* (water).

- * **Fleet Footed:** Sea horses roll a d10 when “running” instead of a d6.
- * **Kick:** Str.
- * **Size +2:** Sea horses weigh around 800 pounds.



SWARM, JELLYFISH

Jellyfish swarms are usually found far out at sea, though in summer they might be found much closer to shore. While they may be very deadly, especially to those lacking area effect spells, they are slow moving and easily avoided by fast swimmers. A jellyfish swarm typically fills a Medium Burst Template.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Notice d6

Pace: —; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7

Treasure: None

Special Abilities:

- * **Aquatic:** Pace 2.
- * **Mindless:** Unaffected by Tests of Will, Tricks, or arcane powers like puppet.
- * **Poison (0):** Different jellyfish have different toxins. Pick one from the choices below for each swarm. Any character Shaken or wounded by the swarm must make a Vigor roll or suffer the poison’s effect.
 - * **Painful:** Victim gains a level of Fatigue for 24 hours. This can lead to Incapacitation, but not Death.
 - * **Paralysis:** Victim is paralyzed for 2d6 rounds. Air breathing victims without magical protection affected underwater must make a Vigor roll each round they are paralyzed or take a level of Fatigue from drowning.
 - * **Potent:** Success means the victim becomes Exhausted until healed. With a failure, the victim becomes Incapacitated and must make a second Vigor roll or die.
- * **Stunning:** Shaken for 1d6 rounds. Victims cannot try to recover until after this time.
- * **Sting:** Swarms inflict hundreds of stings every round to their victims, hitting automatically and causing 2d4 damage to everyone in the template. Damage is applied to the least armored location.
- * **Swarm:** Parry +2. Because the swarm is composed of scores, hundreds, or thousands of creatures, cutting and piercing weapons do no real damage. Area-effect weapons work normally. Characters cannot stomp unless the swarm is in shallow water.



TROLL, ISLAND

Island trolls are found only on the islands of the Southern Ocean. Hulking, humanoid creatures, their skin is inky black and covered in matted hair, their eyes burn like burning coals, and each finger ends in a leonine claw. Their lips hang loose over their breast, concealing a gaping mouth filled from which sprout gnarled tusks. They savor human flesh, though they prefer to slow roast their victims rather than eat them raw.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d8, Stealth d6

Pace: 7; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10

Treasure: Worthwhile, in lair

Special Abilities:

- * **Bite/Claws:** Str+d6.
- * **Regeneration (Fast):** Trolls may attempt a natural healing roll every round unless their wounds were caused by fire or flame. This does not include cold-fire. Decapitation (a Finishing Move) also prevents regeneration.

- * **Size +3:** Island trolls stand around 12’ tall.



ZU BIRD

Zu birds are not native to Al-Shirkuh. During the hot summer months, they ride the warm southern winds from their distant homeland to the coasts of the Caliphate and Sultanate. Here they torment mariners and small coastal settlements, becalming ships or tossing them about on fierce winds, pelting fields and herds with hail and lashing rain, sending lightning bolts to destroy property and scare citizens, and generally making a destructive nuisance of themselves.

Zu birds are typical bullies, terrorizing the weak and avoiding the strong. The only ways to rid oneself of a zu bird’s attention is to stand up to its bullying and fight back, or offer it a sizeable bounty. During summer, zu birds nest on the highest peaks of the many islands dotting the Southern Ocean. Here they leave treasure until ready to fly home to their true home, far beyond the southern horizon.

Zu birds have leonine bodies and the wings and heads of eagles. Their feathers and fur are the colors of the storm clouds in which they cavort, their teeth and claws the blue-white color of lightning.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d12, Spellcasting d8, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10

Treasure: Treasure Trove, in lair.

Special Abilities:

- * **Bite/Claws:** Str+d6.
- * **Flight:** Pace 12.
- * **Immunity:** Zu birds are immune to the effects of all spells with an air or electricity trapping.
- * **Improved Frenzy:** Zu birds may make two Fighting attacks each action at no penalty.
- * **Powers:** Zu birds know the following spells: *becalm*, *blast* (lightning strike), *bolt* (small lightning bolts), *knockdown* (blast of wind or thunderclap), *storm* (thunderstorm only), *whirlwind*, *zephyr*.
- * **Size +3:** Zu birds weigh over 1000 pounds.
- * **Swoop:** Zu birds often swoop on their prey. It gains +4 to its attack and damage. Its Parry is reduced by –2 until its next action when performing the maneuver, however.

Brotherhood of Sinbad

Sinbad the Sailor, mariner, explorer, merchant, rogue, and storyteller has been dead for centuries. Yet his name lives on in coffee houses and caravanserais, for tales of his legendary exploits are as popular today as they were during his lifetime. Among mariners are those who not only grew up on such tales, but also seek to emulate the ancient hero.

History

Little is known about Sinbad's early life. Storytellers agree that he was probably born in the Al-Wazir Sultanate shortly after its foundation, though Faithful quickly add that as a true believer in the gods he emigrated to the Caliphate. The man himself claimed to be the son of a rich merchant, though he gave no indication to his father's name, nor where he lived or the exact nature of his business. Sinbad's religious views likewise remain a mystery, any reference to these being added by later storytellers to suit the particular bias of their audience.

As with many celebrities who roamed the land during the turbulent years after the liberation from the Jinn, Sinbad is claimed by both Devoted and Faithful. The Devoted claim the famous hero was a magician, his wealth arcane and spiritual rather than material. The Faithful insist he was a priest of Upuaut, following his god's teachings by traveling the expansive Southern Ocean, which at that time was a mysterious and unexplored place.

In the first tale of the daring explorer, Sinbad recounts that he squandered his inheritance. He used what little money he had left to purchase a small trading ship, intending to rebuild his wealth through honest trade. In many versions Sinbad enjoys a wicked youth, finally coming to his senses and seeking to atone for his sins.

Both blessed and cursed by fortune, Sinbad undertook seven major voyages (and probably a far greater number of more mundane ones). On each one he suffered terrible calamity. Often he was shipwrecked, and many times he lost his crew, yet somehow he always ended up escaping his predicament. He also unfailingly returned home with more wealth than he began the adventure.

Sinbad's fate remains a mystery. Many accounts say he set sail for an eighth voyage and was never seen again. A small few insist he lived to be an old man, his final days spent enjoying his fabulous wealth. One or two claim that he buried the greater portion of his treasure on an island, where it lies still, waiting to be claimed.

The Brotherhood of Sinbad began life a century so after the mariner's supposed death. Its early members sought nothing more than to locate the places Sinbad adventured, hoping to line their pockets with a little of the treasure he left behind. Over time, they became more

interested in exploration for the sake of knowledge, mapping new islands, exploring the ruins of ancient civilizations, and forging new maritime trade routes.

Structure

The Brotherhood of Sinbad is an organization of maritime explorers loosely bound by common purpose rather than titles and layers of authority. Members are awarded respect based on their exploits and popularity (Glory, in game terms), though their popularity and bravery grants them no authority over fellow brothers.

Brothers are expected to help their comrades when called upon, for the bond between members is as strong as blood. In return for his aid, a brother can, of course, call in a favor when he needs assistance.

A progressive society, the Brotherhood has no religious bias, allowing each member to live by his own calling. It is open to all civilized races and both genders. Faithful strongly favor Upuaut, while Devoted who practice magic opt for jinn magic, considering it the most versatile art.

THE HEIRS OF SINBAD

Within the Brotherhood is a cabal who believe that the tales were not actual renditions of real exploits, but metaphorical references to a great treasure other than coin and jewels—they believe Sinbad discovered a great secret. Exactly what he unearthed remains the subject of much debate.

Among Devoted, one faction insists Sinbad achieved Oneness, his route to spiritual immortality laid out in his stories for those with the eyes to see the truth. Another insists he found a way to travel to Jinnistan, and that he still wanders the highways and byways of the fabled realm the jinn call home. Somewhere, they claim, Sinbad left a map for others to follow.

Faithful say he discovered a powerful relic placed on the mortal realm by the gods. Accounts of why differ slightly. One school believes the relic was intended to be wielded in order to stop the jinn enslaving the races, but no man at that was of sufficient faith to uncover its resting place (and Suleiman had no need for such a thing, of course), and thus centuries of misery befell mankind. Others say the relic was gifted to Suleiman by the gods, who foresaw a time when the jinn would arise again. Fearing lesser men would abuse its awesome power, Suleiman wisely concealed it, leaving complex and cryptic clues so a worthy soul yet to be born could find it. Regardless, having found its location Sinbad received a visitation from Upuaut. Informed that the time was not yet right for the relic to be wielded, Sinbad left his own cryptic clues to its location, enabling those who would come later to unearth the relic when the time was right. In return for this sacrifice, Sinbad was made captain of Upuaut's ship.

Irrespective of their faith, members of this cabal, who refer to themselves as the Heirs of Sinbad, seek to unravel the clues and thus uncover the true treasure of Sinbad.

SCIONS OF SINBAD

Unlike the Heirs, those who belong to the Scions of Sinbad believe Sinbad's treasure was mundane, yet no less fabulous. They hold faith in the stories that Sinbad buried his vast fortune before his final voyage.

Emblem

Members wear a multi-colored headscarf tied with seven elaborate knots. These represent Sinbad's seven great voyages. For each major adventure a member has endured, he is expected to weave a memento into one of the knots. Such objects, trivial as they might seem to outsiders, are the starting point for a lengthy tale of derring-do and peril. When one meets a fellow brother, the first thing one does is point to one to one of his memento and ask how he earned it.

The Heirs of Sinbad have a compass tattooed on their forearms. The "north" arm is missing, leaving just seven points. The seven arms represent Sinbad's seven voyages, while the missing pointer is a veiled reference to Sinbad's eighth and final journey, the one that eventually led him to vanish from Al-Shirkuh. Scions sport a tattoo similar to that of the Heirs, only with north marked by a line of tiny gems glued to their skin.

Playing a Brother

For many, the thought of travelling out of sight of land or to treading the uncharted reaches of a remote island is a terrifying notion. But these are the very environments in which you thrive. Although much can still be gained from following paths others have already sailed, you should set your sights over the horizon, in the uncharted realms where new adventures await.

While you may have course to travel inland in search of new places to explore, the sea is your true home, for it is here your abilities truly shine. Your comrades may be wary of lengthy ocean voyages, especially if the destination is an island inhabited by dangerous foes. You may need to remind them of the tales of Sinbad and his great wealth if you want to secure their support.

COMBAT ADVICE

Although expected to be courageous and daring, a Brother's chief ability is not his strength, but his wit. Sinbad was renowned for his ability to think his way out of a situation, not fight his way to victory. He was also cunning, using tricks to befuddle foes.

Nothing about being a Brother stops you being a top notch combatant, though your required Skills and your Edge benefits are distinctly non-combative in nature.

Glory is not a reward for slaying beasts—it's a reward for overcoming adversity. In a group, notable individual actions are always important, even if you didn't deliver

the killing blow. Since you have a good Agility and Smarts, and a bonus to performing Tricks from the outset, you can set up your opponents for the dedicated fighters by distracting them—darting between the legs of a ferocious island troll, thus causing it to look down and leave its neck exposed to a comrade's sword, is no less courageous or noteworthy than smacking it with a sword.

ADVANCES

Ideally, you should work toward Level Headed and Quick—a high action card gives you the option of going first and making the decisive move or going on Hold, biding your time until the right moment.

Although warriors might claim otherwise, words can be as effective as swords both in battle and in the ears of the populace who will be listening to your tales, so consider boosting Intimidation and Taunt, and/or augmenting their effectiveness with Strong Willed. Charismatic gives you a boost to your Persuasion, an essential skill for recounting your adventures.

Tricks were another favorite tool of Sinbad, and are ideal for combats when you're with friends with better combat abilities, so think about taking Acrobat, as well as improving your Agility and Smarts regularly. While Acrobat only boosts your ability to perform Tricks by +1 overall (Professional Edge bonuses don't stack), the Parry modifier and bonus to Agility rolls is very handy. Although it has a Fighting requirement, Block needn't be viewed as literally parrying a weapon—with a little lateral thinking it can just as easily represent distracting tactics, just enough to throw an enemy's eye off and cause his blade to swish harmlessly by your ear. Dodge works similarly against ranged attacks.

Like Sinbad, there will be a time for heroics and a time for prudence. Fleet Footed is handy both in and for avoiding combat.

NPC Reactions

Among mariners, Brothers of Sinbad enjoy a good reputation. This is more for their seamanship skills than their heroics, for most mariners simply want to reach their destination safely. Few mariners will be below Neutral in their initial reaction, and many will tend toward Helpful, especially if looking to recruit the hero as a pilot or in need of assistance. The Brotherhood rarely suffers from religious bias. Mariners may be superstitious by nature, but they are also pragmatic.

Among the general population a Brother is likely to receive a Neutral welcome along the coast—polite, likely warm and open, yet without offers of immediate aid. Inland, his maritime tales have little meaning. Indeed, there are many Bedu tribes who have never seen the sea, and would consider stories of endless water fanciful at best and outright lies at worst. The Brother will be judged on the many factors nomads take into account when dealing with city-dwellers as normal.