

IAN HAMILTON PRESENTS  
**ROD, REEL,  
& FIST**

A GAME BY RICHARD KELLY



**A FISHING ADVENTURE GAME**

# ROD, REEL, & FIST

*Catch the fish, save your village.*

Dedicated to Team Forest Fire. Where there's smoke, there's Team Forest Fire.

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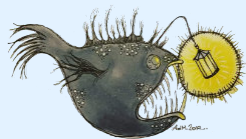
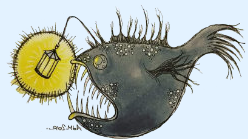
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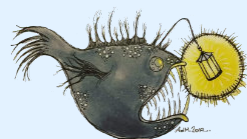
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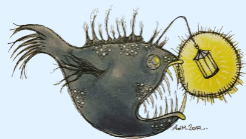
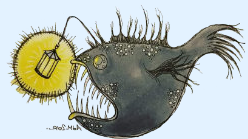
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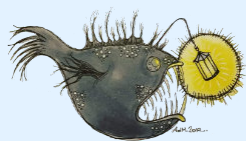


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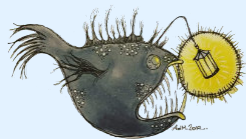
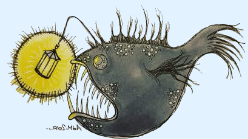
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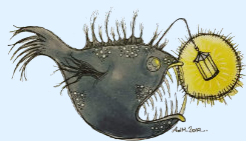
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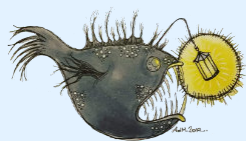
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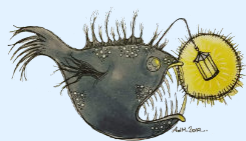
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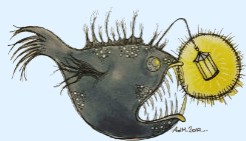
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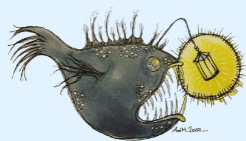
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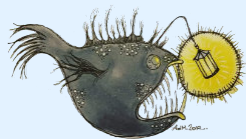
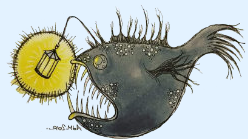
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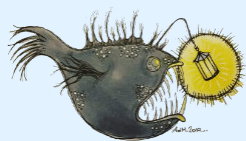
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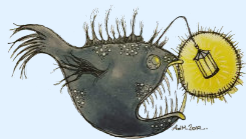
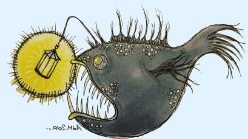
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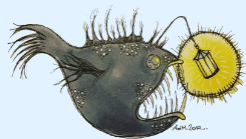
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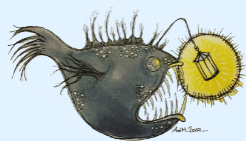
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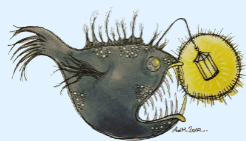
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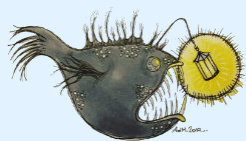
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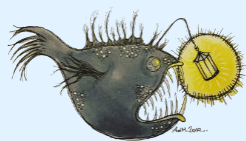
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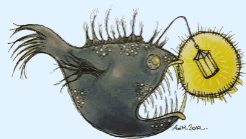
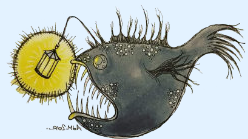
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**PSST!** If you want to know more about running this game for different age groups, [flip to page 181](#). The info you're looking for is there.



# We Open With A Tragedy

Your brother is in a coma. Or your mother has fallen sick. Or the well that supports the village will only give black ichor when the bucket is lowered for water, and the drought has been going for three months now.

The point is, something has gone wrong, and it is not within your power to fix it.

Or at least, it's not within *mortal* power to fix it.

There exists a fish, known in local legend, that has the power to reverse this tragedy. It is a crafty creature, a denizen of grottos and sunless spots, rich with the wiles of hundreds of years of avoiding the sparkle of hook and the wriggle of bait. But if you can find it, and master it, your village will be saved.

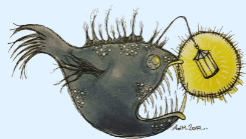
Obtaining it will not be easy.

It lives at the heart of the Old Region, a wild, untamed place many days' journey from your village. There are animals there, and other anglers, that will vie with you for your prize.

But your courage is strong. Your will is true. The price of defeat is too great to pay, so you have not even considered it.

Instead your cooler is packed, your line is straight, and a straw hat rests squarely on your brow.

Whatever challenges lie before you, you will meet them with Rod, Reel, & Fist.



## Those Who Walk The Road Of Fish Walk A Road Of Conflict

Rod, Reel, & Fist is a tabletop roleplaying game in which the players take on the roles of heroic fishers attempting to save their village. To do so, they must navigate the obstacles of the Old Region, catching fish and defending themselves against hostile animals, until they finally come face to fin with the Fish Of Legend.

Guiding them on their journey will be the SWAMP BEING, or SB. The SB is a player too, but instead of taking on the role of one of the fishers the SB takes on the role of the *rest* of the setting. The SB narrates the parts of the game-world that the fishers interact with, showing how they change and respond in reaction to the players' actions. Or to put it another way: the players take on the roles of the fishers trying to save their village, and the SB takes on the roles of the fish, animals, anglers, and obstacles that oppose them.

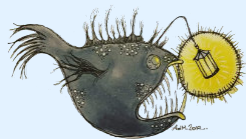
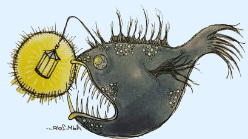
So if a player says "I check out the old beached boat", or "I scramble up the side of the hill", or "I dip my line in the water", the SB explains what they find there and how it reacts to them.

The SB's goal *isn't* to be adversarial. They're not trying to win. Or at least they're not trying to win by beating the players. Instead, the SB wins if the story is interesting, the obstacles are engaging, and everyone has a good time.

Honestly, *everyone* wins if everyone has a good time.

If your group can't decide who should take on the noble role of SWAMP BEING, it's recommended that the SB be the person with the most experience with tabletop roleplaying games. If that's no one, experience with board games, videogames, improv theater, stage productions, or freestyle rap is a valid substitute.

Once you have your SWAMP BEING in place, you're all ready to gather your gear and set up the game world.

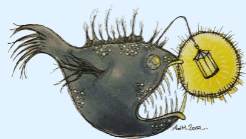
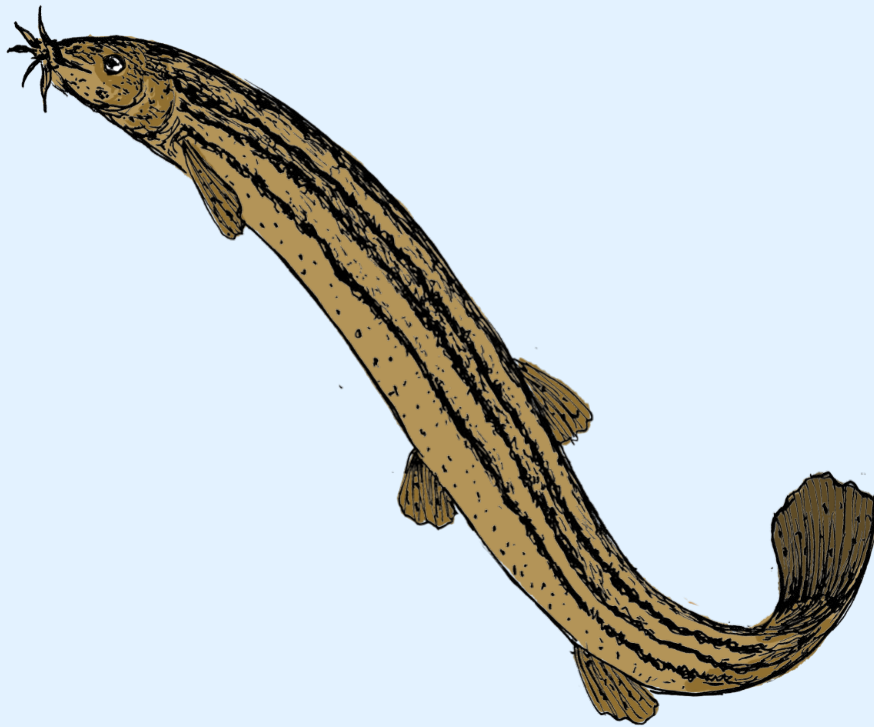


# Gathering Your Gear

To play Rod, Reel, & Fist, you're going to need the following:

- this book
- a handful of six-sided dice (called d6s)
- scrap paper and pencils
- a quiet place to play
- optionally some light snacks and drinks, if the place where you're playing will allow it

Oh, and you'll need a game world.



# Designing Your World

The default setting for Rod, Reel, & Fist is a sort of magic-realism version of rural Japan (or else wherever the players are from) in the early 1980s. There are vending machines, fast trains, animated television programs, and the economy is on everyone's minds, but to the characters of Rod, Reel, & Fist those are usually all background elements.

What's in the forefront of everyone's minds is the Village.

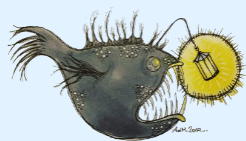
SWAMP BEING, ask the player to your right where the fishers' **Village** is. Then ask the player to their right what the Village looks like. Then ask the player to *their* right to name an important person in the Village. Repeat this last step until every person in your group has defined at least one important person in the Village. Now, if the group wishes, come up with a name for the Village. If you have a small group of players and the spotlight rotates all the way to yourself, you can ask yourself these questions too.

Once you know what the Village is like, you need to figure out what bad thing has happened or is about to happen to it. Ask the player to your left what the **Tragedy** is that has recently affected the Village. Then ask the player to the left of them who the Tragedy most affects. Then ask the player to the left of *them* who *else* the Tragedy affects. If you have a small group of players and the spotlight rotates all the way to yourself, you can ask yourself these questions too.

After you have the Tragedy established, you need to find out more about the **Old Region** that the Fishers must journey into in order to stop the Tragedy. Where is the Old Region? Ask the player on your right. Then ask the player to the right of them why it's secluded. Then ask the player to the right of *them* which part of the Old Region the Fish of Legend is located in. Then ask the next player on the right why that area is particularly dangerous. If you have a small group of players and the spotlight rotates all the way to yourself, you can ask yourself these questions too.

With the Old Region set, the last thing you need to do is establish the **Fish Of Legend**. Going around in a circle, starting on the left and proceeding through every player (including yourself), have someone define a single fact about the Fish Of Legend. This could be a curative property it has, or why it's so hard to catch, or what has become of people who failed to catch it.

During all of these steps, if there's an idea or character or location that gets brought up but that isn't fully defined, the group is encouraged to **fill in the details** now. When filling in details, you don't need to stick to a strict turn order.

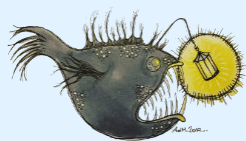


Anyone can riff off of someone else's concept, and you should continue adding details until everyone is happy with the result.

If at any point during this process **someone is really bothered** by an idea or detail, or if an idea or detail gets thrown into the mix that the rest of the group doesn't like, let the person who contributed it redesign it so that it doesn't seriously bother anyone.

At the same time, if the group finds the setting of 1980s Japan to be not to their taste, they may create their own setting based on any criteria they want, as long as they can all agree on what goes into it. There is also a list of pre-made alternate settings later in the book ([page 128](#)), and the SB may simply set the game in whatever place they are most familiar with if this will make it easiest for them to run it.

Once everyone in the Village, the Tragedy, the Old Region, and the Fish Of Legend are defined, **your world is ready to play**. The SWAMP BEING will likely need to fill in setting details from time to time during play (for example, does a rail line run through your town? Are there bears in this region? What types of sodas were available in 1980s Japan?), but now that you've got the big aspects of the setting all hammered out, it's time to learn the basics of gameplay and create the Fishers.





# Game Systems

Rod, Reel, & Fist is played using these core elements.

## Dice

---

Although Rod, Reel, & Fist is ultimately about telling a story with your friends, there will be times when it's not automatically clear what happens next. For example, maybe a skilled Fisher is trying to scale a mountainside in the rain.

Sure, they're competent, and maybe they've even hiked this slope before, but the rain is really pounding down and the rock and dirt are quite slick.

So how do you decide whether the Fisher succeeds or fails in this task? You roll the dice.

The dice in Rod, Reel, & Fist work like this: **any time a situation comes up where the outcome of an action is uncertain, and where the results matter to the plot**, the dice are brought out and the SB calls for a roll.

To determine whether or not a Fisher succeeds on a roll, the SB sets a **Target Number** (also called a TN) based on how difficult the task is.

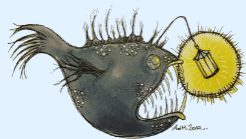
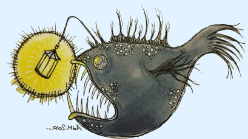
A **TN 3 = Easy** task is one that could be failed with a lot of bad luck, but that people in most situations will succeed at. TN 3 is catching a butterfly in a net, climbing a beginner rock wall, or swimming against a mild current.

A **TN 4 = Normal** task is one that people have a decent chance of failing if they take it lightly. Climbing a slippery hill, parallel parking on a crowded street, or swatting a hornet are all TN 4 tasks.

A **TN 5 = Hard** task is one that seems formidable right from the start. Dodging a fastball, climbing a craggy cliff, or swimming against a moderate current are all TN 5 tasks.

A **TN 6 = Very Difficult** task is one that people do not expect to succeed at without using a lot of their resources or getting very lucky. Shoving a large boulder out of the way, struggling out of quicksand, or swimming against a riptide are all examples of TN 6s.

A **TN 7+ = Legendary** task is one that seems impossible without spending resources or getting help. Wriggling out of handcuffs, wall-kicking your way up between two buildings, or sprinting down an icy slope in the dark without falling are all TN 7 tasks.



Of course, sometimes the SB's sense of what should have a high TN won't line up with the players', so if the players ever unanimously think the TN on a roll should be lower, the SB is encouraged to drop the TN at least by a point or two.

Once the TN is set, **the Fisher rolls 1d6**. If the number on the die **meets or beats the TN**, the Fisher succeeds and they narrate achieving whatever they were trying to accomplish. If they fail, it's a **Setback** and the SB narrates how the situation changes based on their incomplete success.

Depending on the Fisher's Equipment, Type, and other abilities and bonuses (we'll talk about these more in a minute), they may get to roll more than one d6. When a character rolls multiple dice, as long as one of their dice meets or beats the TN, they succeed.

## **Low Lethality**

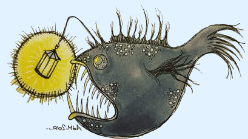
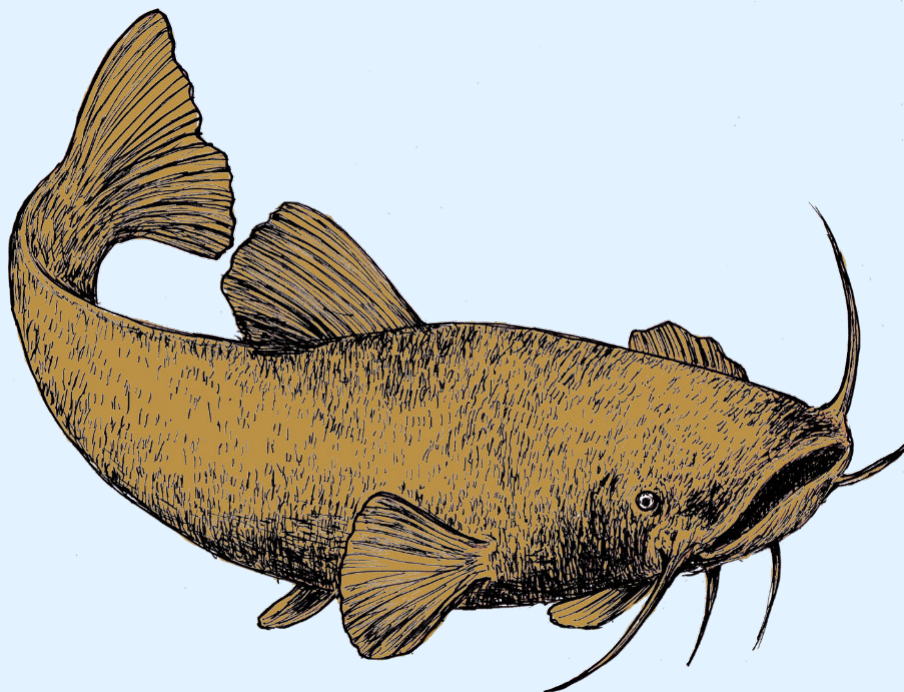
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Failing rolls is less dangerous in Rod, Reel, & Fist than it is in other systems.

Most of the time a Setback will mean a change in a situation that presents the players with a new problem or obstacle to address.

A Fisher that fails to scramble up a rocky slope might tumble into a thicket at the bottom, or a Fisher that fails to endure a cold downpour might fall sick, but a Setback is always a *complication*, never insurmountable. Setbacks *can* pile up to the point where a Fisher's best bet is just to disengage from a situation and come back later with a new approach, but here's an example of a dice outcome you will never encounter in basic Rod, Reel, & Fist: "you die."

In Rod, Reel, & Fist, you can certainly get beat up by an animal or another Fisher, but all that does is sends you to the hospital or leaves you in the grass, recuperating from your encounter. The only way a Fisher can die in Rod, Reel, & Fist is if it is A) narratively appropriate, and B) the player and SB both agree that it should happen.



## **Very High TNs**

---

Now, you might have noticed that if a player only ever rolls d6s, the highest they can roll is a 6. Which means they can never succeed against a TN 7.

Fortunately, **when a player rolls multiple dice and two or more of those dice come up the same number**, those dice get combined. When you **Combine Dice**, you set them aside and **treat their number as the number on the dice, plus the number of times you rolled it**.

So if you roll two 3s, they become a 5. That's the number on the dice (3), plus the number of times it came up (2).

Sometimes your Combined Dice will give you a number that's higher than anything else you rolled. For example if you rolled four 3s and one 6, those 3s combine to become a 7. When this happens, use your Combined Dice to resolve the roll and ignore whatever high die would otherwise be the star of the show.

Now, there are some limits to Combining Dice. You can't Combine a single die with itself, so a single 2 isn't a 2 + 1. It's just a 2. Similarly, you can't build pyramids out of your numbers. If you roll two 2s and one 4, those 2s Combine to become a 4, but they don't Combine *again* with the other 4 you'd rolled to become a 6.

Even with these limitations, Combining Dice can send rolls into the stratosphere, allowing characters to achieve otherwise inaccessible Legendary TN 7 results.

## **A Quick Example Of Rolls**

---

*Hitoshi, a plucky youngster, wants to jump over a mossy log to get to the perfect spot on the edge of a pool---without slipping and falling in. The SB calls for a roll.*

*Hitoshi has the same 1d6 that everyone gets to roll, but he's also wearing Athletic Shoes, which give him another d6 in situations like this.*

*The log isn't especially easy to traverse, its body being old and crumbling and its handholds being slimy, so the SB sets the TN at 4, Normal.*

*Hitoshi rolls 2d6 and gets a pair of 1s. Two 1s Combined is 3 (1 + 2 copies), but this is just short of the TN, so the SB narrates a Setback.*

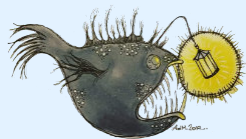
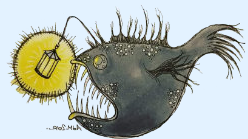
*Hitoshi lets out a yelp of surprise as he slithers too quickly over the log and plummets down the mossy embankment face-first into the pool.*

## **Competing Against Other Characters**

---

In most cases, if a Fisher is trying to do something and the environment or a non-player character is trying to stop them, determining who succeeds is simple. The SB sets the Target Number, and the Fisher rolls it.

So if Hitoshi gets into an arm-wrestling contest with a non-player-controlled villager, the SB might set the TN at 4 or 5 depending on how strong the other villager is, and then Hitoshi's player rolls as normal.



However, what happens if a Fisher competes against another Fisher?

If two or more player-controlled characters ever try to compete against each other, they both roll their dice, and whoever reaches the highest TN succeeds. In the event of a tie, the Fishers roll again. Any Fishers that lose this roll suffer a Setback as usual.

## **Teamwork Makes The Bream Work**

---

Sometimes instead of competing with each other, two or more Fishers will combine their efforts to accomplish a task. This is called Teamwork.

Teamwork may only be used when there is time for the Fishers to plan and coordinate (so it is not available in the heat of battle), but when a Fisher begins a difficult task, up to two other Fishers may jump in and describe how they are helping. For each Fisher who helps this way, the Fisher who is rolling may ignore a single point of Stress or Exhaustion on their roll.

Again, up to two Fishers may help this way and Teamwork may not be used on rolls while in Fish Combat or Animal Combat. In combat, Fishers use Yell Encouragement instead.

Combat is a little different from regular gameplay, and it's covered in its own chapter, so if you're curious about what that above bit of information means, you can [skip ahead to page 56](#).

## **Exhaustion And Stress**

---

Often a Setback will be a temporary complication that applies to a single situation, but sometimes a Setback will make it likely that the difficulty of future rolls is increased.

For example, after being dunked in the pond in the quick example, Hitoshi is probably no longer in the perfect mindset for a long duel of wits with the catfish that lives in the pool. His concentration's been broken, he's cold and shivering, and he's dropped his favorite hook in the pond.

The SB can reflect this kind of consequence by applying Exhaustion or Stress after a Setback.

**Exhaustion** is bad. Every point of Exhaustion increases the TN of a Fisher's rolls by 1. So a Fisher with 3 Exhaustion would treat an Easy (TN 3) roll as being Very Hard (TN 6) instead! Exhaustion generally only goes away when you Make Camp (more about that in a second), and if enough Exhaustion builds up it can become impossible for a Fisher to pass rolls at all.

**Stress** is less bad than Exhaustion, but it works in the same way. Every point of Stress increases the TN of a Fisher's rolls by 1. Luckily, unlike Exhaustion, Stress is only ever accumulated during combat, and all Stress goes away at the end of each combat.

Stress and Exhaustion can't permanently injure a character, but if enough of them build up a Fisher may become so frazzled that their only option is to storm off, cool down, and come back later.

And this is where Making Camp comes into play.



## **Making Camp And Resting**

---

Sometimes a Fisher needs to take a break, get back their composure, and rest.

**Making Camp** allows them to do that.

A group of Fishers can Make Camp any time that they're not in the middle of a Fish Combat or Animal Combat.

When a group of Fishers Makes Camp, the following things happen in order.

- If the group has fewer total Snacks than the current number of Fishers, they gain Snacks until the group's total number of Snacks equals the number of Fishers.
- If the group has in their possession fish that can be exchanged for certain benefits (such as Snacks or Equipment) when they Make Camp, those fish can be exchanged now.
- Any Type-specific abilities related to Making Camp go off.
- All of the Fishers can **Rest**, clearing any points of Exhaustion that they have accumulated.

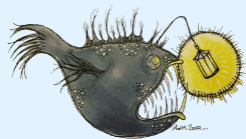
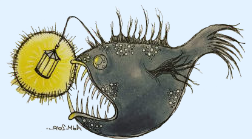
In many Scenarios, when the Fishers Make Camp, the group is also able to make contact with the Village. Sometimes this can mean sending a runner back, or calling a phone line, or even meeting a villager in the Old Region. This allows the Fishers to interact with other characters from the Village and maintain a strong bond with their home.

The Fishers can also encounter NPCs when they camp, and for more information about these encounters [see page 118](#).

In certain Scenarios, to create a sense of urgency, the number of times a group can Make Camp is limited. This is especially appropriate for Scenarios that are under some kind of time pressure (rescuing trapped miners, healing your ailing mother, etc). In these Scenarios, when the Make Camps are all used up, the Scenario can be failed. So if the Fishers get saddled with so many points of Exhaustion that it is no longer possible for them to win with the dice they have, **and if their Make Camps are all used up, the Scenario is lost.**

This is not the default way to play, but it adds drama and tension to the game, so some groups may prefer to have their Scenarios include limited Make Camps.





# Creating Your Fisher

In this chapter, we cover how to create a Fisher.

## Flipping Ahead

---

A lot of players may be itching to create their characters by this point, and if that describes you, you're welcome to dive right in.

However, if this is your first time reading the book, a number of entries here reference mechanics in the Fish Combat ([page 56](#)) and Animal Combat ([page 64](#)) chapters.

So if you find yourself needing to know more about a Stand Firm Roll, or Tagging Out, or anything similar, just know that you can flip over to Fish Combat or Animal Combat to read up on it.

This chapter will still be here when you get back.

## Fisher Basics

---

The first thing we need to do when creating a Fisher is to establish what kind of person they are.

Come up with a name, age, gender, and profession for your Fisher (if your Fisher is old enough to be working a job), then connect your Fisher to someone in the Village that's been affected by the Tragedy.

If you just flipped randomly to this section and skipped some of the earlier ones, you should check out Designing Your World on [page 27](#) to figure out where your Village is located and what the Tragedy is.

If the Tragedy is that an earthquake has buried some locals in the mine outside of town and you're setting off to find the legendary earthquake catfish to put things right, maybe you're the son or wife of one of the miners. Or maybe you're the owner of the mine and you feel responsible. Or maybe you weren't able to work on the day of the collapse and it's your colleagues that are trapped down there. Either way, you should make sure your character cares about someone or something that's been affected by the Tragedy, since your connection them gives you a reason to venture into the Old Region in search of the Fish Of Legend.

Once you've figured out who your Fisher is in the narrative, it's time for the crunchier part of character creation. You need to figure out your Fisher's Type, Temperament, and Kit. To do this, follow the steps in the next three sections.



## Types

---

A Fisher's Type is a quick overview of who they are and how they approach fishing. A Type isn't necessarily something tangible that you can easily read from the surface of the character (for example a Brawler might have a penchant for long hair and sundresses, even though these things are impractical for combat), but a Type often reflects a little portion of the character's spirit (and that same long-hair and sundress-wearing Brawler might be on her tenth year of studying Krav Maga).

Usually, a character's Type taps into some inner truth about the character. A Brawler might live for the moment and thrive in conflict, a Patience Type might have an unshakeable purpose and a stubborn streak as deep as the Marianas Trench, etc.

However, sometimes a Type is just a vocation. Not every Caregiver wants to be a Caregiver, and sometimes being an Entertainer is less of a choice and more of a force of habit.

Steer in whatever direction is most interesting to you as a player, and **pick one Type** from this section.

## Angler

---

*Fishing is an almost spiritual exercise for you. It comes to you as naturally as breathing.*

+1 die on Fish Combat.

## Brawler

---

*You're very comfortable holding your own in a fight. Honestly, you can't really see why being in the middle of a pitched melee stresses some people out.*

+1 die on Animal Combat.

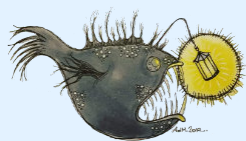
## Caregiver

---

*Your first instinct is to tend to the people who need tending. Unless, of course, one of those people is you. Then chances are good that you're tending to everyone else.*

When you Make Camp, during the Type-specific abilities step, you generate +3 Snacks. However, having too many cooks spoils the broth, so for every other Caregiver in the party, you produce 1 fewer Snack this way.

You cannot produce fewer than 0 Snacks with this Type ability.



## **Engineer**

---

*Fishing is an interesting art but surely, surely there must be a more efficient way to go about it.*

You begin each Scenario with a Mining Charge. The charge is a Consumable item that may be used to immediately end an Animal Combat in your favor, no matter how many animals are in that combat...or you may use it to dynamite-fish a single fishing location. When you dynamite-fish a fishing location, remove all uncommon and rare fish from that spot (without catching them), then catch all common fish without a fight. The Fish of Legend is not affected by the Mining Charge.

Mining Charges are not part of the general Equipment list and may not be acquired or used by other character Types. Due to the risks involved with handling them, they can only be safely set off by you or by someone acting under your direct supervision.

If you are a Split, Engineer may *not* be one of your selected Types.

You may not have more than one Engineer in a party.

## **Entertainer**

---

*With the right words and maybe a prop or two, you can reaffirm someone's purpose or distract them from their troubles.*

The party gains an extra use of Yell Encouragement per combat round, to a maximum of +2 uses from Entertainers if there is another Entertainer in your party.

Start each Scenario with a point of Pep, which you may spend at any time to remove a point of Exhaustion from another Fisher. Each time you Make Camp, regain your Pep point if you've used it.

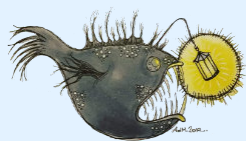
## **Expert**

---

*You have an encyclopedic knowledge of fishing and fishing-related facts, although it is quite possible you have never dipped a line before.*

+1 die to knowing things. This includes facts about fish, details about which plants are edible, general knowledge about what kinds of things are going on in the world, and highly specific bits of intel about local factions or subcultures.

The bonus from this Type does not apply to Stand Firm Rolls or Hang On Tests in Animal Combat or Fish Combat. If you are *not* a Split Type, you also start with the Mirrored Surface Gazing Fishing Technique for free.



## **Explorer**

---

*You've got an appetite for adventure and are often going rambling.*

+1 die to navigating your physical environment. This includes running, climbing, swimming, orienteering, etc.

The bonus from this Type does not apply to Stand Firm Rolls or Hang On Tests in Animal Combat or Fish Combat.

If you are *not* a Split Type, you also start with the Fist Of The Zoologist Fighting Technique for free.

## **Gambler**

---

*Fishing is just another way to roll the dice.*

Twice per combat, after Gambits have been revealed, you may withdraw your Gambit and roll 1d6. On a 1--2, you declare a Force Gambit. On a 3--4, you declare a Finesse Gambit. On a 5--6, you declare a Cunning Gambit.

## **Mystic**

---

*You have visions sometimes, or flashes of inspiration. It's a little uncanny, but you're used to letting them guide you.*

Whenever you Make Camp, you can ask the SB a single question relating to one in-game topic. The SB must then provide a genuinely helpful answer.

Whenever you break camp, you receive +1 die on the first round of the next Fish or Animal Combat that you are involved in.

## **Noodler**

---

*The path of the Noodler is not an easy one, and it requires great dedication and skill.*

*Still, there are rewards for those who seek such challenges, and few are the anglers who would climb all the way inside of a muddy riverbank in search of their prey.*

You do not start with (and may not use) a Rod or a Tacklebox. However, you receive +1 die to Fish and Animal Combat, and you also start with 5 free Techniques which you may divide however you wish between Fishing Techniques, Fighting Techniques, and Versatile Techniques.

If you are a Split, Noodler may *not* be one of your selected Types.

## **Patience**

---

*You take life as it happens. While things can sometimes frustrate you, there's very little that ever breaches your deep inner calm.*

You ignore one point of Stress or Exhaustion on all rolls.



## **Pet**

---

*You are a cute, plucky animal!*

You receive +2 dice to all rolls.

Unfortunately, the differences between your body and a human's body mean that you can't use Equipment, and you don't start with any Equipment either.

The *only* exception to the rule about not having or using Equipment is Snacks. You still get the 3 Snacks that are part of every Fisher's starting Kit, and you can still use Snacks normally---receiving all the usual bonuses for eating them, although another Fisher may have to take off the plastic wrap for you.

When assigning the free Equipment or Technique pick that comes with your Kit, you may only choose +3 Snacks or a Technique.

If you are a Split, Pet may *not* be selected as one of your selected Types.

## **Soul Searcher**

---

*Maybe your life's been too busy and too complicated for a while now.*

*Or maybe you've realized that you're not who you used to be, and you're not sure if you like the person you've become.*

*Or maybe there's problems at your heels, debts and entanglements that you're trying to escape.*

*Either way, your hope is that if you get lost enough in the Old Region, you'll find yourself instead.*

When you select this Type, choose: -1 die to Animal Combat or -1 die to Fish Combat.

Start with an extra piece of Equipment.

The first time you catch a fish, the first time an animal loses combat against you, the first time you lose a combat, and the first time the party enters combat against the Fish Of Legend, instantly learn a Technique of your choice.

If you are a Split, Soul Searcher may *not* be one of your selected Types.

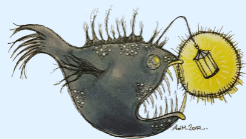
## **Split**

---

*You're neither completely one thing, nor entirely another. Your identity and outlook on life both change from time to time.*

Pick two non-Split Types. At the start of the game, and again every time you Make Camp, declare which one of those Types is Active. Only one of the two Types may be Active at a given time, but while it is Active you receive its benefits.

Unfortunately, while your dual nature makes you adaptable, it also brings you more problems. You never treat tasks as Easy (TN 3). The lowest difficulty you can encounter is Normal (TN 4).



## **Tandem**

---

*You have a loyal companion that would never leave your side. It might be an animal, such as a tiny cat, or it might be a friend or a retainer. Either way, it's practically a part of your identity.*

Gain the following three abilities. You may use each one once per Scenario.

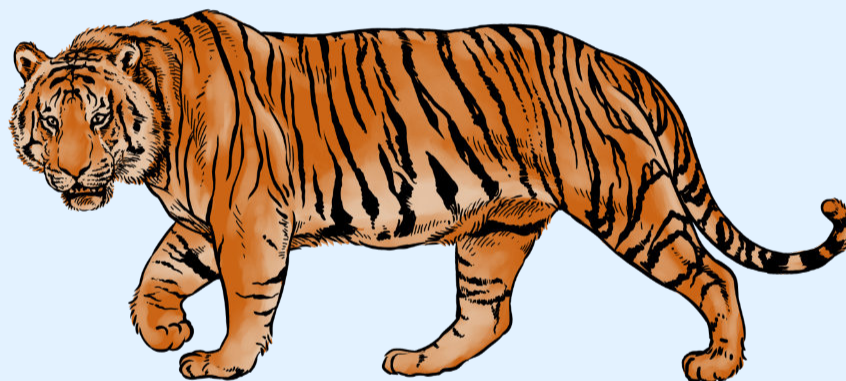
**Go!:** Pick a fish or animal that you are currently in combat with. Give it 2 Stress.

**Heel:** Immediately lose 2 Stress or 2 Exhaustion.

**Fetch:** if you are facing a Common or Uncommon Fish, catch it automatically.

If there are multiple Tandems in a party, Go! may not be used more than twice on a single fish during the same combat.

If you are a Split, Tandem may *not* be one of your selected Types.



## **Type Complexity Sidebar**

---

Some Types are very easy to learn and use. Some require a bit more work.

If you want to pick your character's Type based on how tricky it is to learn and play, use the following guide.

If not, just skip ahead to where the Types start.

**Basic:** Angler, Brawler, Expert, Explorer, Patience

**Advanced:** Caregiver, Entertainer, Gambler, Mystic, Tandem

**Expert:** Engineer, Noodler, Pet, Soul-Searcher, Split

*Note: Basic Types are not any stronger or weaker than Expert Types, they're just simpler in how they work. No one is required to play a Basic Type before they move on to playing Advanced or Expert Types, and you should play what you want to play. Again, this is a list for convenience, and it's there to help people who tend to feel a little overwhelmed when they run into a wall of RPG rules.*



## **Temperaments**

---

Unlike a Fisher's Type, which is how they interact with the world, a Fisher's Temperament is how they *feel* about that interaction.

Temperaments are not meant to be one-note, single-emotion-all-the-time ways for forcing a character into a narrow roleplaying box. Temperaments can be nuanced, and they can manifest in markedly different ways. For example, a Hot-Blooded Fisher might be constantly visibly amped up about everything they do, but they could also be quietly passionate about a cause, or have a very firm, unmoving stance on a topic, or simply have an attitude that craves the kind of challenges that they can meet head on.

Mechanically, a Fisher's Temperament affects the kinds of Gambits they'll choose in Fish and Animal Combat, but it also usually affects how that Fisher is portrayed in the story.

Pick one Temperament and only one Temperament.

### **Easy-Going**

---

*Life is life. You're just along for the ride.*

When you win a Gambit using Finesse, instead of making your opponent lose dice from their Stand Firm, you can lose 1 Stress.

### **Hot-Blooded**

---

*Your driving passion never lets you rest.*

When you win a Gambit using Force, instead of making your opponent lose dice from their Stand Firm, you can cause your opponent to take 1 Stress.

### **Tricky**

---

*You typically see challenges more as puzzles to be solved with guile than as vexing obstacles.*

When you win a Gambit using Cunning, instead of making your opponent lose dice from their Stand Firm, you can give yourself +1 die to your Stand Firm Roll this round and the next round.



## Kits

---

A Fisher's Kit is the gear that they always have on hand.

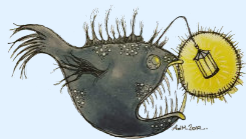
All Fishers (unless their Type says otherwise) start the game with a Kit consisting of a **Rod, Tacklebox, and 3 Snacks**.

However, every Fisher also gets to pick **one free item** from the **Equipment list**, the **Fishing Technique list**, the **Fighting Technique list**, or the **Versatile Technique list** to round out their Kit.

If a Fisher picks a Snack as their free item, they get +3 Snacks instead.

If the SB wishes, they may also provide the Fishers with two-way radios, cellphones, or some other means of communicating with the Village (and each other) while Kits are being selected.

More items can be acquired during gameplay.



# Equipment

The items in this chapter provide long-term bonuses or short-term effects for the Fishers that carry them, just like in real life.

Nearly all Fishers start with a Rod, a Tacklebox, and 3 Snacks. More Equipment can usually be acquired during a Scenario---often by trading in fish when the party Makes Camp.

Some pieces of Equipment have special tags that affect when and how they can be used. Rare, unique rules for items are typically spelled out in each item's entry, but the two most common tags are listed below.

**Consumable** Equipment provides an immediate bonus the moment it's activated, and then gets used up. Some pieces of Consumable Equipment come with multiple charges, and are only used up when the last charge is spent. If a piece of Equipment is not Consumable, you can use it as often as you like, so long as it makes sense in the narrative.

**Passive** Equipment provides a bonus as long as a Fisher is holding it. Fishers can always choose to throw Passive Equipment away, but otherwise activating Passive Equipment does not use it up.

**Stackable** Equipment stacks with itself. This means that multiple copies of the same piece of Stackable Equipment used by the same character all have an effect when they're used at the same time. A common example of Stackable Equipment is Snacks. If you have 3 Snacks for example, you can stuff them all in your face and heal 3 Stress at once. A common example of Equipment that is not Stackable is the Rod. You will not have an easier time fishing with twelve Rods than you would with one.

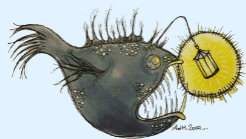
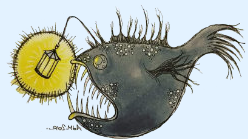
If a piece of Equipment is Stackable, it will say so clearly. Otherwise, it is not Stackable.

## **Trading Passive Equipment**

---

All pieces of Equipment may be traded freely between characters, but whenever a piece of Passive Equipment is traded from Fisher to Fisher, it stops providing its passive bonus until its new owner has Made Camp and gotten used to using it.

This occurs *even* if a clever Fisher hands their Equipment to an NPC, and then the NPC hands it to the Fisher's intended trading partner, and this rule stops groups of Fishers from hot-potatoing a pair of Athletic Shoes back and forth.



## **Artisan Boilies (Passive)**

---

*Fishing bait made out of boiled bread-paste. Expertly crafted. Locally sourced.*

+2 dice on the first Round of each Fish Combat.

## **Athletic Shoes (Passive)**

---

*A set of running shoes with comfortable soles.*

+1 die on rolls to run, jump, tumble, or otherwise interact physically with your environment. This bonus does not apply to Stand Firm Rolls or Hang On Tests in Animal Combat or Fish Combat.

## **Clarified Butter (Consumable)**

---

*Butter that has been cooked and skimmed until it is free of milk solids.*

When you Make Camp and convert at least one fish into Snacks, you may spend a charge from the butter to add +1 Snack to the total. This bonus Snack is added to the party's inventory separately, and is not multiplied by things that multiply the number of Snacks the party creates. Only one charge may be spent from a Clarified Butter per fish you convert, no matter how many Clarified Butters are in your party's inventory.

Comes with 6 charges. Used up when the last charge is spent.

## **Electrofishing Backpack (Passive)**

---

A bulky rig complete with a long rubber-gripped pole and speakers that warn you when the current is live, this piece of gear is cumbersome, expensive, and somewhat unsporting, but it is unarguably the right choice when you're done playing around.

This expensive and technical rig costs two Equipment picks or requires you to spend two Equipment picks (or fish that grant you Equipment) in order to obtain it. For any Type that only has access to the one free Equipment pick that comes with their Kit, the Electrofishing Backpack may not be taken during character creation.

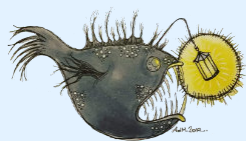
While carrying the Electrofishing Backpack, whenever you break camp, you take 1 Exhaustion from hauling around its weight.

That all said, the backpack is powerful.

Once per round of Fish Combat, and twice total per combat, you may spend a use of Yell Encouragement to instead shock the water with the backpack, inflicting 1 Stress on the Fish.

Once per Animal Combat, you may also use it to inflict 1 Stress on the active animal.

At the end of any combat in which you have used the Electrofishing Backpack, regardless of whether you won, roll 1d6. On a 6, the pack suffers a short and becomes useless.



## **Fishing Manual (Passive)**

---

*A battered guide from at least a decade ago, this is nevertheless still a source of good advice.*

+1 die to knowing things. This bonus does *not* apply to Stand Firm Rolls or Hang On Tests in Animal Combat or Fish Combat.

## **Grappling Hook (Passive)**

---

*A long, sturdy cord with a hooked metal head at the far end. Useful for scaling difficult surfaces. Also quite dangerous if you spin it around uncontrollably.*

Whenever you would suffer a Loss Penalty in an Animal Combat, you may instead use your grappling hook to try to get away. This might mean scrambling up a nearby tree, or it might mean whirling the hook around as you slowly back off. In either case, when you use the hook in this manner, roll 1d6. On a 1--3, you suffer no Loss Penalty. On a 4--6 you make a mistake, your escape isn't as clean as you would like, and you take the Loss Penalty +2 Exhaustion.

## **Hand Weapon (Passive)**

---

*A small axe, knife, baton, or other portable self-defense tool.*

+1 die to Animal Combat.

## **Harpoon (Passive)**

---

*A shiny steel spear meant for use in water.*

+2 dice for the duration of any Animal Combat that results from winning a Fish Combat (such as when an eagle interrupts your catching of a fish).

## **Lemon (Consumable)**

---

*The fruit of a small flowering evergreen, the lemon is best known for its applications in cooking.*

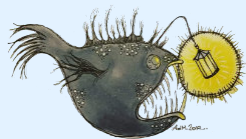
When you convert a fish into Snacks, spend a Lemon from your inventory to double the Snacks that fish gives you. This doubling is applied before any other bonuses that affect the amount of Snacks a fish gives. When in doubt, if there are multiple Snack-doubling items that seem like they should apply at the same time, multiply the Snacks the fish gives by 1 + the number of doubling items instead of applying each doubling item in sequence.

## **Light Attractor (Passive)**

---

*A portable light that shines in frequencies attractive to fish, even during the day.*

When you enter combat against a fish, they take 1 Stress. A given fish may only take 1 Stress from Light Attractors in a single combat.



## **Net (Passive)**

---

*A roughly made but durable net, perfect for encircling fish that are already near the shore.*

When you Tag In, you only take 1 Stress instead of 2.

## **Pepper Spray (Consumable)**

---

*A small tube of capsicum spray used to disable and deter attackers. This canister has a note on the side saying it is specifically formulated for bears.*

Pick an animal that you are in combat with. It loses combat and is driven off.

## **Rod (Passive)**

---

*A fishing rod. Lightweight, durable, and surprisingly reliable in combat.*

+1 die to Fish Combat. +1 die to Animal Combat.

## **Single-Use Labrador Retriever (Consumable)**

---

*A somewhat mercenary-looking dog with a worn old safety vest and a "will fish 4 cash" cardboard sign hanging off its flank.*

At the start of any round of Fish Combat, deploy this good boy to force the fish to immediately make a Hang On Test. The fish does not take a point of Stress before making this roll, and it still makes its Stand Firm Roll (and takes a point of Stress and makes its usual Hang On Test if it fails the Stand Firm Roll) as normal for the round. After being deployed, the Labrador throws a glance over its shoulder, then leaves.

Only one Single-Use Labrador Retriever may be deployed per combat.

## **Skipping Stone (Consumable, Stackable)**

---

*A smooth river stone that can bounce multiple times when flung laterally across the surface of a body of water.*

*Also works just fine for any task you'd use a regular rock for.*

Inflict 1 Stress on an opponent in Animal Combat. Comes in a pouch of three.

## **Snack (Consumable, Stackable)**

---

A single-portion treat that can restore a little bit of energy to the weary fisher.

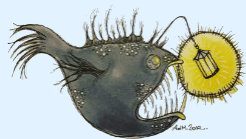
+1 die to any roll OR discard a Stress. Declare dice Snacks before the dice are rolled.

You may not spend more than 2 Snacks to add dice to a single roll.

## **Soapwhyte (Consumable)**

---

*A flowering plant in the same family as peas and beans, Soapwhyte has been used since ancient times to stun fish for easy catching. First the stalks of the plant are pounded into a fine pulp, then they are tossed into a water source.*



*Fish in the water seem to display a sense of euphoria when they come into contact with the pulp, and they calmly float near the drop point for hours afterward, becoming more amicable towards humans and easier to catch.*

Comes as a set of two bundles. Any Fisher may process a bundle by taking 1 Exhaustion to turn it into a paste, then throwing it into a Fishing Spot. For the rest of the Scenario, all fish in that Fishing Spot start combat with 1 Stress. Only one dose of Soapwhyte may be applied to a given Fishing Spot per Scenario.

### **"Soda" (Consumable, Stackable)**

---

*A can that definitely contains a carbonated soft-drink.*

*It even says soda on the side. In quotes.*

Comes in a six-pack. Spend one can from the pack to remove 3 Stress but gain 1 Exhaustion.

### **Tacklebox (Passive)**

---

*A sturdy, portable container stocked with extra line, hooks, bait, pliers, and other essentials for a fishing expedition.*

*Can also be used to whomp someone in a pinch.*

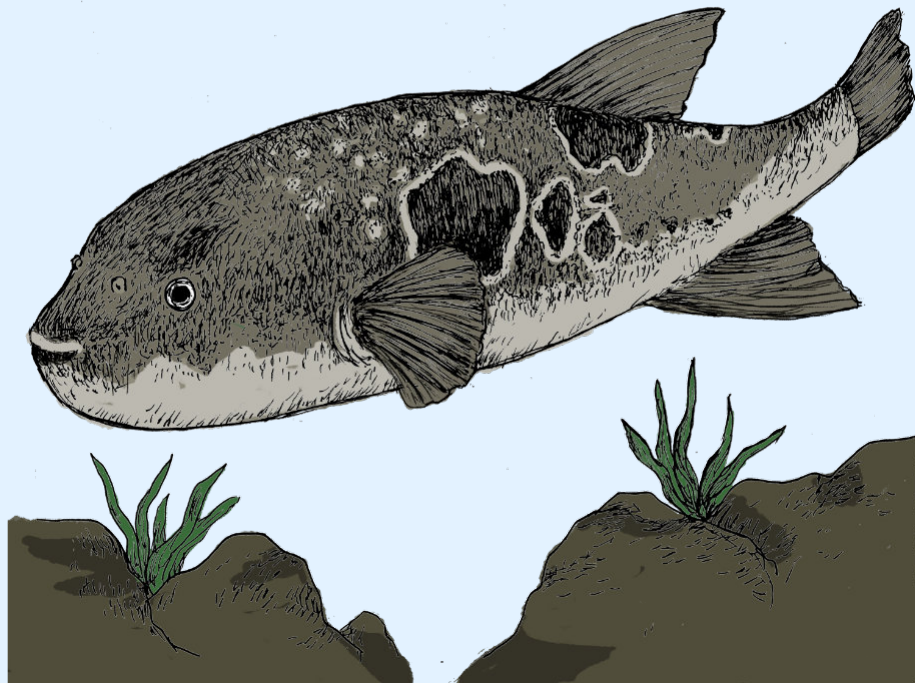
+1 die to Fish Combat. +1 die to Animal Combat.

### **Truly Impressive Fishing Hat (Passive)**

---

*A broad-brimmed, tackle-bedecked monstrosity, this hat nevertheless gives you some status as a fisher.*

+1 die to social challenges. This bonus does *not* apply to Stand Firm Rolls or Hang On Tests in Animal Combat or Fish Combat.



## **Wolfish Rod (Passive)**

---

*During daylight hours, this appears to be a perfectly unremarkable piece of fishing equipment. However, once the sun sets, the rod begins to faintly glow in the reflected light of the moon and its unique nature is revealed. Depending on the type of moon that is in the sky, the rod takes on different properties, not all of which make fishing easier.*

*Although not every one does, some Wolfish Rods grow a shaggy coat of fur, which can make them easy to set apart from mundane fishing kit.*

The Wolfish Rod replaces a standard fishing rod and may only be used by Types that can use rods. However, it may not be freely taken in place of your standard starting Rod. Either you must use the Equipment pick that comes with your Kit to acquire it (replacing your regular Rod in the process), or you must acquire it during play.

When a Fisher acquires the Wolfish Rod, roll a d6 on the Moon Phase Chart below to determine the current Moon Phase (unless it's already been established in the story, such as by another Fisher acquiring a Wolfish Rod). Every time the party Makes Camp, advance the Moon Phase by 1 until it reaches 6, then decrease it by 1 until it reaches 2, then advance it by 1 until it reaches 6 again, etc.

Eclipse can only be reached by rolling a 1 on the Moon Phase Chart when a Fisher first acquires the rod.

### Moon Phase Chart

**1 - Eclipse:** +1 die to Fish Combat and Animal Combat, all your opponents start combat with 1 Stress, and once per combat you can change your Gambit to match your opponent's Gambit after Gambits have been revealed.

**2 - New Moon:** +0 dice to Fish Combat and Animal Combat, but +1 die to all social rolls.

**3 - Crescent Moon:** +1 die to either Fish Combat or Animal Combat (determine which when the moon enters this phase), and once per combat the rod may briefly grow a pair of beefy arms and reel in the fish or haymaker the animal in front of you, dealing 1 Stress to a target of your choice.

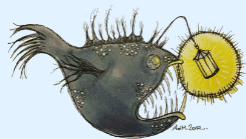
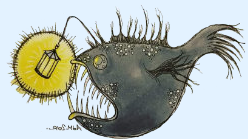
**4 - Quarter Moon:** +1 die to Fish Combat and Animal Combat.

**5 - Gibbous Moon:** +2 dice, divided as you choose between Fish Combat and Animal Combat when the moon enters this phase, but the rod fights you for control and you take 1 Stress at the start of each combat.

**6 - Full Moon:** +3 dice, divided as you choose between Fish Combat and Animal Combat when the moon enters this phase, but the rod resists you completely, and you take 1 Stress at the start of each round of combat.

The Wolfish Rod still provides its bonuses and penalties during daylight hours, but it is less obvious about it.

If your game's setting does not have a moon, the Wolfish Rod attunes to some other distant, changeable force in the setting, SWAMP BEING's pick.



# Fishing Techniques

Fishing Techniques are unique pieces of received wisdom that can be used to turn the tables in Fish Combat.

They may be learned during play by consulting the right fish or taught by non-player characters, but they may not be traded between Fishers.

## **Falling Star Strike**

---

*With a brazen display of strength, you attempt to rip your catch from the water.*

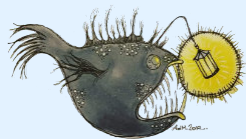
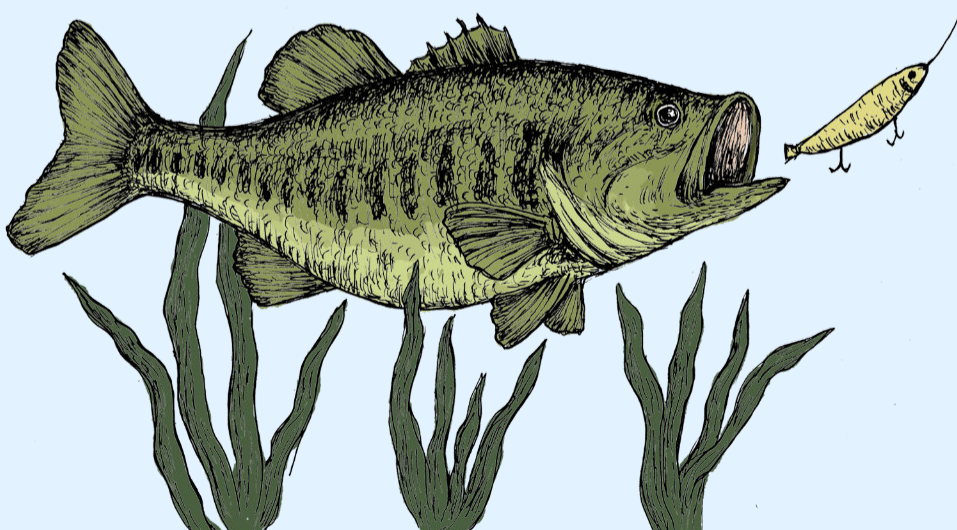
The first time each Fish Combat that a fish succeeds a Hang On Test against you, you apply a point of Stress to it.

## **Footwork Of Herakles**

---

*Your feet are planted firmly on the bank. Nothing can uproot you.*

The first time each Fish Combat that you would lose combat, you instead do not.



## **Man/Line Synchronization**

*You have achieved perfect harmony with the thin cord that links you to the fish.*

During Fish Combat, when picking the Target Number for an even-numbered round, you may pick 7 TN.

## **Mirrored Surface Gazing**

*The water beneath you is merely a shroud. Pull it back and you can see the hooked fish.*

The SB must tell you exactly what fish you are facing during Fish Combat, including its name, Catch Bonus, and any special abilities it has.

## **Ratatoskr's Reckless Abuse**

*Your enthusiasm takes no prisoners and leaves no one unscathed.*

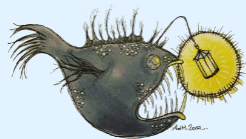
As a bystander in Fish Combat, twice per combat when you would use Yell Encouragement, you may instead spend your use of Yell Encouragement give a point of Stress to both the Fisher and the fish.

Multiple bystanders can have this Technique, but it may only be used a total of three times per Fish Combat.

## **Wind-Water Method**

*By synchronizing your movements to the environment, you can lull the fish into a false sense of superiority.*

In Fish Combat, once per odd round, at any time before the Stand Firm Roll, you may suffer a Stress to inflict a Stress on the fish.



# Fighting Techniques

Fighting Techniques are unique pieces of received wisdom that can be used to change the odds in Animal Combat.

They may be learned during play by consulting the right fish or taught by non-player characters, but they may not be traded between Fishers.

## **Baleen Banda**

---

*Your keen senses filter through the upcoming futures, seeking a reality in which your opponent falls.*

The first time in each Animal Combat that you Strain a die, it is treated as if you had Strained a number of dice equal to the number of Fishers currently in that combat.

If multiple Fishers have this Technique, only one Fisher may use it in a given combat, but that Fisher is treated as Straining an extra die for every other Fisher with this Technique.

## **Crocodile Grip**

---

*Your opponent is only free to leave when you say so.*

When in Animal Combat with multiple animals, if the SB tries to switch the active animal, you can stop them, forcing that animal to remain active.

The SB may choose to swap animals anyway, but if they do so the animal being swapped out takes 1 Stress for every Fisher in combat that has this Technique.

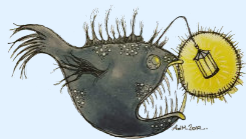
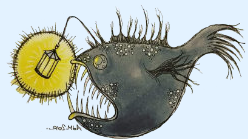
## **Marlin Lunge**

---

*Like the noble marlin, you have learned how to efficiently fling yourself nose-first into attacking creatures. Few animals expect this.*

During the first round of Animal Combat, for every die that an animal would lose due to Strain, you may have it take a point of Stress instead. If you do this, you take that many points of Stress as well.

If multiple Fishers have this Technique, only one Fisher activates it and deals and takes Stress. However, for each additional Fisher with Marlin Lunge, the Fisher activating the Technique is treated as having Strained additional dice equal to the number of Fishers with Marlin Lunge that are currently in combat.



## **Pufferfish's Retort**

---

*Like the cunning pufferfish, you always have the last word in a fight.*

When you lose an Animal Combat, you automatically deal 1 Stress to the animal. You may learn this Technique up to three times. However, the third time you take this Technique, add to it "you also inflict 1 Stress on all Fishers in your party when this activates."

## **Sacrifice Of The Sunfish**

---

*Channeling the heroic sunfish, you intercept a strike that would have finished one of your companions.*

When another Fisher would lose Animal Combat, you may lose combat in their place.

You may do this even if you are also about to lose combat, thus ensuring that you are the only one to lose combat.

Unfortunately, you may only protect one Fisher at a time with this Technique. If two of your friends are about to lose combat at the same time, you have to pick which one you want to save.



# Versatile Techniques

Versatile Techniques are rare abilities that may be learned as either Fishing Techniques or Fighting Techniques, user's choice, when they are acquired.

Particularly dedicated Fishers may go back and acquire a Versatile Technique a second time, thus gaining the ability to use that Technique in both fish and animal combat.

## **Coral's Impenetrable Defense**

---

*There are no gaps in your guard. Beating you is impossible without first wearing you down.*

When you take this, you may choose to take it as either a Fishing Technique or a Fighting Technique.

If you take this as a Fishing Technique, you ignore the first point of Stress you would take in every Fish Combat. If you take this as a Fighting Technique, you ignore the first point of Stress you would take in every Animal Combat.

You may learn either version of this Technique up to three times. Its effects stack.

## **Fist Of The Zoologist**

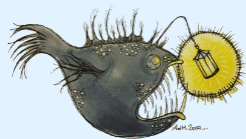
---

*Long periods of careful study have taught you how to exploit the weaknesses in the fighting styles of fish and woodland creatures.*

When you take this, you may choose to take it as either a Fishing Technique or a Fighting Technique.

If you take this as a Fishing Technique, you get +1 die on all Stand Firm Rolls in Fish Combat. If you take this as a Fighting Technique, you get +1 die on all Stand Firm Rolls in Animal Combat.

Bonuses from this Technique only apply so long as you are facing a species of animals or fish that you have already encountered. For example, if you have this as a Fishing Technique, you've faced a Grass Carp before, and you encounter a new Grass Carp, you get +1 on Stand Firm Rolls against that Grass Carp.



## **The Ocean Abides**

---

*The sea cares naught for the trickery of man or beast. By synchronizing your thoughts with the roll of the waves, you can cultivate a similar indifference.*

When you take this, you may choose to take it as either a Fishing Technique or a Fighting Technique.

If you take this as a Fishing Technique, the first die that would be Strained from you each Fish Combat has no effect. If you take this as a Fighting Technique, the first die that would be Strained from you each Animal Combat has no effect.

You may learn either version of this Technique up to three times. Its effects stack.

## **Will Of The Depths**

---

*Memories of your previous life fills you as you awaken the demonic powers of your ancestor: the great Leviathan, emperor of the depths. His dark blood runs through your veins, channeling forbidden power that sets you apart from the common folk.*

*...Or so you believe. And at the end of the day, that's what matters.*

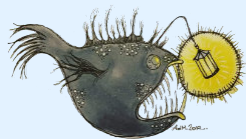
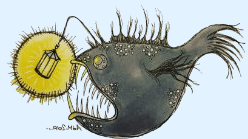
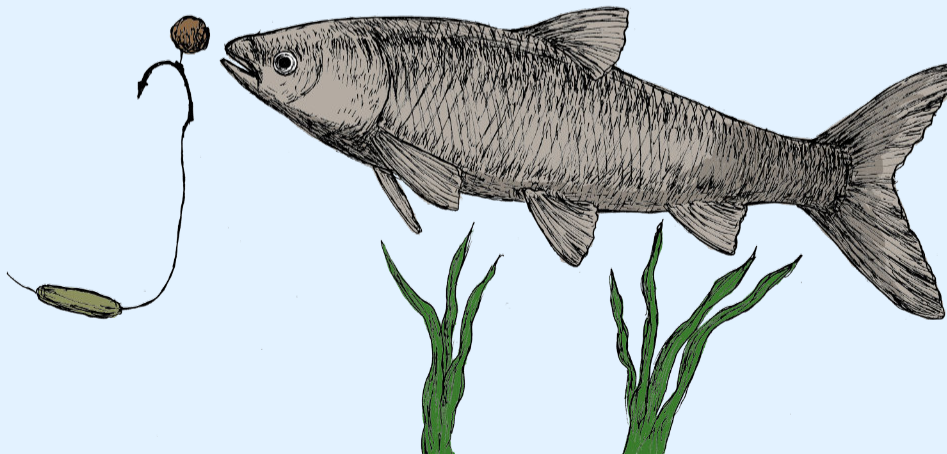
*By indulging in your self-fantasy, you allow yourself to push through your limits.*

*You may look a bit silly by acting out your totally original story about a monster that's definitely not based on a maritime fairy tale, but there is no denying the results.*

When you take this, you may choose to take it as either a Fishing Technique or a Fighting Technique.

At the start of every Fish Combat if you took this as a Fishing Technique, or every Animal Combat if you took this as a Fighting Technique, choose: fight normally, or indulge in a heroic delusion.

If you indulge in a heroic delusion, gain +1 die for the rest of the combat. However, at the end of rounds 1, 3, 5, and every round after 5, gain 1 Stress from your growing self-consciousness.



# Fish Combat

Fish Combat is the long, mental duel that occurs between fish and angler, culminating in a final surge of shining scales and straining line as the fish is at last dragged from the water---or else as it plunges safely into the depths.

Fish Combat occurs whenever a Fisher sets up on the edge of a body of water and announces their intention to fish it.

When Fish Combat begins, unless the Scenario you are playing has rules for which fish are in the area, the SB picks a fish from the Fishtuary that matches that body of water being fished and sets that fish against the Fisher.

The Fisher **doesn't automatically know** what kind of fish is on the other end of the line, and---other than telling the Fisher how many dice are in the Fish's pool---the SB will only reveal facts about the fish (such as how many Stress it ignores) as they become relevant.

In Fish Combat, the game is **broken into rounds**. At the start of every **odd-numbered round**, the fish picks a number between 1 and 7. At the start of every **even-numbered round**, the Fisher picks a number between 1 and 6. The number that is picked serves as the Target Number for that round's **Stand Firm Roll**.

Once the Target Number for the round has been set, both Fisher and Fish make a Stand Firm Roll (rolling 1d6 + any bonus dice they get for rolls in Fish Combat) and they each **try to meet or exceed the Target Number that was picked**.

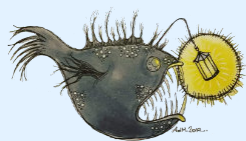
Any character that fails the Stand Firm Roll suffers a Stress and must then immediately make a **Hang On Test**.

A Hang On Test is done by attempting an **Easy (TN 3)** roll. Like the Stand Firm roll, this is made with 1d6 + any bonus dice they get for rolls in Fish Combat. TN 3 might not seem too difficult, but remember that points of Exhaustion and Stress apply to each roll, *including the point of Stress that just came from losing the Stand Firm Roll*. If either party ever fails the Hang On Test, the line breaks (if the Fisher failed) or the fish is hauled to the surface (if the Fish failed).

Either way, **whenever at least one party fails this test, Fish Combat ends**.

When Fish Combat ends, the Fisher **clears all Stress** (but not any Exhaustion) that they had accumulated during the combat.

If neither party failed the Hang On Test, a new round begins, and combat continues this way until one side (or both sides) have finally lost.



## **The Spoils of Fish Combat**

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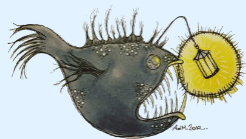
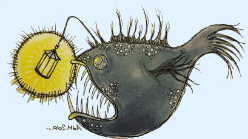
If the fish loses combat, it is landed and the Fisher gets its Catch Bonus.

If the Fisher loses combat, the fish gets away, vanishing from the current location. Other fish of the same species might still be catchable there, but that particular fish is gone. The Fisher loses a little bit of self-confidence at this Setback and suffers an Exhaustion.

In rare situations, both fish and Fisher can lose Fish Combat at the same time.

If this happens, the Fish is caught and provides its Catch Bonus and the Fisher suffers an Exhaustion.

Caught fish can often be cashed in for various bonuses when the Fishers Make Camp, but they can sometimes also be deployed in other ways (such as throwing them to ward off a bear). Which bonuses are provided by a landed fish depend on the kind of fish that was caught.



## **Advanced Fish Combat**

---

Now that you've got the basics under your belt, let's take a look at some more advanced rules for Fish Combat.

These rules keep Fish Combat moving along at a good clip, and they give both the fish and Fisher some options that aren't just rolling dice.

### **Advanced Combat: Gambits**

---

Each round, before the Stand Firm Roll, both the Fisher and the fish should secretly declare a **Gambit**.

A Gambit is the broad approach that a character is taking to combat that round.

Gambit options are as follows:

- Force
- Finesse
- Cunning

Force beats Finesse. Finesse beats Cunning. Cunning beats Force.

After both sides have declared their Gambits, reveal them.

**If the fish wins the Gambit, the Fisher loses 2 dice from their next Stand Firm Roll (but not their next Hang On Test. This is important.) Losing dice this way cannot bring the Fisher's pool below 1, but for each die the Fisher is unable to lose due to already being at 1 die, a Snack used by that Fisher will have no effect this round.**

**If the Fisher wins the Gambit, the fish suffers the same consequences with the same restrictions.**

**If no one wins the Gambit (generally because both sides picked the same thing), no one loses any dice.**

Once the Gambit has been resolved, both sides proceed to the Stand Firm Roll as normal.

### **Advanced Combat: Straining**

---

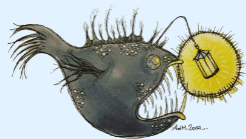
After resolving Gambits but before resolving the Stand Firm Roll, characters in Fish Combat may choose to take a dice penalty to their own pool in order to apply a dice penalty to their opponent's pool.

This is called **Straining**.

When Straining, **you can give up any number of your dice in order to remove an equal number of your opponent's dice.**

**Dice given up or removed this way are gone for the rest of the round.**

**Strain penalties can't lower your own or your opponent's dice pool below 1 die, and you can't Strain away your last die, but you *can* Strain away dice that**



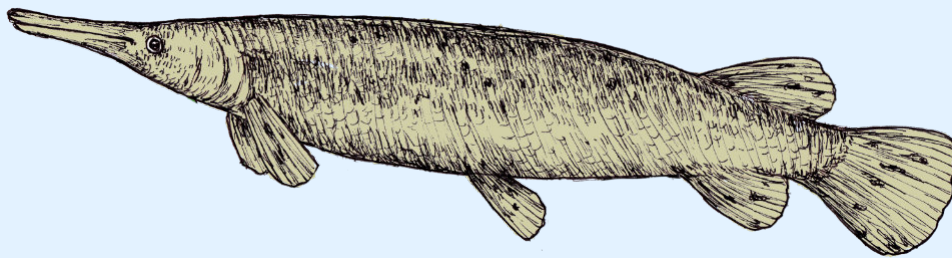
you've gained from Snacks or other Equipment or abilities.

This means that if you have 1 die and you eat 2 Snacks, this brings your dice pool temporarily up to 3, and you can Strain away 2 of those dice to apply a -2 dice penalty to your opponent's pool. Of course, if you do this and then you end up having to make another roll after the temporary dice are gone but before the Strained dice have come back, you'll be left at 1 die with a Strain penalty on top of that.

Like with Gambits, **if a Strain would ever reduce a character to less than 1 die on a roll, for each die that they are unable to lose due to already being at 1 die, a Snack used by that character will have no effect this round.**

**In Fish Combat, the Fisher always declares how many dice they wish to Strain first, and then the fish declares how many dice *they* wish to Strain after (assuming there's any dice left in their pool after the Fisher's Strain.)**

Remember, dice lost due to Straining are gone from both your Stand Firm Roll and the Hang On Test, so if you Strain away all but one of your dice, you'd better be prepared to roll high.



### **Advanced Combat: Using Items And Yelling Encouragement**

Fish Combat is a 1 v 1 affair, but that doesn't mean that your friends can't participate. In addition to sharing Snacks and other Consumable items with the Fisher who's locked in Fish Combat, other Fishers can **Yell Encouragement**.

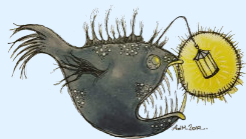
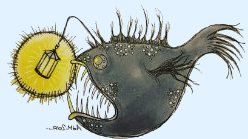
Every Fisher can request (and get any benefits from) Yell Encouragement **twice per round of Fish Combat**. These uses may be both at the same time, or spread out between different rolls.

To request Yell Encouragement, the active Fisher announces that they need help, and then another player describes how their character pitches in to help them.

Each time Yell Encouragement is requested and received, **the active Fisher suppresses a single point of Stress or Exhaustion for the duration of the current roll**. This means that if a Fisher has 2 Stress and their friends Yell Encouragement once, only 1 of those Stress applies to the current roll.

Yell Encouragement *does not permanently remove Stress or Exhaustion*, it must be declared before the roll in question has been made, and it doesn't carry over between rounds.

Even with these restrictions, support from your fishing buddies is a powerful thing, and it is a crucial tool for keeping a Fisher standing in a long, knock-down-drag-out fight.



## **Advanced Combat: Tagging Out**

---

In particularly dire circumstances, a Fisher who is engaged in Fish Combat may **Tag Out** after the Stand Firm Roll but *before* the Hang On Test has been rolled.

When a Fisher Tags Out, they take **1 Exhaustion**, clear their **Stress**, any dice they had **Strained away** are immediately returned to the fish, and they may not rejoin that particular Fish Combat.

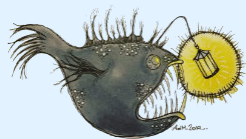
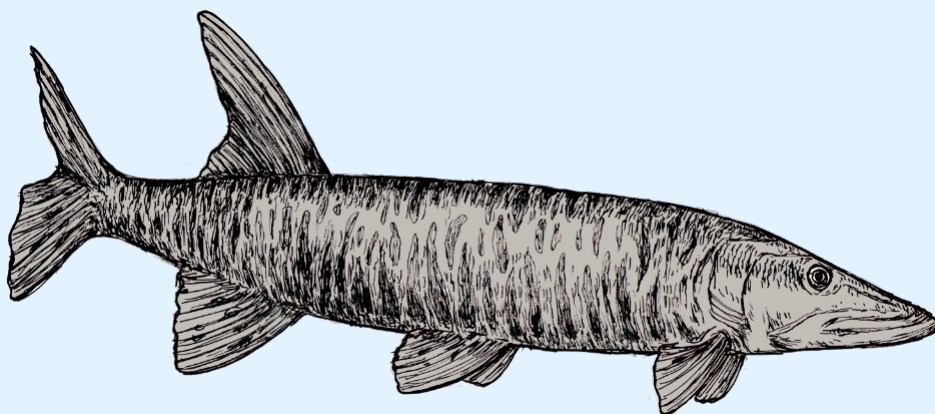
Instead, an allied Fisher nearby can **Tag In**, grabbing the rod and entering combat in the original Fisher's place.

Tagging In is harrowing, as even a slight mistake could forfeit the fish, and the Fisher who Tags In **suffers 2 Stress immediately**. On top of that, **they must still attempt to pass the Hang On Test that their companion tagged out of**.

During all of this, any dice that the *fish* had Strained remain Strained away, and **these Strain dice are immediately applied to the Fisher Tagging In**. This means that if a Fish Strains 2 dice, the active Fisher Tags Out, and a new Fisher Tags In, the new Fisher takes 2 Stress from Tagging In and then has to make a Hang On Test with 2 dice Strained away---not an easy task.

Yelling Encouragement is also limited during a Tag In/Tag Out. **Any uses of Yell Encouragement that were already spent on the Fisher Tagging Out cannot be spent on the Fisher Tagging In**. So if a Fisher requests Yell Encouragement twice on their Stand Firm Roll and then Tags Out, the Fisher Tagging In doesn't get to request any Yell Encouragements this round (unless they have an ability that lets them use more than the usual number).

Despite all this, Tagging Out can be the best way to continue the fight against a particularly difficult fish, and multiple anglers can sometimes triumph over a catch that a single Fisher is unable to land.



## **Fish Combat Flowchart**

---

If you're still not sure you have Fish Combat down completely pat, this handy flowchart has been provided to help you track your progress.

1. Combat begins. The SB does not tell the Fisher anything yet about what they've hooked, other than how many dice are in its pool. This information is only revealed as it becomes relevant. For example, if a Fish ignores a certain number of points of Stress, the SB doesn't need to mention this until the Fish is about to take its first point of Stress.
2. The round begins. If it's an odd round, the Fish picks between 1 and 7. If it's an even round, the Fisher picks between 1 and 6. The number that is picked will be used as the TN for that round's Stand Firm Roll, but don't make the Stand Firm Roll just yet.
3. First, the Fish and Fisher secretly select their Gambits.
4. Next, the Fish and Fisher reveal their Gambits. The loser suffers -2 dice on the upcoming Stand Firm Roll.
5. Now the Fisher decides whether to Strain, and then the Fish decides whether to Strain.
6. Finally, the Fisher may request a Yell Encouragement.
7. Once this is all done, both Fish and Fisher make the Stand Firm Roll.
8. If either party fails the Stand Firm Roll, they take 1 Stress and will need to make a Hang On Test---but they don't roll it just yet.
9. The Fisher may request a Yell Encouragement.
10. Alternately, the Fisher may choose to Tag Out.
11. Now, anyone who failed the Stand Firm Roll makes a Hang On Test (TN 3.)
12. If the Fisher tests and fails, they take 1 Exhaustion and combat ends.
13. If the Fish tests and fails, the Fisher gets their Catch Bonus and combat ends.
14. If no one failed, all Strained dice are returned to the fish and the Fisher and combat continues. Go to 2.



## **An Example Of Fish Combat**

---

*Finn Troutbane, pet goliath minibear, wants to catch a fish for Susan B. Bonny, his traveling companion. Finn has found a promising river and wades into it.*

*First, Finn's player announces his intention to fish.*

*Next, the SB selects a fish that could reasonably be in that river, tells Finn's player how many dice are in that fish's dice pool, and Fish Combat begins.*

*Finn does not have any special Techniques that would allow him to know extra information about the fish, so the SB only tells him that it's a 2 dice fish (concealing from him that it's a Trashfish.)*

*Round 1 starts, and the fish chooses 5 TN.*

*Finn and the fish each secretly choose a Gambit, and then they reveal them at the same time. Finn reveals Force and the fish reveals Finesse. Force beats Finesse, so Finn wins the Gambit. The fish would normally lose 2 dice from its Stand Firm---but it only subtracts 1 die this time because losing 2 dice would take its dice pool to zero.*

*At this point, Finn and the fish can both choose to Strain. Finn decides to Strain away 1 die, giving up one of his own dice to penalize the fish by 1 die. This might not seem like it has any effect, since the fish is already down to 1 die from Finn's Gambit, but it will matter if the fish loses its Stand Firm Roll.*

*In any case, Finn and the fish both attempt the Stand Firm Roll.*

*Because the fish had set the Target Number to 5 at the start of the round, 5 is the number they both have to reach.*

*Finn would normally have 3 dice to work with, but he's just Strained 1 die away, so instead he rolls 2 dice and gets a 4 and a 5. 5 meets the Target Number, so Finn is safe.*

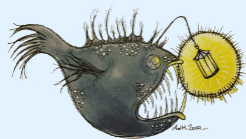
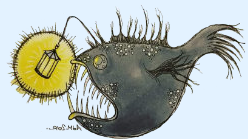
*The Trashfish, on the other hand, is suffering -2 dice from its lost Gambit and -1 die from Finn's Strain, and it only has a dice pool of 2 to begin with. This means it has just one 1 die to roll. It rolls and gets a 4, which isn't good enough. The fish takes a point of Stress and then has to make a Hang On Test.*

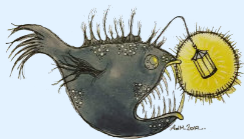
*The normal TN for a Hang On Test is 3, but factoring in the fish's point of Stress it needs to get at least a 4 to succeed.*

*Worse, even though the penalty for losing the Gambit is gone, the missing die from Finn's Strain still applies, so the fish only has 1 die instead of 2 to roll. It rolls that one die and gets a 3, which isn't good enough. The fish loses combat and is caught.*

*Now that combat is over, any Stress that Finn had goes away. However, as Finn drags his catch to the surface, he finally realizes that it's a Trashfish. Catching a Trashfish is demoralizing, and the Catch Bonus in this case is a point of Exhaustion.*

*Finn grumbles and trundles off to present the fish to Susan B. Bonny.*





# Animal Combat

Animal Combat occurs whenever an aggressive animal gets one or more Fishers in its sights and moves in for the attack.

Animal Combat unfolds similarly to Fish Combat, but with a few key differences.

At the start of Animal Combat, the SB describes the animal (or animals) involved and tells the players their dice pools, but not their special abilities. Those are only revealed as they come up during the conflict.

Like Fish Combat, in Animal Combat the animal sets the Target Number on odd rounds. The Fisher sets the Target Number on even rounds. All participants make a Stand Firm Roll every round, trying to get the Target Number or higher, and any that fail have to make a Hang On Test. After leaving Animal Combat, all Fishers and animals clear any Stress they have accumulated.

The biggest single difference between the two types of combat is that **multiple Fishers may be involved in Animal Combat at the same time**. If this happens, they make their Stand Firm Rolls and Hang On Tests at the same time, fighting together against the animal (or animals).

As a result, there are several other differences that flow from that one big change.

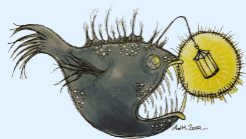
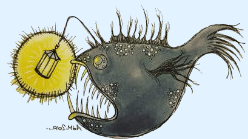
**When an animal loses combat, it is driven off and it does not come back.**

**When a Fisher loses Animal Combat, they suffer the animal's Loss Penalty as a Setback**, and they narrowly manage to escape, retreating to the nearest safe location on the map.

**Animal Combat ends when the animal has lost, or whenever all Fishers have lost.**

If these two things happen at the same time, the animal is driven off, but the Fishers who lost still all suffer its Loss Penalty.

Now, let's talk about Gambits, Straining, using items and Yelling Encouragement, and encountering multiple attackers in Animal Combat.



## **Gambits In Animal Combat**

---

Gambits in Animal Combat work the same way as Gambits in Fish Combat, but with one exception.

**When there are multiple Fishers in combat, whenever a Fisher wins a Gambit against the animal, they only remove 1 die from the animal's pool.**

Groups of Fishers may win, lose, and tie the same Gambit, depending on what they picked and what the animal picked.

**Fishers that lose Gambits in Animal Combat still lose a full 2 dice from their Stand Firm Roll.**

**If there is only one Fisher left in an Animal Combat, their successful Gambits remove 2 dice from the animal's pool as normal.**

## **Straining In Animal Combat**

---

Straining in Animal Combat works the same way as straining in Fish Combat, but with three exceptions.

The first is that in Animal Combat, **animals Strain first.**

The second and third have to do with how Fishers and animals Strain.

## **Fishers Straining In Animal Combat**

---

In Fish Combat, Straining is simple. You haul back and try to drag the fish out of the water before the line breaks.

In Animal Combat, Fishers Strain by putting just a little too much effort into what they're doing, leaving themselves off-balance and open to a counterattack.

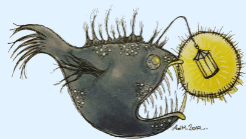
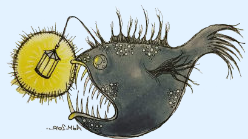
In a big group, coordinating going all-out like this is difficult. But as groups get smaller, it gets easier.

**When there are multiple Fishers in combat, the Fishers have to give up a combined number of dice equal to the number of Fishers that are currently in combat in order to Strain *one* die from the animal.**

So, if four Fishers are in combat against a Bear, and each Fisher has to choose to lose one die by Straining for the Bear to lose one die total.

By the same token, if there are four Fishers in combat against a Bear, one Fisher can lose 4 dice in order to Strain one die from the Bear.

As the number of Fishers in combat dwindles, Straining becomes easier, so in the case of a single Fisher vs a Bear, for every die the Fisher loses, the Bear loses a die as well.



## **Animals Straining In Animal Combat**

In Animal Combat, each die an animal Strains removes a number of dice equal to half the number of Fishers currently in the combat from a Fisher (round down, minimum 1). Dice removed this way can be distributed between multiple Fishers, so if there's four Fishers in a party and an animal strains 1 die, it can remove one die from two of those Fishers, or it can remove two dice from one Fisher.

Like in Fish Combat, all Strained dice always return at the end of the round.

## **Speeding Things Up**

Sometimes groups will get into long conversations about who should Strain, and how much. This can slow combat down to a crawl, so it is recommended that if the players are taking a long time to figure out their Animal Combat Strains, the SB should impose a ten second time limit. If the Fishers haven't figured out who's Straining how much by then, none of them Strain anything and combat continues.

## **Using Items And Yelling Encouragement In Animal Combat**

Fishers may not Yell Encouragement in Animal Combat. Everyone is too busy trying to endure the animal attack.

Fishers may use items normally, however.

## **Encountering Multiple Attackers**

Sometimes you land that Voracious Pike just as a Fishing Eagle spots your catch. Other times, two Giant Salamanders emerge from the lake to make a play for your freshly caught Goldenscale Carp.

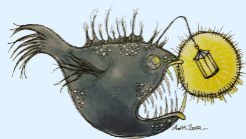
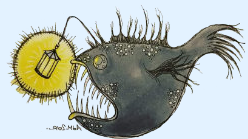
In these situations and others like them, the Fishers can end up in combat against multiple animals at the same time.

In Multiple Animal Combat, at the start of the first round, the SWAMP BEING designates one animal as the **Active Attacker** and all other animals as **inactive**. At the start of every following round, the SB may deactivate the Active Attacker and activate one of the inactive animals, making *that* animal the new Active Attacker.

Animals that are particularly predisposed to teamwork may cleverly switch between Active Attackers at critical moments to turn the tide against the Fishers. However, most animals aren't that coordinated, and will attempt to change the Active Attacker only occasionally.

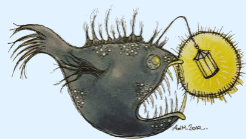
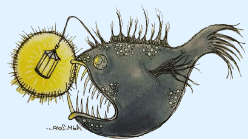
If the Active Attacker is ever defeated, the SB must immediately make one of the remaining animals the new Active Attacker. If no other animals remain, the Fishers have won.

During combat, the **Active Attacker is the only animal that can be targeted by items, Straining, Techniques, Gambits, etc, and it is the only animal that selects a Gambit, that Strains, that makes Stand Firm Rolls or Hang On Tests, and that uses its own abilities during a given round.**



In simpler terms, the party is only ever fighting one animal at a time, even when they're in a Multiple Animal Combat.

If a Fisher ever loses combat against multiple animals, the SB chooses one of the animals and the losing Fisher suffers that animal's Loss Penalty---even if it's not the Active Attacker.

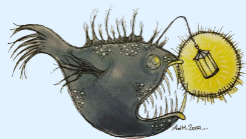
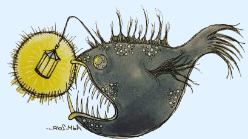


## **Animal Combat Flowchart**

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If you're still not sure you have Animal Combat down completely pat, you can follow this chart to track your progress.

1. Combat begins. The SB tells the Fishers what animal(s) they are facing and provides its dice pool. The SB doesn't have to tell the players anything about the animal's special abilities or Loss Penalty yet.
2. The round begins. If there are multiple animals, the SB chooses which animal is the Active Attacker and all the other animals are set to inactive.
3. If it's an odd round, the Active Attacker picks a number between 1 and 7. If it's an even round, the Fisher picks between 1 and 6. The number that is picked will be used as the TN for that round's Stand Firm Roll, but don't make the Stand Firm Roll just yet.
4. First, the Active Attacker and the Fishers secretly select their Gambits.
5. Next, the Active Attacker and the Fishers reveal their Gambits. If there are multiple Fishers, the Active Attacker loses 1 die from their Stand Firm Roll per Fisher that wins their Gambit. If there is only one Fisher, the Active Attacker loses 2 dice from their Stand Firm Roll if that Fisher wins their Gambit. Any Fisher that loses a Gambit against the Active Attacker loses 2 dice on their upcoming Stand Firm Roll.
6. Now, the Active Attacker decides whether to Strain. For every die the Active Attacker Strains, they can remove (Fishers/2) dice, divided as they wish between the Fishers.
7. Next, the Fishers need to decide whether to Strain. They may collectively lose dice equal to the number of Fishers in order to force the Active Attacker to lose one die. If the Fishers haven't figured out who's Straining how much after ten seconds have passed, move on to the next step.
8. Finally, both the Active Attacker and the Fishers make the Stand Firm Roll.
9. If anyone fails the Stand Firm Roll, they take 1 Stress and must make a Hang On Test (TN 3).
10. If a Fisher tests and fails, the SB picks an animal currently in combat. The Fisher suffers that animal's Loss Penalty and exits combat. When the last Fisher leaves combat this way, combat has been lost.
11. If the Active Attacker tests and fails, they exit combat and are chased off. If this is a multiple animal combat, the SB must immediately choose an inactive animal to become the new Active Attacker. If no inactive animals remain, combat has been won.
12. As long as at least one animal and one Fisher remain, all Strained dice are returned at the end of the round and a new round begins. Go to 2.



## **An Example Of Animal Combat**

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*Susan B. Bonny, a plucky youngster, has accidentally angered two Large Woodcutter Bees. The SB tells Susan's player that the bees are each a 3 dice animal.*

*Round 1 begins. There are two bees, so the SB designates swarm A as the active attacker. Swarm B fades into the background for this round. The SB then chooses 6 TN as the difficulty for the round's Stand Firm Roll.*

*Next, Susan and swarm A secretly choose a Gambit and then reveal them. Susan reveals Cunning and swarm A reveals Finesse. Finesse beats Cunning, so Susan loses 2 dice from her Stand Firm Roll.*

*Susan normally would have 3 dice for her Stand Firm Roll, but she only has one at the moment thanks to that penalty from the lost Gambit. On top of that, Swarm A chooses to Strain. It gives up 2 of its dice to make sure that Susan will be short 2 dice on every roll she makes for the rest of the round. Susan has nothing left to Strain with, so she does not Strain.*

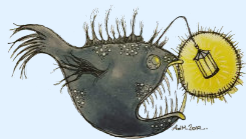
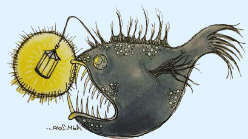
*Now, both Susan and swarm A make the Stand Firm Roll. They're both trying to get a 6 TN, and they also both have a single die (the swarm because it Strained away 2 of its own dice, and Susan because she's suffering both from the penalty from the lost Gambit and from the swarm's Straining). Susan rolls and gets a 5, which is 1 short of the TN. No good. The swarm meanwhile rolls and gets a 6. It's safe.*

*Because she lost the Stand Firm Roll, Susan takes 1 Stress and has to make a Hang On Test.*

*The base difficulty for a Hang On Test is 3 TN, but Susan's point of Stress applies to it, bringing that 3 TN up to a 4 TN. Susan also still has only 1 die to roll, since the penalty for losing the Gambit is gone, but the penalty from the swarm's Straining is still in effect.*

*Tentatively, Susan rolls her one die and gets a 3, not good enough.*

*Susan loses combat. The SB picks swarm A, and Susan suffers its Loss Penalty: 3 Exhaustion as she runs in a blind panic away from the bees.*



# Mixed Combat

In rare circumstances, the Fishers may get into both an Animal Combat and a Fish Combat at the same time.

This might occur when half of the party is trying to hold off a mountain lion while their friend has a rare trout on the line, or when a bear blunders into the middle of a complex fishing operation.

**In Mixed Combat, both types of combat take place simultaneously,** and they share the same round number. This means that round 1 of the Fish Combat takes place at the same time as round 1 of the Animal Combat, and vice versa. If an Animal Combat begins in the middle of a Fish Combat, it starts at the same round number (and the reverse is true as well). To give an example, if a Fisher is on round 3 of a Fish Combat when a wild boar charges out of the bushes at their friends, the wild boar fight begins at round 3.

In a Mixed Combat, the Fish Combat follows normal Fish Combat rules, and the Animal Combat follows normal Animal Combat rules, but there are a few gray areas where those rules overlap, and they are covered in more detail here.

## **Handling Stress In Mixed Combat**

Normally, Fishers clear their Stress when they win a combat or Tag Out. However, during a mixed combat, no one clears their Stress this way until both combats have concluded.

## **Tagging Out In Mixed Combat**

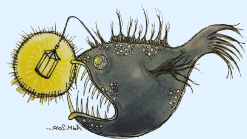
During Mixed Combat, the Fisher in the Fish Combat may still Tag Out. When they do, they are added to the Animal Combat, and the Fisher that's Tagging In leaves the Animal Combat and enters the Fish Combat.

All normal restrictions and penalties for Tagging Out/Tagging In apply.

## **Losing And Winning In Mixed Combat**

If all Fishers in the Animal Combat half of a Mixed Combat lose combat while there is still a Fisher in Fish Combat, at the end of the round the Fisher in the Fish Combat loses the Fish Combat *and then* loses the Animal Combat as well.

Apart from this, losing and winning works as normal. The Fishers can lose combat to the fish and still win against the animal, or they can win against the fish and then lose to the animal.



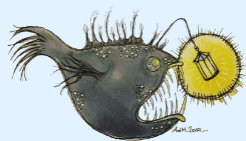
If the last animal in a Mixed Combat is defeated at the same time that all the Fishers that are in combat with it are defeated, the Fisher in Fish Combat may continue their Fish Combat untroubled. However if another animal joins the fray after that, the Fisher in the Fish Combat will lose at the end of the round it joined in.

The rule of thumb is that if there's a Fisher locked in Fish Combat and there's an animal that wants to attack them and there's no other Fishers to get in the animal's way, the Fisher in Fish Combat won't be able to defend themselves at all against the animal, and will lose as soon as the animal attacks.

### **One Player Mixed Combat**

If there is only one Fisher total in the game, Mixed Combat works a little differently in order to keep the game balanced.

When a party-of-one Fisher is both fishing and being attacked by an animal, instead of losing at the end of the round, that Fisher takes 1 Stress at the end of each round and fights in the Fish Combat only. When the Fish Combat is done, the Fisher enters the Animal Combat. This occurs regardless of whether the lone Fisher won or lost their Fish Combat, and they carry over any Stress from the Fish Combat into the Animal Combat.



# Fishtuary

The following example fish can be encountered in the ponds, streams, and other bodies of water of the Old Region.

Not all of these fish have real-world analogues, and slight adaptations may be required to match a given fish to the tone and setting of your game, but each comes with a suggested habitat, dice pool, special abilities, and bonus for catching it.

## **Common Fish**

---

These fish are abundant. They can be found in most habitats and caught without too much trouble.

They may not be fancy, but nabbing a common fish is always better than going home empty-handed.

## **Bass, Fighting**

---

*A common sport fish, prized for its incredible spirit.*

**Habitats:** Lakes, rivers, creeks, areas near dropoffs or with thick vegetation, sandy or rocky shoreline shallows. Fresh or salt water.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** Removes an additional die from the Fisher on a successful Force Gambit. When a Fisher *succeeds* a Hang On Test against the Fighting Bass, they take 1 Stress. Permanently loses a die at the end of the 2nd and 5th rounds.

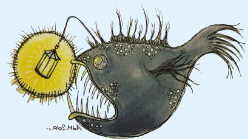
**Catch Bonus:** Catching this guy is a workout. The next time you get into a Fish or Animal Combat after landing a Fighting Bass, you may choose to have your first successful Force Gambit inflict +2 Stress instead of reducing your opponent's dice pool. This can stack with other effects that inflict Stress instead of reducing an opponent's dice pool. When you Make Camp, you may convert each Fighting Bass into 2 Snacks.

## **Carp, Grass**

---

*A common, herbivorous freshwater fish that can sometimes be enticed to the surface with a scrap of bread.*

**Habitats:** Lakes, ponds, pools, slow-moving rivers, stagnant bodies of water, areas with heavy vegetation. Fresh or brackish water.



**Dice:** 3

**Special:** Ignores the first two points of Stress it would take.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may convert each Grass Carp into 2 Snacks.

## **Catfish, Lurking**

---

*Bottom-dwellers with a surprisingly good sense of hearing, catfish are named for their whiskers.*

**Habitats:** Ponds, swamps, streams, rivers, lakes, marshes, stagnant or running water, on the bottom or inside holes in the bank. Fresh or brackish water.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** If Lurking Catfish succeeds a Finesse Gambit, and if it has succeeded at least one other Finesse Gambit during the combat, the Fisher loses combat.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may convert each Lurking Catfish into 3 Snacks.

## **Cod, Atlantic**

---

*A shoaling, predatory fish that can reach six feet (almost two meters) in length, Atlantic Cod can swim great distances along the ocean bottom while foraging on crustaceans and smaller fish. When confronted with an active predator, they've been known to pack themselves between rocks or into kelp forests to decline their spot on the menu.*

**Habitats:** Coastal areas, sea bottoms, places with rocky or coarse sand substrate. Saltwater.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** At the end of round 3, permanently loses 1 die.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may convert each Atlantic Cod into 3 Snacks---or 5 Snacks if you put some extra effort into fully processing the fish and take 1 Exhaustion when you break camp.

## **Eel, Unagi**

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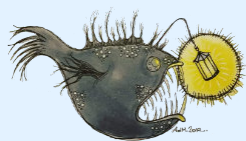
*With a complex life-cycle, these eels grow to adulthood in fresh water, migrate out to the ocean as adults, and then let oceanic currents disperse their spawn across the shores, where the new eels swim upstream and grow into adults.*

*Unagi can be made into a number of delicious dishes, but the process for preparing them is a little finicky.*

**Habitats:** Estuaries, lakes, rivers, headwaters, near fallen trees, strainers, wrecked boats, holes in river banks, and thick plantlife. Fresh or salt water.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** Loses 1 Stress when it succeeds a Cunning Gambit. This happens in



addition to removing dice from its opponent's dice pool.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may attempt to convert your Unagi into delicious kabayaki (barbecued eel). For each Unagi, roll 1d6. 1--4, the eel is ruined. On a 5--6, receive 4 Snacks.

## **Minnow, Tiny Hooked**

*Although technically in the same family as carp, this minnow has two traits that set it apart from its larger cousins.*

*The first is that it is very small---only a little bigger than an adult's pinky finger.*

*The second is that natural hooks grow out of its back. This is probably meant to deter predators, but it has turned the little guy into a sort of good luck charm for fishers...thus encouraging its overfishing.*

**Habitats:** Small lakes, ponds, wetlands, drainage ditches, river rapids, in the ocean near the shore. Fresh or salt water.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** When you catch this minnow, its wriggles put your hands in danger of its hook. Before clearing your Stress from the combat, make an immediate TN 5 (Hard) roll or suffer 1 Exhaustion as it wriggles out of your hands, drops back into the water, and gets away.

**Catch Bonus:** Once caught, this minnow becomes a Consumable item. At the start of any Fish Combat, you may declare that you are using it as your fish hook. Twice during that combat, you can reroll a single die if you didn't like the result. Only one Tiny Hooked Minnow may be used this way per combat.

## **Piranha, Vegetarian**

*These little critters can strip a carrot to the bone in minutes.*

**Habitats:** Rivers, lakes, swamps. Silty or sandy or gravelly bottoms. Warm climates. Fresh water only.

**Dice:** 3

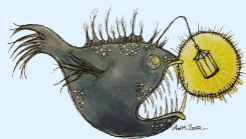
**Special:** Attempts to chew through the hook, making landing it a matter of speed rather than patience. At the start of every third round, gains 1 Gnow Point. For every Gnow Point it has, raise the difficulty of the active Fisher's Stand Firm Rolls and Hang On Tests by +1 TN. Effects that would reduce Stress or Exhaustion do not reduce Gnow.

**Catch Bonus:** These fish are quite tasty, and can be fried up for 2 Snacks when the Fishers Make Camp.

## **Pufferfish, Tiger**

*While this fish is known for inflating itself in a display meant to ward off predators, that is far from its only defense mechanism. It also has a bite that can sheer through fish hooks, and its organs are highly toxic.*

*Only with extremely careful preparation can the Tiger Puffer be turned into an*



*edible dish.*

**Habitats:** Near the bottoms of seas, rivers, and estuaries. Near shore or in open water. Salt and brackish water.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** Whenever this fish attempts a Force Gambit, it automatically inflicts 1 Stress on the Fisher.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may attempt to convert the Tiger Puffer into tasty fugu, discarding the most poisonous parts of the fish. When you do this, the SB rolls 1d6 secretly, and then you decide whether to eat the fugu. On a 5--6, eating the fugu allows you to ignore the next 3 points of Stress that you would suffer. On a 1--4, you take 4 Exhaustion as soon as you break camp. After the fugu has been prepared, only one Fisher may choose to eat it. If it is not eaten, it is thrown away.

## **Sole, Common**

---

*A fish named for its close resemblance to a shoe, this bottom-dwelling, mottled-colored, flat ocean-goer is nevertheless prized for its mild, sweet flavor.*

**Habitats:** On the bottoms of shallow, temperate or tropical, sandy or muddy, waters. Buried in the seabed. Salt or brackish water.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** When you announce your attention to fish a spot and this fish is selected as your opponent, roll 1d6. On a 1--2, another fish takes the bait instead. If this happens, roll and select a different fish as your opponent.

**Catch Bonus:** The common sole is delicious when fried in a bit of butter, and you may turn it into 3 Snacks when you Make Camp. However, if you spend a charge of Clarified Butter when preparing Common Sole, each Common Sole that you prepare during that Make Camp yields 4 Snacks. This increase in Snacks is in addition to the normal bonus Snacks you get for using Clarified Butter, and reflects the pure deliciousness of flaky, buttery sole. Using multiple Clarified Butters on the same Common Sole provides no extra benefits---it simply makes the fish very buttery.

## **Trashfish**

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*A curious denizen of polluted ponds and streams, the Trashfish appears to have self-assembled from discarded junk.*

*It is highly inedible.*

**Habitats:** Any body of water where the detritus of human civilization can accumulate. Fresh or salt water.

**Dice:** 2

**Special:** Ignores the first point of Stress that it would take.

**Catch Bonus:** Catching a Trashfish is demoralizing. Suffer 1 Exhaustion, but



keep the Trashfish as a unique Consumable, Stackable item that you can use in Animal Combat. Throwing a Trashfish at an animal applies a point of Stress to the animal.

## **Whiting, Kisu**

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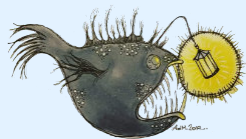
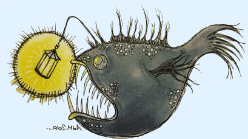
*Small, darting, schooling fish, a single Kisu isn't much of a catch on its own, but it's also rare to catch just one.*

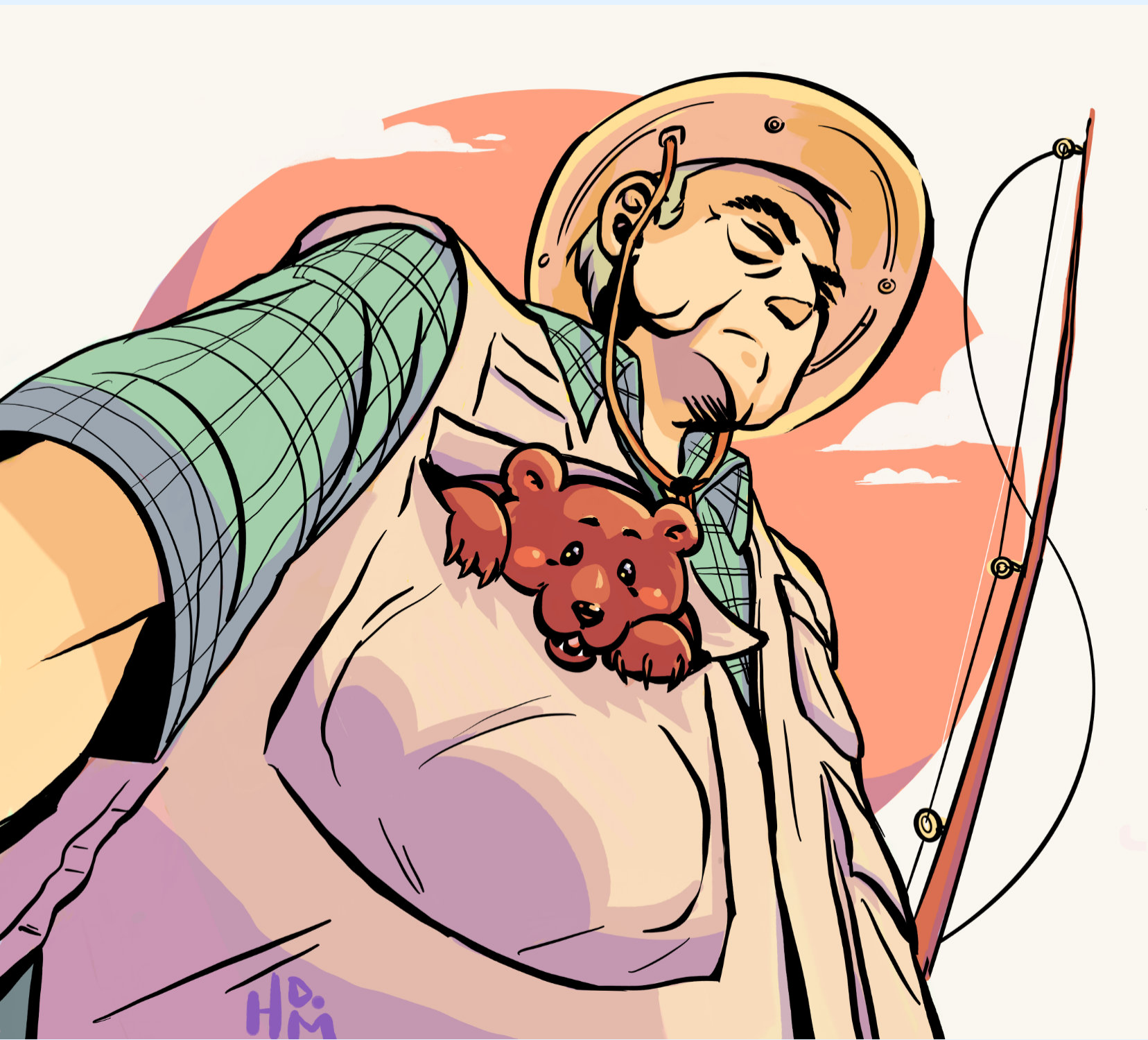
**Habitats:** Shallow waters near the bottom of bays, estuaries, surf zones, and areas with heavy seagrass or sandy bottoms. Salt and brackish water.

**Dice:** 2

**Special:** Immediately upon catching this fish, you may keep your current Stress total, gain +1 Stress, and enter Fish Combat with another Kisu. You may do this up to five times per Kisu encounter.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may convert each Kisu into a single Snack.





## Uncommon Fish

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These fish might be an unusual sighting due to their scarcity, or their difficult-to-access habitats, or to their odd migration patterns. Either way, they are an exciting prize for any Fisher to catch.

### Carp, Giant

---

*An extraordinarily robust and meaty carp, these fish can reach weights of 60 pounds (27 kg) or more.*

**Habitats:** Lakes, wide rivers, large bodies of stagnant water, areas with heavy vegetation. Fresh or brackish water.

**Dice:** 5

**Special:** At the start of Rounds 2 and 4, permanently loses 1 die.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may convert each Giant Carp into 4 Snacks.



### Carp, Goldenscale

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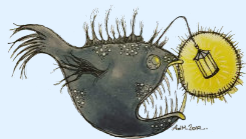
*An odd fish---and apparently one rich in dietary metals, as its scales naturally plate themselves with gold---this carp is valued by jewelers, metallurgists, and biologists alike. It is almost entirely inedible, though, and incautious diners may break a tooth.*

**Habitats:** Lakes, ponds, pools, slow-moving rivers, stagnant bodies of water, areas with heavy vegetation. Fresh or salt water.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** Ignores the first 2 points of Stress that it would take. When it succeeds a Force Gambit, instead of forcing the Fisher to lose 2 dice from their next roll, it inflicts 1 Stress on the Fisher.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may convert Goldenscale Carp into Equipment by sending these valuable fish back to the Village to be sold.



## **Char, Arctic**

---

*A salmonid native to cold northern waters, this fish has a bright red belly and a pattern of small pink dots across its dark body. It feeds on insects, shrimp, crustaceans, snails, fish eggs, and smaller fish, and it has a lifecycle that sends it migrating upstream to spawn every fall.*

*But none of this is why researchers and occultists are so interested in the Char.*

*Despite its cold habitat, this fish is always hot to the touch, and in times of stress it can heat itself to the temperature of a steel forge. This flash-heating boils the water around it and makes it particularly difficult to catch, and the Arctic Char has even been known to burn through lines and melt hooks in order to escape.*

*This unique trait, plus the fish's ability to survive self-superheating with no apparent consequences, has made it a creature of interest for both power companies and sport fishers.*

**Habitats:** Alpine lakes, rivers, glacial pools, cold coastal waters. Fresh or salt water.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** At the start of every odd-numbered round, put a Temperature Counter on the Arctic Char. For each Temperature Counter on the Char, increase the TN of all of the active Fisher's rolls by +1. Whenever the Char loses a Gambit, is landed, or escapes, remove all Temperature Counters from it.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may convert the Arctic Char into 3 Snacks and use it to effortlessly start your campfire, causing you and another Fisher of your choice to ignore the next point of Exhaustion you would receive after breaking camp.

## **Croaker, Bellicose**

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*A bony, ray-finned fish that can weigh between 5 and 50 pounds (or 2 and 24 kilograms), croakers feed on molluscs and other invertebrates and prefer to hang out on the bottoms of whatever body of water they're in.*

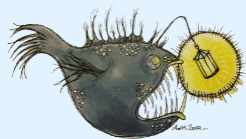
*The entire family of croakers is named for the grunting sound they produce by manipulating specific muscles deep inside their body, but the Bellicose Croaker takes this trait to another level and has developed a resonant yell that can scare predators into dropping it.*

**Habitats:** On the bottom of lakes, streams, bays, estuaries, off of shores, or in deeper water. Found in clean or murky water, and usually with sand or gravel underneath. Lives in fresh and salt water.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** Ignores the first 2 points of Stress it would take. At the end of every even-numbered Round, it may take 1 Stress to unleash a croak and inflict 2 Stress on the Fisher.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may convert this fish into a Snack



and a Consumable item called an Otolith. The Otolith is a large, lucky bone that comes from the ear of the croaker. When you make a roll and are unhappy with the result, you may spend the Otolith to add +1 to the number on a single die. This may not raise a die's number above 6, but it can be used to Combine Dice.

## **Eel, Electric**

---

*Technically a knifefish (gymnotiforme), this human-sized creature has both the shape and characteristics of a very large eel.*

*Electric eels are capable of producing a powerful electric discharge not just at will but also after death, so catching this creature is often a matter of endurance, with the angler convincing it to shock and shock until it has exhausted itself into harmlessness.*

**Habitats:** Swamps, rivers, lakes, creeks, flooded areas. Muddy or silty waters with little to no current. Fresh water.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** Ignores the first 3 Exhaustion that it would take. Ignores Stress entirely. At the start of every round, and every second time it ignores a point of Stress, it takes 1 Exhaustion. At the end of every even round where it declared a Force Gambit, it deals 1 Stress to the active Fisher.

**Catch Bonus:** The eel becomes a unique Consumable item, and may be hurled into an Animal Combat to inflict 3 Stress on all animals in that combat. After being deployed this way, it reanimates and slithers away. Only one eel may be hurled this way per combat. After the first eel-based shock has been applied, animals learn to duck.

## **Gar, Armored**

---

*A large, bony, torpedo-shaped fish that can grow to 10 feet (3 meters), the gar behaves a bit like an alligator---floating lazily near the surface, taking periodic gulps of air, and striking at prey with a speed that is astonishing.*

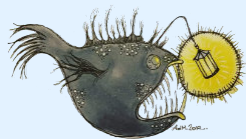
*The gar is an impressive aquarium fish and also popular with sport fishers. Its scales are surprising in their weight and density, and have historically been used as components in projectile weapons.*

**Habitats:** Lakes, swamps, rivers, or sewers, near vegetation. Clear or murky water with muddy or sandy bottoms. Fresh and brackish water.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** Ignores the first point of Stress it would take. Every second time the Armored Gar suffers a point of Stress, it thrashes and inflicts a point of Stress on the active Fisher.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may convert this fish into 2 Snacks and a pouch of 3 Skipping Stones.



## **Lionfish, Walking**

---

*Unlike its spiny, venomous, ocean-dwelling cousin (which has the good grace to stay put), this semi-amphibious lionfish is a highly invasive species and is the subject of a nation-wide removal campaign.*

*It has tiny forelegs which allow it to crawl between ponds, and it is capable of being out of water for a few hours without consequence, which means that sometimes these fish are spotted in river meadows or on grassy inclines by the water's edge.*

**Habitats:** Lakes, ponds, running rivers, sandy or rocky areas, small stretches of land between bodies of water. Fresh or salt water.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** Upon successfully landing this fish, before clearing your Stress, make a Hard (TN 5) roll to avoid its spines. On a failure, you suffer 2 Exhaustion.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may convert each Walking Lionfish into a piece of Equipment by sending proof of your removal of this invasive species to the Village.

## **Loach, Weather**

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*An elongated, eel-like fish, the Weather Loach is a bottom-feeder that subsists off of algae, worms, and other small creatures. It has a surprising jumping ability, and it can survive out of water for days at a time, even drying out and reviving in the process. It is also an excellent burrower, and it will sometimes tunnel into the substrate to avoid predators.*

*Carefully studying these fish can predict oncoming storms, as they become extremely active (and perform an odd vertical dance in the water) whenever there is a sudden drop in the barometric pressure.*

*Unfortunately, actually catching a Weather Loach is tricky. Despite their gullible nature and willingness to bite, many of them have an odd electromagnetic power that lets them call small localized weather patterns into existence to harry and drive off fishers.*

**Habitats:** The bottoms of ponds and rivers. In gravel, sand, and mud. Murky or clear water, with plantlife, rocks, and other objects to hide under. Fresh water.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** When Fish Combat begins, a storm forms. It starts with a single d6 of power (don't roll it yet), and gains +1d6 storm power at the start of every even round. At the end of each round, roll the storm dice. For every 6 that comes up, the Fisher takes 1 Stress.

**Catch Bonus:** When captured, a Weather Loach becomes a unique Consumable item. You may throw it at an attacking animal to call a 1d6 storm that supports you for the duration of the Animal Combat. Storms called this way behave the same way as the loach's anti-Fisher storm, except they target the active animal and they do not increase in storm dice every round. You may spend multiple Weather Loaches to add one die each to an existing storm, and



all loaches that are deployed in combat wriggle away to safety while you are finishing your fight.

## **Mackerel, Seerfish**

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*Quick-moving, striped, schooling fish, most mackerel rely on their disruptive coloring and large swarms of companion fish to deter predation.*

*The Seerfish is a little more complicated, as it seems to actually tell the future in order to avoid being caught.*

*Researchers blame Omega-3 fatty acids.*

**Habitats:** Deep waters, coastal waters, around oil platforms, or other places where debris might fall into the ocean. Salt water only.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** When the Seerfish succeeds on a Finesse Gambit, it inflicts 1 Stress on the Fisher instead of reducing their dice for the next roll. Whenever it makes a Cunning Gambit, regardless of whether it succeeds, the Seerfish gets +1 die for the rest of the round.

**Catch Bonus:** The fish bestows upon you a vision, should you spare it. You may throw it back to ask the SB a question, and the SB must answer accurately and helpfully. Alternately, you may keep the fish. If you do, the next time you Make Camp you may convert it into 3 Snacks.

## **Marlin, Brass**

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*An unusual morph of the Blue Marlin, blessed with scales of bright metal, the Brass Marlin is a surface predator that---like others of its genus---is named for its sharp bill. It uses this bill to hunt with, slashing and spearing prey fish, and its attacks can be a danger to fishers and fishing lines alike.*

*Although almost any fisher is excited to have a marlin on the end of the line, the Brass Marlin is especially rare, and is purported to bring good luck to those who can land it.*

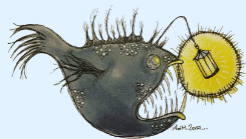
*In return, successful fishers are expected to throw back their catch or else face the consequences of killing such a majestic creature.*

**Habitats:** Open ocean, near the surface. Tropical and temperate regions. Saltwater.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** At the start of very even round, the marlin may suffer 1 Stress to inflict 2 Stress on the active Fisher. It ignores the first 2 Stress that it would take.

**Catch Bonus:** Choose: either take a single scale and release the marlin back into the water, or take the entire fish. If you take a single scale, that scale serves as a good luck charm and you may spend it as a Consumable item to reroll any one pool of dice once. If you take the whole marlin, the next time you Make Camp you may process it into a bag of scales and 4 Snacks. Unfortunately, taking the whole fish has turned its luck against you. From now until the end



of the Scenario, you start each combat with +2 Stress. Furthermore, the bag of scales works differently from the single scale. It is a non-Consumable item that allows the holder to reroll their dice pool any time they want, but they must take 1 Exhaustion each time they do so.

## **Muskellunge, Abiding**

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*A predatory fish named for its long face, the Muskellunge can be found patrolling its habitat for fish, birds, frogs, or water-faring mammals to eat. It grows large, up to six feet (2 meters), and it has camouflage spots that enable it to blend in with the plantlife it is often found near.*

*The Muskellunge looks similar to other pike, and it can interbreed with them to produce hybrids, but it is notable for sometimes forming small schools on its own---something pike tend not to do.*

**Habitats:** Clear waters with weeds or rocks. Lakes or wide rivers. Shallow or deep water, ranging across wide areas. Fresh water.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** When you would enter Fish Combat with a Muskellunge, roll 1d6. On a 1--2, it doesn't bite at all and you enter combat with a different fish from the same location instead. Once in combat with a Muskellunge, the Muskellunge ignores the first point of Stress that it would take. At the start of the first round, the Muskellunge darts and you must make a Hard (TN 5) roll or lose the fish. At the start of the third round, the Muskellunge jumps, and you must make a Hard (TN 5) roll or lose the fish. When you land it, before clearing your Stress, make a Hard (TN 5) roll or get bit for 1 Exhaustion.

**Catch Bonus:** Catching a Muskellunge is exhilarating and reassures you of your skills as an angler. If you catch and release, ignore the next 2 Exhaustion that you would take. Otherwise, you may convert it into 4 Snacks worth of tasty croquettes when you next Make Camp.

## **Panfish**

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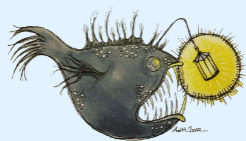
*Made of cast iron, this fish lurks at the bottom of ponds and feeds on empty soda cans, lost fish hooks, and other abandoned metal. Despite its unsanitary environment, if caught and scrubbed clean, the Panfish can be turned into a wonderful tool for cooking.*

**Habitats:** The bottoms of lakes, streams, and ponds. Anywhere aluminum cans, lost fish hooks, or metal scrap can be found. Fresh or salt water.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** The Panfish is heavy. At the start of each round, the active Fisher takes 1 Stress. At the end of the fourth round, the Panfish permanently loses 1 die.

**Catch Bonus:** Once caught, the Panfish serves as a wonderful single-use cooking tool. When you Make Camp and choose to convert fish into Snacks, pick one of those fish and double the Snacks it gives you. This doubling is applied before any other effects that increase the number of Snacks a fish would yield. When in doubt, if there are multiple Snack-doubling items that



seem like they should apply at the same time, multiply the starting number of Snacks by 1 + the number of doubling items. You may not use multiple Panfish on the same fish.

## **Pickpocketopus**

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*A brilliant animal by almost any measure, this particular octopus has decided to turn its talents to crime.*

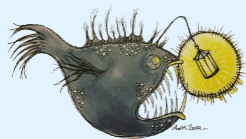
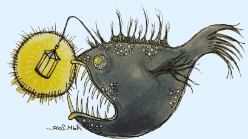
*Its motivations may be unclear, but it is a highly gifted thief, and fishers are advised to beware of waters where the pickpocketopus roam.*

**Habitats:** Tidal pools, shallows, reefs, depths, near seagrass beds, anywhere with rocks or sand that would make a suitable den site. Salt or brackish water.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** Whenever the Pickpocketopus succeeds a Finesse Gambit, it takes an unused Snack from the Fisher. Whenever the Pickpocketopus succeeds a Cunning Gambit, it gains +2 dice for the rest of the round.

**Catch Bonus:** Roll 1d6 immediately. On a 1--2, the Pickpocketopus steals one last Snack and gets away. Otherwise, you regain all Snacks the Pickpocketopus had stolen and you may choose whether to release the creature or to keep it. If you release it, roll 1d6 and on a 3--6 it comes back with a non-Snack piece of Equipment (SB's choice, although the Equipment should be helpful) as thanks. If you keep the Pickpocketopus, you may turn it into 4 Snacks worth of delicious takoyaki the next time you Make Camp.



## **Pike, Voracious**

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*A long fish, sharp at one end, the pike does a good job of living up to its namesake. It has a characteristic mottled color, and it will snap at anything that resembles the silvery scales of a small fish flitting past.*

**Habitats:** Lakes and large rivers near rock ledges and weed outcroppings. Fresh or brackish water.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** Upon successfully landing this fish, the Voracious Pike becomes a 2 dice Animal Combat with a Loss Penalty of 2 points of Exhaustion. Any Stress you had from the Fish Combat carries over into this Animal Combat. The pike is only successfully caught if you win the Animal Combat.

**Catch Bonus:** Keep the pike as a unique Consumable item. During Fish Combat, you may release a captured Voracious Pike to apply 2 Stress to the fish you're trying to catch. Alternately, you may do the same during Animal Combat by simply hurling the Voracious Pike at the animal, after which it flops away to safety. Only one Voracious Pike may be used in either way per combat. Alternately, you may convert the Voracious Pike into 4 Snacks worth of quenelles de brochet while Making Camp, but the pike does not prefer this outcome.

## **Piranha, Red-Bellied**

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*Despite their reputation, Red-Bellied Piranha don't always turn the water into a boiling maelstrom of torn flesh and teeth at the slightest drop of blood---but they can still do that, and this makes them a hazard under specific conditions.*

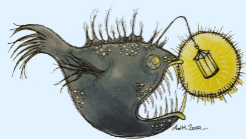
*Technically omnivores, Piranha nevertheless have serrated teeth and an excellent bite-strength-to-mouth-size ratio for a vertebrate, and their aptitude for stealing fish off the line makes them frustrating for tropical Fishers.*

**Habitats:** Rivers, streams, lakes, flooded areas. Places with fast or clear water, although murky water is tolerated. Warm climates. Fresh water.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** If a Fisher enters a water source containing Red-Bellied Piranha, they must make a Very Hard (TN 6) roll or take 1 Exhaustion per two Red-Bellied Piranhas (round up) and quickly struggle back out. If a Fisher hooks another fish in a water source containing Red-Bellied Piranha, that fish takes 1 Stress per Red-Bellied Piranha (up to a maximum of 3) and if its Catch Bonus includes Snacks, that Catch Bonus is reduced by 1 Snack per Red-Bellied Piranha.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may grill this fish into 2 Snacks. Alternately, you may keep it and either introduce it to new water sources, or throw it in Animal Combat as a Consumable item to inflict 1 Stress on the active animal.



## **Sailfish, Wild**

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*A long-billed predatory fish with a majestic blue-purple dorsal sail, the Wild Sailfish has one-upped nature and given new meaning to its name by apparently learning to conjure large, directed gusts of wind. These gusts seem to come from nowhere in particular, but they are clearly being summoned by the fish, whose sail glows a pale blue in the process.*

*In the wild these wind gusts are used to hunt birds, but sailfish are occasionally domesticated by maritime cultures, and the friendlier versions of the fish are fed on a diet of mackerel and tuna scraps tossed from boats. In return, they help to propel those boats at high speed through the water by means of controlled wind-blasts into a quickly hoisted small sail.*

**Habitats:** Open waters of bays and oceans, on the surface or at middle depths, wherever small, schooling fish congregate. Salt and brackish water.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** Three times per combat, the Wild Sailfish may call a windblast and inflict 1 Stress on the active fisher. Windblasts may not be used twice in the same round.

**Catch Bonus:** The active Fisher immediately makes a Hard (TN 5) roll or suffers 2 Exhaustion from the fish's incoming spearlike bill. Once caught, the Wild Sailfish may be converted into 4 Snacks and a Hand Weapon when the party next Makes Camp, or it may be released back into the water for no immediate gain. If it is released into the water, the Fishers may throw it any number of Snacks. For each Snack they throw it, they gain one charge of Sailfish Summoning. Sailfish Summoning charges may be spent in Animal Combat to call out to the distant sailfish, which blasts the active enemy with wind for 1 Stress per charge. Multiple Sailfish Summoning charges may not be spent during the same round, but charges may be used even if the place where the Fishers are fighting is nowhere near where they released the original sailfish.

## **Shark, Turnip**

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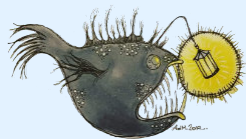
*Also known by the scientific name *neeps elasmobranchii*, the Turnip Shark is an apex predator with a very specific niche: its body is white-purple and bulbous, it has large leafy fronds protruding from its back, and it can go through a field of crops in minutes.*

*This creature is noteworthy for its ability to swim in both water and earth, and it is the bane of farmers, who will chase it from their fields with gunfire and hurled gardening implements and spritzes of weedkiller.*

*The Turnip Shark is not dangerous to people, and its flesh is both mild and starchy from all the root vegetables it consumes. Attempts are made occasionally to raise them in paddocks, but these creatures remain a very wild species.*

**Habitats:** Temperate climates, near the surface, especially in places with high amounts of agricultural runoff. Salt or fresh water. Tilled fields.

**Dice:** 3



**Special:** Ignores points of Stress equal to 2 + the number of Fishers in the party. Takes 1 Stress at the end of every round. Ignores an extra point of Stress each time it wins with a Cunning Gambit.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may exchange each caught Turnip Shark for 1 bland, starchy Snack. Alternately, if you have Clarified Butter, you may spend a charge from it and---in place of the butter's usual effect---get 5 Snacks out of the Turnip Shark instead.

## **Smelt, Tornado**

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*Small, migratory, schooling fish, the Tornado Smelt are named for their unique anti-predator defense. Simply put, when one of the fish is grabbed, the rest of its school begins to swim frantically in circles, churning the waters around them into a mighty vortex. These vortexes then trundle up out of the water and scare away the predator by pelting them with high-velocity fish, shot out from inside the watery spiral.*

*Of course, no anti-predator measure is perfect, and sufficiently patient Fisher (or bear) can wait out the vortex and scoop up dozens of these fish before they can wriggle back into the water and disappear.*

**Habitats:** Estuaries, rivers, rills, runs, lakes, any body of water that connects back to the ocean. Fresh or salt water.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** Ignores the first 3 points of Stress it would take. All Fishers in the vicinity take 1 Stress when the Tornado Smelt executes a successful Force Gambit. Upon landing this fish, don't clear your Stress from the Fish Combat. Instead, all Fishers in the area immediately begin an Animal Combat against a 5 dice Smelt Tornado with a Loss Penalty of 2 Exhaustion, and which permanently loses 1 die at the end of every round. If the Fishers win this combat, make a note of how many Fishers were still standing when the Fishers won. If the Fishers lose this combat, make a note of that instead. Either way, when the Animal Combat ends, the Fishers successfully catch the fish.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may convert the Tornado Smelt into 2 Snacks. For each Fisher that won combat against the Tornado Smelt, catch another copy of the fish.

## **Snakehead, Invasive**

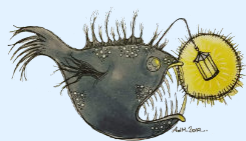
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*A bottom-dwelling, predatory lunge-feeder, this fish has a wide dietary range and can devastate populations of native animals that have never encountered anything like it. Worse, snakeheads can breathe air and migrate over land, travelling for days until they find a new body of water to inhabit. There is little that can be done to prevent their spread.*

**Habitats:** Stagnant water, muddy substrate, heavy vegetation, slow and murky streams, shallow edges of lakes. Fresh water.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** Ignores the first 2 points of Stress that it would take. On a successful



Finesse Gambit, inflicts 1 Stress on the active Fisher instead of removing 2 dice from their next roll. If the Snakehead wins combat and gets away, the SB replaces two of the listings in the next fishing spot with Invasive Snakeheads. The SB replaces "Nothing" listings first, then moves on to replacing existing fish. The Fish Of Legend may not be replaced by a Snakehead.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may convert each Invasive Snakehead into 4 Snacks.

## **Sole, False**

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*What at first you'd taken to be the bottom of a shoe is instead staring up at you with startled eyes, a piteous expression on its face.*

*These creatures are inedible, being made almost entirely of leather, but they make comfortable footwear when prepared properly.*

**Habitats:** The bottoms of oceans, estuaries, and freshwater rivers, lakes, marshes, or drainage areas. Salt and fresh water.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** No special abilities.

**Catch Bonus:** Keeping a False Sole is somewhat demoralizing, as it stares up at you, begging you to reconsider its fate. Unless you throw it back, take 1 Exhaustion. However, if you ever have two False Soles in your inventory when you Make Camp, you may turn them into a single pair of Athletic Shoes.

## **Sturgeon, Leaping**

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*A long, torpedo-shaped, bottom-feeding fish, sturgeon are known for flinging themselves into the air and then crashing back into their habitat with a mighty splash.*

**Habitats:** Lakes, tributaries, river mouths, rocky areas near river bends. Fresh or salt water.

**Dice:** 5

**Special:** Ignores the first 3 Stress that it would take. At the start of Round 2, the sturgeon permanently loses 1 die. When landing this fish, before clearing Stress from combat, make an immediate Very Hard (TN 6) roll or take 2 Exhaustion from a collision with it.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may convert the Leaping Sturgeon into 5 Snacks, or you may send it back to the Village in trade for a piece of Equipment.

## **Sunfish, Ocean**

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*An extremely large, heavy, bony fish, the Ocean Sunfish can reach weights of 2,000 pounds (1,000 kg). That, coupled with its distinctive shape, makes it a very striking catch.*

*With a flattened body and fins that look like someone tried to design a fish*



*throwing star and got bored partway through, it has an odd swimming pattern and an (entirely undeserved) reputation for laziness.*

*The Ocean Sunfish is a predator that consumes a variety of fish, crustaceans, squid, and jellyfish, and it is capable of putting on surprising bursts of speed, or even leaping out of the water, despite the limitations of its body.*

*It does sometimes sun itself on the surface, lying flat so that it can soak up the heat, but this is only because the depths that it dives to are freezing, and it needs to periodically recharge itself or die.*

**Habitats:** On the surface or in the depths of the ocean. In coastal regions or in the open ocean, in warm or temperate waters. Saltwater.

**Dice:** 5

**Special:** At the start of rounds 2 and 4, the sunfish permanently loses 1 die and splashes around. At the start of round 3, the sunfish puts on a surprising burst of speed and the Fisher must make a TN 6 (Very Hard) roll or immediately lose the fish. When it splashes around, the active Fisher and any Fisher who has Yelled Encouragement must make a TN 5 (Hard) roll to get out of the way or take 1 Exhaustion from being drenched.

**Catch Bonus:** There is a lot of meat on this fish, but it's not all easy to process. When you Make Camp, you may convert the Ocean Sunfish into 3 Snacks. Any number of other Fishers may volunteer to help, adding +3 Snacks each. However, every Fisher who helps takes 1 Exhaustion when they break camp, and items that increase the number of Snacks this fish gives only increase the initial 3 Snacks, not the +3 Snacks per Fisher that can be added to it.

## **Trout, Glacial Bull**

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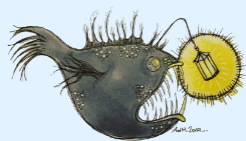
*Not just tolerant of cold conditions but also somehow capable of swimming while inside solid ice, this trout continues to puzzle scientists and excite winter fishers. Glacial Bull Trout grow to noteworthy size, and can be identified by the pink spotted patterns that range across their bodies.*

**Habitats:** Clear, cold, deep pools, large rivers, lakes, snowmelt, within glaciers. Fresh water.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** Ignores the first 6 Stress that it would take. Takes 1 Stress at the start of every round. On a successful Gambit, instead of lowering its opponent's dice pool, it inflicts 1 Stress on them.

**Catch Bonus:** Keep the Glacial Bull Trout as a unique Consumable item. Out of combat, you may press the freezing fish against your forehead to refresh yourself, discarding 3 Exhaustion in the process. After this, the Glacial Bull Trout suddenly reanimates and thrashes out of your grip, bouncing animatedly and at high speeds away towards the nearest pond.



## Rare Fish

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Both scarce and cryptic, these fish are challenging to find---let alone catch. However, the rewards for doing so are often extraordinary, and most fishers return them to the wild after a successful battle so that others will have a chance to encounter these incredible creatures.

## Dragonfish, Obese

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*Part of the Stomiidae family of deep sea ray-finned fishes, most Dragonfish look like a spiny windsock with an anglerfish maw on one end. The typical Opostomias Micripnus (better known by its common name Obese Dragonfish) is no exception. It is a nightmare of leather and ink, and it feeds on whatever deep-sea creatures stray into striking range.*

*However, in recent years, many of these fish have been leaving their lightless, high-pressure habitats to seek lairs in fresh water, near places where humans dwell.*

*Their motivations for doing this are not entirely clear, but at night they emerge from their watery holes, slither into houses, and engulf the silverware. Other valuables, such as jewelry or property deeds, are also targets of opportunity for these Micripnus, and by the time the dawn comes they are frequently bloated with stolen wealth. From there, they return to their lairs, and over several weeks a curious change occurs.*

*Driven by a bizarre alchemy, their form loses its Gigeresque slinkiness, their faces become cute and lizardlike, and tiny wings grow from their backs. These changed dragonfish still protect their hoards with an adorable ferocity, and most anglers feel at least a little bad for catching and keeping one---especially since the more the fish changes, the harder it has to work to increase its stockpile of stolen goods.*

**Habitats:** Deep oceans or the bottoms of ponds, wells, and sewers near human habitation. Salt and fresh water.

**Dice:** 6

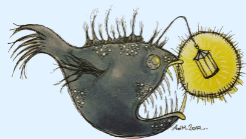
**Special:** At the start of each odd round, before choosing a Gambit, the dragonfish makes a Powerful Attack. When it makes a Powerful Attack, it permanently loses 1 die from its pool for the rest of combat, but if it wins the Gambit on the same round that it makes a Powerful Attack, it inflicts 4 Stress on the active Fisher. If it ties the Gambit, it inflicts 1 Stress instead. If this fish ever Powerful Attacks its dice pool all the way down to 0, it loses combat at the end of that round.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may exchange the dragonfish's swallowed valuables for 3 pieces of Equipment. However, when you do this, you feel a little bad for robbing it and you take 1 Exhaustion as soon as you break camp.

## Eel, Insidious

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*A sinuous, inky eel capable of producing guttural, halting human speech, this creature is ancient and wise and it will turn on its piscine companions in a*



*moment---teaching fishing techniques in exchange for its freedom.*

**Habitats:** Wide lakes and shallow, fast-moving rivers with pebbled bottoms, near large debris and overhanging banks. Fresh or salt water.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** Whenever the Insidious Eel succeeds a Finesse Gambit, in addition to the Fisher losing 2 dice from their Stand Firm Roll, the Eel gains +2 dice to its Stand Firm Roll.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may convert Insidious Eels into Fishing Techniques by listening to each eel's dread advice before freeing it.

## **Koi, Ageless Master**

---

*A massive ornamental carp with long, trailing whiskers, the ageless master was once raised by humans and it still believes that there is hope for the species.*

*It can speak directly to a fisher's mind, and its voice is old and deep. Although it will share deep insights with anglers in exchange for its freedom, fishers are often rattled by encounters with it---wondering if perhaps they might be the villains in a story that was about fish all along.*

**Habitats:** Overgrown ornamental ponds, naturally filtered and clear-watered pools with overhead screening and deep regions far away from the banks. Clean, abandoned, manmade bodies of water. Fresh water only.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** Ignores the first 3 Stress it would take. It also has the Easy-Going, Hot-Blooded, and Tricky Temperaments, just as if it were a Fisher. Twice per combat, it may change its Gambit to match the Fisher's Gambit after Gambits have been revealed.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may convert each Ageless Master Koi into one Fishing Technique and one Fighting Technique by letting the fish impart upon you one of the philosophical truths of the universe before releasing it back into the water.

## **Shark, Firefighter**

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*"Whooooooah, dude! Not cool, man! Let me go!"*

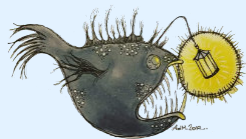
*You're not sure what this shark is doing here, or why it speaks your language, or what the little hat on its head is for, but clearly there's been a misunderstanding.*

*It's probably best just to let it go.*

**Habitats:** Seabeds in coastal waters, near the shore, the fringes of reefs and kelp forests, anywhere humans are not practicing sufficient fire safety. Salt or brackish water.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** Ignores the first 2 Stress it would take. When it makes a Force Gambit,



you cannot choose to Strain this round.

**Catch Bonus:** You set the shark free and the next time you are in serious trouble, the shark returns to rescue you. The SB chooses when the shark returns. The shark will not usually waste its appearance on helping you out of a minor jam, but you may call out for its aid any time you wish. If the shark returns just as you are about to lose a roll, you instead succeed at that roll.

## **Turtle, Sagacious**

---

*A large, self-involved terrapin that speaks your language with a rickety old man's voice, this creature has seen hundreds of years of human combat and wishes to help today's youngsters avoid the mistakes of the past.*

*Or at least it wants to see them using better forms and proper stances.*

*Honestly, that sloppiness with the lowered guard and locked knees is shameful.*

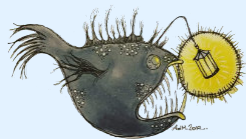
*If caught, this turtle will alternately teach and berate an angler until their martial arts knowledge improves.*

**Habitats:** Slow-moving streams, bogs, ponds, and lakes with sandy bottoms and heavy vegetation. Fresh or salt water.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** When the Sagacious Turtle succeeds a Cunning Gambit, instead of the Fisher losing 2 dice from their Stand Firm Roll, the turtle may choose to have the Fisher take 1 Stress and become unable to Tag Out this round.

**Catch Bonus:** When you Make Camp, you may convert Sagacious Turtles into Fighting Techniques by conferring with each turtle before freeing it.





## **Legendary Fish**

---

Truly exceptional creatures, these fish blur the line between fact and story. They are only found in their respective Old Regions, and there is typically only one Fish Of Legend to a Region.

When a Fish Of Legend is removed, its Old Region often loses its significance and becomes just another point on a map.

## **Standard Fish Of Legend**

---

*A semi-mythical enigma. The key to the village's salvation.*

**Habitats:** As defined by the players. The very center of the Old Region.

**Dice:** 6

**Special:** The Fish Of Legend ignores a number of points of Stress equal to 2 + the number of Fishers in the party. The first time the Fish Of Legend would lose combat, it does not. If it gets away, it recovers any dice it had permanently lost, and at the SB's discretion it does not vanish from the body of water. The Fishers all suffer 2 points of Exhaustion, but they may rest up and attempt to catch it again.

**Drawbacks:** When the Fish of Legend loses a Gambit, it also takes 1 Stress. At the start of Round 5, it permanently loses 1 die.

**Catch Bonus:** You win.

## **Airchovies**

---

*No small amount of scientific effort has been spent studying the mechanism by which schooling fish move and react in such perfect unison. And although it looks eerily precise, in most species this is simply an evolved behavior playing out.*

*Not so for the airchovies.*

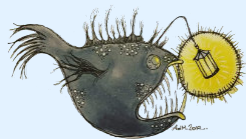
*Once dismissed as a silly hoax, this species of fish flies under its own power, thriving in the arid reaches of the sky, feeding off of small windblown bugs and plant seeds and other aerial detritus. None of these fish have wings. They simply hover.*

*And more remarkable still is their schooling behavior.*

*Rather than each acting according to its instincts, the entire school is controlled by a single fish at the center. This 'control fish' has a slightly different hue, making it distinguishable from the swarm, and it is extraordinarily intelligent---capable of shaping its swarm into gestures, symbols, and even words that can be understood by humans.*

*There are many potential uses for a fish like this, and high-altitude archaeological sites all over the world contain carved or painted legends of interactions with it.*

*Of course, a few of those sites also depict cautionary tales of the storms that*



*should come were it ever mistreated. But those are just legends. Right?*

**Habitats:** Mountainous heights, abandoned airports, ruined plateaus, cruising altitude, the dark of space.

**Dice:** 2 dice

**Special:** Whenever the Airchovies win a Gambit, they inflict 1 Stress on the active Fisher. The first 3 + (the number of Fishers) times the Airchovies would lose combat, they instead clear all of their Stress and continue combat. Each time a Fisher loses combat against the Airchovies, it recovers any dice it had permanently lost, and the Fishers all suffer 2 Exhaustion.

**Catch Bonus:** You win.

## **Ceci N'est Pas Un Poisson**

*An abstract creature made of mismatched shapes and impossible angles and colors that bleed past the lines, the Poisson is a harbinger of tragedy and chaos in both the fishing and art worlds. It swims through the air, needing to neither breathe nor eat, and everything it touches is left changed.*

*Physical objects that are brushed by the Poisson lose their three-dimensionality, becoming flat, simplified representations of what they were. This transformation affects chairs, tables, buildings, clocks. And people.*

*At the same time, any art that is brought into the presence of the Poisson crawls from its paintings, stands from its plinth, or clambers down out of its mural and walks free.*

*The Poisson is usually easy to spot because of the procession of modernist creatures and liberated art that follows it, and this at least makes it easy to evacuate cities when it appears.*

*However, for those who would brave the areas that have been contaminated by the fish, there is a payoff to this creature's existence.*

*A scale torn from the Poisson acts as a small container for some of the fish's unreality. That scale can be used to undo and fictionalize a disease, a death, a famine, or any tragedy that it is brought into contact with, and this makes Poisson scales incredibly valuable to treasure hunters and black marketeers.*

*Or at least, that's what the stories say.*

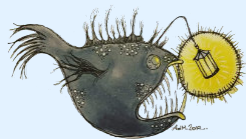
*As far as anyone can tell, no one has ever taken a scale from the Poisson.*

*The legends about the people who have tried are extremely detailed and specific, right down to their birthdays and driver's license numbers, but this is probably just a quirk of storytelling and not because they used to be real people before they touched the fish.*

**Habitats:** Abstract paintings, abandoned art museums, ruins from an earlier time, theater districts on the opening night of a certain play.

**Dice:** 5 dice

**Regular Special:** The Poisson ignores a number of points of Stress equal to 2 +



the number of Fishers in the party. The first time the Poisson would lose combat, it does not. Each time a Fisher loses combat against the Poisson, it recovers any dice it had permanently lost, and the Fishers all suffer 2 Exhaustion.

**Extra Special:** When combat begins, the Poisson reaches across the veil between reality and fiction and enters combat with both the players and the Fishers, forcing the players to observe a series of strange new axioms. While in combat with the Poisson, the player controlling the active Fisher must keep a d6 balanced on their head. Every time it falls off, that player's Fisher takes 1 Stress. Luckily, while this is happening the other players may attempt to siphon off some of the Poisson's unreality by drawing pictures of it. Each time a player draws and submits a picture of the Poisson to the SB during combat, the Poisson takes 1 Stress. Unfortunately, the Poisson is a potent creature, and the players may not just avoid rolling and and bury it under artwork. Whenever the SB prompts the player controlling the active Fisher to make a roll, that player may wait no longer than one minute before rolling. If they wait longer than one minute after being prompted to roll, they lose combat automatically. The SB is encouraged to bring an egg-timer to the session to accurately track this fish-power.

**Catch Bonus:** You win. Players and Fishers alike, you have triumphed---although perhaps not without cost. In the process of defeating the Poisson, the Fishers and their world have been reduced to a story: a tabletop game that you and your friends are currently playing through. Still, congratulations. You did win, and (since this was just a game) there were no real consequences that happened to any real people.

## **Pisces**

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*Although this is not common knowledge, every zodiac sign is capable of manifesting physically into the world. These beings, also known in ancient writings as the Stellars, look like walking constellations when they form. They also course with the energies of coincidence and destiny, and even a small dipper of starstuff drawn from one of them has the power to completely rewrite a person or region's fate.*

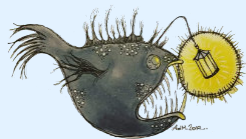
*Unfortunately for would-be starhunters, the Stellars are well-defended. Each is more than capable of protecting itself, and the Stellar known as Pisces is no exception.*

*Although it resembles a giant koi, every point of light in Pisces is a single brightly shining betta fish. There are dozens of these bettas hovering in formation, and they appear to all follow the same will, moving in perfect unison to create the illusion of a cohesive Pisces.*

**Habitats:** Deep lakes, oceans, wide and cold streams, at night under a cloudless sky.

**Dice:** 5 dice

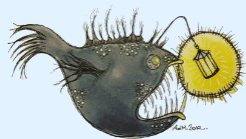
**Regular Special:** Pisces ignores a number of points of Stress equal to 2 + the number of Fishers in the party. The first time Pisces would lose combat, it does not. Each time a Fisher loses combat against the Pisces, it recovers any dice it



had permanently lost, and the Fishers all suffer 2 Exhaustion.

**Extra Special:** Once, at the start of every odd round, Pisces may take 2 Stress to summon a single Common Animal of its choice by manipulating that animal's destiny. When this happens, the animal immediately enters Animal Combat with any Fisher that is not currently facing the Pisces. When the Pisces is defeated, all of its summoned animals lose combat as well.

**Catch Bonus:** You win.



## **Stingray Of Near-Universal Levitation**

*In general, stingrays are a bit like shark-puppies. Sure, they have a venom-dispensing butt-spine as part of their basic equipment loadout, but many stingrays are peaceful and curious and can become socialized to the presence of people.*

*This is not the case with the Stingray Of Near Universal Levitation.*

*An old, massive red ray with bright yellow warning spots, the SONUL has a unique meta-biological trait that causes every object or living thing it touches to gain the temporary power of flight. This power can last for anywhere between several hours to several days, depending on whether the stingray is allowing its power to affect someone or actively willing the power to lose effect, but it always takes effect---at least for a little while.*

*The reason the SONUL usually tries to cut other beings' flight times short is that it is intensely jealous of all things that fly.*

*It hates birds and clouds especially, and this jealousy comes from a place of despair.*

*The SONUL itself is flightless.*

*Attempts have been made to capture and study it, but the ray is strong and crafty and it knows how to break a line or elude pursuit.*

*What has not been tried yet is bargaining with it---and perhaps this is the only path that might lead an angler to victory.*

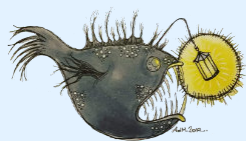
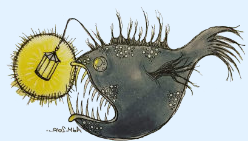
**Habitats:** Bays and rivers with clear water and sandy or rocky bottoms. Salt water or fresh.

**Dice:** 5 dice

**Regular Special:** At the start of combat, the SONUL stings the active Fisher for 3 Stress. The SONUL ignores a number of points of Stress equal to 2 + the number of Fishers in the party. Each time a Fisher loses combat against the SONUL, it recovers any dice it had permanently lost, and the Fishers all suffer 2 Exhaustion.

**Extra Special:** The first time the SONUL would lose combat, it does not. Instead, the fish loses 2 dice permanently and you must enter a debate with it. Debate with the SONUL follows the same structure as a Fish Combat, but bonuses that apply to fishing do not apply to the debate, and most items that can be deployed in Fish Combat are not suited to being used during civilized conversation with a stingray. However, items that provide bonuses to social interactions (such as Impressive Fishing Hats) do apply here, and the SB may award the active Fisher +1 or +2 dice for a round if they make a particularly good point. Fishing Techniques also still apply during the debate, and Fishers may still Tag In, Tag Out, and Yell Encouragement, but this is all done verbally.

**Catch Bonus:** You win.



## **The Copper Frog**

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*The Copper Frog is a symbol of playful and mystic creativity. Its oxidized-green eyes glint from the edges of clear blue Old Region ponds, inviting Fishers to try to capture it. While the enzymes in its slimy skin offer a Fisher wisdom and creative solutions to problems once it has been landed, the Copper Frog is only able to survive out of its native ponds for a short time.*

*Unless it is returned to its home waters within the hour, it hardens into a small, solid copper statue, a mere vestige of what it once was. Rub its head for the insight you seek, enjoy its chirping croaks, then release it back to the Old Region to help others down the line.*

**Habitats:** Wetlands, marshes, areas near monuments to human ingenuity.

**Dice:** 4 dice

**Regular Special:** The Copper Frog ignores a number of points of Stress equal to the number of Fishers in the party. The first time the Copper Frog would lose combat, it does not. At the start of each Fish Combat, the frog receives a pool of 3 Snacks that it may spend however it wishes. These Snacks do not carry over between combats. Each time a Fisher loses combat against the Copper Frog, it recovers any dice it had permanently lost, and the Fishers all suffer 2 Exhaustion.

**Extra Special:** At the start of every odd-numbered round, the active Fisher must take 2 Stress to keep the frog's interest, or else roll 1d6. On a 5--6, the frog remains in combat. On a 1--4, it unhooks itself and bounds away, finding another body of water to serve as its new home. The Copper Frog can enter bodies of water containing other fish if it escapes this way, and if the body of water is full up, the frog displaces one of the existing fish and takes its spot. It may look small, but it is very hungry.

**Catch Bonus:** You win.

## **The Cyberfish**

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*The early internet was a strange place; a semi-lawless plane of frontier towns and wanderers, unified by a mingling of electricity.*

*Not every story told about the early internet is true, but this one is.*

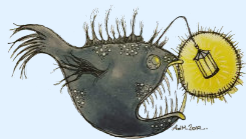
*The Cyberfish is an old legend, a proto-meme from ancient message boards and dial-up chatrooms. It would appear as a visual anomaly, a green wireframe model of a freshwater sunfish, as it swam across a screen.*

*Some considered it a bit of invasive code, visually complex but harmless, and frustrating to figure out. A nod to the first virus, The Creeper.*

*Some thought it was supernatural, a ghost story for an era that had almost grown out of ghosts.*

*Neither group had the truth of it.*

*The Cyberfish comes from somewhere else. Where it intersects our reality, it appears as a crude CGI prototype of a fish. It feeds on electricity and the husks*



*of abandoned technology, and it can drain a municipal grid dry in a few minutes if it so chooses.*

*It does not wish us any harm, and it may not even know we exist, but the nature of its feeding habits has made it extremely interesting to defense contractors.*

**Habitats:** Digital environments, abandoned power stations, places where electronic scrap has been disposed of.

**Dice:** 5 dice

**Special:** The Cyberfish has a pool of 6 Snacks per combat that it can use on itself, and it ignores a number of points of Stress equal to 2 + the number of Fishers in the party. The first time the Cyberfish would lose combat, it does not. Each time a Fisher loses combat against the Cyberfish, it recovers any dice it had permanently lost, and the Fishers all suffer 2 Exhaustion.

**Drawbacks:** When the Cyberfish loses a Gambit, it takes 1 Stress. This is in addition to any dice it might lose from its Stand Firm Roll or any other penalties it might suffer for losing a Gambit.

**Catch Bonus:** You win.

## **The Last Miniwhale**

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*Only a little smaller than an adult human, miniwhales were rare even during their prime. Because of their size, they were vulnerable to predation from sharks, orcas, and large squid, and worse still they favored areas of the sea with heavy boating traffic, preferring to be near humans despite the dangers from collisions and runoff pollutants. The Miniwhale population was largely unaffected by commercial whaling---aside from the occasional specimen that was taken as a trophy or novelty---but as shipping traffic increased, their numbers thinned until there was only one miniwhale left.*

*Miniwhales are known for their complex songs, which fade in and out of human hearing but otherwise sound like a full orchestra performing classical music.*

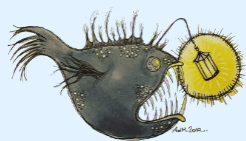
*Because of their scarcity, and because cloning has proven difficult, a single live miniwhale would fetch an almost extraordinary price on any market, and there are many private collectors that would like to get their hands on one.*

**Habitats:** Cold salt waters, abandoned marine parks, government laboratories.

**Dice:** 5 dice

**Special:** The Miniwhale ignores a number of points of Stress equal to 2 + the number of Fishers in the party. The first time the Miniwhale would lose combat, it does not. Yelling Encouragement has no effect during this combat, and when the Miniwhale wins a Gambit with Cunning, the Fisher takes 1 Stress in addition to losing 2 dice from their Stand Firm Roll. Each time a Fisher loses combat against the Last Miniwhale, it recovers any dice it had permanently lost, and the Fishers all suffer 2 Exhaustion.

**Drawbacks:** The first time each combat a Fisher loses combat against the Miniwhale, they instead do not lose combat.



**Catch Bonus:** You win.

## **The Lohengrin Engine**

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*A buoyant clockwork swan with a farmhouse on top, the Engine may well be the strangest scourge of the sea. It meanders along the shoreline, occasionally discharging mechanical geese from a pipe-organ cannon atop its back, then these geese run inland, plunder whatever precious materials they can find, and return to the Engine.*

*Of the ship's owner there is no sign, but someone who once managed to get close enough without alerting the geese seems to have carved the word "Nemo" on one side.*

*Despite the dangers it poses, the Engine is an archaeological curiosity and a scientific wonder. It has been around for apparently hundreds of years, and there is much speculation over what strange technologies could be found in its depths if it were tamed.*

**Habitats:** Seas, coasts, inlets, rivers that lead back to the ocean, anywhere there is plundering to be done.

**Dice:** 4 dice

**Regular Special:** The Engine ignores a number of points of Stress equal to 2 + the number of Fishers in the party. The first time the Engine would lose combat, it does not. Each time a Fisher loses combat against the Lohengrin Engine, it recovers any dice it had permanently lost, and the Fishers all suffer 2 Exhaustion.

**Extra Special:** When combat begins with the Engine, it immediately discharges a clockwork Vengeful Goose that attacks the other Fishers in Animal Combat. At the start of the second round, and every round after, the SB rolls 1d6 to see what the Engine's pipe organ cannon will do. On a 1--2, nothing happens. On a 3--5 another Vengeful Goose is added to the combat. On a 6, 1d6 Snacks shower down on the Fishers. Only once the Engine has been defeated or the Fishers have lost combat do the mechanical geese fall inactive.

**Catch Bonus:** You win.



## **Create Your Own Fish Of Legend**

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Once the players have faced every Fish Of Legend in the book, they might start to grow complacent.

Which is the perfect time to hit them with a homebrew Fish Of Legend.

To make a custom Fish Of Legend, simply take the **Legendary Fish Template**, then add one **Drawback** and one **Advantage** at a time until you are satisfied with the monstrosity you have created.

### **Legendary Fish Template**

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**Habitats:** Habitat at the center of the Old Region.

**Dice:** 5 dice

**Stalwart:** The Fish Of Legend ignores a number of points of Stress equal to 2 + the number of Fishers in the party.

**Canny:** The first time the Fish Of Legend would lose combat, it does not.

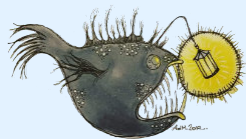
**Taxing:** Each time a Fisher loses combat against the Fish Of Legend, it recovers any dice it had permanently lost, and the Fishers all suffer 2 Exhaustion.

**Catch Bonus:** You win.

### **Legendary Fish Drawbacks**

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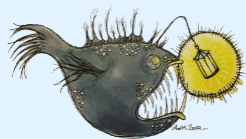
- **Desperate:** At the start of Round 6, the fish permanently loses 2 dice and the active Fisher suffers 2 Exhaustion.
- **Flagging (counts as 2 Drawbacks):** The Fish takes 1 Stress at the start of every round.
- **Merciful (counts as 2 Drawbacks):** The first time each combat a Fisher loses combat against this fish, they instead do not lose combat.
- **Mercurial:** The fish may not select the same Gambit twice in a row.
- **Predictable:** When the fish loses a Gambit, the Fisher can choose whether it subtracts 2 dice from its Stand Firm Roll or from its Hang On Test.
- **Quick To Fatigue:** At the start of Round 5, the fish permanently loses 1 die.
- **Unused To Fishers:** When the fish loses a Gambit, it takes 1 Stress in addition to any dice that would be removed from its Stand Firm Roll or any other effects it would suffer from losing the Gambit.
- **Weak:** The Fisher may Strain 2 dice to inflict 1 Stress on the fish instead of removing 2 of its dice for the round.
- **Vulnerable:** Pick Force, Finesse, or Cunning. When a Fisher wins with this Gambit, it is twice as effective. All dice lost or Stress inflicted by Fishers who win with that Gambit are doubled.



## **Legendary Fish Advantages**

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- **Aggressive:** When Fish Combat begins, all Fishers suffer 1 Exhaustion.
- **Brilliant:** The second time the Fish Of Legend would lose combat, it does not.
- **Challenging:** Every 3 Snacks that the Fishers spend this combat, the fish discards 1 Stress.
- **Deafening:** Yelling Encouragement has no effect during this combat.
- **Destructive:** At the start of combat, the fish selects 2 individual pieces of Equipment from the Fishers' combined inventory. These two pieces of Equipment provide no benefits to the players for the rest of the combat.
- **Elusive:** Pick Force, Finesse, or Cunning. When the fish wins with the selected Gambit, the Fisher takes 1 Stress in addition to losing 2 dice from their Stand Firm Roll.
- **Energetic:** The fish has a pool of 6 Snacks that it can use on itself.
- **Forceful (costs 2 Drawbacks):** When the fish wins a Force Gambit, the Fisher must Tag Out. If they cannot Tag Out, they lose combat.
- **Formidable (costs 2 Drawbacks):** +1 die
- **Fortified:** The fish ignores additional points of Stress equal to the number of Fishers.
- **Overwhelming:** The first Snack used each round has no effect.
- **Tiring:** At the start of every even round, the active Fisher suffers 1 Stress.
- **Vindictive:** For every 2 dice that are Strained away from the fish, the active Fisher suffers 1 Stress.



# Bestiary

The following animals can be encountered on the slopes, trails, and alongside the bodies of water that dot the Old Region.

Not all of these animals have real-world analogues, and slight adaptations may be required to match a given animal to the tone and setting of your game.

Each animal comes with a suggested habitat, dice pool, special abilities, and a penalty for losing to it, and in most cases you can convert an animal into a more setting-appropriate creature simply by changing its habitat and description. For example, in a setting about robots, the Large Woodcutter Bees might be drones. In a game that takes place in the open ocean, the Adult Bear might be a giant shark.

If your party encounters human adversaries, geese are frequently a good stand-in.

## Common Animals

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These animals are easy to encounter, due either to their abundance or to their preference for inhabiting the kinds of places that Fishers like to visit.

Common doesn't mean "not dangerous", however, and a big enough swarm of bees can be as dangerous as any bear.

## Bees, Large Woodcutter

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*These swarming, territorial insects build their homes by boring into sources of wood.*

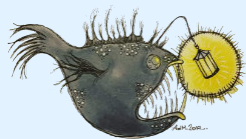
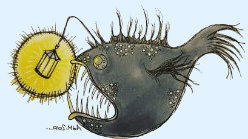
*Since their homes look just like any other fence post, tree, or house, it can be difficult to tell when you're near a nest.*

**Habitats:** Trees, bushes, the eaves of buildings, anywhere sheltered and elevated near a woodland.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** The first time Large Woodcutter Bees would lose combat, they instead do not lose combat.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer 2 points of Exhaustion.



## **Centipede, Giant**

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*A large centipede that feeds not only on other bugs, but also on birds, mice, frogs, and bats, this creature is venomous, it's prone to hiding (sometimes on ceilings), and it reacts aggressively to people who unknowingly enter its space.*

*Some folks keep these as pets, but then they have never had one drop down the back of their shirt.*

**Habitats:** Dry or moist woodland. Areas with ground cover, particularly leaves, bark, rocky outcroppings, or brush. Deserts or rocky regions.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** Ignores the first 2 Stress that it would take. Before making a Gambit, it may Rear Up and inflict 1 Stress on a Fisher. If it does this, its Gambit only reduces Fishers' dice by 1 if successful this round.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer 2 Exhaustion. The next time you Make Camp, do not clear 1 of your Exhaustion.

## **Hornet, Single Giant**

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*Also sometimes called the 'sparrow bee' due to its size, this aggressive hornet feeds largely on other insects. That said, it is quite willing to sting humans who disturb it, and it injects a distressing amount of venom compared to its smaller kin.*

**Habitats:** Forests, hills, lowland, cleared fields, anywhere within several miles of a nesting burrow.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** Ignores the first point of Stress that it would take. All Fishers take 1 Stress when it enters combat.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer 2 Exhaustion. The next time you Make Camp, do not clear 1 of your Exhaustion.

## **Leech, Mountain**

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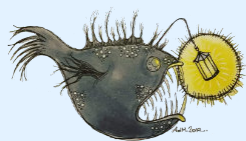
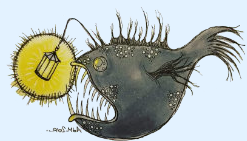
*A terrestrial highland species, mountain leeches either rear up out of the grass, leap from bushes, or else drop from trees to find vulnerable areas on passing people and animals. Their bites are painful and bleed freely, making them quite unpopular with hikers.*

**Habitats:** Forested mountain slopes, highlands, and ravines, especially following rainfall.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** Once per even-numbered round, when the Mountain Leech succeeds on a Finesse Gambit, instead of reducing its victim's dice pool, it may discard one of its own Stress.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer 2 Exhaustion. The next time you Make Camp, do not clear 1 of your Exhaustion.



## **Scorpion, Brush**

---

*A large but minimally venomous scorpion, this creature has adapted to look like one of a number of different kinds of cleaning supply. Some of these scorpions resemble scrub brushes. Some look like mops. Some appear as a bleach bottle with a tail.*

*While not lethal, Brush Scorpion stings are painful. Fortunately, the animal is terrified of humans and only really stings when it feels cornered---such as when it is advancing on a retreating person, pincers clicking rhythmically and tail swaying from side to side.*

*In parts of the world where this scorpion is found, people often leave sticks outside their broom cupboards so that they can rattle the inside equipment around and see if any of it sprouts a stinger. This works fine, so long as no Brush Scorpions attempt to mimic the stick.*

**Habitats:** Woodland, plains, scrubland, maintenance closets.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** When encountering the Brush Scorpion, the SB picks one Fisher out of the group and asks for a Very Hard (TN 6) roll to notice it before being stung. If that Fisher fails, they immediately take 1 Exhaustion.

**Loss Penalty:** 2 Exhaustion.

## **Snake, Lashtip**

---

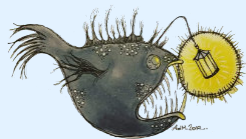
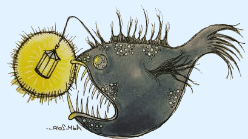
*A small, nonvenomous snake, the lashtip nevertheless has a painful bite, blends in with ground cover, and can be difficult to detect.*

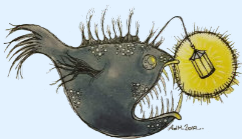
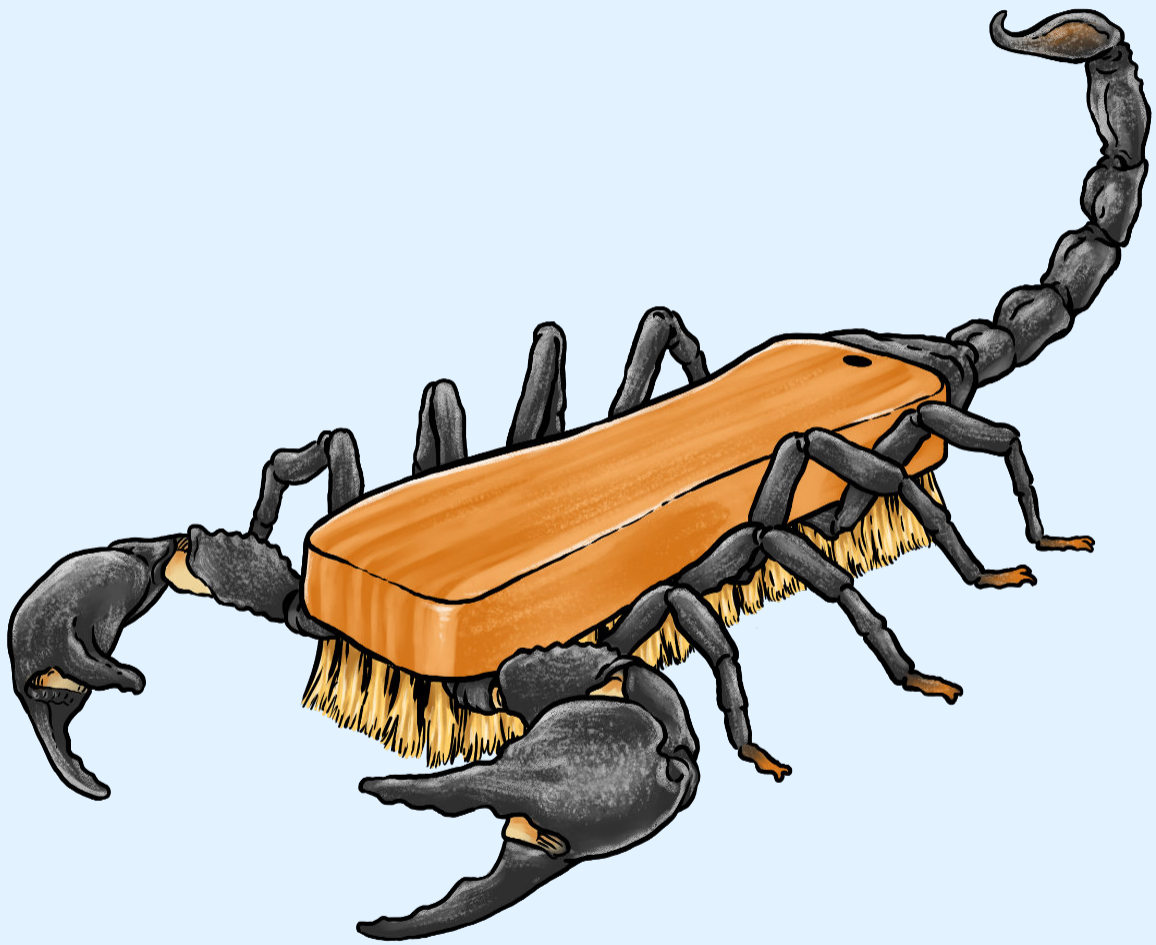
**Habitats:** Open woodlands, field borders, locations with flat rocks and visible sky, pond edges and the margins of other bodies of water.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** The lashtip sets the Target Number for the first three rounds, rather than trading off with the Fishers on round 2.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer 2 points of Exhaustion.





## Uncommon Animals

---

With smaller overall populations than common animals, uncommon creatures make for a noteworthy sighting, an exciting journal entry, and sometimes a quite lively trip to the hospital if sufficient caution isn't taken.



### Bat, Shrieker

---

*A medium-sized bat with an uncommonly loud cry, this species reacts to being disturbed by dive-bombing and sonic-blasting the intruders until they go away.*

**Habitats:** Trees, caves, abandoned buildings, other dark and secluded areas.

**Dice:** 2

**Special:** All Fishers suffer a point of Exhaustion at the start of combat.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer a point of Exhaustion.

### Buffalo, Remorseless Water

---

*A large, hardy, short-haired bovid that is comfortable both in and out of the water, water buffalo are found in herds, and the males have horns that range in shape from short swept-back affairs to long, wide crescent moons that completely frame their face.*

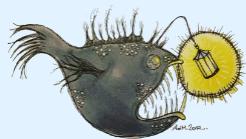
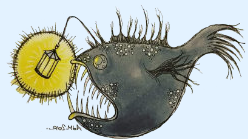
*Water buffalo are often domesticated, but this particular one is not. It also does not appreciate your intrusion in its territory, and it is prepared to expel you by force if need be.*

**Habitats:** Forested areas, plains, and jungle in humid, high-temperature areas. Along the edges of ponds, streams, lakes, or swamps.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** Instead of starting combat, the Fishers may simply leave the area and go back the way they came. However, if the Fishers do pick a fight and fail, in all future encounters with this buffalo, it has +1 die on the first round.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer 2 Exhaustion.



## **Cannibarilla, Phragmites**

*While very technically a member of the phragmites family of large perennial wetland grasses, the Cannibarilla is a large, mobile creature that looks a bit like a shaved, water-wisened gorilla.*

*It also has the head and claws of a crayfish, so there's that.*

*Long reeds and grasses grow out of the Cannibarilla's back, and it spends most of its time face-down in shallow, swampy waters, blending into its environment---but it's not an ambush predator. As far as science can tell, it mostly photosynthesizes sunlight and absorbs water-borne nutrients through its face---although it will sometimes also take small prey animals, such as frogs, water rats, or deer.*

*Anglers are advised to beware of the places where Cannibarilla can be found, since they are timid and react to the approach of anything they might mistake as a predator with extreme violence.*

*Reedy, grassy river meadows are of particular concern because of how well the Cannibarilla blend in, making them a bit like gorilla-shaped landmines.*

**Habitats:** Marshes, swamps, estuaries, reedy banks, river meadows or flood plains.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** Ignores the first 2 Stress that it would take. Roars at the start of the first round, and every Fisher must make a Hard (TN 5) roll or turn to run and suffer the Loss Penalty immediately. Can be pacified after the first round by throwing it a fish of uncommon rarity or better, which immediately ends combat in the Fishers' favor as it shambles off, taking the catch to a more secluded area to eat.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer 2 Exhaustion.

## **Cassowary, Instructor**

*A tall, heavy blue-headed bird with what looks like a funny helmet on its head and an ancient straw raincoat on its body, this particular cassowary is not to be trifled with. It has claws like combat knives on the backs of its feet, it can run at 30 mph (50 kph) or jump five feet (1.5 meters), and its helmet allows it to sprint through the forest, caroming off of trees, without permanent damage.*

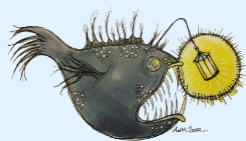
*Actually, those are all features that a standard cassowary has.*

*This particular cassowary has also studied martial arts, and it is willing to pass some of its knowledge to anyone who earns it.*

**Habitats:** Tropical forests, savannahs, and swamps.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** The cassowary will not attack solitary Fishers. It is treated as having both the Hot-Blooded, Easy-Going, and Tricky Temperaments---each of which it can use once per round. Once per combat, before Gambits have been declared, it may leap into the air and bicycle-kick one Fisher. It must declare a



Force Gambit after it does this, but the bicycle kick inflicts 3 Stress on the targeted Fisher. If the cassowary is defeated, it teaches all Fishers that were not defeated a Fighting Technique of their choice.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer 2 Exhaustion. The last Fisher standing learns one Fighting Technique of the cassowary's choice, then the cassowary leaves the area permanently.

## **Eagle, Fishing**

---

*A broad-winged, hooked-beaked predatory bird, the fishing eagle spends its time near sources of water, grabbing meals when they float too close to the surface.*

*It also occasionally catches other birds, rodents, frogs, crustaceans, and other easily accessible prey---such as an overjoyed fisher's recently-landed fish.*

**Habitats:** Tall trees near open fields and water.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** Interrupts the catching of a fish. Don't clear your Stress from the Fish Combat before this Animal Combat begins.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer a point of Exhaustion. If all Fishers are defeated, it gets away with your fish.

## **Goose, Vengeful**

---

*A long-necked waterfowl with a noisy cry, an aggressive temperament, and no respect for the ascendancy of humans, the average goose would fight an entire army for a single crust of bread. It knows neither mercy nor remorse.*

*This goose is set apart from other geese by having a tan body, a black chest and neck, and a distinctive white band below its eye.*

*Its murderous disposition is unchanged.*

**Habitats:** Meadows and fields, rivers and lakes, the borders of any body of fresh water in a temperate climate, parks and urban areas where people can be terrorized into dispensing bread.

**Dice:** 3

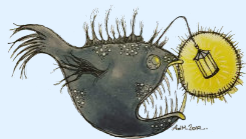
**Special:** When it joins combat, the Vengeful Goose deals 1 Stress to each Fisher. This Stress may be prevented if at least half of the Fishers (round down, minimum 1) throw it Snacks.

**Loss Penalty:** 2 Exhaustion and you must flee the area immediately.

## **Mountain Lion, True**

---

*Unlike the False Mountain Lion, which is a leonid the size of a mountain, this cougar is a large, solitary wildcat that preys upon deer, rabbits, camelids, cubs or adults of other predator species, as well as birds, frogs, fish, and other creatures as available.*



*Mountain lions are territorial, and they may stalk or attack people if they become accustomed enough to humans that the sight and smell of people no longer scare them off. Mountain lions prefer to act as ambush predators, and they have a tan or gray coloration that lets them blend into the rocks and soil of their environments, but they will also scavenge meat when it's available.*

**Habitats:** Forests, mountains, deserts, lowlands, the edges of swamps or bodies of water. Places with dense brush or high rocks.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** Deals 1 Stress to any Fisher it beats with a Finesse Gambit. This is in addition to penalizing dice from their Stand Firm roll. At the start of combat, each Fisher may make a Very Hard (TN 6) roll to posture and yell and scare off the mountain lion. If at least half of the Fishers succeed (round up, minimum 1), the Fishers immediately win combat and the mountain lion is chased off.

**Loss Penalty:** 3 Exhaustion.

## **Lynx, Singing**

---

*A long-legged wildcat with gray fur, tufted ears, and big feet, this animal is a surprisingly capable vocalist.*

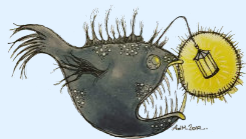
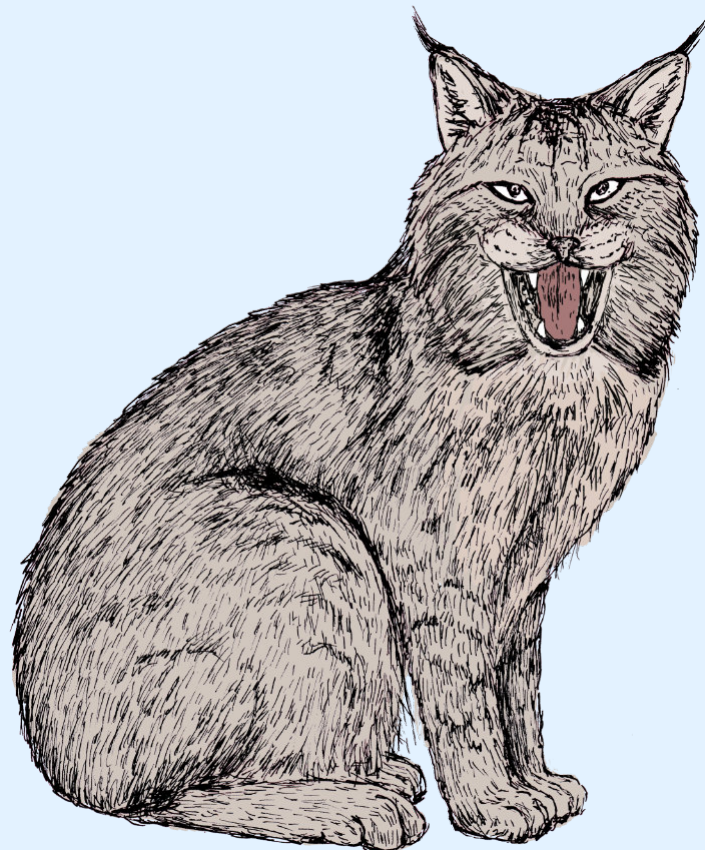
*Granted, its compositions are all a sort of off-key scream-whine, but over the right beat they'd sound great.*

**Habitats:** Forests, mountains, and tundra. Areas with trees and cliffs and cover.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** Losing a Stand Firm Roll while fighting the Singing Lynx causes you to take 2 Stress instead of 1.

**Loss Penalty:** 3 Exhaustion.



## **Porcupine, Waddling**

*An adorable heap of quills with a doglike personality, this creature is nevertheless wild, and it will defend itself by running into or tail-whacking anything it sees as a predator.*

**Habitats:** Forested areas, rocky areas, scrubland, tundra, deserts.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** Before the first round of combat begins, you may choose to retreat and the porcupine will not pursue you. Once per Fisher per combat, when the Waddling Porcupine beats them on a Finesse Gambit, it may inflict a point of Quilled Exhaustion instead of reducing the dice on their Stand Firm Roll. Quilled Exhaustion points are unlike regular Exhaustion points, in that they don't go away normally. You may remove one or more points of Quilled Exhaustion when you make camp, but for each point you remove this way, you take 1 Exhaustion when you break camp.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer a point of Exhaustion.



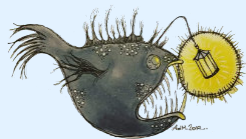
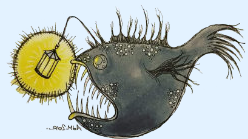
## **Raccoon, Devious**

*An agile, intelligent, and social mammal, raccoons can be quite troublesome when hungry.*

*For example, this one has learned how to mug fishers.*

**Habitats:** Sparsely wooded areas, old growths, places with boulders or rocky burrows, near rivers and marshes, urban areas with unguarded food scraps.

**Dice:** 4



**Special:** When the raccoon succeeds a Cunning Gambit against a Fisher, instead of penalizing dice from their Stand Firm Roll, it steals one random fish from them. It may do this once per Fisher, per combat, and if it is defeated all stolen fish are recovered by the party.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer 1 Exhaustion and, if you are carrying any fish, the raccoon steals one of them at random.

## **Snake, Mottled Hunter**

---

*An extremely venomous snake with a natural camouflage pattern and no helpful threat displays, the mottled hunter is a danger to anyone who likes tromping through tall grass.*

*Just knowing it's out there encourages fishers to wear tall, thick boots.*

**Habitats:** Swamps, marshes, meadows, open woodlands. Especially in areas with ground cover, access to water, and sun-warmed rocks.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** If the Mottled Hunter makes a Cunning Gambit, regardless of whether the Gambit succeeds, it gains +1 die to its Stand Firm Rolls this round and the next round. If it succeeds the Cunning Gambit, it may inflict 1 Stress on each Fisher it succeeded against instead of reducing their dice pool for the Stand Firm Roll.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer 1 Exhaustion. The next time you Make Camp, do not clear 2 of your Exhaustion.

## **Spider, Timekeeper**

---

*A venomous spider with a characteristic hourglass shape on its back, this creature finds human environments very well suited to its taste, and is happy to make a lair out of any convenient basement, garage, or old shoe.*

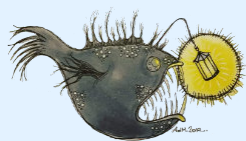
*Unfortunately, while its venom is potent, this spider is also able to manipulate time to an extent, and this allows it to scurry at high speeds and inflict multiple simultaneous bites for a minute or so after it's startled.*

**Habitats:** Woodlands, urban areas, and desert. Dark, dry, sheltered places. Amongst human debris. Caves, tree stumps, abandoned buildings.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** Gambits do not succeed against the Timekeeper Spider for the first 2 rounds of combat. If the Timekeeper Spider succeeds a Gambit during the first 2 rounds, every Fisher it succeeds against takes 2 Stress instead of losing dice from their Stand Firm Roll.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer 2 Exhaustion. The next time you Make Camp, do not clear 1 of your Exhaustion.



## Rare Animals

---

While not frequent sightings in the Old Region, these animals nevertheless leave an impression on Fishers who encounter them.

Sometimes that impression is quite literal.

### Bear, Adult

---

*A shaggy apex predator with a singularly intimidating roar, adult bears are best left in peace.*

**Habitats:** Forested highlands. Areas with abundant grasses, trees, and bushes.

**Dice:** 6

**Special:** Ignores a number of points of Stress equal to the number of Fishers in the party. Can be pacified (thus ending the combat in the Fishers' favor) by throwing it 4 Snacks or any 2 fish (Trashfish and Panfish excluded).

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer 4 points of Exhaustion.

### Boar, Wild

---

*Like a domestic pig, but with hooked bone-swords on both sides of its face, wild boar are fierce fighters and can be extremely aggressive.*

**Habitats:** Forests, grasslands, taiga, jungle, highlands, deserts, anywhere with heavy brush and drinkable water.

**Dice:** 5

**Special:** At the end of the 4th round, permanently loses 1 die. Twice per combat, on a successful Force Gambit, instead of reducing the dice on a Fisher's Stand Firm Roll, deals 1 Exhaustion to them.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer 4 Exhaustion.

### Burrowgator

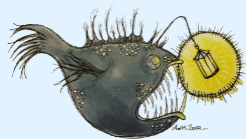
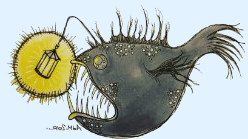
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*While technically more closely related to the komodo dragon, this unique species of lizards looks almost identical to a common alligator. However, rather than lurking in murky ponds and dining on fish and whichever unlucky animals come to drink, the burrowgator takes a page from the trapdoor spider's playbook and constructs roomy, dry underground dens, which it covers over with debris or plantlife. When an unsuspecting victim comes traipsing by, the burrowgator rushes out and goes for the ankles.*

*Counties with burrowgators tend to advertise the creatures' presence with bright caution-yellow signs---however the lizards have been known to knock over those signs and then build burrows beneath them, using the sign-plates as cover.*

**Habitats:** Floodplains, badlands, fields, scrub, the edges of forests or jungles, anywhere with mild winters and loose soil.

**Dice:** 4



**Special:** Ignores a number of points of Stress equal to the number of Fishers in the party. Once per round, when it wins a Gambit with Finesse, it may Do A Big Chomp to the Fisher it won against. When it Does A Big Chomp, instead of reducing the Fisher's Stand Firm Roll, it takes 1 Stress to inflict 3 Stress on them.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer 3 Exhaustion.

## **Hornet Nest, Giant**

---

*While a single giant hornet is dangerous, a nest of them is life-threatening. Worse, as "sparrow bees" tend to build their nests underground, it's hard to know that you're on top of a nest until songbird-sized wasps start scrambling out of it and careening towards your face.*

**Habitats:** Forests, hills, lowland, cleared fields. Anywhere small animal burrows can be found, invaded, and taken over.

**Dice:** 5

**Special:** Starts combat with a Single Giant Hornet supporting it. At the end of the 2nd, 4th, and 5th rounds, and then every 3 rounds after that, adds a Single Giant Hornet to combat on its side. Will always choose to make a Single Giant Hornet the active attacker, so long as there is one available. If the Giant Hornet Nest is ever made the active combatant for a round, at the start of the round it permanently loses 1 die. If it is reduced to 0 dice this way, it immediately loses combat.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer 2 Exhaustion.

## **Salamander, Giant**

---

*Though not large enough to prey on people, these salamanders can reach lengths of six feet (two meters), and they are highly motivated by the wriggling of a fresh catch as it is drawn by a fisher towards the surface.*

**Habitats:** Clear, cool, running water. Rivers and streams. Drainage basins. Rocky areas.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** Interrupts the catching of a fish. When a Fisher is interrupted by a giant salamander, they don't clear their Stress from the Fish Combat before Animal Combat begins. During combat, ignores the first 2 points of Stress that it would take.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer 1 Exhaustion. If all Fishers are defeated, it gets away with your fish.

## **Snake, Ophidian Giant**

---

*A swamp-dwelling constrictor which can grow up to twenty feet (5.5 meters) in length, the ophidian giant is entirely non-venomous---but this isn't especially comforting to the occasional sheep, deer, or cow that gets dragged into the water.*



**Habitats:** Marshes, sluggish streams, wetlands. Beneath the surface of murky waters in warm climates.

**Dice:** 3

**Special:** Ignores a number of points of Stress equal to the number of Fishers in the party. At the end of the 1st and 4th rounds, gains +1 die. Successful Gambits against the snake remove +1 dice from its Stand Firm Roll.

**Loss Penalty:** 4 Exhaustion.

## **Tentagoose**

*Somehow worse than a regular goose, the Tentagoose looks like a long-necked, gray waterfowl. It feeds on bugs, plantlife, and occasionally small rodents, and it is extremely fearless and territorial.*

*What sets it apart from its kin is its unusual defensive mechanism. From underneath its wings it can sprout, when threatened, six thrashing lamprey-mouthed tendrils. Bites from the goose and its tendrils are painful, and people who stumble into the goose would be advised to simply run away---if Tentagoose weren't also extremely fast.*

*The only saving grace for this creature is that it's flightless, so climbing a tree or scaling the side of a building can get you away from it.*

*That said, it is very patient, so you'd best have a plan for rescue once you're safely trapped in a tree or on a roof.*

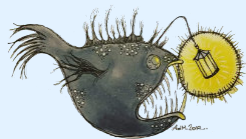
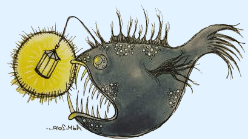
*Also, it can open locks.*

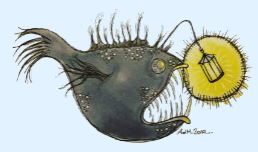
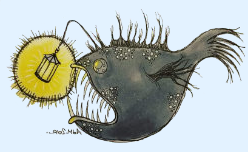
**Habitats:** Farmyards, fields, ponds, rivers, urban areas, behind you.

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** Ignores the first 2 Stress that it would take. At the start of each round, the Tentagoose chooses a configuration for its tentacles. If they are thrashing, all Fishers must immediately make a Hard (TN 5) roll or take 1 Stress. If the tentacles are curled in a defensive screen, after Gambits have been revealed, the goose chooses one Fisher who succeeded their Gambit against it and that Fisher receives no benefits for succeeding the Gambit. If the goose's tentacles are poised to counterattack, it is treated as only having a pool of 3 dice this round, but until the end of the round each time the goose takes Stress it picks a Fisher and inflicts 1 Stress on them.

**Loss Penalty:** 2 Exhaustion. Also, the Tentagoose will begin pursuing you until it is defeated, showing up again each time you break camp.





# NPCs In The Old Region

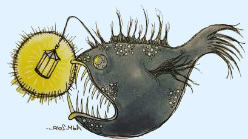
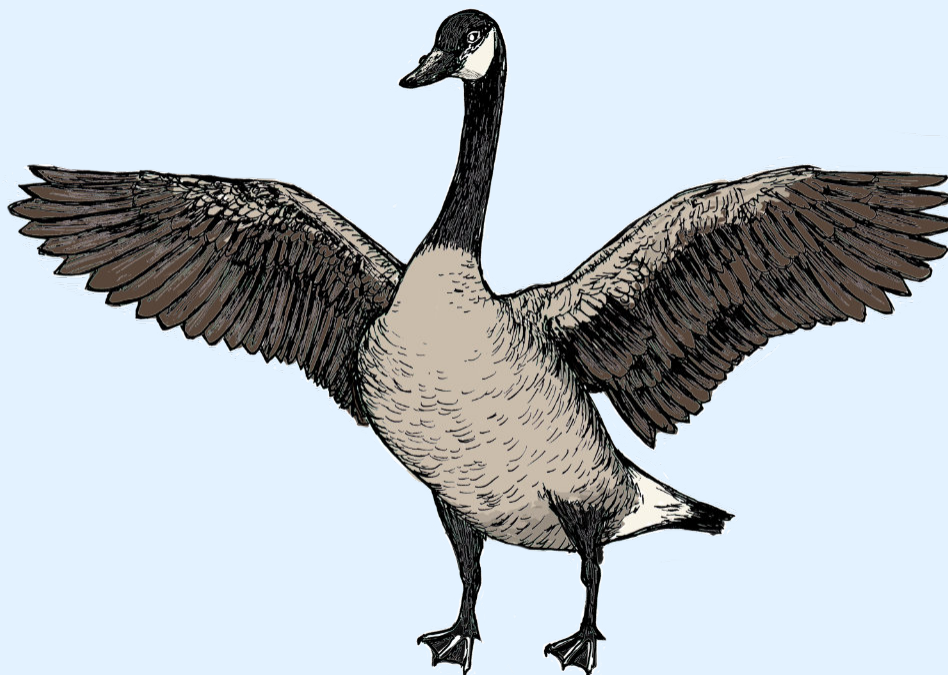
As removed from the Village as it is, being in the Old Region can feel a little isolating. Fortunately, the Fishers aren't the only people wandering its reaches.

Any time the Fishers Make Camp, the SB may roll 1d6. On a 5+, one of these NPCs (or another NPC of the SB's own design) may appear.

NPCs have distinct personalities and may be fun for the players to talk to, but they also frequently offer trades or have requests, giving the Fishers sidequests to pursue.

The important thing for the SB to keep in mind about NPCs is that they typically have fundamentally different motivations from the Fishers. Some may help. Some may hinder. But none will go out and bag the Fish Of Legend for themselves and then just hand it to the party.

Not all NPCs will automatically fit every setting, so the SB is advised to pick NPCs that work best, but any NPC can be adapted to better suit a particular Scenario, and the SB is encouraged to create new NPCs to add custom encounters to their game.



## **Captain John Murray**

---

*Captain John Murray is a brawny, square-jawed man with a beard and mutton chops. He is heavily bedecked in fishing kit, and he has a gruff attitude, but there's a hint of a smile at the corners of his mouth, even though it's somewhat obscured by the monster cigar that he keeps chomped in place there.*

*The Captain isn't afraid of speaking plainly and critically, although this seems to be more a force of habit than anything else. There's a deep tiredness behind his eyes that the quiet serenity of his fishing trip hasn't quite penetrated. Although it's slowly getting better, it hasn't gone away completely yet.*

*Whatever it is that he's seen, he's definitely happy to be somewhere he can relax for a little bit.*

*For now, at least, the fish are biting, the birds are singing, and there's a slow cloud of white smoke spooling off the tip of his cigar and vanishing into the breeze.*

**Bargain:** Captain Murray doesn't ask anything of the Fishers, but he's happy to share the area with them so long as they let him be. If they try to bug him into giving them an item or teaching them a Technique like any other wandering character, he'll tell them to shove off. Regardless of what happens, the next time the Fishers get into combat with a Rare Animal and one of the Fishers is about to lose, Captain Murray will show up seemingly out of nowhere and charge into the fray, forcing back the animal and dragging the Fisher to safety. When this happens, the animal is treated as driven off, and the Fisher does not suffer a Loss Penalty.

## **Earl**

---

*One of the stranger denizens of the Old Region, Earl is a Fish Of Legend---and that's pretty apparent from first impressions, given that he is a goldfish inside a fishbowl which is in turn sitting on top of a telekinetically floating nightstand---but he's not YOUR Fish Of Legend, and capturing him won't do anything to stave off the tragedy that is threatening your village.*

*Earl is a bit wary of fishers, knowing that eventually one will have a go at him, but he's polite and businesslike and will talk to people who don't immediately start spooling their lines and threading their hooks.*

*As a Fish Of Legend, Earl has the ability to grant wishes, but not very big wishes, and they don't always come out the way the wisher intended.*

*He warns fishers about this up front, but not everyone listens.*

**Bargain:** If the Fishers promise not to tell anyone that they saw him, Earl will wish up a single free piece of Equipment for them. That Equipment will last until the next time they Make Camp, at which point it vanishes.

**Risk:** The Fishers can jump Earl and try to make him fix the tragedy affecting their village. If this happens, treat Earl as a 4 dice animal that inflicts 1 Stress on anyone he beats with a Finesse or Cunning Gambit in addition to removing dice from their Stand Firm Roll. If Earl wins this combat, the Fishers all take 1 Exhaustion and he gets away. If the Fishers win, Earl will reluctantly enchant



one of them so that no prey may escape their hook. This enchantment allows that Fisher to ignore the first 3 Stress they would receive in each Fish Combat, but every time they try to eat a Snack from now on, the Snack flies out of their mouth and sticks to their fishing hook, wasting it.

## **Guy du Fleurs**

---

*An easy-going rambler from far away, Guy strayed into the Old Region while exploring something he calls 'the Omniswamp'. As best you can tell, there's no Omniswamp anywhere near where you are. And although you can understand Guy when he talks (at least mostly. There's an accent), the labels on his clothing and fishing kit are all in an unfamiliar script.*

*Guy wears shorts and a t-shirt and has a cheery attitude, and he pushes along a wheeled refreshment cart full of cold, unmoving iguanas that he's collected.*

*His eventual goal is to get him and his iguanas back to the Omniswamp, but in the meantime he's a deep well of advice about fishing.*

**Bargain:** Guy will offer the Fishers a Moderately Cold Iguana at no cost. If the Fishers accept, sometime between now and the next time they Make Camp (SB's choice), the iguana will thaw enough to reanimate and attack whoever is holding it. That person must then make a TN 6 (Very Hard) roll to pacify the iguana or take 1 Exhaustion as it gets away. If the Fisher passes the roll, the iguana may be turned into 3 Snacks when the Fishers next Make Camp.

**Request:** If the Fishers show him a Rare fish, Guy will wax poetic and share some deep insights into fishing, allowing one Fisher to learn a Fishing Technique of their choice. He will do this once per Scenario.

**Risk:** If the Fishers allow Guy into their camp while they have "Soda" in their inventory, the next time they check their inventory after he leaves, there's a can missing.

## **John Smithman**

---

*John is a tall, somewhat unsteady-looking man in a tan trenchcoat with a hat pulled down most of the way over his face. Despite his awkward gait, he is very polite and he will chat with the Fishers about topics like how good it is to breathe the air, and how exercised his legs feel.*

*If the Fishers try to take off his hat or pull down the collar of his trenchcoat, Smithman will stumble back a few steps, refusing to let them do that.*

*He is doing quite well, thank you, he will say. There is no need to remove parts of his ensemble to check.*

*Weirdly, the footprints Smithman leaves are all wet.*

**Risk:** John Smithman offers the Fishers a free handful of 1d6 kelp-based Snacks. Should a Fisher accept, two grappling hooks will suddenly launch out of John's sleeves as he attempts to shamble awkwardly into the nearest water source, dragging the Fisher with him. A Fish Combat begins, with the Fisher as a 3 dice fish with no abilities, and the twelve carp and an eel that were puppeting the Smithman suit as a 3 dice Fisher. If the character being



dragged into the water loses the combat, they are still able to eventually fight their way back to the surface, but they take 2 Exhaustion in the process. Regardless of the outcome of this unique fish combat, the Snacks being offered as bait are left on the shoreline, and the Fishers may collect them freely.

**Other Risk:** If the party simply tries to jump Smithman, he fights tenaciously (use the stats for a Tentagoose) and he retreats into the water if he wins. However, if John Smithman is defeated, the Fishers may collect 3 Grass Carp and an Insidious Eel before the rest of the fish in the Smithman supermarine can escape back into their home environment.

## **Madam Yaga**

---

*Madam Yaga is an old woman dressed for rambling. She wears a large backpack and carries a birch walking stick, and she keeps with her a large wooden mortar and pestle, which can be seen sticking out of the pack. When not hiking, she spends much of her time picking specific plants.*

*Madam Yaga has little tolerance for foolishness, and she will simply continue on her way if she thinks someone is wasting her time, but she will sit for a while at a campfire if invited politely to do so. She is a living compendium of herbological lore, and she will give expert advice if the Fishers ask for it.*

*Madam Yaga's only requirement for her advice is that the Fishers give her half of the food they were preparing so that she may take it with her on her travels.*

*At no point does she explicitly mention any consequences for crossing her, but there is a definite feeling to the air that she could be a whole lot more threatening if she wanted to be.*

**Bargain:** If the Fishers allow her to share their fire and give her half of all their Snacks, Madam Yaga will either give them words of advice or teach them about herbalism---their choice. If she gives words of advice, each Fisher may ask the SB a question and the SB must answer honestly. If she teaches them about herbalism, every time the Fishers Make Camp for the rest of the Scenario, the group automatically gains +1 Snack from foraging.

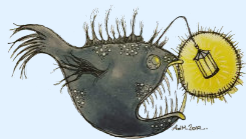
**Risk:** If the Fishers allow Madam Yaga to share their fire but they trick her into giving them words of advice or teaching them about herbalism for free, the next three times they break camp, they are immediately attacked by an Adult Bear.

## **The Man Of Moss**

---

*It is unclear whether or not there's a man under this heap of sticks, leaves, and lichen. Tendrils of moss trail from its feet and small white butterflies dance around its sides, and it has wide, expressive gold eyes that watch you from deep within the pile, but none of these details strongly suggest a human biology. None of them rule it out either.*

*The Man Of Moss seems to be native to the Old Region, and it is permeated by whatever weirdness has also shaped this place. When it speaks, it does so in a rattling voice, dry with disuse. On the other hand, its actions are not obviously*



*hostile, and it seems as curious about the fishers as they are likely to be about it.*

*If asked about its name and origins, the Man Of Moss will not give a clear answer. It has been here for as long as there has been a here. Its name is a rustling sound like the wind passing through leaves.*

*It is very knowledgeable, however, and it's happy to assist the Fishers as long as this aid comes at no great risk to itself. The Man is especially interested by the idea of fishing, and it grows quite excited at the notion of actually watching someone landing a fish.*

*It doesn't want to eat fish, though. It doesn't actually care for meat. Just watching the angling process is enough for it.*

**Bargain:** The Man Of Moss will offer to accompany the Fishers until they next Make Camp. They may choose to accept or decline.

**Request:** If the Man Of Moss is accompanying the Fishers, each time it watches them successfully land a fish, it will shake and dance in excitement until 1 Snack worth of edible berries showers out of its branches and lands on the ground for the Fishers to retrieve. If the Fishers fail to catch a fish, the Man Of Moss will still be excited that they tried, but it won't dance so hard any Snacks fall out.

**Risk:** If the Man Of Moss is accompanying the Fishers and they Make Camp, it will announce that it must be moving on and depart. When it leaves this way, there is a strange feeling to the air, the area of the Old Region around them becomes less vibrant, and the next time each Fisher gets into a combat, they take 1 Stress. If the Fishers simply declined to have the Man Of Moss accompany them, they do not suffer this effect when it departs.

## **Melinae**

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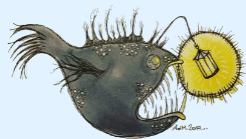
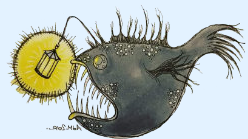
*Mel is a tall, skinny girl in her mid teens. Although she dreams of being an internationally recognized fisher, in the absence of her father she has been responsible for looking after her nine younger brothers and sisters.*

*Mel, out of necessity, has become an expert cook and medic, and she can handle almost every other practical skill that would be needed in the rearing of nine other children---a continuum of talents that stretches from small mechanical repairs to intermediate-level martial arts. Mel also runs a local aquarium shop that sells supplies as well as exotic fish, and her personal collection of fish includes rock groupers, stonefish, pacific rockfish, and rock lobsters.*

*Lately, due to issues with availability and fluctuations in prices, Mel has been venturing into the Old Region in search of saleable fish.*

**Bargain:** Mel carries a pack full of cooking supplies with her, and she will quickly whip up some rice balls and donuts if the Fishers let her. This adds 2 Snacks to the party's inventory.

**Request:** Mel will trade Snacks for living Rare or Uncommon fish. For every Rare or Uncommon fish that the Fishers give to her, Mel will give them Snacks



equal to 1 + the number of Snacks they would've gotten by preparing that fish. If the fish isn't cookable, Mel will give them a flat 3 Snacks for it instead.

**Risk:** Mel's favorite rock lobster, Brock Lobster, has gone missing somewhere in the Old Region. When this information becomes known to the party, the SB secretly picks a spot on the map and marks it as Brock Lobster's Hiding Place. If the Fishers go there, they can spot Brock Lobster with a TN 5 (Hard) roll, and they can pick him up without being pinched for 1 Exhaustion by making a TN 6 (Very Hard) roll. If the Fishers bring Brock Lobster back to Mel, she will give them a set of Skipping Stones.

## **Pops Bailey**

---

*An old man with a drab dress sense and solid white teeth, Pops Bailey seems to have strayed into the Old Region while on a fishing trip with his gaggle of grandchildren. Neither he nor the kids are particularly bothered by this. There's still plenty of time to get home before dinner---and if not, Pops knows a few things about camping, and the children see this whole excursion as a grand adventure.*

*Pops Bailey is an excellent fly fisher, and he can usually be found angling for morning trout. He's happy to chat with any other fishers who stop by, and will---if asked---also be happy to demonstrate The Perfect Cast.*

**Bargain:** Pops will show one Fisher how to make The Perfect Cast. This esoteric knowledge doesn't linger in the brain long, but the Fisher that has been shown this cast gets +1 die on all rolls for the first two rounds of the next Fish Combat they get into.

**Request:** Pops is an old hand at preparing fish, but he didn't bring along anything to season them with. If the Fishers give him Clarified Butter and a Lemon, he'll prepare an extremely gourmet feast out of some simple trout he's got in a bucket, giving them 7 Snacks in the process.

## **Sweet**

---

*A short, scrawny man dressed in old clothing and inexplicably wearing an armadillo hide on his back, Sweet carries a pack full of compounding, tincturing, and preserving equipment that jangles with every step.*

*He is also festooned with dried bundles of herbs, rocks and feathers tied on cords, and erlenmeyer flasks sticking out of a variety of pockets, and if the Fishers don't call out to him, he will continue right on through their camp, stepping right over the fire and mumbling to himself about bezoars.*

*If the Fishers do stop him, he will startle, notice them, and then introduce himself. He is a wandering scientist and apothecary (and an MD, he will add, even if the board doesn't agree with him on this) and he is currently in search of fantastical ingredients to add to his medicines.*

*Well, perhaps not fantastical, really. The ingredients are very real and he expects to find them eventually. But certainly their results will be much like something out of a fable, and that's enough to justify the phrasing.*

*Assuming the Fishers are not completely fazed by him, Sweet will take out one*



*of his many flasks at this point, announce that its contents are entirely experimental, and ask if any of the Fishers want a sip.*

*While his expression is earnest, it's possible that swigging from one of Sweet's homebrews might lead to results other than the health improvements he is promising.*

**Bargain:** Any number of the Fishers may accept Sweet's offer, and each Fisher who does may only drink once. When a Fisher takes a sip, roll 1d6 and consult the following chart.

1. **Soporific Tonic.** Take 2 Exhaustion after breaking camp.
2. **Stress Amplifier.** At the start of the next fight, take 2 Stress.
3. **Fish Attunement Brew.** Two times in your next Fish Combat, immediately after Gambits have been revealed, you may change your Gambit to match the fish's Gambit.
4. **Martial Catalyst.** The next time you enter Animal Combat, pick an animal and it immediately takes 2 Stress from a roundhouse kick you didn't know you were capable of performing.
5. **Mental Horizon Philter.** Learn one Technique of your choice.
6. **Just Soda.** Gain the item "Soda". It has a single charge on it.

## **Vincent Of The Gar Sea**

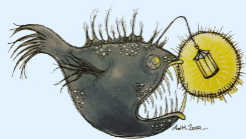
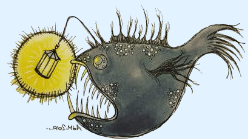
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*You've never seen the Gar Sea personally, but stories of it filter through the Village occasionally. By those accounts, it is a vast freshwater ocean full of snapping, alligator-like fish. Small communities live on its waters atop wide, flat rafts, and they make a living by catching and processing the gar into everything from food to clothing to weapons.*

*Vincent has not been to the Gar Sea in a long time, but he carries in his pack a set of ceremonial Gar-Scaled Armor and he has at his side a famous Gar-Headed Spear. A great calamity is facing the Gar Sea, and although Vincent will not speak of it, he will disclose that he is on a quest to stop that tragedy. To do so, he will need to capture a Fish Of Legend (not the one the Fishers are interested in, fortunately), and the road to catching that fish has been long and arduous for him.*

*Honestly, he misses the dipping oars and snapping fish-mouths of home, and he's gotten a bit nostalgic remembering them.*

**Request:** Vincent is homesick for the Gar Sea and he requests that the Fishers show him that they can catch an Armored Gar---or any other type of gar, if there are multiple gars in the Scenario---to lift his spirits. If the Fishers present him with a gar, Vincent will exclaim "By my stars and GARters! That GAR is GARgantuan! I'm gonna take this back to the GARrison, GARnish it with some GARlic and serve it up with some GARbonzos fresh from the GARden. Great GARgling GARgoyles, I'm as happy as a clam! Or, um, a gar." If the Fishers somehow endure this onslaught of gar puns, Vincent will GAR-antee (sorry, last one) them access to the Gar Dimension---a sidelying reality full of tightly-packed gar---by presenting them each with a Gar Badge. From then on, three



times per Scenario a Fisher in the party may drop a hook into the Gar Dimension and enter Fish Combat with an Armored Gar. They may do this even if there are no fishing spots in sight, and any items thrown into the Gar Dimension are lost until someone goes there in person and recovers them.

## **William Jahl**

---

*William is a thin, scruffy man typically found behind the push-bar of a large wooden cart, which he strains to propel through the weeds and rocks of the Old Region. On a good day William is sweating and straining and wrestling with the cart, trying to force it over a bump on the trail. On a bad day he's lying in the shade, staring at the parked cart, wondering how he will ever get it moving again.*

*William wears a red-and-white striped shirt, tan shorts, and a straw boater hat, and he has a genial if somewhat road-weary attitude. He doesn't know particularly where he's going, but he's confident that he'll get there when he needs to.*

*The most remarkable feature about William (apart from his completely wild beard) is his cart, which unfolds from its compact wooden travel-form into a stage---complete with a piano---with the application of a little bit of elbow-grease.*

*William is a capable entertainer, and he can climb up onto the stage and play a beautiful tune right off the cuff, but his songs are never just meaningless fluff. They have a way of discomfoting the comfortable and comforting the discomfoted.*

*For a small tip, William will play for the Fishers.*

**Bargain:** Once per time they encounter him, William will offer to play a song for the group, provided the Fishers give him 1 Snack. If the Fishers decide to pay him, the SB rolls 1d6 on the following chart and narrates the result.

If the group ever gives him 1 Snack per person in their party in a single encounter, he plays his first song, and then the SB rolls a second d6. On a 4+ William will perform a second song as an encore, rolled randomly on the chart.

**1. Church Organ Guy.** A very memorable piece of music, although it seems to go on for quite a while, this song chronicles the travails of a church organist trying to get by in a difficult economy. The next time each Fisher converts a fish into Snacks, they take a little more care to extract every bit of useable meat and receive +1 Snack from the fish, applied before any other modifiers from cooking equipment or seasoning are factored in.

**2. Life Insurance Policies For Ethical People.** Despite the wordy title, it's a bop. Every Fisher gets +1 die for the first round of the next combat they are in.

**3. The Entire Universe Is On Fire.** A surprisingly upbeat, happy song if you don't mind the lyrics. Every Fisher may ignore the next point of Exhaustion they would take, but every Fisher also ignores the first two Yell Encouragements they receive each round for the duration of the next Fish Combat they are in.

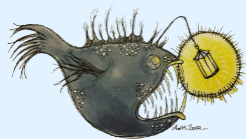
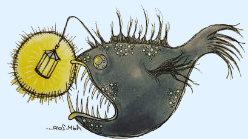


**4. Eviction Notice.** Part protest song, part bluesy rock tune, it's certainly a mood. The next time each Fisher succeeds a Gambit, they may inflict +1 Stress on their target in addition to any effects or benefits they would get from winning that Gambit.

**5. It Was Blues All Along.** While a slow-moving deconstruction of modern music's roots, it still gets your toes tapping. All Fishers ignore the next point of Stress they would take, but the next time each Fisher loses a Gambit, they lose +1 die from their following Stand Firm Roll, in addition to any other consequences they would suffer.

**6. Smallfry.** A punchy, energetic performance inexplicably causes fish to rain from the sky when William is done. The Fishers as a group immediately catch a Tornado Smelt and are treated as all having won combat against it, but they each start their next combat with 2 Stress.





# Alternate Settings

If the idea of playing a game set in an idyllic, 1980s Japan isn't *quite* catching to your group, you've got options.

These options are listed below.

## **Building Alternate Settings**

---

1980s Japan is the stock setting, and there are a host of other alternatives in this chapter, but that doesn't mean you have to stick to any of them.

Would you rather play in the 1990s in a Louisiana bayou? No problem.

2151 C.E. in the Amazon or central Africa? Sure.

A far-future mutant swamp-world? Go for it.

A ruined post-apocalypse where a person's value is only equal to their skill at fishing? I won't stop you.

If you're going to run an alternate setting, the only strong suggestion is that you make sure there's a Village, there's a Tragedy, there's an Old Region, and there's a Fish Of Legend. And even these elements can be dropped if you can think of something more interesting and relevant to replace them with.

To get started on building an alternate setting, see the Designing Your World Chapter near the beginning of the book, on [page 27](#), and give your players permission to add details to the setting while everyone is creating the Village/Tragedy/Old Region/Fish Of Legend.

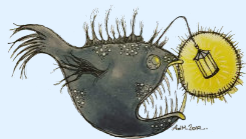
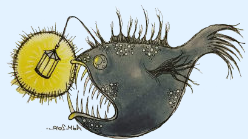
Often you can get a whole world out of "why is the Fish Of Legend *on fire*?"

It *is* recommended that if you run an alternate setting, you let every member of the group define at least one fact about it so that everyone has some buy-in, but an SB with an extremely well-realized concept for a setting can just present that concept to the group and let them accept it or propose modifications.

Honestly, if your group gets pulled out of the game by having to collaboratively build the world, it is perfectly okay for the SB to just design a setting first and then present it to the group.

As long as you're all having fun, there's no one right way to play.





## **Fish Of The North Star**

---

*The reconstruction is doomed to failure.*

*That's what everyone says, at least.*

*For two hundred years the war raged. And for another hundred, all humanity could do was live amid the rocks and pick up the pieces.*

*Much was forgotten over those three, long centuries, and even basic skills like hunting and gardening have gone by the wayside. What human settlements remain are full of hungry, desperate people, and the rugged wastes between them are crawling with mutated fauna and bandits.*

*Unripped clothing is at an all-time low, extremely over-defined musculature is at an all-time high, and predation is the law of the land.*

*Fortunately, not all of the old world was lost in the war. Certain knowledges, such as the finding and catching of fish, were passed down from master to student in secluded monasteries all around the world. Knowing how, and when, to fish allows a person to obtain food without taking it from anyone else--and this is something that the powers of this fallen world cannot abide.*

*The kings of ruined cities, the queens of bandit packs, and all the others who thrive in these hungry times would not see such knowledge diffuse out into the wasteland, so they hunt the Fishers in their monasteries.*

*In this way, many of the greatest fishing lineages have been exterminated from the world.*

*Many, but not all.*

*There remain fishers who have survived the destruction of their monastery, or who have chosen on their own to leave it---going out into the world in hopes of finding meaning or redemption or maybe just someone to save. These legendary warriors travel from village to village, driving off bandits and catching fish for the hungry. They are called, often in a trembling voice, Those Who Eat For A Day, as they only carry enough dried fish to sustain themselves for a short while.*

*Everything else they eat, they must catch.*

*Some of these fishers have devoted themselves to picking humanity up out of the dust, to rebuilding civilization. Not even the most optimistic villager believes they can achieve this, and yet...*

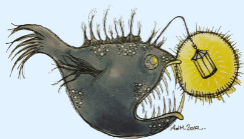
*The reconstruction is doomed to failure.*

*That's what everyone says.*

*But then, they haven't met you.*

*Born to a forgotten lineage, trained by an ancient master, you've only just journeyed out into the world, but already you know what you must do.*

*There's tension in your line, force in your cast, and courage in your blood, and you will bring salvation to these wastes with rod, reel, and fist.*



## **Fish Of The North Star: Overview**

Fish Of The North Star is an homage to (and very affectionate parody of) a story with a nearly identical name: Doberman Detective, a 1975 detective manga by Japanese writer Buronson, who would later go on to be recognized for his 1999 manga HEAT.

Anyway, Fish Of The North Star features wandering martial artists in a post-post-world-war future where humanity has regressed so intensely that basic skills like farming, foraging, and hunting have been all but lost. Fishing has been preserved by secretive lineages of monastic warriors, but these lineages are hated by bandits and warlords, who have been flourishing off of the ruination of the world.

In general, hair is big, muscles are ripped, and people dress like they've either sworn their allegiance to a hair metal biker gang, or an 80s punk band, or to a desolate rural community in the 1300s. Much of the world is desert, tainted by the weapons used during the war, but some places are thriving in man's absence, and life has come back to the seas and rivers quite quickly.

A typical game of Fish Of The North Star involves the fishers wandering into a new town, discovering a problem plaguing the locals, and confronting it with martial might and fishing know-how. Sometimes this problem is bandits or gargantuan radio-bears. Sometimes it's food insecurity or disagreement between influential villagers. Either way, after the town's problems have been solved, the fishers continue on down the road---ideally with their bodies caught in heroic profile by the light of the setting sun.

## **Fish Of The North Star: Making Changes**

Fish Of The North Star has the potential to be darker in tone than a regular game of Rodreel, but it doesn't have to be. Depending on whether you play the material straight or lean into its deliberate silliness, you'll end up with a very different game experience. If you plan to play it straight, check with your group first and make sure everyone's on the same page. You don't want to wind up in a situation where one of the players only realizes it isn't silly a couple minutes in.

Other than that, the major changes that you need to make to run Rodreel as Fish Of The North Star are pretty simple.

First, there's a different Village every Scenario. This means that the Tragedies the group comes up with can be quite varied, as every Village may be facing a dramatically different problem.

Second, combat can be frequent, and it is reasonable for the SB to reskin certain animal entries as different types of bandits. There's no reason to have to create dozens of new types of enemies when you can simply have "bandits of the Burrowgator clan" or "students of the Giant Salamander lineage".

Finally, some of your players are likely going to want to create their own fishing lineages. This is totally fine. The things you want each lineage Fisher's player to define are as follows: the name of the lineage, its monastery and master, what it forbids, and what its signature move is.



Players that aren't playing a lineage Fisher (for example, they might be playing a reformed bandit, or an uplifted animal, or even a travelling acupuncturist) should also be encouraged to define something that's cool about their character. Maybe they have one of the last motorcycles, or they understand the lost art of farming, or they're telekinetic.

More than a usual game of Rod, Reel, & Fist, let your players make powerful, competent characters.

That'll make the enemies they encounter feel all the more satisfying to defeat.

## **Fish Of The North Star: Factions And Forces**

The following factions are of importance in the Fish Of The North Star setting.

### **The Bones**

Wasteland bandits united by their love of chance and coincidence, the Bones cover themselves in tattoos and other iconography depicting six-sided dice---which they believe to represent the underlying truth of reality: that nothing happens by intention, only by accident.

Members of the Bones are fierce fighters due to their unpredictability, and they are dangerous to villagers for similar reasons. A group of Bones might attack a village simply for existing, only to spare it mid-fight, only to return five minutes later and attack it again.

The Bones forsake all culpability for their actions, and---if pressed---explain that they are simply doing what their creator intended them to do.

### **Fauna**

Fish and animals, no longer kept in check by hunting and fishing, have grown wild and varied over the past three hundred years.

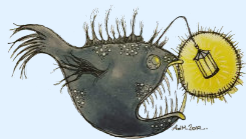
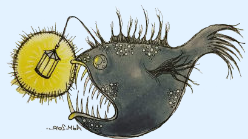
The period of intense cybernetic modification that occurred towards the end of the war didn't help, either.

It is still possible to run into a normal sturgeon, or a perfectly recognizable bear, but half-robot lobster tanks that fire lasers from their eyes are also a thing that exists, and they migrate in herds across the plains.

### **Jealous Sloth Lineage**

A heretical offshoot from the ancient Taking Salmon From Bears lineage (now lost to the wastes), practitioners of the Jealous Sloth style of fishing do not catch anything for themselves. They wait for others to fish, and then they challenge them and steal their catch.

Because the lost art of fishing is only just returning to the world, students of the Jealous Sloth are not well known among the bandits and villagers of the wastes. However, their existence is heavily documented in the cautionary stories of the other fishing traditions. They are the vile mirror to the noble art of fishing. They are the Unfisher that waits at the end of every dark road.



They are hungry.

And they are recruiting.

## **Other Fishing Lineages**

Other fishing lineages exist, and their philosophies and teachings were once as varied as the stars in the sky. Sadly, there are far fewer than there once were, and most of the surviving lineages are isolated and hidden. Still, there are a few that have been intentionally sending their students out into the world---either to heal or tame or conquer it.

A few---but not all---of the most common lineages are listed below:

The **Grasping Crawdad Lineage**, originally born from shoreline foragers, teaches that in order to get to the sweetness of life, you sometimes have to first smash its shell on the rocks. Gregarious and bold, Grasping Crawdad students are often accomplished grapplers, a skill that they use when they crawl under rocks and face crayfish and lobster in their own dens.

The **Ambassadors Of The Salt** were once involved with something called "social media". They told stories about fishing that were received by millions, and they sustained themselves off of that approval alone. Now, cut off from the "zone of electric ghosts" that they used to attune to, they have become bitter and spiteful. Ambassadors Of The Salt seek out the biggest, most dangerous fish that they can catch, in hopes that one of them will eventually land a lunker big enough to reactivate the zone of electric ghosts and restore them to their lost status.

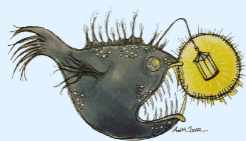
The **Disciples Of Mise En Place** were never true Fishers. Instead, they dedicated themselves purely to the cleaning, preserving, and preparation of the catch. As such, their techniques are mystifying to the other lineages---who might understand that there is such thing as a salad fork, but not what it looks like nor where it should sit on the table.

Finally, the **Remnants Of The Summer Day** are a holy order dedicated to the memories of fishing as it once was. Remnants are not allowed to leave their monastery until they have turned eighty, but as a result these wandering Remnants have achieved perfect mastery of thousands of techniques (which they call "reminiscences") before they ever set foot in the world. To the Remnants, fishing is less about the catch and more about the shared experience---a belief which brings comfort, if not release from hunger, to the inhabitants of this ruined world.

## **Starving Villages**

It is unclear how long these people have been living off of canned rations, air, and hope, but the people of most settlements do not look well. With the massive resource stockpiles that were amassed during the wars finally reaching their end, humanity has no choice but to rediscover how to feed itself---or else vanish from the earth entirely.

Occasionally, a villager will rediscover a lost art such as squirrel-trapping or rutabaga cultivation, and that villager's community may thrive for a while, but



success attracts bandits---which usually leads to the art becoming undiscovered again.

## **Unjust Kingdoms**

---

Rarely, when a pack of bandits finds a village that has rediscovered how to feed itself, the two enter into a lord and vassal relationship. The villagers work tirelessly, the bandits eat endlessly, and if a stronger pack of nomads shows up, the original bandits are run off and the new set takes over in their place.

Over time, some of these villages have even built themselves up to a feudal level, but the intense inequality of the relationship remains. There are roads, but only bandits may walk upon them. There is food, but only bandits may eat. There are laws, but they only exist to protect the powerful, and they change at the ruler's whim.

Villagers in these kingdoms maintain that at least they are safer than the villagers in the wild, and villagers in the wild maintain that at least they are safer than the villagers in the kingdoms, and neither is correct.

## **Fish Of The North Star: Locations**

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The following locations may be points of interest in the Fish Of The North Star setting.

### **Supply Depots**

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During the final phases of the war, humanity stockpiled extraordinary quantities of preserved food, with each bar or can rated to last for centuries. Over time, these stockpiles have been eaten, tainted, forgotten, or deliberately ruined, but the volume of preserved food was still so high that many remain.

Small stockpiles are usually held by villages or bandits, whereas larger stockpiles are controlled by kingdoms. Monasteries almost never have supply depots, as access to more than a day's fish runs contrary to their way of life.

### **The Wastes**

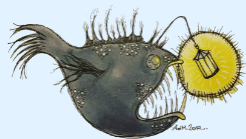
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Dust and obliteration, as far as the eye can see. The wastes do have a high density of supply depots, making them attractive to villages despite their inhospitable climate, but they are also thick with bandits, who often allow villages to take control of supply depots just so that they'll know where to find them.

### **The Wilderness**

---

Slumping skyscrapers, ruined oil tankers, and forgotten bunkers, all reclaimed by green. The wilderness is rich with life, but most of it is dangerous. Moreover, with most villages still surviving off of rations, there is little reason for villagers or bandits to venture into these areas, leaving them relatively pristine.



## **Fish Of The North Star: Extra**

This setting, more than anywhere else in the book, is where Techniques shine. As such, don't be afraid to give the Fishers an extra Fighting or Fishing Technique right off the bat in order to establish the proper tone. You may even wish to let each player designate one Technique as a Lineage Technique, which they will always keep between Scenarios.

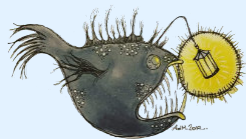
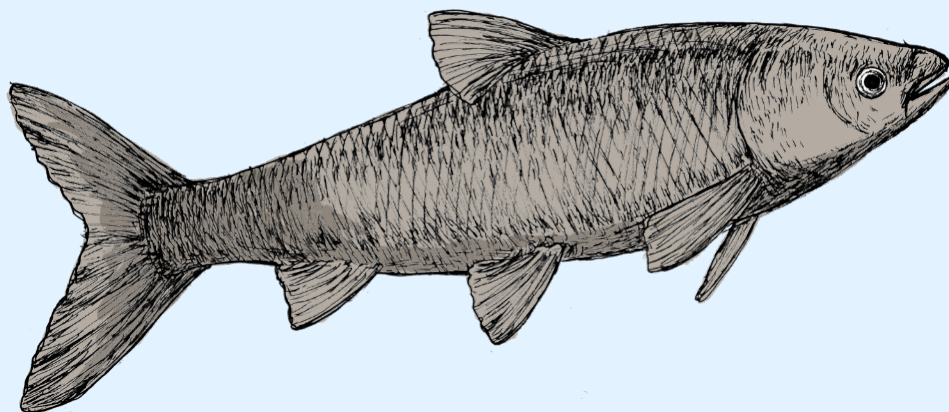
In a more campaign-oriented game, you may wish to allow Fishers to keep their Techniques between Scenarios, but care should be taken to avoid simply having every Fisher know every Technique by the end of the second Scenario.

It is recommended that if you are playing a campaign of Fish Of The North Star, any time a Fisher reaches or passes 4 Exhaustion, they lose one non-lineage Technique permanently. If all they have left is their Lineage Technique, they do not lose it. Otherwise, they must train to re-acquire anything they lose due to wounds and stresses on their body.

It is also recommended that you limit the Make Camps in a Fish Of The North Star Scenario, thus ensuring that the party won't just Make Camp at the slightest sign of Exhaustion.

Alongside these changes, SBs and players are both encouraged to create their own Techniques. Homebrew Techniques will add flavor and complexity to the setting, and Techniques that involve predicting an opponent's Gambit, placing secret information face-down to be triggered later, or activating powerful single-use abilities are all extremely appropriate for Fish Of The North Star. All player-created Techniques should be run by the SB for final approval, but the SB is both encouraged to be lenient with what they accept, and to start throwing in the occasional Technique-heavy warlord if the Fishers are just blazing through their enemies.

Alternately, for a one-shot or a change of pace in the middle of a campaign, this Setting works *extremely well* with the Seasonal Migration Of The Transpacific Slaughter Eels Scenario ([page 262](#)). The challenge in Seasonal Migration doesn't stem purely from combat, which may make it a good choice if the abundance of Techniques in Fish Of The North Star is giving you trouble, and its story is framed in a way that uniquely fits the fishing-martial-arts-western tone of Fish Of The North Star.



## **I.C.E. F.I.S.H.I.N.G.**

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*It's a dark night on the rain drenched streets of New West Boston Harbor. Police choppers crawl through the stormy skies and searchlights slide over the architecture below, illuminating edifices of redbrick and chrome.*

*In a narrow alley you and your companions crouch, waiting for the light to pick out the gleam of your titanium hooks and nylon lines, but the moment passes and you all breathe easy again.*

*Up ahead, past a dumpster overground with neo-seaweed, is the blazing neon body of an otherwise photorealistic lobster. It drapes its body over the entryway to a restaurant, its legs half-hiding the name of the establishment, but through that shifting chitinous screen you can pick out the words: The Bah.*

*It's a gaudy joint, trying too hard to be a part of the natural landscape of pubs and dives while at the same time aggressively marketing lobster-branded plastic cups, t-shirts, harpoon guns, and body armor. It's not the kind of place most locals would be caught dead in---which makes it perfect for your purposes.*

*The Bah is where out-of-towners go to meet freelancers.*

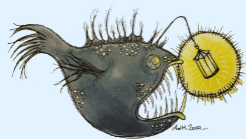
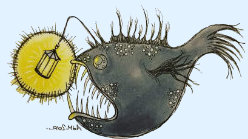
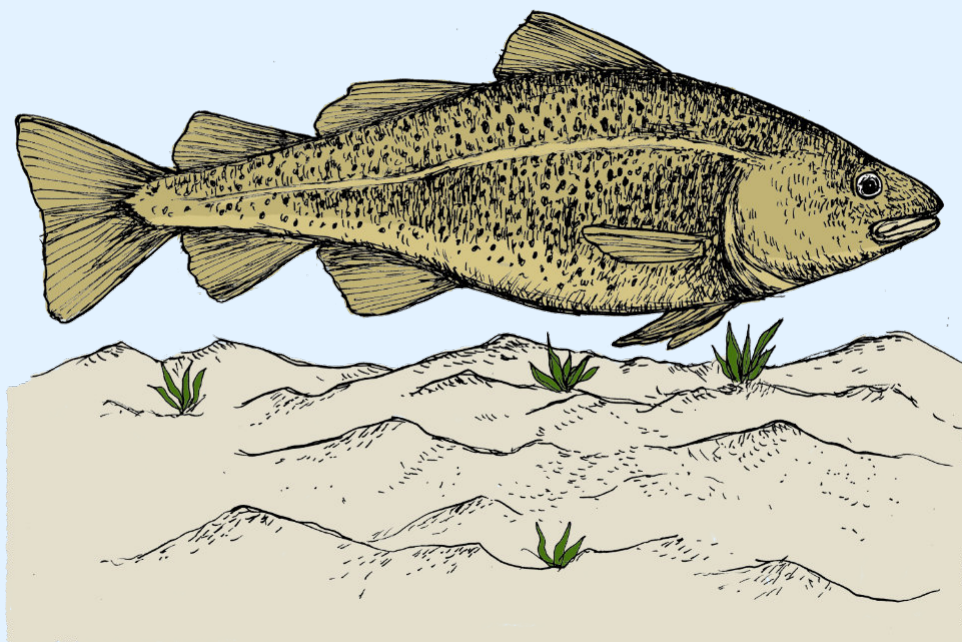
*You find the man in a corner booth, staring intently into a plate of fries. Just fries. No fish. A small ramekin of ketchup sits to one side of the plate, untouched.*

*"You our skipper?" you ask.*

*The man scrutinizes you for a moment, then gestures for you to take a seat. "If I were, I'd say I have a job for you," he says in a voice made raspy by long exposure to salt air.*

*Outside, the police choppers bank for another pass.*

*"I've got time to listen," you say.*



## **I.C.E. F.I.S.H.I.N.G. Overview**

It's the year 20XX and fishing is illegal.

On the other hand, *fish harvests* are not, and the great Marine Research Consortiums of the world have grown rich off of this distinction. With unfettered access to the world's oceans, the MRCs can set any price they wish for halibut, or cod, or scrod. Vendors have no choice but to pay these prices, and a single fishstick can command an incredible value on the open market.

As a result, the MRCs have grown staggeringly rich. And what portions of their wealth haven't gone into bribing government officials or buying police forces have been channelled into R&D. This kind of excess supports a dark underbelly of marine biology, where researchers are implanted with tetrodotoxin pellets that release their deadly poison when another corporation tries to hire them.

And it is into this scene that the freelancers are thrust.

Former hobby, sport, or career fishers, the freelancers have a particular set of skills that, in 20XX, is now suited only for criminal work.

To this end, private clients called skippers (some of which work for the MRCs, some of which work for themselves) reach out to the freelancers with catch requests. By meeting these requests and delivering fish (or research material, or rival scientists) to the skippers, the freelancers can keep food on their own tables, they can keep the law off their backs, and they can maybe, just maybe, stockpile enough money to reach retirement.

Assuming they don't end up on the wrong side of a consortium catch-team or lab-grown mega-crab first.

## **I.C.E. F.I.S.H.I.N.G. Making Changes**

There are a number of important cosmetic changes in I.C.E. F.I.S.H.I.N.G. (for example, the world is a cyberpunk dystopia), but the most important tonal change is that there doesn't need to be a Village. Or rather, a Fisher's Village might just be the Fisher themself.

It's perfectly fine in I.C.E. F.I.S.H.I.N.G. to have a different Village for each Fisher. In this case, the Village represents the thing that the Fisher cares enough about to do dangerous, illegal mercenary work for. A Fisher's Village might be a family member, a community that can't care for itself, a political cause, or the Fisher's own retirement account.

Depending on how your group likes to play, you may even want to have multiple Fish Of Legends in a Scenario, with each Fisher needing at least one.

If you decide to play this way, keep your Tragedies low in scope. Maybe a mob heavy leans on you a little harder if you can't pay your protection money this month. Maybe a sewer community is chased off their turf by an expanding gang if you can't get together the funds to keep them healthy and well-fed.

Apart from this, most other changes to the Rodreel formula are fluff.

For example: Fishers start with R.O.D.s (Randomized Operations Devices) and T.A.C.K.L.E.B.O.X.es (Tactical Application Control Kit, Lasting Effect, Benefits



Often eXtreme), which can be used not just for fishing and combat, but also hacking. The R.O.D.s in particular have been engineered to turn from fishing rod to quarterstaff with the touch of a button, and are fitted with digital lures that flash complex signal patterns in LED, briefly distracting hostile AI-controlled machines.

Other Equipment, Techniques, and Fish can be left-as is or cybered up as needed---whichever seems the most immersive/funny in the moment.

Animals need a little bit more work, and some statblocks may need to be entirely reskinned as human opponents (such as consortium catch-teams, mobsters, or rival freelancers.) Alternately, enemies can be robots, cybernetically enhanced guardian animals, or digital creatures if your game involves hacking.

Snacks can be called stimulants if you want a darker tone, but honestly it's better comedy if they're just regular snacks and processed fish is *just so delicious* in the setting that it gives people hope and extra dice.

Like any other setting, have fun with it and take it in whatever direction you wish.

There shouldn't be any tweaks you can make to I.C.E. F.I.S.H.I.N.G. that will scuttle it as an enjoyable setting, as long as your group's on board with the changes being made.

## **I.C.E. F.I.S.H.I.N.G. Factions And Forces**

The following factions are of importance in the I.C.E. F.I.S.H.I.N.G. setting.

### **The Consortiums**

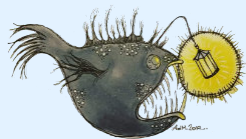
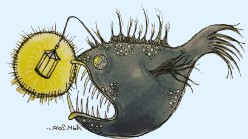
The Marine Research Consortiums control the shape of civilization in I.C.E. F.I.S.H.I.N.G. Their influence is felt at every level of society, and their wealth and political control is almost untouchable.

There are five major MRCs. Nearly every company is a subsidiary of one of them.

The five major MRCs are:

**Halibut Whaling** - The largest of the five, Halibut is an economic powerhouse due to its exceptional managers and lobbyists rather than because its business model is fundamentally sound. Relying on political power, wielded like a billhook to quash its rivals' objections, Halibut sells whale steak to societal elites at unconscionable prices---and even the board members of the other big five shell out for its premium products. Halibut's own buildings are towering and grand, and its catch-teams are modified with altered voiceboxes that allow them to overwhelm their foes and coordinate their attacks with constant, tonally-shifting whale song.

**Echinoderm Biocentrals** - With almost no commercial "harvesting" fleet, Echinoderm's corporate structure is dedicated to the intense, monofocused study of individual marine animals. This approach has allowed them to take several powerful medicines to the market, including the revolutionary



“fish oil ++”, and it has also ensured that they have one of the strangest corporate cultures within their consortium. Nearly every employee of Echinoderm is genetically modified, often in increasingly strange ways, and it's not unheard of for even the people in the Echinoderm phone center to have bioelectric pads on their fingertips, or hair that strings like an anemone, just to match the company look. Echinoderm's architects prefer underwater themes in their constructions, and they go to great pains to make their buildings feel submerged. Fitting in with the decor, Echinoderm catch-teams are bizarre and highly modified, and sometimes not recognizable as human.

**Stingray Proactive-Defense Systems** - Formerly made up of weapons manufacturers and defense contractors, the Stingray consortium was formed out of economic self-defense when the global economy suddenly re-oriented itself around fish back in the year 20YY. Stingray sells firearms and body armor, as well as DRM-encrypted R.O.D.s and T.A.C.K.L.E.B.O.X.es, to consumers, but their more potent technologies are reserved for the police forces and their own security. Stingray architecture is tacky and upsetting and looks like the worst of the 1950s dunked in anti-nausea medicine pink and robin's egg blue. Their catch-teams, on the other hand, are made up of hardened former freelancers and international mercenaries and are armed with the best weapons Stingray has to offer.

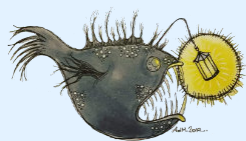
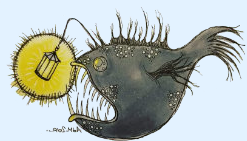
**Mullet Motors** - With a near monopoly on trans-oceanic transport technologies, Mullet has abandoned its automotive origins to provide custom ships, platforms, and deep-sea exploration vessels to the other consortiums. This makes it somewhat subservient to the others, but it has also kept it from being taken over by any one competitor. A consortium that made a play for Mullet would be picked apart by the others, and Mullet uses this immunity to its advantage---being as daring as it can afford to be when it raids or price-gouges its competitors. Mullet architecture is nondescript, designed to blend in with whatever other buildings are in the area. Mullet catch-teams are little more than overdressed, heavily armed accountants, but they make up for their lack of training or discipline with zeal.

**Herring Futures** - Herring Futures sells no physical products. Instead, their research is occupied purely by digital technologies, simulated environments, and investigations into the murky field that is fish-based psionics. Herring architecture is organic and strange, and their buildings often stand out as formidable fortresses of coral with laser-light projections of kelp stalks waving in the air above them. Herring catch-teams are lightly armed, but usually psychic, and are often accompanied by large robots.

## **NWBHPD**

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A militarized police force, the NWBHPD works first and foremost for the consortiums, tracking down and prosecuting illegal fishers. They also undertake operations against the mob, manage the byzantine database that is New West Boston Harbor parking violations, and respond to calls by private citizens. They are overworked and underpaid and often have to wait for consortium authorization before they can act, and some of their surveillance techs will take bribes from Fishers to make ends meet.



## **The Mob**

---

Having mushroomed up from the black market that was caused by the illegalization of fishing, the mob deals in contraband salmon, unlicensed clams, and off-the-books krill. They also run protection rackets and sell equipment to freelancers, making them either a freelancer's best friend or worst nightmare---depending on whether the freelancer has or owes money.

## **The Skippers**

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Private citizens who arrange illegal operations, most Skippers work as deniable middlemen for the consortiums. Skippers can come from any cultural background, and some are even former freelancers, but the one thing they all have in common is that they are paid slightly better than freelancers. Many Skippers dress in unique, distinctive styles when they're working, and most Skippers have a single spot they frequent, making it easy for freelancers angling for a job to find and identify them.

Skippers are almost never retaliated against by consortiums, even when those consortiums know that they have been raided by a team that the Skipper assembled. The consortiums typically withhold after-the-fact response because it poisons other Skippers against them, but they also know that if they retaliate and it fails, there is nothing more dangerous than a rogue Skipper with an agenda.

## **I.C.E. F.I.S.H.I.N.G. Locations**

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The following locations may be points of interest in the I.C.E. F.I.S.H.I.N.G. setting.

### **New West Boston Harbor**

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The end result of a series of fills and infrastructure projects that ultimately built Boston land all the way out into the ocean, the district of New West Boston Harbor sits almost on the oceanfront. Its factories belch out smoke that is whipped away by the ocean winds, and infestations of genetically modified limpets, seaweed, and sea lice are found everywhere in the bad parts of town.

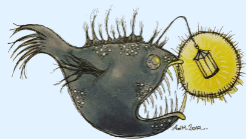
And there are a lot of bad parts of town.

Although NWBH is a lucrative place for the consortiums, whose buildings dominate the downtown skyline, it is not an affordable place for their workers. The word "shantytown" is banned, as saying it may promote fishing-friendly sentiments, but the word "tenement" is not.

NWBH is thick with tenements.

New West Boston Harbor's population is a mix of long-time locals and international transplants. The locals tend to be slightly poorer than the transplants on average, and this has led to some stereotypes on both sides, but both groups are at the mercy of the consortiums.

Culturally, NWBH isn't all that different from its parent city. Seafood and well-meaning animosity are the cultural touchstones, there are lots of shops dedicated to kitschy, over-branded local merchandise, and there is public



transportation in theory but not in practice. The city was also not built on a grid, so the roads are a spaghetti-tangle of borderline non-Euclidian guesswork.

Longtime residents navigate the city with ease. Everyone else relies on GPS.

And if good old reliable satellite navigation sometimes sends them into neighborhoods where kelp covers the redbrick and people put an edge on their billhooks...well, no city is without its hazards.

## **The Net**

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A slang term forbidden out of fear that it might promote unlicensed fishing, the (inter)net is a vastly different place in 20XX than it was in 2020. Users can access it through screens in a text-and-image format in public, but at home and at work augmented reality and full virtual reality are considered more private and ethical.

In order to promote personal accountability for online behavior, both augmented reality and virtual reality rigs both come with built-in biofeedback systems that can deliver shocks or simulate blunt trauma that is experienced on the net. These features are mandatory, required by the consortiums, but ultimately they have done little to reduce online antagonism. Instead, there are simply places on the net that are dangerous, particularly for users with loud and unpopular viewpoints.

Visually, the net looks a little like something that might have crawled out of a fever dream in the 1980s. Avatars are wireframe. Distances are trivial. The ground is a white-and-blue grid. However, everything also has a distinctly nautical vibe. There are jetties, canneries, travel between networks is often done by rowboat, etc. People who study the internet claim that none of this was a deliberate choice by the AR and VR designers who first mapped out the place, and that the maritime aesthetic was already fully formed when they got there, but these claims are generally ignored or buried by the consortiums.

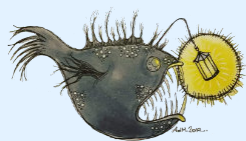
Apart from the internet, individual businesses often have their own private nets. These nets might be connected to the internet by a single port, or they may be completely "landlocked" and only accessible from within. Many have their own aesthetics, distinct from those of the wider net, but the only people who see them are employees---or freelancers with unlawful access.

## **Consortium Labs**

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Consortium Labs are typical targets for freelance missions, and they frequently have hardened defenses as a result of past incidents. These defenses might include visible guards, cameras, and automated S.M.E.L.T.s (Smart Mechano-Electric Laser Turret), or they might include a complicated threat response flowchart that only activates certain defenses in sequence after particular areas have been breached---thereby trapping freelancers within the lab.

The most common prize sought by lab intruders is fish, and although the consortium hydroculture bays are usually heavily fortified and hard to breach, a black market R.O.D. can usually bore a small hole in the side and deploy a hook into the tank, allowing freelancers to get away with some of the contents.



Other prizes, such as acclaimed researchers or a facility's research materials, are typically heavily guarded and located at the innermost points of a laboratory. This does not deter freelancers, as the potential reward usually outweighs the cost, but it makes for a trickier job when they have to fight through several more waves of catch-teams, S.E.A.L.s (Strategic Enforcement Attack Lampreys), and perhaps even the hypothetical A.B.A.L.O.N.E. (Artificial Biological Assault Lifeform One Never Encounters).

## **I.C.E. F.I.S.H.I.N.G. Extra**

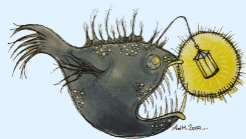
I.C.E. F.I.S.H.I.N.G. is a setting especially suited to one-shots and Scenarios where the mission gimmick only becomes apparent midway through play.

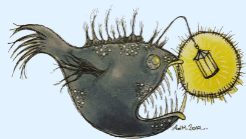
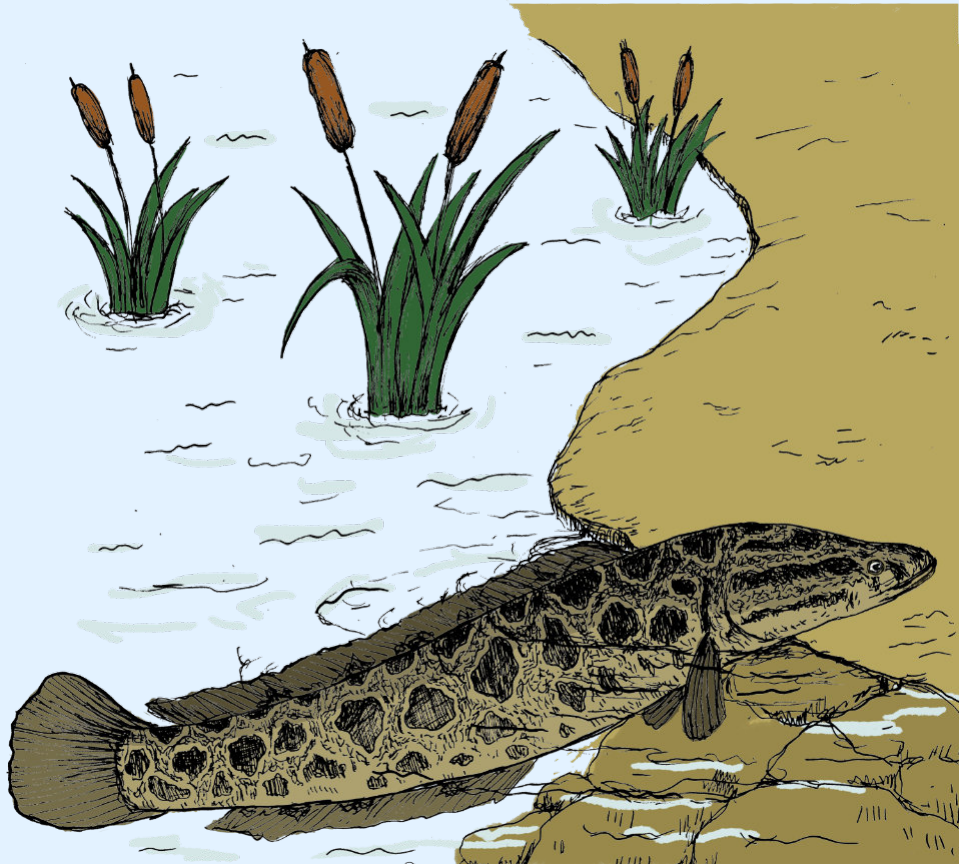
To that end, a few changes might be needed if you wish to play a longer game of it.

If you wish to play I.C.E. F.I.S.H.I.N.G. in more of a campaign style, it is recommended that you allow each Fisher to keep one Technique or piece of Equipment (other than their Rod, Tacklebox, or 3 Snacks) past the end of a Scenario for each Fish Of Legend that they caught and kept on that mission.

As Fish Of Legend belong to individual Fishers and not the group in this setting, this creates a certain amount of inter-party tension, but it nevertheless allows individual Fishers to become quite powerful without altering the game balance.

Alternately, if your group doesn't like inter-party conflict or if some Fishers being stronger than others creates an un-fun game experience, you can adjust the above change so that the group as a whole gets to keep one non-Rod, non-Tacklebox, non-3-Snacks piece of Equipment per Fish Of Legend that has been caught. This gives the group a pool of Equipment that they can carry between Scenarios, and it requires them to agree on what that Equipment is and who has it.





## **Jovian Sleighride**

---

Based on the future space-whaling simulator Jovian Sleighride, by Josh Berkowitz-Geller and Adam Kraus.

Concept and game text used with permission.

*This is not a game about whales.*

*Hundreds of years in the future humanity is finally leaving the solar system, sending out long-haul spaceships full of colonists in suspended animation. The inner solar system has been colonized, with bases on the moon and dome-cities on Mars. Eighty billion people are alive at once, and the solar system is a terribly crowded place.*

*But there is one place where a human can go to be alone.*

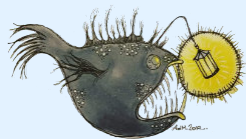
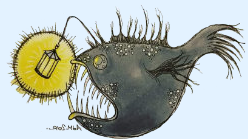
*Jupiter is the first stop for a ship after Mars and the last real outpost of civilization in the solar system. A scant few tens of thousands live and work on the moons Io, Europa, and Ganymede, trading fuel, water, and mineral resources between them. The moons of Jupiter are incredibly harsh to human life, and Jupiter itself is harder still. What madness drives humans to live there?*

*In the swirling depths of Jupiter live the Leviathans: vast, buoyant beasts that churn through the atmosphere, finding nourishment on strange chemicals and schools of smaller, shrimp-and-bat-like organisms. Inside the body of each Leviathan is a veritable fortune of traan, an energy-rich fluid that the Leviathans create to efficiently store calories---which gives more energy per gram than any substance man has ever made. Traan is the only fuel efficient enough to properly power long-haul colony ships past the bounds of the solar system, or to fuel the speedy inner-system skiffs of corp executives or the long range cutters of the stellar navy.*

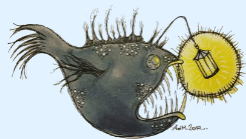
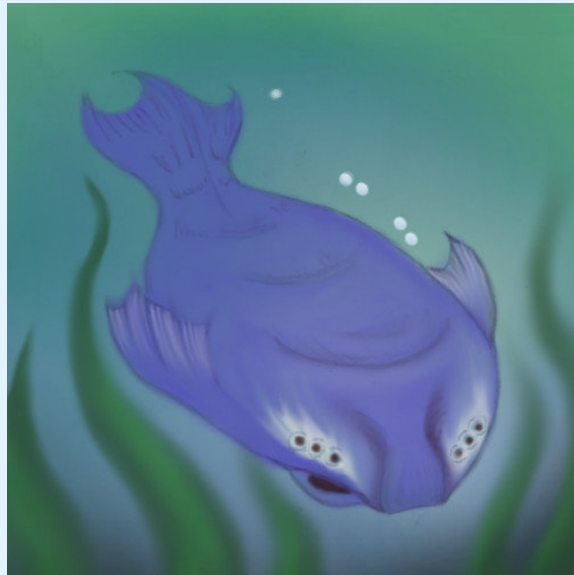
*This makes the Leviathans valuable enough to hunt for, starve for, fight for, and die for.*

*Around Jupiter, then, using the three colony moons as a base, ply the Leviathan hunters. The refineries take their cuts, the moons take a chunk in excise taxes, and the hypercorporations take the bulk of the remaining profits, so most whalers don't get rich. Instead, the people who go whaling are running from something back on the ground, or desperate for adventure, or dream of the rare great haul that will let them buy their own ship or retire.*

*These damaged people are away from shore for weeks or months at a time, days away from safe harbor in a spaceport or rescue from another ship. The atmosphere of Jupiter and its strong magnetosphere make communication with the moons almost impossible, so every whaling ship must be self sufficient as the slightest misstep could cause disaster. A becalmed ship with its engines failed must fix them or starve. Hull breaches must be repaired or the crew will suffocate in the Jovian atmosphere. A single reactor failure can tear a ship apart. Even if the ship holds together, the crew of a whaler is rarely made of stable people, and they will often argue or even come to blows about the ship, the job, and the profits---or just because most of hunting Leviathans is waiting for one to appear, and sometimes fighting is the only way to relieve to boredom.*



*Although God help you if you actually find a Leviathan. Even ignoring the strange biologies of the creatures, and the unusual powers sailors purport them to have, if your crew sights one and you harpoon it with your titanium bolts and diamond thread, you'd best pray you kill it in one shot---because otherwise it's about to take you on a Jovian Sleighride.*



## **Jovian Sleighride: Overview**

Jovian Sleighride transports Rod, Reel, & Fist into a far future world of straining hulls, flickering cabin lights, and increasing atmospheric pressures. It casts the Fishers as the crew of a second-hand Leviathan-whaling vessel, trying to make ends meet as they dip into the mists of Jupiter in search of a catch that will provide them with fuel, repair money, docking fees, provisions, and a pocket full of shore-money for just a little longer.

Should they fail, the ship will be impounded, their debts will mount, and they will serve as a cautionary story to the other whalers in a canon already thick with missing crews and ghost ships.

But should they grow too ambitious, the lower atmosphere of Jupiter is filled with the floating coffins of those who dove too deep and took on Leviathans beyond their size.

## **Jovian Sleighride: Making Changes**

Apart from changing nearly all of the fluff, there are a few conversion notes that are particularly important to changing a game of Rod, Reel, & Fist to fit Jovian Sleighride.

First, the Village should be the whaling vessel that the Fishers work on. For most Fishers in this setting, that vessel is their near-permanent home---although they may also have family on a nearby station, or "at shore" on Io, Europa, or Ganymede. This means that the Village travels with the Fishers, and the actions of the Fishers can put the Village at direct risk.

Next, the Fishers are *probably* all adults. There may well be some plucky teens or especially skilled children on a crew, and labor laws are lax out beyond Mars orbit, but a crew of *all* children would be especially strange. Not impossible, just something that other characters would remark on unless the setting was tweaked specifically to normalize it.

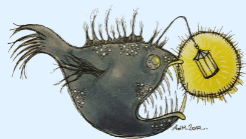
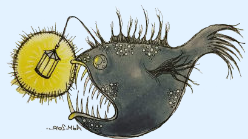
Third, the Pet Type is probably not going to be a cat or trained bear---again, unless you want to tweak the setting in that direction. What it *might* be is an uplifted work-animal, or a company android, or an illegal AI, or something else that---while not human---is clearly the work of humanity. Aliens are not impossible, but again would be very weird to people in the setting unless this was modded otherwise.

Lastly, Equipment, Animals, Fish, and Techniques need special attention.

Fish are the easiest to convert. They're the Leviathans, and the Fish Of Legend is a catch big enough that the Fishers can pay most of their current debts with it.

Animals are a little trickier, and they represent the non-traan-producing creatures of Jupiter's atmosphere. They might be hull lice, or deep shrimp, or cutter sharks, or any number of other hazards that a whaling ship has to contend with---or they might be another crew, vying for the same catch.

Techniques should be flavored as either cybernetic upgrades, bits of ancient whaling wisdom, oddly mystical effects triggered by immersion in Jupiter's



atmosphere. Pick whichever one makes the most sense for the individual Technique and for the tone you are trying to set in your game.

Equipment is the toughest to convert, and each piece will often require a little bit of special attention. Snacks are Traan, which can be used to momentarily juice up the various subsystems and apparati in the whaling vessel. Rods and Tackleboxes are instead A.H.A.B. Conduits used to plug into the ship's Atmospheric Harvest Assistance Bionics, which allows Fishers to manipulate the various external harpoon guns, steering jets, and lice-repellant-turrets by gesture rather than by hammering away on blocky console keyboards. Everything else, just like Techniques, needs to be taken on a case-by-case basis, but the overall rule is that pieces of Equipment should represent technology that can be deployed externally (in the case of consumables) or linked to a single Fisher (in the case of anything that provides a passive bonus). Follow this rule, and you'll keep everything on an even keel.

## **Jovian Sleighride: Factions And Forces**

---

The following factions are of importance in the Jovian Sleighride setting.

### **The Hypercorps**

---

Centuries ago, the economies of Earth and Mars eventually stratified to the point where nearly everything was owned by a group of large corporations---with each member of the group too large to be bought by the others.

Today, the hypercorps largely function as separate empires, loosely grouped under the umbrella of Earth and Martian government.

Very rarely are any of the hypercorps in a hot-war with each other, but clandestine action and economic maneuvering are common, and each hypercorp is always angling to get an edge against its nominal competitors.

### **The Navy**

---

Bringing interstellar enforcement to Jupiter, courtesy of the governments on Earth and Mars, the Navy has just enough presence in the area to discourage heavy piracy, but not enough to fend off the occasional (or even regular) attack. Most of the Navy's presence is concentrated around the refineries or the moons, but occasionally a vessel will do a run past the upper atmosphere of the gas giant to look in on what's happening there.

### **Other Whalers**

---

Other whalers differ in temperament from person to person and crew to crew. Many are hardbitten and practical, and won't stick their necks out unless there's reward to balance the risk. Others are more idealistic and believe that there's always a way that things should be done, and damn reality if it fails to comply. Still others are fanatics or pirates, or are as trustworthy as a bag of ship lice.

Whalers are advised to take other vessels on a case by case basis.

Not every other whaler is dangerous, but each one represents a risk.



## **Docking Stations**

---

The most famous of which is Nantucket Station, this string of orbital ports provides whalers and commercial vessels with places to berth, to get some shore time, and to exchange goods and services on the open market.

Individual docking stations represent a wide range of corporate or private owners and have wildly different reputations. Some are basically floating black markets, and packing a pistol is an important part of basic etiquette. Others are much more corporate and polished and are quick to jail lawbreakers for the slightest of crimes.

## **Traan Refineries**

---

Vast, void-faring structures that look like crosses between spiders and oil refineries, these form the economic heart of the region. Without the refineries, there would be nowhere for whalers to bring their catches. Of course, for their processing services, the refineries charge a hearty fee, and from there most of the refined traan is sent earth-wards where it will fetch an even higher price on the market.

Although the refineries all have different corporate owners, and although they only have small defensive fleets protecting them from attack, they wield outsize power in the region. The Navy is obligated to defend them---and in turn their economic interests---and this makes any given refinery's owners extremely dangerous to cross.

## **Io, Europa, and Ganymede Colonists**

---

Life on the moons is a hardscrabble one, and the colonists are a tough, pragmatic people. While mining, manufacturing, and hydroponics are all heavily automated processes, there is a lot of machinery involved, and all of it can break. As such, most colonists work for low pay at jobs where they debug code or fix broken processes. Slightly better paid are the port staff and security forces, and above them are the corporate reps and colony governments who live in a state of frontier luxury.

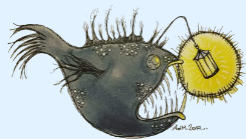
Although most colonists have a reputation for being pessimists, this is less an innate part of their outlook and more a function of how much their survival as a people depends on finding the spots where machines and systems break and correcting them before anything can go horribly wrong.

## **Cult Of The Inner Sky**

---

A group that has a surprising presence on Io, Europa, and Ganymede, the cult believes that there is a Jupiter inside the heart of every person, and that the true goal of humanity is to explore that inner space.

More practically, the cult believes in tackling internal obstacles instead of external ones. For many members, this means increased quantities of meditation and prayer while wasting away from malnutrition and poverty. For a handful of others, it means that those who try to tackle external obstacles must first be *punished*, and then everyone can meditate.



The cult attaches especial importance to the Leviathans, believing them to be divine messengers, and cult members have an absolutely chilly relationship with whalers.

## **Leviathans**

---

Vast, flying inhabitants of Jupiter's atmosphere, the Leviathans bear a vague resemblance to Earth's long-extinct whales. Many Leviathans have forward-facing eyes, pectoral fins, and flippers. However, beyond these basic similarities, evolution has taken the Leviathans in some very strange and divergent directions.

Some of the creatures resemble giant eels, lighting their paths with crackling electricity. Others have more in common with sharks, and can crunch ships in half with their cavernous jaws. Still others are actually schools of smaller creatures flying in perfect formation, and each has an instinctive sense of its role in the composite whole.

All Leviathans are valuable sources of traan, the highly energetic oil that powers interstellar exploration and intra-stellar policing and high-speed shipping, and all are considered valid commercial whaling targets.

## **Jovian Sleighride: Locations**

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The following locations may be points of interest in the Jovian Sleighride setting.

### **Nantucket Station**

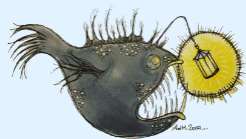
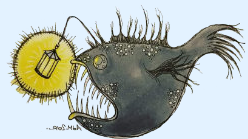
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What would be a hopeless, half-derelict wreck in Martian space is instead the thriving hub of the whaling community on Jupiter.

Inside its metal confines, Nantucket Station is cramped and half-converted from a place to store cargo to a place where people work and live. Shuttle bays serve as market places. Waste-heat conduits are used for drying laundry. Designated sleeping areas are rented in the hallways, and hydroponics projects are found along ceilings and in storage spaces to make up the oxygen deficit that is created by packing so many people into a space designed initially for a single skeleton-staff observation crew to manage its mostly automated docking and storage.

Every earth-standard-year, the station slips a little bit lower in orbit. This is the consequence of station management skimping on fuel expenses, and it is the firm belief of every whaler on the station that it will simply be allowed to fall when its time comes.

Just about anything can be bought in Nantucket Station, but the most common gray-market wares are cut-price cyberotechnology, misplaced aid shipments, and scrimshaw. The latter, carved Leviathan bone, is carried and collected by almost every veteran whaler, and most attribute supernatural properties to it, crediting it with keeping their ships and crew safe.



## **The Refinery Belt**

---

A string of largely airless processing facilities, the individual refineries in the belt are owned by different hypercorps and are heavily guarded by both corp vessels and ships of the Navy. The Navy has an especially vested interest in protecting the belt, and whalers that wish to approach must answer a complicated series of hails and submit to multiple long range scans before bringing their catch in for processing and payment.

No violence is tolerated near the belt, and whalers largely hate the staff of the belt facilities, who have a haughty, business-first manner, dress in spotless, corporate uniforms, and speak without accent.

## **The Upper Atmosphere**

---

Plied by the least structurally sound (or least reckless) whaling ships, the upper atmosphere boasts few heavyweight Leviathans. However, the Jovian life that can be found there is relatively easy and safe to catch, and often the upper atmosphere makes a good staging area for ships while they wait to either mount an expedition into the lower atmosphere or to drag a lower atmospheric catch off to the refineries.

Piracy is not unheard of here, and even though it happens "in the open" when compared to the depths of the atmosphere, there are few supervisory forces to discourage it. Other whalers might answer a distress hail, as may the rare Navy cutter passing through the region, but the Navy has also been known to cripple the occasional ship and steal its catch---an action that, while illegal, is nearly impossible to prosecute.

## **The Lower Atmosphere**

---

Also called "The Dungeon" or "Hell's Heart" by whalers, the lower atmosphere is where more medium Leviathans can be found---and where the truly colossal Depths-Dwellers are also occasionally spotted.

Normal atmospheric hazards, such as razor-sharp clouds of frozen ammonia or the intersection between ceaseless Jovian storms and kilometers-wide pockets of volatile gasses, are more pronounced here, and sometimes disturbances from deep in this fog roll up to where they can be seen in the upper atmosphere.

Most ships are rated for certain periods of time in the lower atmosphere, and it is dangerous to exceed that stay, but sometimes a harpooned Leviathan leaves a crew no choice---diving deep and taking the vessel with it, only becoming buoyant again in death.

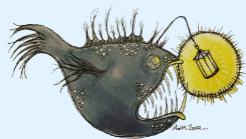
## **Jovian Sleighride: Extra**

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For a more custom experience, you may wish to do the following:

First, limit the number of Make Camps that the Fishers can perform to 9 - (the number of Fishers) per Scenario.

Next, allow the Fishers to keep traan between Scenarios.



Finally, assign Upkeep Costs. At the end of each Scenario, an Upkeep Cost must be paid in traan on various things. If the cost isn't paid, the thing that it was being paid for is lost, repossessed, or becomes inactive.

Equipment (excluding traan) and Techniques have an Upkeep Cost of 1 traan each. Ships have an Upkeep Cost equal to (the number of Fishers) x 5. If the Upkeep Cost is ever not paid on the ship, a Tragedy visits the Village.

To balance all this danger and scarcity out, a few other changes are recommended:

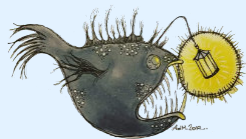
First, Fish Of Legend give (the number of Fishers) x 5 traan as a reward for catching them.

Next, Fishers may abandon a Scenario at any time. Their Upkeep Costs immediately come due, but if they're careful with their traan supplies they can weather the occasional fruitless trip into the upper atmosphere.

Finally, Fishers may purchase new Equipment and Techniques in between Scenarios by spending 3 traan apiece.

These rules can be particularly effective when combined with **Legacy Mode** ([see page 276](#)).

Legacy Mode Jovian Sleighride allows for tense, resource-limited campaign play in an evolving map of the atmosphere.



## **Skyhook**

---

*It was called the Visitation.*

*In the early 21st century, during a cycle of global famine and war, a large black box descended from the sky. A little larger than a suburban town, the box hovered for several hours over a patch of land in New Jersey, and then departed again into the sky.*

*That was when the earth was lost.*

*Over the next twenty four hours, continents ripped themselves from the ground and rose up into the air.*

*There was civil unrest and almost apocalyptic terror that the now-floating land would break apart, or simply drift up and up and out of the atmosphere, but instead the newly detached land stabilized at 12,000 feet above sea-level.*

*Far below, where the rest of the world had been, was a roiling tableau of mist and electrical current.*

*The centuries since then have not been easy, but humanity has survived.*

*People built cisterns for rainwater. Crops and animals were modified to tolerate high altitudes. Warfare ended. But that wasn't enough.*

*Over time, the forces that had lifted the continents began to wane. At first, the great landmasses crumbled at the edges. Then chunks broke off and drifted free. Then the continents splintered and began to dissolve.*

*With communication limited to radio, and with panic goading every wild theory that could gain traction, the minds on the continents turned to addressing The Gravity Problem.*

*Old Tech, the kind that had involved burning materials for lift, was dismissed as useless in the long run...as were more outlandish theories, such as tying a lasso around the moon.*

*Instead, the breakthrough that saved us came about as an accident.*

*In an attempt to save a child that had fallen off the edge of an island, a young girl and her domesticated glide-eel dove deep, plunging into what had been dubbed the Gravitic Zone, where the mists of lost Earth still roiled. When the girl came back out, she not only had the fallen child in tow, but she had tales of mysterious structures and floating creatures that she had seen in the mists. Even better, she had snagged a piece of hovering debris and taken it back up with her, and as she alit on the shores of her home island, purple lightning crackled out of it and shot into the ground, causing the whole island to rise several feet in altitude.*

*That wasn't the end of her discoveries.*

*There were more artifacts down in the Gravitic Zone, and the girl dove back into the mist, collecting them. In the meantime word spread, and other floating islands began mounting similar expeditions. As divers returned to the surface again and again, their communities' salvations in hand, it was remarked upon*

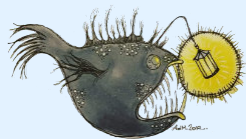
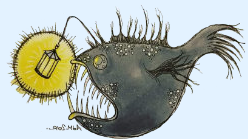


*that their eyes and bodies had changed. Some of them glowed softly. Others produced a high, electric whine when agitated. Still others could move objects without touching them, or hovered several feet off the ground while they slept.*

*Eventually, the girl vanished tracelessly into the Gravitic Zone. One day she simply didn't return, and divers' stories about what became of her have flourished in her absence.*

*For you, though, that doesn't matter. You carry on her legacy, dipping into the zone to scavenge the artifacts that your village needs to stay afloat. Your work is dangerous, as the zone is no safer than it was in the early days, but what you do is as vital as the toil of the farmers or the water-collectors or the holy radio engineers. You are not a hero. Not quite. But the fate of the village rests on your shoulders all the same.*

*Are you strong enough to carry it?*



## **Skyhook: Overview**

---

Skyhook positions the Fishers as heroic divers in a nomadic aetherpunk world of floating nations, flying fauna, and unguessable artifacts left behind by earth's destruction.

The Fishers' village is dependent on their success, as without the artifacts they scrounge from the Gravitic Zone, it will crumble away piece by piece into the abyss.

At the same time, the Fishers are perpetual outsiders. Even though the other villagers do undeniably care for them, the Fishers are physically and aetherically different, and they stand out from the farmers and water-collectors and others that share their home.

Added to this mix are the mysteries of the Gravitic Zone, which has never been fully mapped. Divers vanish into the zone all the time, making attachments between the Village and the Fishers a sometimes fraught and difficult thing.

Worse, not every nation gets along with its neighbors, and now that life on the floating islands has stabilized, there are some leaders that are eager to beat anew the drums of war.

And there are groups of fighters who are willing to follow them.

Amidst all this tension, the Fishers must decide where they stand---whether it's with their feet planted on solid ground, or with the mists hurtling up to meet them.

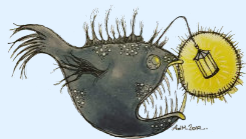
## **Skyhook: Making Changes**

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The biggest change when converting Rod, Reel, & Fist to Skyhook is cosmetic: the Fishers need to feel like they belong in the setting. To this end, it's perfectly reasonable to give them leather jackets, goggles, scarves, and glide-eels as part of their starting kit. None of these need to have a mechanical effect---they're all considered part of the basic character---but the glide-eel is particularly important, as without some kind of a flying mount any exploration of the sky is going to be a one-way trip.

The Village, for all intents and purposes, can either be a small flying island with a single settlement on it, a large flying island with a nation on it, or a larger-still flying island with multiple groups that make up its population. In either case, the Fishers are going to be serving a community, but whether they serve a chieftain or a royal family or a particular guild is up to the group. If you've got players that like politics, Skyhook has the potential to be an extremely political setting, with various factions in conflict for resources and prestige. On the other hand, if your players don't especially care to have a complicated metaplot, you can pick a small community on a small island that's alone in the sky. Bring as much or as little metaplot into the setting as you want.

The Old Region, which in this setting is the Gravitic Zone, is a place that can only be explored by flying down into the mists. Within those mists there are structures, small islands, perhaps even cities made by inhuman hands. There are also gravitic artifacts, which take the place of Fish, and strange creatures that swim through the mist called Denizens---which take the place of Animals.



Fortunately, Equipment, Techniques, Types, and other game-elements don't really require much converting to be made appropriate for Skyhook. The SB may want to add aether to some item descriptions (such as Snacks, which can easily be renamed to Aetheric Charges), but otherwise it's perfectly fine to have Fishers with rods and tackleboxes angling for artifacts that dart and sky-swim away from them, and it's equally reasonable for those Fishers to have developed combat Techniques that let them try to drive off the denizens of the Gravitic Zone.

Have fun with the conversion, but don't feel like you have to over-cook anything. If in the end the setting still feels like it's a little too much about fishing, that's fine. *Rod, Reel, & Fist as an entire game* is a little too much about fishing.

## **Skyhook: Factions And Forces**

---

The following factions are of importance in the Skyhook setting.

### **Farmers**

---

Descended from the original Agriculture Families---the people who saw the continents rising into the sky, shrugged, and continued to plant their potatoes--the farmers are a hard-working but culturally isolated group on most islands. Their work is vital, and without it an island will starve, but it requires so much time and energy that the farmers mostly keep to each other's company. They have their own holidays and positions of status and, to an extent, even a language that is different from the rest of the people on the island. They interact the most with the water-collectors, on whose work they in turn depend, so outsiders who wish to talk to the farmers are usually advised to go through the water-collectors first.

### **Water-Collectors**

---

Not just the people who are responsible for sanitation and municipal water supplies, the water-collectors are often doctors, scientists, and diplomats as well. They act as a go-between, smoothing relations between the islanders and the farmers, and they research the causes of illness, as well as develop new technologies to assist their craft, while they wait the long, long time that it takes water to condense and fill their silos.

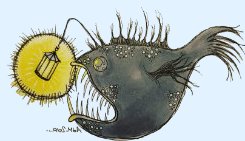
The only thing water-collectors don't really touch is artifact tech or aetheric energy. They see those sorts of things as too risky for any reasonable person, so the shaman council handles them instead.

### **The Shaman Council**

---

A group of researchers responsible for unraveling the mysteries of the Gravitic Zone, there is often an overlap between the agendas of the divers and the goals of the council. Members of the council study the energy that keeps the islands aloft, and they design uses for the artifacts that are brought up from the zone, but to call them scientists would perhaps be misleading.

Scientists are concerned with the underlying "why" of a thing's function.



Scientists want to be able to learn the rules of the universe, so as to predict the outcome of future situations. The shaman council, on the other hand, cares nothing for the why. Their only concern is the what.

For example, it might not matter what the underlying implications are of a device that poisons the soil and sickens people who go near it. What matters are the applications.

Can it make the island rise higher in the air? Can it fortify the divers with new powers?

Can it be turned into a weapon?

## **Other Divers**

---

Most islands have at least a few non-active divers---either in training, or on standby for other missions.

Divers tend to have the most bright and expressive culture on an island, and their odd rituals, small faiths, and frequent celebrations say a lot about how cheek-to-cheek they live to the possibility that they might not come back from their next trip into the Zone.

Divers are also usually the most tolerant of outsiders, as they are often drawn from the ranks of the other factions, and as their own aetheric weirdnesses are much stranger than any difference in cultures---although this is not always the case.

## **Holy Radio Engineers**

---

Communication between islands is a rare and difficult thing, but the cult that maintains the knowledge and application of radio broadcasting is singularly dedicated to their task. If a given island has a government, the radio engineers are usually apart from it, but they will side with other engineers over their own government if push comes to shove.

## **Soldiers**

---

Not every island has soldiers, and not every island that has soldiers names them as such.

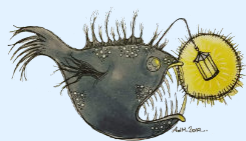
In some cases, the soldiers are watchmen who conduct investigations and deal with injustices in the community. In other cases, the soldiers are glide-eel-mounted raiders who steal the goods of passing communities. But on particularly vast islands, the soldiers are sometimes trained fighters dedicated to the establishment of a nation.

This last kind is the most dangerous, as they will attack a passing community for no reason other than that it hasn't been conquered, and because it doesn't acknowledge a different island's ruler as its own.

## **Glide-Eel Ostlers**

---

Although their constant work caring for large stables of ox-sized flying eels often makes them idiosyncratic and difficult to talk to, the ostlers are a



necessary group for any island that has divers. The ostlers feed and groom the eels, they keep them domesticated, and this ensures that anyone who wishes to explore the Zone has a means for coming back.

For their part, the eels are quite happy to be looked after, and behave a bit like oversized puppies.

## **Artifacts**

---

Although the name makes them sound inert, the artifacts are often anything but. Animated by the same energy that keeps islands aloft, artifacts dart and flee at the first sign of divers, and some have more evolved defenses than that. Catching an artifact isn't as simple as flying up to it and putting it in a bag, and angling for them is a skill in its own right.

## **Gravitic Denizens**

---

Unlike artifacts, there are no benefits to dragging a Denizen up to island-level--and perhaps this is for the best. Denizens are large, dangerous, and very clearly animal-like. Some have strange, fractal geometries and look like a piece of mathematics that has gone rogue. Others are quite clearly biological, and glide through the air on fins or wings or paws. Most react strongly to intruders, and treat divers as prey.

## **Skyhook: Locations**

---

The following locations may be points of interest in the Skyhook setting.

### **Your Island**

---

Your island is the center of your world. You may have visited other islands, and you may even have been born on another island, but your life orbits around the earth that floats beneath your feet.

It may not necessarily be true that you would die for this place, but without you the island would dwindle until its last floating pieces were crumbling away into the void.

### **The Gravitic Zone**

---

Filled with swirling mists and the floating shapes of tilted, half-complete structures, the Gravitic Zone is where you go to harvest the artifacts that keep your island skyborne. This region is dangerous---and not just because of the aetheric energy that crackles through it. Denizens also hunt---or whatever it is they're trying to do---here, and running afoul of the bigger ones is a sure way to never come back.

### **Void Chapels**

---

A slightly grandiose name for the bigger structures found floating in the Gravitic Zone, the phrase Void Chapel is used to describe any building with two complete chambers or more. Structures can be quite big without being a Void Chapel, as all of their rooms can be damaged and exposed to the outside mists, but Void Chapels are special. They tend to have more artifacts than



elsewhere in the zone, as if the items are congregating there. They also tend to have intact signs scattered throughout their interiors, telling a story of whatever it was that built them. Carvings, murals, and flickering hardlight displays have all been spotted in the chapels, and divers regard these places with a combination of heavy superstition and worried reverence.

## **Other Islands**

---

Other islands, more than anything else in the setting, represent the greatest possible threat to divers. Sure, a Denizen can eat your glide eel and leave you stranded in the Zone, but at least Denizens are predictable. Their motives may not be guessable, but their behavior is.

Other islands are much less predictable.

If an island wishes to be left alone, they may steer away from yours. But if an island wishes to trade, or steal your research, or study you, or abduct your people, or swap legends, or ask for your help, or invade, they might steer towards you.

After that, what happens next depends on how jumpy you are and what the people of the other island do first.

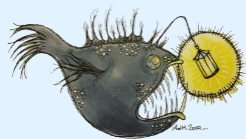
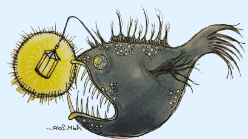
Good-faith trade is possible. As is sabotage.

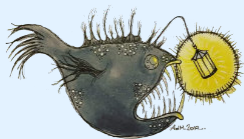
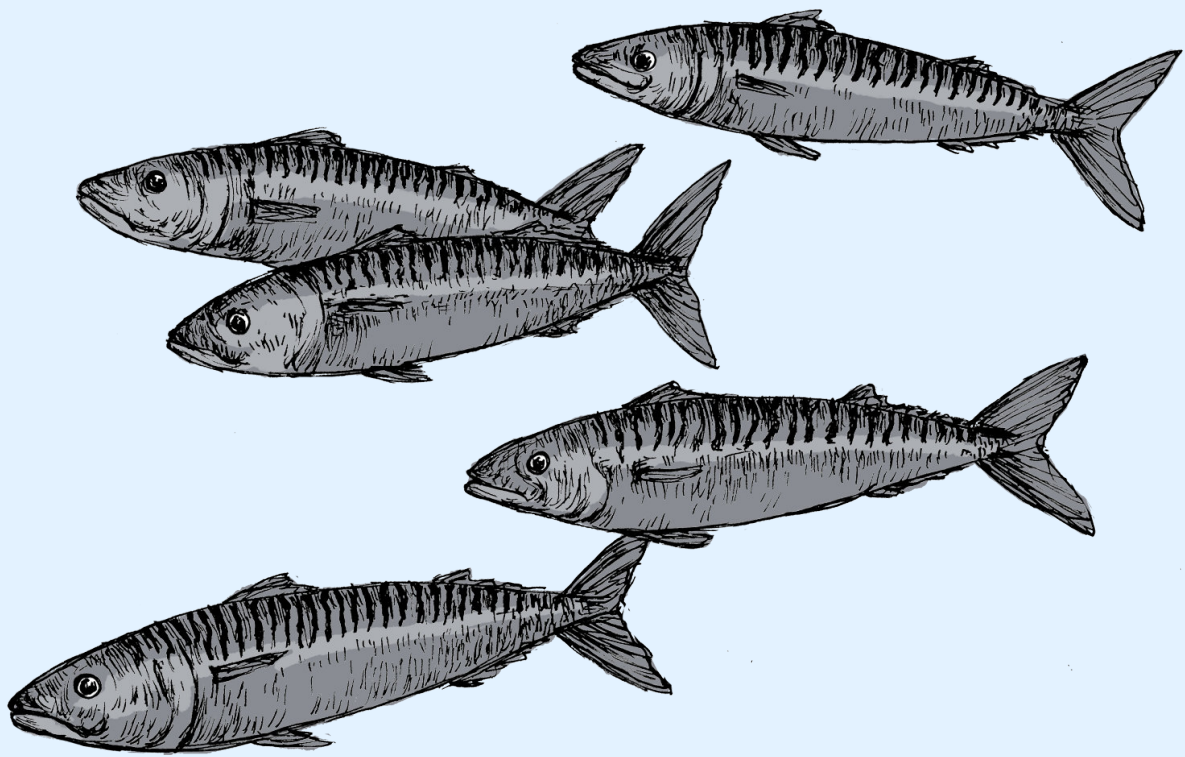
## **Skyhook: Extra**

---

In the event that your island is invaded by another island, you may wish to use the map and rules from the Seasonal Migration Of The Transpacific Slaughter Eels Scenario at the end of the book. Simply replace types of eels with types of invaders and run the rules as written.

Otherwise, feel free to use the rules from Jovian Sleighride or I.C.E. F.I.S.H.I.N.G. (page [146](#) and [136](#) respectively) to run a campaign in this setting.





## **40,000 Leagues Under The Sea**

---

*The ocean is four times deeper than the circumference of the earth. This should be impossible, and yet it is true.*

*In lightless zones and thermal sunless gardens wave strange fronds and lie the blocks of civilizations long undiscovered. These ancient structures can be found as deep as a league, and they only grow more intricate and strange as the hull pressure climbs.*

*The nations of the surface world respect the ocean. Some fear it. Some crave the treasures and technologies that can be dredged from its depths.*

*All wish to crack open its mysteries like an abalone and dine on the rich meat inside.*

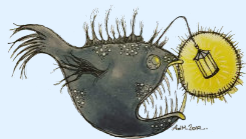
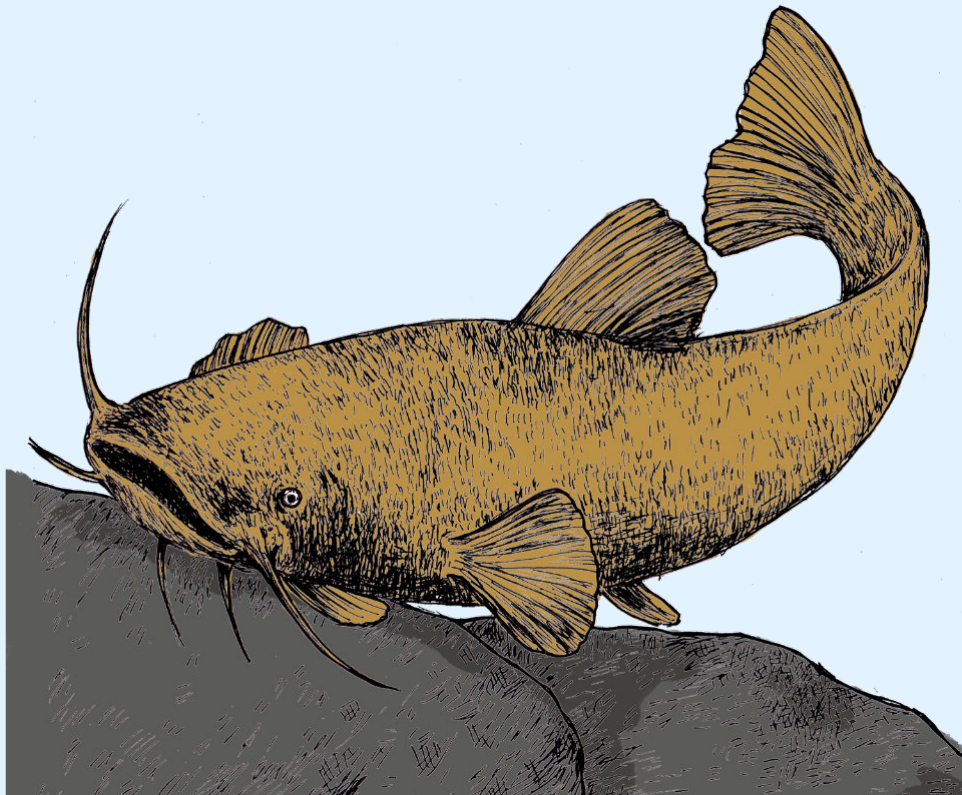
*And that is where you come in.*

*Aboard an experimental submarine, you are tasked with exploring the deep, mapping its furthest reaches, and returning to tell the tale.*

*On your side, you have cutting edge galvanism and machinistry. Arrayed against you is every dread possibility the water can fathom.*

*Will you triumph, winning advancement for the sciences and recognition for your nation and crew, or will you be lost to the depths, your name fading from surface use, until someone else discovers your resting place?*

*The answers to these questions lie 40,000 Leagues Under The Sea.*



## **40,000 Leagues: Overview**

40,000 Leagues is a pulpy adventure-style setting that draws off of (and then heaps a bunch of weird exaggerations onto) the half-fantastical/half-grounded milieu that Jules Verne's novels were written in.

In this setting, the Fishers are members of a submarine crew tasked with discovering the undersea world. As they descend into the depths, they encounter wondrous sights and creatures---some of which the surface nations may be ready to encounter, and many for which they are not.

## **40,000 Leagues: Making Changes**

There are a couple of optional changes that your group may want to make before playing.

First, 40,000 Leagues does not require a Village or a Tragedy. It can work with or without them, so you can choose as a group whether you want to define them. For longer campaign-style play, you may wish not to.

40,000 Leagues *does*, however, require a submarine, and you should go around in a circle defining facts about yours until you have at least three traits for it, and then you should do another rotation defining rooms or areas of the submarine. Drawing a small map is also encouraged. The Fishers are going to spend a lot of time in it, so you want everyone to have a sense of where everything is.

After designing the submarine, the players may wish to pick a surface power with which to ally themselves---or else choose to be freelancers. Both are valid choices and create opportunities for shifting alliances and political entanglements, but neither has to be explored in the game. Some groups may crave this kind of element. Others do not.

Finally, each expedition into the ocean should have an objective, and these objectives don't always have to be "catch the Fish Of Legend". Some might involve gathering X number of Snacks from fish, others challenging and defeating a particularly dangerous undersea animal, and others may simply be reaching the deepest place on the scenario map and returning to shore.

The Ruby In The Mire may be a particularly good Scenario to adapt to this setting, as its structure and tone fit nicely with the suspenseful adventures that can occur in 40,000 Leagues, but it will require a little bit of on the spot conversion work to transport it from the rainforest to the deeper reaches of the ocean.

If you want to take a look at it before reading deeper into 40,000 Leagues, Ruby In The Mire can be found on [page 242](#).

## **40,000 Leagues: Factions And Forces**

The following factions are of importance in 40,000 Leagues Under The Sea.

### **Other Explorers**

Yours is not the only vessel beneath the sea. Some have been down there for



ages, foraging and sustaining themselves in the dark. Others are newcomers, driven to adventure by the politics of the surface. Still others never came from the surface world to begin with; their alien geometries and strange propulsion mechanisms marking them as craft that have never been touched by human hands.

Often, an encounter with another ship is surprising and frightening to the crews of both vessels, and usually the two ships pass each other at a distance, and without contact.

However, in some cases the ships will stop, turn their floodlights on each other, and dock.

What happens then is up to the nerves and steel of the two crews. They may trade, or fight, or merely exchange information.

Either way, the ocean is so vast that when they are done, there is little chance that they will see each other again.

### **The Forbidden Wilds Of Alexandria**

In antiquity, the wilds were a flourishing kingdom, its borders secure against raiders and its cities bastions of pre-modern enlightenment. Alas, long ago it crumbled, and the wilds were left in its wake.

Alexandria is now run by several barbarian clans. Some practice warfare. Others shipbuilding. Others are consummate traders, driving the kinds of deals that would make an imperial bank wince. Unifying them is a young merchant warlord known as Hero.

Hero's holdings, like the rest of Alexandria, are dangerous and untamed, but they also happen to lie along the coast, thus making them an ideal stopping place for foreign traders. Hero's contact with other nations has modernized him, and he has a strong eye for detail and a deceptively keen mind, so perhaps it should be no surprise that he has managed to copy advancements from the Realm, the Protectorate, and the Domain and deployed these advancements in several of his walled cities.

Still, this worries the other nations.

If Hero is not just some young upstart, if he has the potential to steal the very things that have made the others powerful, the time to stop him is now---or never.

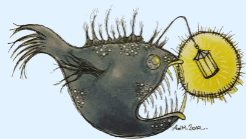
### **The Immortal Realm Of Anwaar Al-Biruni**

Anwaar is a simple mathematician.

Or she was, really.

Five hundred years ago she discovered a kind of sacred geometry that could be turned from a written equation into a coherent physical shape.

First, she created porters out of it. Then she made mathematicians. Then those mathematicians made more of the geometry. And when the king's men came to take her away, Al-Biruni made soldiers as well.



Ever since crushing the old king under her construct armies, Anwaar has ruled an ever-expanding domain where all the tedious duties needed to run a civilization are performed by strange, geometric guardians. The mathlings are all farmers and bridge-builders and servants and doctors, and Anwaar and the few other humans in the realm are free to pursue the arts and sciences in peace.

The other nations are jealous of Anwaar's abilities---as well as the secret of her eternal youth---so she guards her borders closely and lets few in, but those who do visit her cities return saying that they have seen paradise, and that it exists upon this earth.

### **The Mechanized Domain Of Babbage**

An old empire, recently revived by a change in agricultural technology, the Domain is a place of starvation and prosperity. The poor beg and plead to be taken on as servants in the mansions of the wealthy. Meanwhile the fields where they used to work are dotted with automaton laborers.

Mechanical wonders are found throughout the Domain, their hoppers piled with coal and their seams jetting out periodic bursts of white steam. Manufacturing and repairing the automata is the single most profitable industry in any of the Domain's territories, and each automaton is an unending source of discussion, fortune, and outrage for the people that now have to live among them.

Babbage himself, the leader for whom the Domain is now named, is a mild-mannered and somewhat irritable man who cares more about data than human cost. He largely ignores the saber-rattling that his generals have been doing for the past several years, eager to test out these mechanized creations on a foe, but of late their noise has been getting louder and calls have been made for him to resign in favor of someone more warlike.

Not that those calls are easy to hear against the deafening sound of street music from buskers, who now infest the capital. Babbage hates street music with a singular intensity and, rather than admit that there have been many more buskers since the country's farmers were all replaced with machines, he tries to have the buskers arrested when he can.

Unfortunately for him, the Domain's jails are now mostly full with fiddlers and organ grinders, and there isn't anywhere left to put new criminals.

### **The Protectorate Of Emperor Dakkar**

Once a colony of the Domain, the Protectorate took its own independence back at swordpoint ten years ago.

Dakkar, then merely a prince and a machinist, had been developing military equipment in secret for most of his life, and it was unveiled all at once in a flurry of air rifle shots and galvanic arc blasts, driving the Domainers back across the ocean.

Since then, most of what has unified the Protectorate has been their desire not to be conquered again. They are still a feudal society, and there are hundreds



of petty disagreements between Protectorate lords, or between the lords and the crown, but thus far no one has been quite willing enough to weaken the nation by going to war with one of their domestic rivals.

Economy-wise, the Protectorate covers the greatest area out of any of the major nations and it produces the most raw material, but this also sticks its administrators and armies with the most total ground to cover, and leaves it vulnerable until it can build more manufactories.

Emperor Dakkar is a stabilizing force, as he is mostly beloved by the people, but he is forced to spend the time he would prefer to pour into inventing on dealing with civic problems instead. These days he is a calm, kind man, but also a perpetually frustrated one.

## **The Sea Beings**

---

Not hailing from any surface region, there are many populations (some would argue nations) of intelligent, thinking creatures in the deep.

Some resemble entities from folklore, such as mermaids and sirens. Others look like a fish would, if it attempted to imitate the body and features of an ape. Still others are singular animals: pods of octopi as smart as any natural philosopher, giant eels that flash patterns in morse code, coral brains that hijack the minds of passers-by.

Not all sea beings are dangerous, and some have been tentatively befriended by crews, but this alliance is never completely easy, nor without problems of communication.

## **40,000 Leagues: Locations**

---

The following locations may be points of interest in 40,000 Leagues Under The Sea.

### **1 League: The Ocean We Know**

---

This is the familiar ocean. It covers the photic (with light) and aphotic (without light) regions, and it stretches from the surface all the way to the deepest trenches.

Non-human ruins are rare here, but not unheard of.

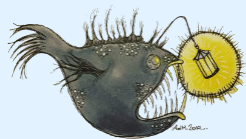
### **3--4 Leagues: The Primary Abyss**

---

Below the deepest trenches, the Primary Abyss begins. It can be accessed through strange rents in the earth, around which tubeworms are clustered in staggering forests. Below, the ocean opens out into a vast, black expanse where there is neither up nor down---just billions of gallons of crushing water.

It is at this layer that the megafauna start to appear. Wrasse the size of cities. Octopi that move like mountains in the deep. Brightly shining palaces that dangle from the brows of angler fish.

Were this still the commercial whaling age, the Primary Abyss would be more interesting to the surface than it is.



Still, just one of these creatures could feed a population for months.

### **5--70 Leagues: The Littered Region**

Below the Primary Abyss, the ocean constricts, growing walls. These walls slope inwards and outwards like the structure of an urn, forming shelves on which entire ecosystems can rest.

This region, being relatively accessible, is packed with abandoned cities, lost temples, and drifting submarines.

Not every structure here is uninhabited, and fishers leave the submarine at their own peril.

### **71--80 Leagues: Sky Below Sky**

Inexplicably, everyone who passes into this region feels their perspective flip. Down is now up, and up has become down. Unsecured objects momentarily lift into the air and hang for a moment before setting back into place, and studies have shown that there is a factual weightlessness that momentarily affects every crew that sails into this zone.

More peculiar, however, is how bright everything becomes. The light seems to come from no real source, but it lights the region brightly, and corals flourish everywhere a shelf or cliff can be found.

The waters are also warm, despite the pressure, and the sea creatures here are primarily tropical.

This means lots of sharks.

And, in some cases, things that merely resemble sharks.

### **81--10,000 Leagues: The Impossible Region**

The water darkens again at these fathoms, and with the change in light goes the sealife. There is very little here beyond swarms of white barnacles and the occasional pale swimming crab, and space itself seems to loop. You can descend for weeks and then somehow end up back at Sky Below Sky.

There are charts for traversing this region, but they are peppered with guesswork and blank spaces.

### **10,001--25,000 Leagues: The Approaching Terror**

Something lives at this depth. It looks like a dogfish, but its skin is made of seaweed-covered brass and its eyes shine with electric light.

It might be a submarine, but if so it is a terribly old one.

Letters on its face plate spell out R O B U R.

### **25,001+ Leagues: The Unknown**

No explorer has reached these depths yet, although there are tales of what awaits when they do.



Some claim the ocean is a giant mouth. Others, a way into the afterlife. Still others, a vast museum of everything that has ever sailed, preserved in dark suspension at the heart of the earth.

Perhaps you will prove one of these stories right.

Or perhaps what waits at these depths is even stranger.

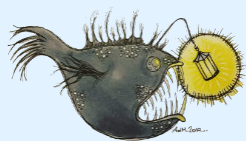
## **40,000 Leagues: Extra**

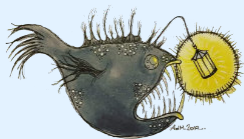
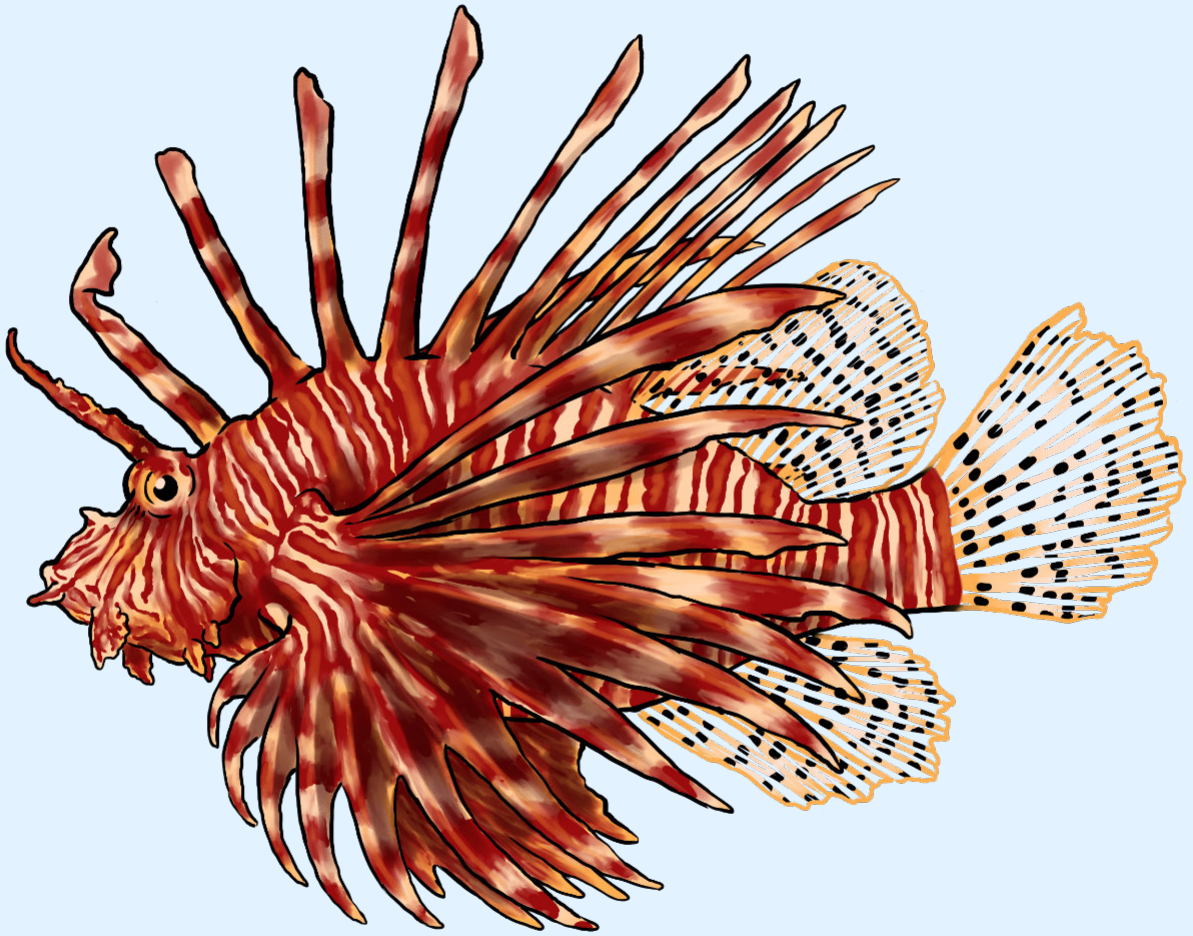
---

40,000 Leagues is designed as a homage to the fantastical science-adventure stories of Jules Verne. As such, it is about adventure and discovery a little more than it is about fishing. SBs are encouraged to improvise and add their own material, fleshing out whatever parts of the setting they wish to explore, but the goal is to keep the tone exciting and each new location novel. Not everything under the sea is or needs to be hostile, but wonder and danger are the two guiding lights for this setting. Steer towards them, or risk getting hopelessly lost.

In some cases, to help establish character and tone you may want to have small vignettes that take place before a Scenario has begun. Some of these may happen on the surface. Try to keep these relatively concise, but don't worry about making rolls during them. Just follow the flow of the story until it leads to the main plot.

Of course, depending on how much the players interact with the surface-world, you may want to have Scenarios that take place partly or entirely on shore. For these, feel free to tweak Rodreel's core mechanics to fit your game's needs. For example, maybe weaseling information out of a reluctant courtier uses the same mechanics as fishing. Or maybe fending off the palace guard is similar to being attacked by a Vengeful Goose. Don't worry if you need to reskin the mechanics in a few places, but don't call attention to it either. "You are surrounded by geese---I, uh, mean the royal guard" is immersion-breaking, but "you are surrounded by the royal guard" and then you secretly consult the bestiary entry for geese *isn't*.





# Example Fishers

Not every player needs to make their own, wholly new, Fisher to play Rod, Reel, & Fist.

The example Fishers in this section can be used as playable characters in quick pick-up games, convention scenarios, or in any situation where a player doesn't want to go through character creation.





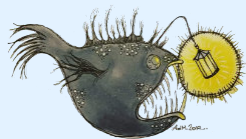
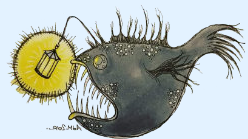
## **Arwenn Weathersax**

---

A young woman dressed in worn, brightly-colored clothes, Arwenn is a wayfarer and is only recently come to the Village. She makes her living as a traveling musician and she keeps an accordion strapped to her back and a harmonica holstered at her side. Unfortunately, she's also under a bit of a curse, and whenever she plays either one inclement weather begins to gather around her. The longer she plays, the worse the eventual storm, and she keeps her performances short to avoid conjuring up a true tempest.

Sometimes Arwenn freelances, playing blues riffs until a storm comes to tend to thirsty crops, but mostly she wants to be done with her supernatural complication. She's heard that the Fish Of Legend might provide her with a cure, and she has dedicated every resource to tracking it down.

When not traveling or embarking on a fishing expedition, Arwenn takes life as it happens---although she is never truly easy-going about it. She's long since learned not to get too attached to everything that happens, but deep down she's a passionate person, and this comes out especially clearly in her music.



**Character Name:** Arwenn Weathersax

**ROD, REEL,  
& FIST!** 

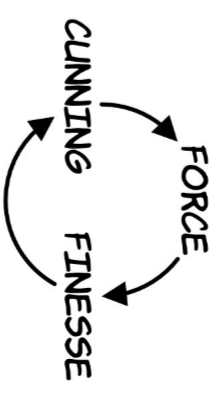
TYPE

**Entertainer**

DESCRIPTION

TEMPERAMENT

**Hot-Blooded**



EQUIPMENT

**Rod** (+1 die to Fish and Animal Combat)

**Tacklebox** (+1 die to Fish and Animal Combat)

**3 Snacks** (spend a Snack to lose 1 Stress or gain +1 die on a single roll)

TECHNIQUES

**Mirrored Surface Gazing** (The SB must tell you exactly what fish you are facing during Fish Combat, including its name, Catch Bonus, and any special abilities it has.)

FISH

## **Elliot**

---

Elliot is an outgoing young boy with a passion for aquariums. His house in the Village is full of glass and acrylic tanks, and they hold everything from bright tetras and slow-moving guppies to big gar lurking in the weeds or stately-looking arowana gazing out from the water.

Elliot is a skilled fisher, but where he really shines is information about fish. Elliot is a practical encyclopedia of fish knowledge, and other fishers periodically come to him for advice.

When Elliot journeys out into the Old Region, he does so with the confidence of someone who has been there before---because he has.

Several of the fish in Elliot's aquarium are from the Old Region, and he is possibly the only true local expert on the place.



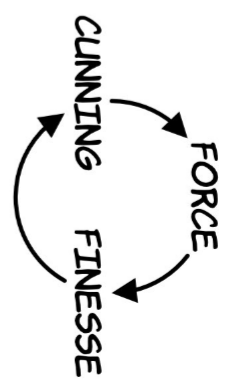
**Character Name:** **Elliot**



**TYPE**  
**Split: Explorer/Expert**

**DESCRIPTION**

**TEMPERAMENT**  
**Easy-Going**



**EQUIPMENT**  
**Rod** (+1 die to Fish and Animal Combat)  
**Tacklebox** (+1 die to Fish and Animal Combat)  
**3 Snacks** (spend a Snack to lose 1 Stress or gain +1 die on a single roll)  
**Fishing Manual** (+1 die to knowing things)

**TECHNIQUES**

**FISH**

## **Finn Troutbane**

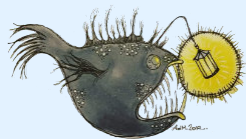
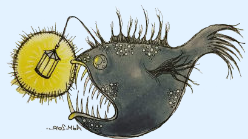
---

As a goliath minibear, Finn stands a little higher than a child and a little shorter than an adult human. He can't speak human language, but he has managed to get his paws on a label-maker, which he uses to print short messages.

For everything else, he uses pantomime.

Finn's origins are vague, as he just wandered into the village one day and set up a takoyaki stand, but when he's not methodically mixing chopped octopus and batter or adjusting the heat of the portable stove, he often stares out towards the Old Region---where, presumably, his past awaits.

As a side-note, Finn is genetically distinct from teacup minibears, teacup megabears, and goliath megabears, which are all separate species.



**Character Name: Finn Troutbane**

**ROD, REEL,  
& FIST!** 

TYPE

**Pet**

DESCRIPTION

TEMPERAMENT

**Tricky**

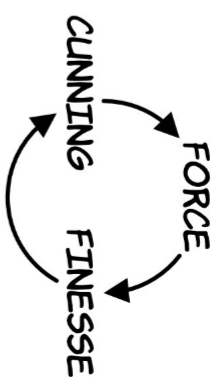
EQUIPMENT

**3 Snacks** (spend a Snack to lose 1 Stress or gain +1 die on a single roll)

TECHNIQUES

**Footwork Of Herakles** (The first time you would lose each Fish Combat, you instead do not.)

FISH



## **Theresa "Thresher" Heshher**

---

Theresa is a short, athletic woman somewhere in her twenties. Her body is compact, her muscles are toned, and she carries herself with an easy confidence that people occasionally mistake for a laid-back attitude.

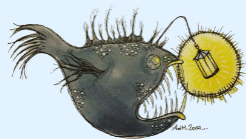
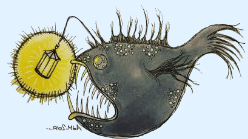
This is incorrect.

Theresa isn't so much driven as she is propelled. Sometimes this propulsion comes from the need to test herself against a challenge. Sometimes it comes from her own curiosity. Sometimes what drives her is the need to pick someone else up and help them compete against life's adversities. She hates seeing people be bullied---at least in part because of how disappointed she is in anyone who would pick an easy target instead of a difficult one---and more than once she has started (and won) a fight against someone who was pushing a stranger around.

Theresa is a capable mixed martial artist and trains daily, but she's also a competitive freestyle swimmer, creates home pickles, and can throw together a professional-level stir fry with ease---although not with cauliflower. She thinks cauliflower is a useless vegetable.

When not actively training, competing, or working at improving something in her life or someone else's, Theresa gets antsy. She doesn't like boredom or for things to be too easy, and she finds new challenges to charge headfirst at whenever she feels her life is getting too settled.

Wardrobe-wise, Theresa tends to wear casual, athletic clothes, and she owns a lot of t-shirts with sharks on them. She loves sharks, a detail which sometimes takes people by surprise, and she is a comprehensive index of shark facts.



**Character Name:** Theresa "Thresher" Heshher

**ROD, REEL,  
& FIST!** 

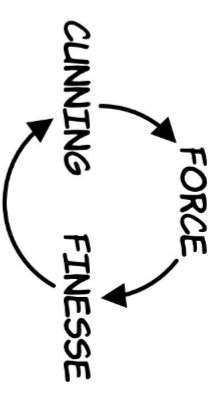
TYPE

**Brawler**

DESCRIPTION

TEMPERAMENT

**Hot-Blooded**



EQUIPMENT

**Rod** (+1 die to Fish and Animal Combat)

**Tacklebox** (+1 die to Fish and Animal Combat)

**3 Snacks** (spend a Snack to lose 1 Stress or gain +1 die on a single roll)

TECHNIQUES

**Marlin Lunge** (during the first round of combat, for every die that the active animal would lose due to Strain, you may have it take a point of Stress instead. If you do so, you take that same amount of Stress.)

FISH

## **Tiger**

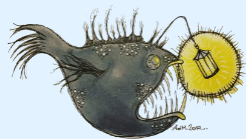
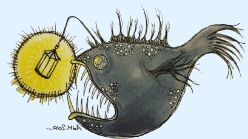
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An optimistic young woman with bright red hair and a casual fashion sense, Tiger was born in the far off City. She's spent most of her life since then in the Village, however. And to be honest, she doesn't even remember all that much about what the City was like.

Tiger is an accomplished fisher, and there are more than a few pictures on the walls in her home showing the salmon that she's caught. She's also got a knack for making small repairs, and other villagers come to her when they've got a hopelessly snared line or a bit of equipment that just won't work.

Tiger has several cats, all adopted strays, the largest of which is a big orange tom. Villagers joke sometimes that Tiger's just another one of the cats, and they're careful not to do it where they think she can hear them, but Tiger's got good ears.

Honestly, though, this doesn't bother her. If anything, it's a compliment being compared to a cat.



# Character Name: Tiger



TYPE  
**Angler**

TEMPERAMENT  
**Tricky**

DESCRIPTION

## EQUIPMENT

**Rod** (+1 die to Fish and Animal Combat)

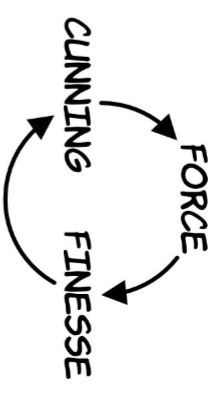
**Tacklebox** (+1 die to Fish and Animal Combat)

**3 Snacks** (spend a Snack to lose 1 Stress or gain +1 die on a single roll)

## TECHNIQUES

**Wind-Water Method** (In Fish Combat, once per odd round, any time before the Stand Firm Roll you may suffer a Stress to inflict a Stress on the fish)

## FISH



# How To Be A Swamp Being

Contained in this chapter are a few hints and tips for how to run this game.

If this is your first time running an RPG, don't panic. You've got this.

For everyone else, listen to your group and adapt the game to what they're looking for. There's no one right way to run Rod, Reel, & Fist, and you win if your group has fun.

And if that bit of reassurance isn't enough and you feel like you need more help, no worries.

No matter your skill level, read on. We've got you covered.

## **Philosophy And Goals**

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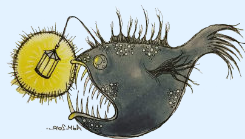
The core of this game is adventure. You're going somewhere other people aren't, searching for a creature that may only be semi-real, and you're doing so because the people you care about are *counting on you to succeed*. That's the tone you're striving for. The scope might be small, but the outcome *matters*.

Of course, how an adventure will feel depends heavily on the circumstances that surround it. Some games might have a more dire tone. Others will lean towards whimsical and wistful remembrances of a past that almost was. Don't be afraid to play with tone during world creation, but keep it consistent once the game has started up. Don't blindside your idyllic fishing trip kiddies with a scene in a chemotherapy ward unless your group expects and wants this type of mood whiplash.

Other than that bit of advice, just follow the progress of the story. Let the Fishers keep making meaningful progress towards their goal, and be clear about it when an obstacle is in front of them. If they need to catch X fish to raise money to repair the bridge to the concrete pavilion where the Lion Carp is said to dwell, let them know up front that that's the task.

It can help to write scenarios out in advance to ensure that your party's adventures have a good structural backbone, but fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants SB-ing is totally fine too as long as you keep the plot moving towards an eventual resolution.

This game falls apart when the players are floundering, so don't let them do that. Give them purpose, give them obstacles, and follow them all the way to their confrontation with the Legendary Fish. Then pull back. Leave the ending ambiguous.



Is the fish magic?

Will it really fix the Village's problems?

That's for the players to decide.

## **Running This Game For Different Age Groups**

---

### **Elementary Level**

The core game of Rodreel is designed to be playable at the 4th grade level and up. Some of the words the book uses may be unfamiliar or big (a precocious middle-schooler should be totally fine), but the game can be run for a young audience or for reluctant readers if a parent or guardian reads the rules and acts as the SB.

For elementary school age groups in particular, don't be afraid to keep scenarios short and to skip dice rolls if they start to slow things down. Telling an interactive story is going to be more important than rigorously following the mechanics, and taking a break when your player(s) gets bored is more important than soldiering on through to the end of an already too-long game session.

Not all of the Settings and Scenarios in the book are ideal for an elementary school age fishing adventure, but if you stick to the core setting (idyllic 1980s Japan, or else somewhere that's familiar to your players) and play the first Scenario (The Truth Of The Grotto), your players won't encounter too much peril.

Creating your own setting and Scenario can also be a good idea if you can spare the time, as this allows you to build your world collaboratively, and you'll be able to incorporate ideas from your player(s) into the backdrop the game takes place in, but try to keep this process simple and roll with the prompts you're given.

John Cena and Elvis might team up to defend Las Vegas from walking eels.

This is normal and fine.

### **Middle School Level**

For middle-school age gamers, the whole book is likely fair game as far as what's playable goes. There is no content in here that I haven't run into in fiction at a middle-school reading level, but obviously that's a wide gamut of content, so if you're a parent reading this and you're worried that there's something in here that you might object to, I encourage you to flip through first and make that decision for yourself.

The Alternate Settings ([page 128](#)) and the Scenario Ruby In The Mire ([page 242](#)) are probably the closest to being a bit grim, but they can all be run with a gentler tone, and they can be skipped entirely if you just want a whimsical game about normal fishing.

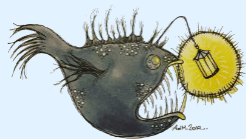
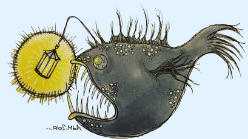
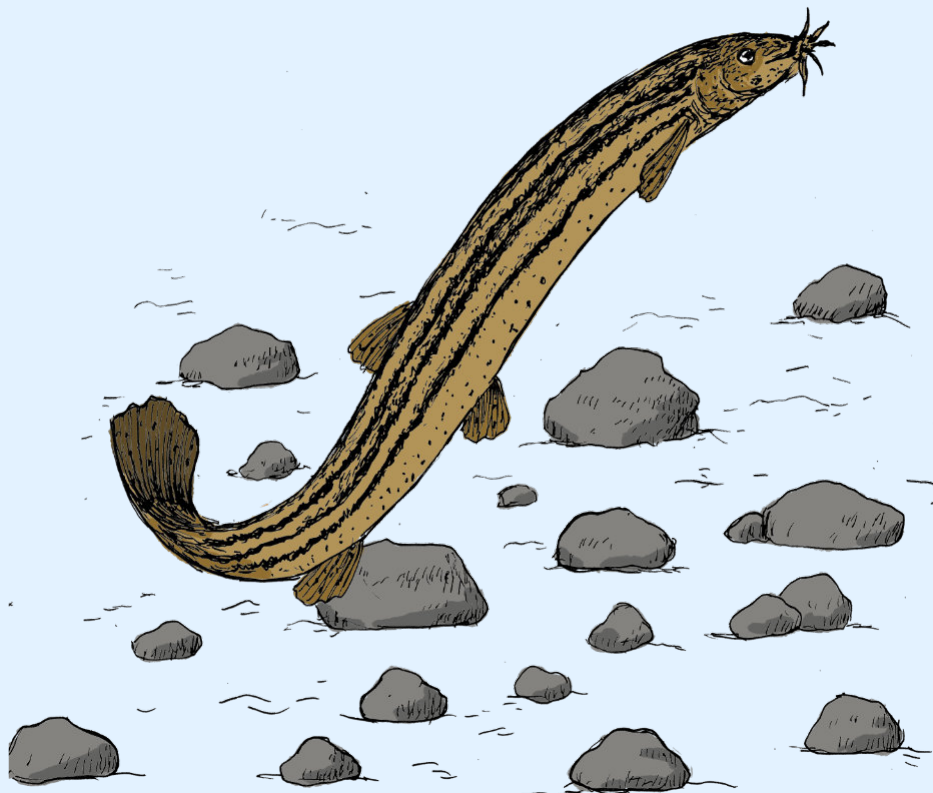


## Teenagers And Up

For teenagers, adults, and everyone else, this game is designed to be very flexible with its setting and tone. If you want a gritty, realistic fishing drama for some reason, you can do that. If you want a gentle, happy game, you can do that too. The pre-packaged alternate Settings that come with the book tend to lean towards being super serious, since that was the funniest thing I could think of to do with a goofy RPG about fishing, but the pre-packaged Scenarios almost all work with super gentle, low-stakes stories. The possible exception is *The Ruby In The Mire*, which is written to be suspenseful, but even its tone is designed to scale to whatever your gamers would like.

So basically: play the way you want to play, and the game will do its best to support that.

And if you have any questions or specific concerns, you can always contact me and I will be happy to provide game information or custom suggestions on how to modify *Rodreel* for your specific group.



## **Running This Game As A Beach Episode**

If you wish, you may use the Rodreel engine to run a mini fishing adventure spliced into the middle of an ongoing campaign in another system.

Technically, the term for this sort of thing is a bottle episode, but I am assuming that everyone who does this is going to go the full nine and also make it a beach episode.

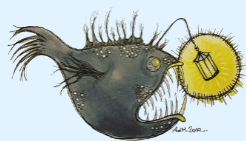
When using Rodreel to run a beach episode, it is recommended that you create "beach versions" of the main characters in your existing campaign by re-stating them as Rodreel Fishers, rather than trying to frankenstein the two sets of mechanics together.

It is also recommended that you have a hook, something your players can gain in the original game system if they do well in the beach episode---but if anything serious and plot-oriented happens during your beach episode, you should switch back into the original game system you were using in order to resolve it.

When run as a beach episode, Rodreel is meant to be a fun, wacky sort of interlude. It's not meant to replace the mechanics of the original game---so while you *could* substitute an Animal Combat against a Tentagoose for a pitched battle against that hydra you've been hunting for weeks, you should only do this if you're willing to have that battle take on a distinctly Rodreel tone.

Again, if things get dire, switch back to your original mechanics.

Otherwise, lean into the goofy beach tone.



# Scenarios

The following Scenarios are all ready to run, pre-packaged adventures specially made for Rod, Reel, & Fist.

They are arranged in order from "most beginner friendly" to "this thing plays heavily with the game's formula", but they can technically be tackled in whichever order your group prefers.

Furthermore, these Scenarios aren't the only way to play Rod, Reel, & Fist.

Once you get comfortable with the rules and the way the game flows, you can easily write your own Scenarios or improvise adventures off the top of your head.

Feel free to steal design elements from the existing Scenarios, and feel free to share the new Scenarios with other groups. There's bound to be lots of great ideas I didn't think of, and I'd love for them to be added to the pond.

## **Sidebar: Modding Scenarios**

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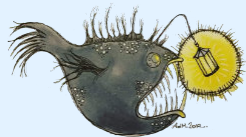
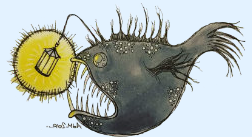
If your group likes to build especially complex or out-there settings, you may need to alter some of the descriptions in the following Scenarios to make them fit comfortably in your settings (for example, if your game takes place in a desert, you may need to swap trees to cacti).

If you're not totally comfortable modding Scenarios, ask your group if they're okay with playing in the default game setting (1980s Japan). Alternately, let your players know that there might be moments where you'll have to stop and quickly figure out how to re-skin an area so that it matches the setting.

If you like and trust your group, you can even let them do the heavy lifting when it comes to converting a Scenario. Whenever you get to a new area, just tell them how the book describes it and then ask *them* how it should look in *their* setting.

If none of that works, you can always build your custom setting by yourself and then make sure the Scenario fits in it---but this is intended as a last resort. Taking setting creation away from the players also takes away some of the investment they have in caring about the game world, so you should do this only if it's the best way to make a game that your group will find fun to play.





## **The Truth Of The Grotto**

---

This Scenario is a simple sandbox set in the modern world, where the Fishers find a legendary catch in an abandoned structure.

It makes no assumptions about what your Village, Tragedy, or Legendary Fish is, and the assumptions that it makes about the Old Region (i.e. that it exists in the countryside of 1980s Japan) can all be replaced with other setting-flavors as appropriate.

Thus, The Truth Of The Grotto should be compatible with most settings that a group could design, as long as the SB is willing to change a few details as needed.

### **Intro**

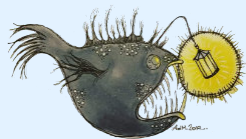
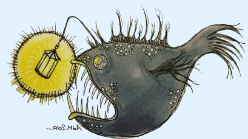
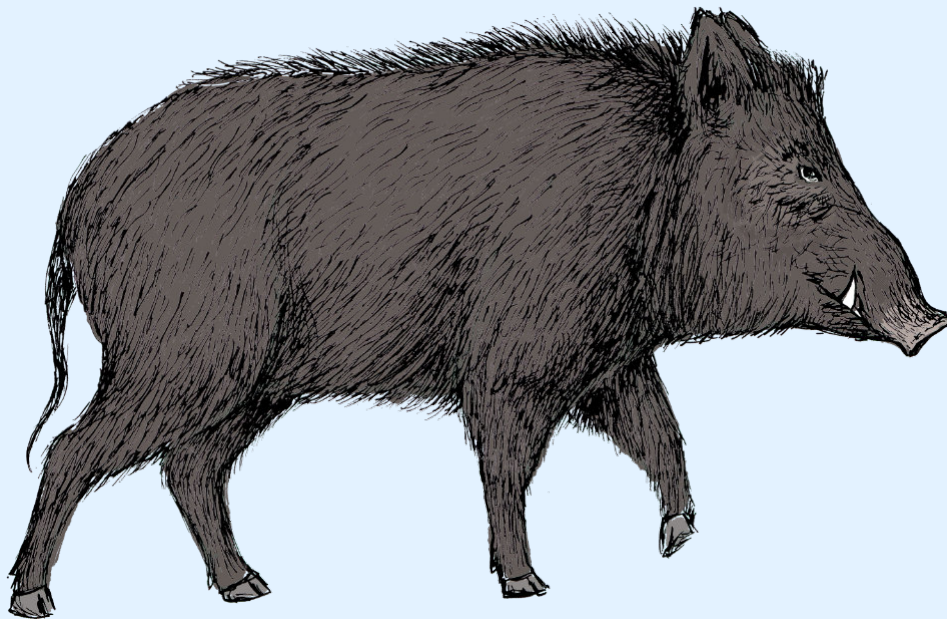
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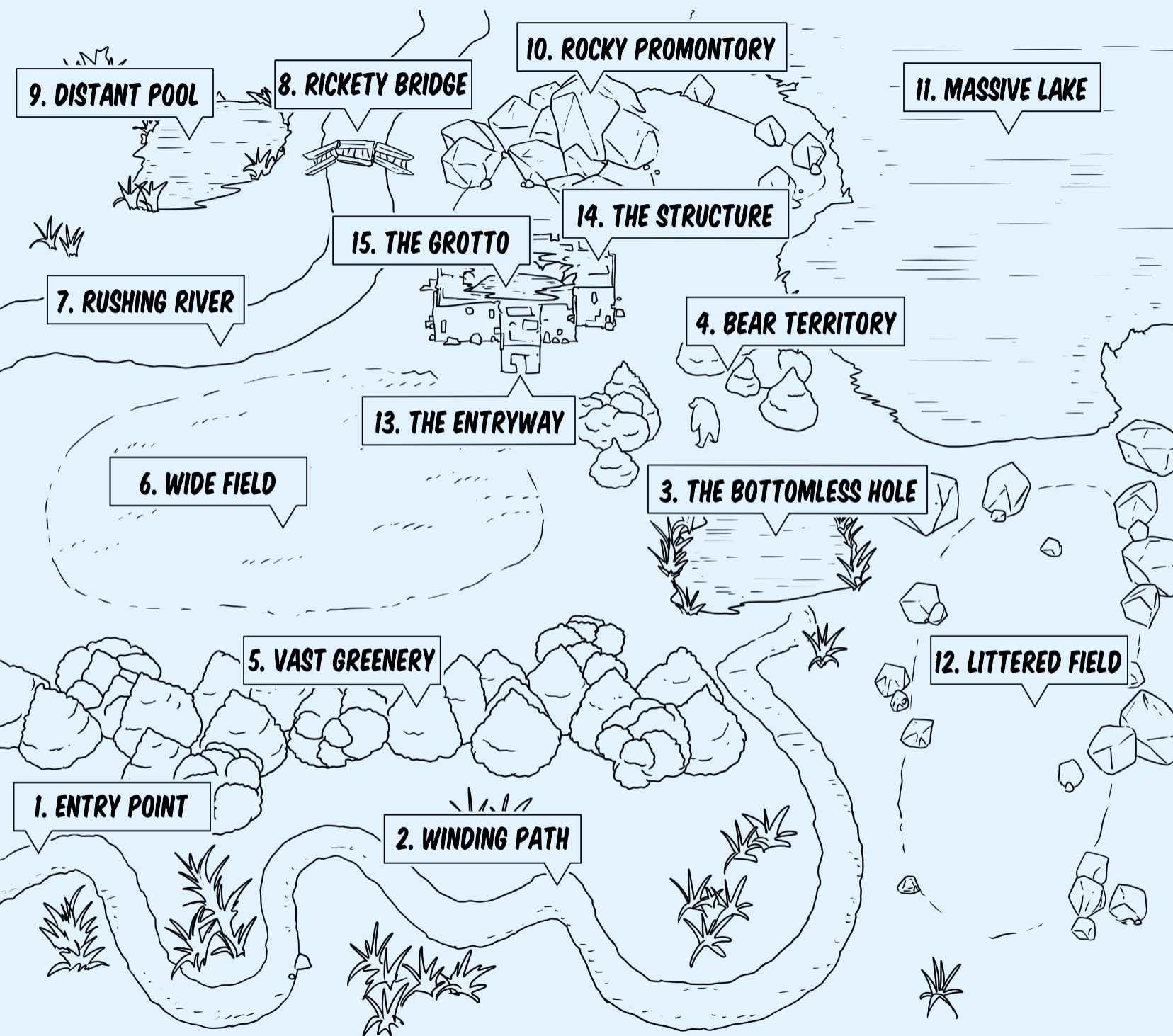
In the Old Region, there exists a secluded hollow. Within it, the breeze is quiet. The foliage is still. The air itself seems latent with purpose.

Within this hollow dwells the Fish of Legend.

It is not difficult to find. Simply walk until you have reached the center of the region.

The problem lies in catching the fish---and in clearing the obstacles that wait in your way.





9. DISTANT POOL

8. RICKETY BRIDGE

10. ROCKY PROMONTORY

11. MASSIVE LAKE

7. RUSHING RIVER

15. THE GROTTA

14. THE STRUCTURE

4. BEAR TERRITORY

6. WIDE FIELD

13. THE ENTRYWAY

3. THE BOTTOMLESS HOLE

5. VAST GREENERY

12. LITTERED FIELD

1. ENTRY POINT

2. WINDING PATH

## 1 - Entry Point

---

*There is a change in the air as you enter the Old Region. The sun doesn't shine any less brightly. The birds don't stop singing. But you suddenly have the feeling of being observed.*

*It's as if you are a very conditional guest in someone else's home, and the host is waiting to see what you will do.*

The entry point is a clear, grassy area.

**Directions:** To the north is a thick, dense wall of vegetation. To the east is an overgrown footpath. To the south is the way back to the Village.

## 2 - Winding Path

---

*A weed-choked, debris-strewn footpath winds down a narrow corridor between walls of encroaching foliage. There are beer-cans, faded plastic packets, and even the corpse of an old comics magazine here. Its pages are brittle and half-covered in fallen leaves.*

*The path is bordered by high grasses on either side, and past the tall grasses are dense shrubs and thickets. The very center of the path is clear, and it is just wide enough that a person can walk down it, the grass-tips skimming against them all the way.*

**Optional Encounter:** The SB may wish to put a **Snake, Lashtip** here, in which case it's sunning itself on the open ground in the middle of the path. Introducing an animal here may set a more Animal-Combat-oriented tone for the scenario, but it is a good way to introduce combat mechanics to new players without putting them at much risk of losing the first fight. If you do put a snake here and the players hesitate over trying to scare it off vs. just leaving it alone, have it slither off on its own after a minute or so. Not all combats need to be taken head-on, and lateral thinking should absolutely be encouraged.

**Directions:** To the north is a thick, dense wall of vegetation. At the end of the path is a shockingly deep pond. To the east of the path's end is a field of scraggly grass and scattered stones. To the south is more thick, dense vegetation. To the west is the entrypoint to the Old Region and the way home.

## 3 - The Bottomless Hole

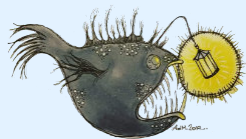
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*A screen of scrub-grasses gives way to shockingly dark and still pool. Light from the sun doesn't reach the bottom.*

*The edges of the pool are treacherous, and the water is surprisingly cold despite the heat of the sun on its surface.*

**Hazard:** The first Fisher to arrive here must make an **Easy (TN 3)** roll or fall into the pond, suffering an Exhaustion from the embarrassment and the cold.

**Directions:** Past that is a large, overgrown concrete building in the middle of a decades-long process of slumping into the marshy ground. To the north the ground slopes upwards, becoming a small rocky hill. To the northeast is the edge of a sizeable lake. To the east is a field of scraggly grass and scattered



stones. To the south is an overgrown footpath. To the west is a thick, dense wall of vegetation. To the northwest is an area of fallen trees, several of their stumps disfigured with wide vertical scratches.

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Carp, Grass
- 2 - Carp, Grass
- 3 - Carp, Giant
- 4 - Trashfish
- 5 - Trashfish
- 6 - Turtle, Sagacious

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **4 - Bear Territory**

---

*A series of old trees, cracked and fallen, interlace across the landscape. Many of them bear scratches on their sides, suggesting that this area is inhabited--- though not by people.*

*Crossing this stretch of ground is not easy, largely because of what occupies it.*

**Primary Hazard:** There is a **Bear, Adult** here. Adult Bears are very difficult to beat in Animal Combat, and the group may want to bribe it with fish, deploy Pepper Spray, or gather a lot of useful Techniques and Equipment before taking it on. If the Fishers spot the bear and then back off, it will not pursue them.

**Secondary Hazard:** The fallen trees make this area difficult to trek across. After the bear has been chased off or bribed with fish, any time a Fisher attempts to cross this area, they must make a **Normal (TN 4)** roll or suffer an Exhaustion from scrapes and exertion.

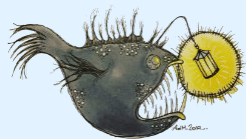
**Directions:** To the northwest is a ruined concrete entryway that leads into a large, overgrown building in the middle of a decades-long process of slumping into the marshy ground. To the north the ground slopes upwards, becoming a small rocky hill. To the northeast is the edge of a sizeable lake. To the east is a field of scraggly grass and scattered stones. To the south is a shockingly deep pond. To the southwest is a thick, dense wall of vegetation. To the west is a wide, sunlit meadow.

## **5 - Vast Greenery**

---

*Thick, choking vegetation forms a green wall. A telltale droning comes from its sunless depths.*

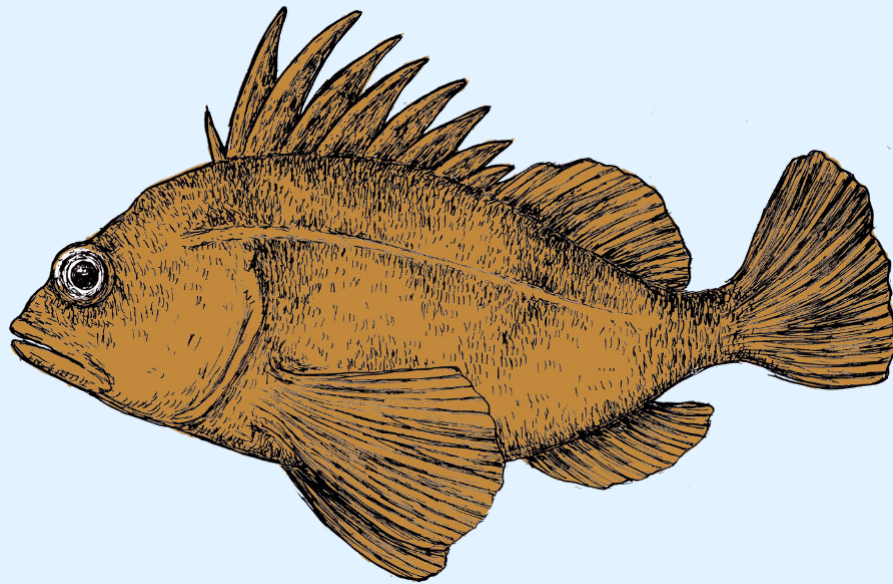
*Determined Fishers can just crash through the foliage, but there's no telling what they'll anger in the process.*



**Primary Hazard:** Thorny shrubs, dense-bushes, and vine-wrapped trees could hold any number of dangers. Pushing through them requires a **Normal (TN 4)** roll to muster your courage and move deftly, or else you suffer an Exhaustion from exertion and worry.

**Secondary Hazard:** There is a colony of **Bees, Large Woodcutter** that gets stirred into hive-defending violence by anyone who successfully passes the Primary Hazard and attempts to push through the greenery to the other side.

**Directions:** To the north is a wide, sunlit meadow. To the northeast is a ruined concrete entryway that leads into a large, overgrown building. North by northeast is an area of fallen trees, several of their stumps disfigured with wide vertical scratches. To the east is a shockingly deep pond. To the south is an overgrown footpath. To the southwest is the way back to the Village.



## **6 - Wide Field**

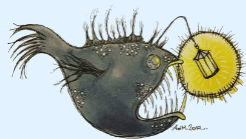
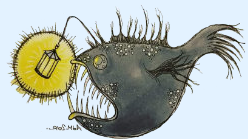
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*A wide, grassy field leads north to the stony banks of a river. This looks like prime snake-country.*

*It is prime snake-country.*

**Hazard:** Any time the Fishers cross this area, roll 1d6. On a 5+, they stumble over a **Snake, Lashtip**. If the Fishers have said they are moving carefully, one of them can make a **Hard (TN 5)** roll to spot the snake in time to avoid provoking it.

**Directions:** To the north is a wide, quick-moving river. Further north is a rickety, half-broken bridge that crosses it. On the other side of the river is a very promising-looking pool. To the northeast is a ruined concrete entryway that leads into a large, overgrown building in the middle of a decades-long process of slumping into the marshy ground. To the east is an area of fallen trees, several of their stumps disfigured with wide vertical scratches. To the south is a thick, dense wall of vegetation.



## 7 - Rushing River

---

*The current moves quickly here, dragging clear, clean water over dense plantlife.*

*If the Fishers wish to cross the river safely, the bridge to the north is a (slightly) better bet. Nevertheless, they can throw caution to the winds and attempt to swim across here.*

**Hazard:** Attempting to swim the river is reckless. Anyone who tries to cross this way must make a **Hard (TN 5)** roll or be swept downstream, suffering two points of Exhaustion before finally crawling out on the other side.

**Directions:** To the north is a rickety, half-broken bridge that crosses the river. On the other side is a very promising-looking pool. To the east the ground slopes upwards, becoming a small rocky hill. To the southeast is a large, overgrown concrete building in the middle of a decades-long process of slumping into the marshy ground. To the south is a wide, sunlit meadow.

### Fishing Spot:

- 1 - Pike, Voracious
- 2 - Pike, Voracious
- 3 - Trashfish
- 4 - Trashfish
- 5 - Walking Lionfish
- 6 - Eel, Insidious

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## 8 - Rickety Bridge

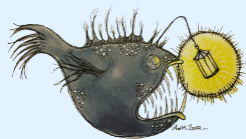
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*A skeletal span of wood and metal, rotted-through in places and discolored in others. It still looks nominally crossable, as long as you tread lightly.*

*This is a safer route across the river than swimming, but nevertheless requires some caution.*

**Hazard:** Sections of the bridge have crumbled away to wood and rusted metal, and the structure must be crossed with care. The first person to cross must make a **Hard (TN 5)** roll. If they succeed, they can call out the safe places to step. Once a Fisher has done this, no one else needs to roll to cross. However, for anyone that rolls and fails, they fall through a weak spot into the river and suffer 2 points of Exhaustion.

**Optional Encounter:** If the group has been having an extremely easy time of things so far, the SB may choose to put a **Snake, Lashtip** on the bridge itself. During this combat, all Fishers must make a Hang On Test at the *start* of every round in addition to any other times when they would normally make a Hang



On Test. Any Fisher that loses combat at the start of a round plummets into the river and suffers 2 points of Exhaustion instead of suffering the snake's normal Loss Penalty.

**Directions:** Below is a wide, quick-moving river. To the east the ground slopes upwards, becoming a small rocky hill. To the southeast is a large, overgrown concrete building in the middle of a decades-long process of slumping into the marshy ground. To the south is a wide, sunlit meadow. To the west is a very promising-looking pool.

## **9 - Distant Pool**

---

*A deep, clear pool with sandy shores and a gentle incline leading down into the rocky depths.*

*Despite the trouble it took to get here, this might be the best fishing spot in the Old Region.*

*It certainly seems calm and peaceful.*

**Opportunity:** An **Easy (TN 3)** roll reveals that this is where valuable Goldenscale Carp are likely to be found. A **Hard (TN 5)** roll reveals that this is also the perfect environment for Giant Salamanders. There are no Setbacks for failing these rolls, but they may not be repeated, and only the Fisher with the best dice pool for the task may attempt them.

**Hazard:** The first time a fish is caught in this location, a **Salamander, Giant** emerges from the depths to snag it.

**Directions:** To the southeast is a wide, quick-moving river and a rickety, half-broken bridge that crosses it.

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Carp, Goldenscale
- 2 - Carp, Goldenscale
- 3 - Carp, Goldenscale
- 4 - Carp, Giant
- 5 - Nothing
- 6 - Nothing

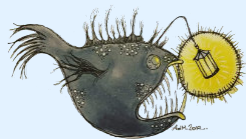
When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **10 - Rocky Promontory**

---

*A small hill covered in mossy, weather-smooth rocks overlooks the rest of the area.*

*The hill can be circumnavigated without any trouble. Walking around it is*



*considerably shorter than climbing over it.*

**Opportunity/Hazard:** If the Fishers want to go to the top of the hill, scrambling up the rocks is a little tricky, requiring a **Normal (TN 4)** roll. On a Setback, characters still scramble to the top, but they suffer an Exhaustion from fatigue. Getting to the top of the promontory allows you an excellent view of the heart of the Old Region, and anyone at the top of the promontory may ask questions about any outdoor area on the map as if they were there.

**Directions:** To the east is the edge of a sizeable lake. To the southeast is a field of scraggly grass and scattered stones. To the south is a shockingly deep pond. To the south-by-southwest is an area of fallen trees, several of their stumps disfigured with wide vertical scratches. To the southwest is a large, overgrown concrete building in the middle of a decades-long process of slumping into the marshy ground. To the west is a wide, quick-moving river and a rickety, half-broken bridge that crosses it.

## **11 - Massive Lake**

---

*A wide, flat lake issues out from you towards a distant treeline. The banks are crowded with grasses and reeds, and frogs and turtles scatter into the shallows as you approach.*

*Because the lake is so large, any temporary shortages of fish are quickly rectified by waiting a while and then coming back.*

**Passive:** Any time the Fishers Make Camp, replace any 'Nothing' listings at this Fishing Spot with **Carp, Grass**.

**Hazard:** The first time a fish is caught here, an **Eagle, Fishing** descends from the distant treeline to grab it.

**Directions:** To the south is a field of scraggly grass and scattered stones. To the southwest is an area of fallen trees, several of their stumps disfigured with wide vertical scratches, as well as a shockingly deep pond. To the west is a large, overgrown concrete building in the middle of a decades-long process of slumping into the marshy ground---north of which the ground slopes upwards, becoming a small rocky hill.

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Carp, Grass
- 2 - Trashfish
- 3 - Carp, Giant
- 4 - Carp, Goldenscale
- 5 - Pike, Voracious
- 6 - Eel, Insidious

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.



## **12 - Littered Field**

---

*Patches of scraggly grass interspersed with sand, rocks, and gravel mar this broad field. Butterflies and bees drift between the bright flowers of weeds.*

*The stones crunch underfoot here, and the grass is just high enough that something low to the ground could hide in it.*

**Opportunity:** If the Fishers take a moment to pick over the stones in the field, they can find a set of **Lovely Decorative Stones** that they can trade to one of the older inhabitants of the Village. When the Fishers next Make Camp, they may convert the set into a piece of Equipment by sending them back to the Village to be sold. Alternately, they may use them as Skipping Stones in combat, but they won't be able to send any of the stones back to the Village to trade if part of the set has already been chucked at attacking snakes and eagles. Only one set of useable stones may be harvested from the field in this location.

**Hazard:** Any time the Fishers cross this area, roll 1d6. On a 6, they stumble over a **Snake, Lashtip**. If the Fishers have said they are moving carefully, one of them can make a **Hard (TN 5)** roll to spot the snake in time to avoid provoking it.

**Directions:** To the north is the edge of a sizeable lake. To the southwest is an overgrown footpath. To the west is a shockingly deep pond, an area of fallen trees, several of their stumps disfigured with wide vertical scratches, and a large, overgrown concrete building in the middle of a decades-long process of slumping into the marshy ground. To the northwest the ground slopes upwards, becoming a small rocky hill.

## **13 - The Entryway**

---

*A set of concrete stairs, now tilted at an angle, lead into the mouth of the structure. It is cool and quiet inside, and every sound you make echoes in counterpoint to the distant dripping of water from within.*

*Faded paint on one wall spells out "Re arch S ati n." Somewhere in the dark ahead is the grotto of the Fish of Legend.*

*Climbing in through the angled stairs is a bit disquieting, like approaching the mouth of a giant whose head is tilted to the side.*

**Primary Hazard:** The building is a bit spooky. Everyone who enters must make a **Normal (TN 4)** roll or suffer an Exhaustion.

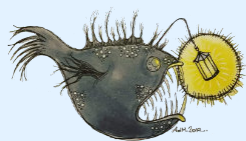
**Secondary Hazard:** The first time the Fishers move into the area, a **Bat, Shrieker** flies out at them.

**Directions:** Through the entryway is the interior of the structure. Outside to the east is an area of fallen trees, several of their stumps disfigured with wide vertical scratches. Outside to the south is a thick, dense wall of vegetation. Outside to the west is a wide, sunlit meadow.

## **14 - The Structure**

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*From the outside, the structure looks solid but doomed. Vines crawl across its*



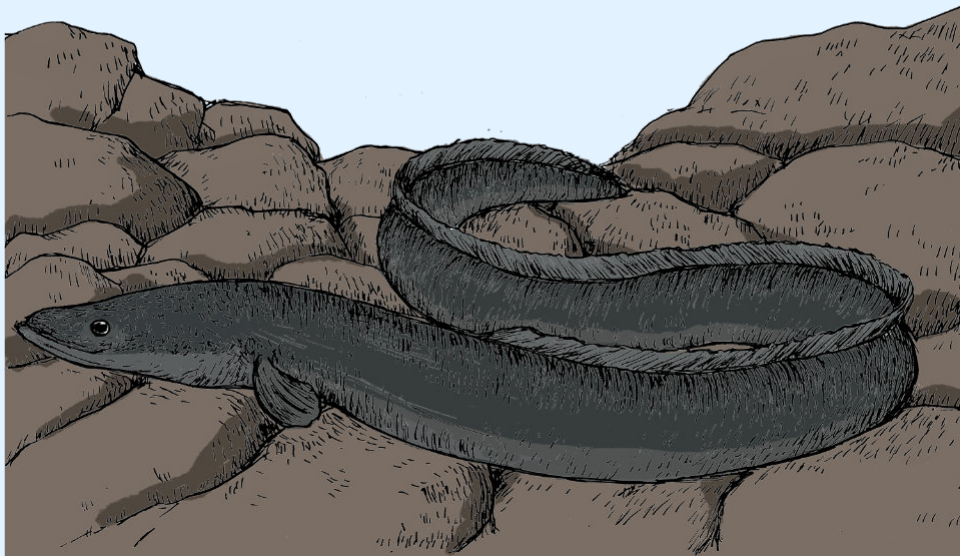
concrete skin, and its foundation is tilted eastwards as it sinks at geological speeds into the marshy soil around it.

From the inside, the structure looks like it belongs in a world without people. There are still faded signs pointing the way to "the viewing pool", but the floor is canted at a steep angle and most of the remaining, rusting furniture lies piled by gravity at the eastern ends of corridors and rooms.

Finding a route to the grotto is disquieting, but not difficult. The signs on the walls are accurate, and it only takes a few minutes of walking and scrambling up the occasional incline to get to the center of the building where the grotto is situated.

**Hazard:** There is a group of **Bees, Woodcutter** within the structure. Their nest hangs down from the ceiling in front of the doorway to the grotto, and a swarm of the bees will come down to challenge any group that lingers in the entryway. They won't move deeper into the building, so simply sprinting past the nest is a valid strategy once the Fishers know it's there.

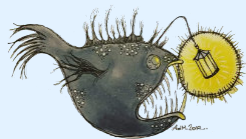
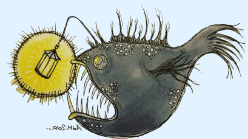
**Directions:** Deep within is the grotto. To the north the ground slopes upwards, becoming a small rocky hill. To the northeast is the edge of a sizeable lake. To the east is a field of scraggly grass and scattered stones. To the southeast is an area of fallen trees, several of their stumps disfigured with wide vertical scratches. To the south is a thick, dense wall of vegetation. To the southwest is a wide, sunlit meadow. To the northwest is a wide, quick-moving river and a rickety, half-broken bridge that crosses it.



## 15 - The Grotto

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A thin stream of light trickles down from a break in the roof overhead, illuminating the wide, dark pool that dominates the center of the room. A cluster of lily pads huddles in that sunlight while a single lost dragonfly circles



*in the cool, still air. Nothing moves in the water below.*

*This is it. If the Fishers went straight to this location, they may not be fully prepared to try and wrangle with its denizen. However, they may freely leave and come back at any time if it proves too difficult for them.*

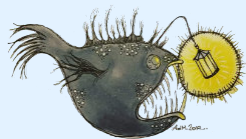
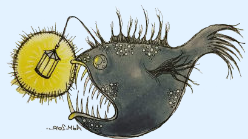
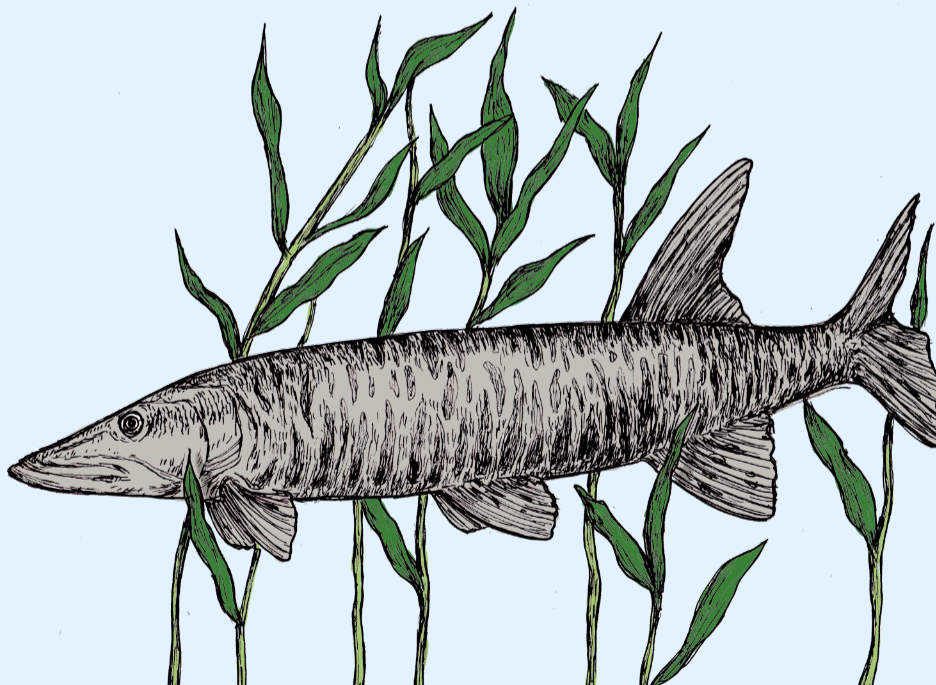
**Optional Hazard For Very Confident Groups:** For an intense, two-stage final conflict, either add a **Salamander, Giant** to the grotto or have the **Bear, Adult** from **4 - Bear Territory** show up to make a play for the Fish Of Legend as soon as the Fishers have captured it. Be warned that this *can* lead to situations in which the Fishers lose, causing a kind of unfinale, so only implement this if you feel confident your group would be okay with that sort of downer twist ending.

**Directions:** To the south down a winding series of corridors is the entryway and the exit to this tilted, half-sunken building.

### Fishing Spot:

- 1 - Fish of Legend
- 2 - Nothing
- 3 - Nothing
- 4 - Nothing
- 5 - Nothing
- 6 - Nothing

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.



## **SBing The Truth Of The Grotto**

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As this is an introductory Scenario, and as it's also intended for gamers of all ages, it cannot be failed (optional bear ambushes into the final battle aside).

In Truth Of The Grotto, the players can freely fish as much as they like, and only tackle the Fish Of Legend when they're ready.

On the plus side, this makes all setbacks temporary---which is good for young players that might get frustrated by missing a Gambit and losing an important fish.

On the flip side, this can make the Scenario seem almost too calm, or even grindy, for players that are used to more high-stakes stories.

So if you have a group that likes a little more narrative tension, add a **Make Camp limit of 5**. After the Fishers have camped five times, they cannot camp again until the Scenario is over. Therefore, if their Stress and Exhaustion stack so high that they cannot beat the Fish of Legend, they lose the game.

An alternate way of adding challenge to the Scenario, provided your players don't mind some friendly PvP, is to **split the players into two teams and nominate a second Swamp Being**.

For this approach, the game is divided into turns, and each turn both teams may move to either a location that they've explored or to a new location that's adjacent to a location they've explored. After both teams have moved, each chooses: fish, make camp, or move again. The SBs resolve both teams' choices, and then a new turn begins. If both teams are ever at the same location at the same time and there is a dispute over who acts first, the two teams enter Animal Combat against each other. During this specific Animal Combat, Straining dice is done 1-to-1, with each Straining player removing an equal number of dice from one specific player on the other team. The Loss Penalty against another Fisher is 2 Exhaustion.

In PvP mode, the first team to catch the Fish Of Legend wins.



## **The Road Of Fish**

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The Road Of Fish is a slightly different take on Rod, Reel, & Fist's mechanics. While it's still adaptable to different settings, it isn't a sandbox the way Truth Of The Grotto is.

The Road Of Fish is about a journey, and not all journeys end happily.

### **Changes (Journey Mode)**

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There are two big changes to the Rod, Reel, & Fist formula in this Scenario.

The first is tone-based: when you pick a Tragedy, make sure it is not something that would be devastating to the players if it were to happen. There is a solid chance that the fishers in this Scenario might go home frustrated and empty-handed---but you don't want the players to. Communicate this to your players before they select a Tragedy. Their Fishers are capable, but they might lose.

The second change is mechanics-based. During this Scenario, the Fishers are travelling, and they're also on a deadline. As such, the map is broken up into Stops and Paths. Paths connect the Stops, and the party travels from Stop to Path until they've reached the Fish Of Legend's resting place at the end of the map.

**Paths** are roads between places. They sometimes include tasks or challenges, and may inflict Exhaustion on fishers who fail. At times, Paths are blocked unless specific criteria have been met. Mostly, though, Paths are open and give the Fishers freedom to move and explore.

**Stops** are sites of interest. When the Fishers reach a Stop, every Fisher gets an **Action**. An Action can be used to Make Camp (in this case, providing the benefits of Making Camp for just the Fisher that's camping), or it can be used to attempt to fish, or it may be used to attempt certain tasks that might be unique to the Stop, such as clearing the brush from a promising fishing site, or finding a new trail.

Once every Fisher has used up their Action at the current Stop, the gang must pick a Path and travel down it, heading onward towards the lair of the Fish Of Legend.

Once the party reaches the final Stop, **everyone gets one last Action**, during which they must attempt to catch the Fish Of Legend.

If they fail, time runs out and the Tragedy has not been averted.

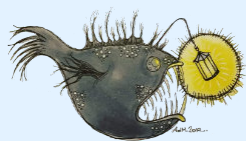
### **A Note About Caretakers**

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In this Scenario, specifically because of the nature of the journey, Caretaker Types only get their Type benefit the first three times they Make Camp. After that, they receive no additional Snacks from Making Camp.

After the Scenario ends and Caretakers can get back to the village and replenish their cooking supplies, their Type works normally again.

As the SB, you may disable this rule if you wish, just know that a Caretaker that Makes Camp at every single Stop will have generated 45 Snacks by the time



they get to 25 - The Lake's Center.

### **A Note About NPC Appearances**

In this scenario, a little modification needs to be made to the rules for NPC appearances. Because they would normally pop up every time the Fishers Make Camp, and because multiple Fishers can camp at a single location in this Scenario, a normal party would be swimming in NPCs by halfway to the Fish Of Legend.

So, for this Scenario, treat the NPC appearance rules as this:

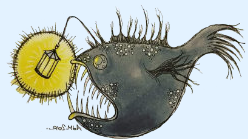
Once per Stop, when at least one of the Fishers is Making Camp, roll to see if an NPC appears.

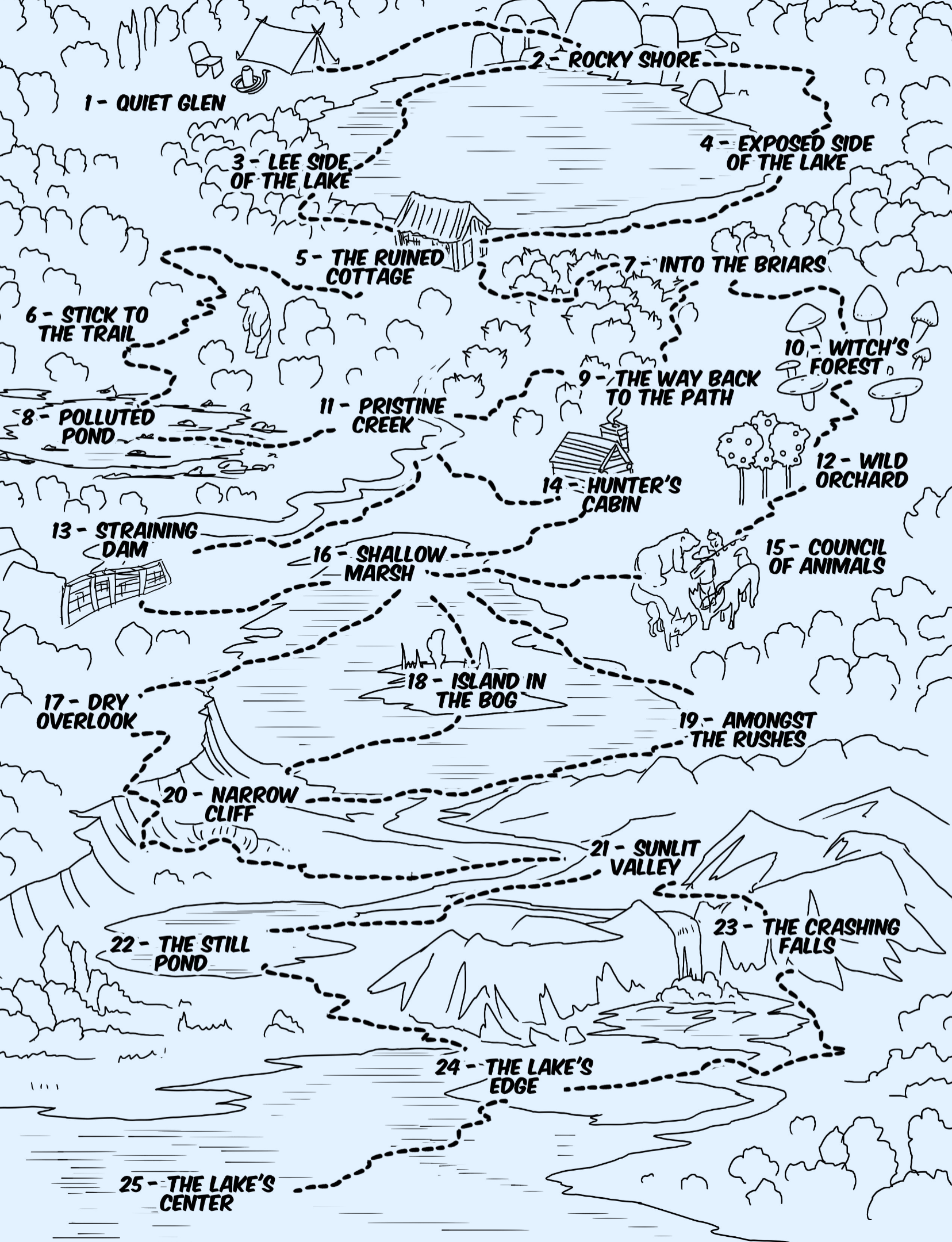
### **Intro**

If you ask any villager where the Old Region is, they'll say "there", and they'll point into the distance, to where you can just barely see a dip in the greenery that might indicate a lake.

It's a long walk, and there's no easy way to get to it, but you don't have a lot of other options...and besides, it would be a shame to give up now, before the journey's even begun.

If you keep a good pace, and you're careful with how frequently you take breaks, you should *just* be able to make it there and back in time.





1 - QUIET GLEN

2 - ROCKY SHORE

4 - EXPOSED SIDE OF THE LAKE

3 - LEE SIDE OF THE LAKE

5 - THE RUINED COTTAGE

7 - INTO THE BRIARS

6 - STICK TO THE TRAIL

10 - WITCH'S FOREST

8 - POLLUTED POND

11 - PRISTINE CREEK

9 - THE WAY BACK TO THE PATH

14 - HUNTER'S CABIN

12 - WILD ORCHARD

13 - STRAINING DAM

16 - SHALLOW MARSH

15 - COUNCIL OF ANIMALS

17 - DRY OVERLOOK

18 - ISLAND IN THE BOG

19 - AMONGST THE RUSHES

20 - NARROW CLIFF

21 - SUNLIT VALLEY

22 - THE STILL POND

23 - THE CRASHING FALLS

24 - THE LAKE'S EDGE

25 - THE LAKE'S CENTER

## 1 - Quiet Glen

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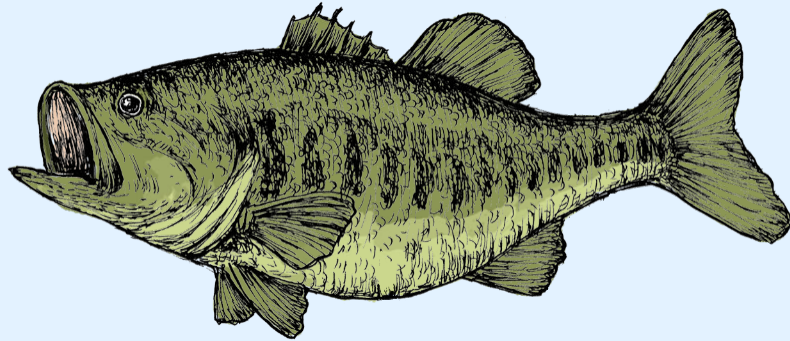
*The path into the Old Region starts in a secluded hollow. Foliage obscures a small, rocky pool where algae and frogs' eggs mix with half-sunken twigs at the banks.*

**Hazard/Opportunity:** On a sunny rock nearby, a **Snake, Lashtip** has curled around an unusual item. Trying to shoo the snake away costs an Action and begins a combat between the snake and any Fishers who want to join in. Win or lose, the snake slithers away, leaving behind a single can of "**Soda**". It is definitely aged, but still drinkable.

**Path to 2 - The Rocky Shore:** A pebbled path winds out of the glen, wending its way downhill towards a lake's edge. There are no hazards on this path.

### Fishing Spot:

- 1 - Carp, Grass
- 2 - Carp, Grass
- 3 - Bass, Fighting
- 4 - Catfish, Lurking
- 5 - Eel, Unagi
- 6 - Lionfish, Walking



When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## 2 - Rocky Shore

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*A wide, silvered lake fans out before you. The shores are pebbles and sand, with the occasional scrap of aluminum or plastic garbage half-sunken in the sediment. Birds sing overhead, and something rustles the sparse plantlife on the lake's edge as it slides unseen into the water.*

**Opportunity:** Instead of fishing or making camp here, Fishers may spend an Action to gather a single **Skipping Stone** here.

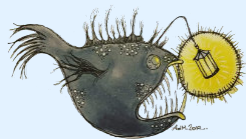
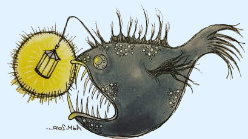
**Hazard:** The third person to try and fish this location triggers a fight with a **Snake, Mottled Hunter** that emerges from the water.

**Path to 3 - The Lee Side Of The Lake:** A quiet path leads to the sheltered, forested southern side of the lake. There are no hazards on this path.

**Path to 4 - The Exposed Side Of The Lake:** An exposed path leads to the bare, windy northern side of the lake. There are no hazards on this path.

### Fishing Spot:

- 1 - Carp, Grass
- 2 - Carp, Grass



- 3 - Pike, Voracious
- 4 - Bass, Fighting
- 5 - Turtle, Sagacious
- 6 - Trashfish

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

### **3 - Lee Side Of The Lake**

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*The wind is low and calm, although the branches overhanging the lake shake regularly with its movement.*

**Hazard:** Fishing through the screen of branches is difficult, and anyone who wishes to fish here must make a **Hard (TN 5)** roll or get their lure caught in the trees and waste their Action.

**Path to 5 - The Ruined Cottage:** A narrow path leads through fallen leaves towards a distant building made of thatch and falling-down stones. There is a **Timekeeper Spider** here, but the first person in line can spot it with a **Average (TN 4)** roll and call out its position, letting the group maneuver around it. Otherwise, it attacks. If it wins, the group must take the long way past it and all Fishers suffer +1 Exhaustion.

#### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Carp, Grass
- 2 - Carp, Grass
- 3 - Eel, Unagi
- 4 - Eel, Unagi
- 5 - Snakehead, Invasive
- 6 - Snakehead, Invasive

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

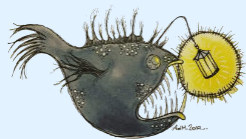
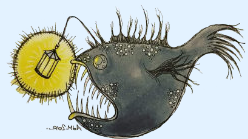
### **4 - Exposed Side Of The Lake**

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*The wind is fierce and thrashing, and it rakes the rocky ground like it's jealous of the earth's stability.*

**Primary Hazard:** On entering this area, all Fishers must make an **Average (TN 4)** roll or suffer an Exhaustion.

**Secondary Hazard:** This is an unpleasant area to Make Camp, and anyone who does so takes **1 Exhaustion** after their Make Camp ends.



**Path to 5 - The Ruined Cottage:** The shoreline curves, leading to a more sheltered area. In the distance, you can see an old building made of thatch and falling-down stones. There are no hazards on this path.

**Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Trashfish
- 2 - Trashfish
- 3 - Bass, Fighting
- 4 - Bass, Fighting
- 5 - Pike, Voracious
- 6 - Sturgeon, Leaping

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **5 - The Ruined Cottage**

---

*On the edge of a thicket is a building that looks like it must predate the entire region. Its roof, now fallen in, is moldy thatch, and its walls are made of unevenly shaped rocks---each the size of a person's chest. Whoever lived here is long gone. Probably.*

**Hazard/Opportunity:** One Fisher may spend an Action to investigate the cottage. This provokes an encounter with two **Centipedes, Giant** that the Fisher can simply back away from, wasting their Action, to avoid. Otherwise, they enter combat with the centipedes and any other Fishers can join in. If the Fishers win, the Centipedes are driven off and the Fishers find a **Truly Impressive Fishing Hat** inside.

**Primary Opportunity:** One Fisher may spend an Action to investigate a curious warp in the briars of the thicket. If a Fisher does this, they open up the path to **7 - Into The Briars**.

**Secondary Opportunity:** Any number of Fishers may spend Actions to pick berries from the edge of the thicket. Each Fisher who does this gets a **Snack**.

**Path to 6 - Stick To The Trail:** Unless a Fisher has discovered the path into the briars, all Fishers must take this path. A trail winds past the thicket, heading into a dark section of woods. There are no hazards on this path.

**Path to 7 - Into The Briars:** If a Fisher has discovered the path into the briars, the Fishers may take this route. A narrow path, looking more like an accident of the thicket's growth than any kind of intentional feature, snakes into its depths. All Fishers who take this path must make an **Average (TN 4)** roll or suffer 1 Exhaustion as their clothes get caught on the abundant thorns on all sides.



## **6 - Stick To The Trail**

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*The trail stretches on. And on. And on.*

*Are you even headed in the right direction?*

**Hazard:** Fishers may spend an Action to stop and get their bearings, making a **Hard (TN 5)** roll. If no one does this and succeeds, all Fishers suffer 1 Exhaustion when they leave this location.

**Opportunity:** Alternately, Fishers may spend an Action to forage, making a **Hard (TN 5)** roll. Each Fisher that succeeds this roll scrounges up enough edible roots, leaves, and mushrooms for **2 Snacks**.

**Path to 8 - Polluted Pond:** At last, the path breaks from the woods, leading down a mossy slope to a heavily polluted, oily pool. Unfortunately a **Bear, Adult** wanders across their path just before they get there. If they wait for it to pass, suffering 1 Exhaustion each, they do not need to fight it or bribe it with fish and Snacks. Otherwise, the party fights a bear.

## **7 - Into The Briars**

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*This was a bad idea. The thicket is dense and the thorny vines seem to reach out and snatch at you.*

*A reasonable person would turn back.*

**Primary Hazard:** All Fishers take **1 Exhaustion** upon entering this location and no one may Make Camp while here.

**Primary Opportunity:** Fishers may spend an Action to attempt to chart a path deeper into the thicket, making a **Hard (TN 5)** roll. If they succeed, the route to **10 - Witch's Forest** opens up.

**Secondary Opportunity:** Fishers may spend an Action to forage, making an **Average (TN 4)** roll to look for berries in the tangle. Any Fisher that succeeds gathers enough for **1 Snack**.

**Secondary Hazard:** When the Fishers exit this area, all Fishers must make a **Average (TN 4)** roll or take another Exhaustion from the thorns.

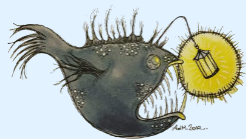
**Path to 9 - The Way Back To The Path:** Unless a Fisher has discovered the way to the witch's forest, all Fishers must take this path. The brambles form a sort of tunnel, leading away from the heart of the thicket. There are no hazards on this path.

**Path to 10 - Witch's Forest:** If a Fisher has discovered the way to the witch's forest, the Fishers may take this route. The path narrows further, but despite that you can see a clearing at the end. The sound of wind through leaves and the smell of fruit draws you onward. There are no hazards on this path.

## **8 - Polluted Pond**

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*A sickly sheen of oil covers the surface of this rocky rocky pool, and scraps of torn plastic, rusting cans, and discarded pieces of human detritus infest the shoreline. A shopping cart lies with its nose in the sand, half buried.*

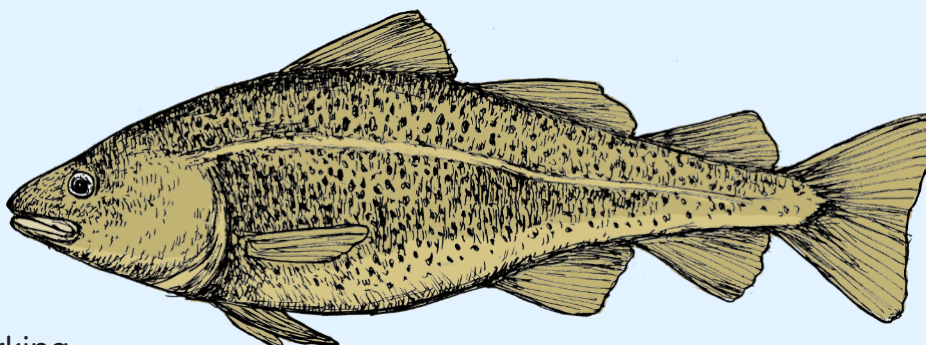


**Opportunity:** One Fisher may spend an Action to find a beached **Trashfish** on the shore.

**Path to 11 - Pristine Creek:** The sound of clean, rushing water call you on. A rocky, mossy rivulet leads you towards its source. There are no hazards on this path.

**Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Trashfish
- 2 - Trashfish
- 3 - Trashfish
- 4 - Trashfish
- 5 - Catfish, Lurking
- 6 - Snakehead, Invasive



When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

**9 - The Way Back To The Path**

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*The briars have thinned, but their presence is still choking the trees and other vegetation.*

**Hazard/Opportunity:** Any Fisher may spend an **Action** to clear a tree stump or rock of brambles. One Fisher may Make Camp in this location per rock or stump that has been cleared of brambles.

**Path to 11- Pristine Creek:** Through the obscuring thorns, you see a clear, clean stream running over rocks far downhill. There are no hazards on this path.

**10 - Witch's Forest**

---

*All of a sudden, the briars recede like an unwanted guest. In their place are trees, evenly spaced, birches and poplars and others that are totally alien to this climate. Sunlight filters down through the branches and hidden birds sing.*

*You feel watched, and---although there is no malice in it---you get the sense that this is not your place. You are intruders in someone else's home.*

**Primary Opportunity:** There is a delightful cluster of mushrooms, one which would make for a wonderful saute. One Fisher may spend an Action to pick it and receive **4 Snacks**.

**Secondary Opportunity:** A bough from one of the trees, if broken and modified, would make a fantastic walking stick. One Fisher may spend an Action to break it off and receive a **Hand Weapon**.

**Tertiary Opportunity:** Squirrels gambol and play around a mossy tree stump. You feel like you could learn something from them. One Fisher may spend an



Action to terrorize the squirrels and, in the process, learn **Fishing Technique: Ratatoskr's Reckless Abuse**.

**Hazard:** The SB should record how many of these special actions the players take, under a category marked as "**Sins**", on a separate piece of scrap paper.

**Path to 12 - Wild Orchard:** Miraculously, the quiet forest gives way to rows of fruit trees, with a small house in the middle. Could it be that someone lives here? There are no hazards on this path.

## **11 - Pristine Creek**

---

*A clear stream runs over rocks, burbling downhill.*

**Hazard:** Unfortunately, while the water is beautiful, the rocks are slippery, and all Fishers who declare that they intend to fish the creek must make an **Average (TN 4)** roll or slip and bang a knee for 1 Exhaustion.

**Path to 13 - Straining Dam:** To the south, the creek turns into a pond, the waters stopped with a crude dam of sticks and bracken. There are no hazards on this path.

**Path to 14 - Hunter's Cabin:** To the north, a staunch wooden cabin sits uphill, overlooking a lightly forested area. There are no hazards on this path.

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Bass, Fighting
- 2 - Bass, Fighting
- 3 - Catfish, Lurking
- 4 - Catfish, Lurking
- 5 - Smelt, Tornado
- 6 - Lionfish, Walking

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **12 - Wild Orchard**

---

*Row upon evenly spaced row of fruits trees grow here. The air is greenhouse-hot, and the mingled scents of lemons, oranges, and other tropical fare perfume the breeze.*

*In the center of the orchard is a small house in an antique style. Its windows are open, and its door is ajar.*

**Hazard/Opportunity:** There is a bee hive (treat it as a **Hornet Nest, Giant**) hanging from one of the lemon trees, and its insides are rich with honey. One Fisher may spend their Action to fight the bee hive, and any number of other Fishers may join in. If the Fishers win, they gain 2 of the unique Consumable



item **Honeycomb**, which clears 3 Exhaustion from a single Fisher. Win or lose, the SB records a "Sin" if the Fishers fight the bees' nest.

**Primary Opportunity:** Any Fisher may spend an Action to forage fruit from the trees. If they do, they receive **3 Snacks** and the SB marks down a "Sin".

**Secondary Opportunity:** Finally, any Fisher may spend an Action to inspect the house. No one is living there, but the pantries are well stocked and may be raided for supplies. Any Fisher that does so generates **2 Snacks** the next time they Make Camp and the SB records a "Sin".

**Path to 15 - Council Of Animals:** Suddenly there is a rumbling, as if hundreds of small feet were stamping the earth and thousands of gossamer wings were droning through the air---all at once. A host of animals forms, seemingly from all corners of the orchard and surrounds the Fishers. There are no hazards on this path.

### **13 - Straining Dam**

*A wide, slow-moving pond has formed, held in place by a dam of sticks and bracken. Water leaks past the edges and trickles through the gaps where the dam is just barely holding.*

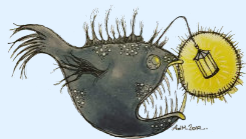
**Hazard/Opportunity:** If a Fisher wants, they may attempt to sabotage the dam. Doing so is dangerous, costs an **Action**, and causes them to get washed away. If a Fisher sabotages the dam, this location immediately ceases to be a fishable spot, the Fisher takes 4 Exhaustion and is carried off by the floodwaters (and cannot rejoin the party until they have reached **20 - Narrow Cliff**), and the players can pick two fish out of the flood (the SB rolls two times on this location's Fishing Spot. Results of 'Nothing' are, unfortunately, still 'Nothing'.)

**Path to 16 - Shallow Marsh:** Downhill from the dam are the verges of a reedy, shallow marsh. If the Fishers chose to sabotage the dam, they must face a **Smelt, Tornado** that has formed here from some of the stranded fish. Otherwise, there are no hazards on this path.

#### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Carp, Grass
- 2 - Carp, Grass
- 3 - Carp, Giant
- 4 - Catfish, Lurking
- 5 - Snakehead, Invasive
- 6 - Turtle, Sagacious

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.



## 14 - Hunter's Cabin

---

*A solidly-built wooden cabin perches on the top of a hill, surrounded by a light forest.*

**Primary Opportunity:** This area is a wonderful place to rest. Any Fisher who Makes Camp here ignores the next point of Exhaustion they would receive.

**Secondary Opportunity:** If the Fishers wish, at no Action cost, one of them may make an **Average (TN 4)** roll to notice scratch marks on trees indicating the presence of a bear. Additional Fishers may attempt this roll by spending an Action, but once a Fisher has succeeded there's no need for anyone else to roll.

**Hazard/Opportunity:** Any number of Fishers may spend an Action to go up the hill and check out the cabin. Those that do encounter a **Bear, Adult**. If the Fishers win combat with the bear, they may inspect the cabin. Otherwise, they have to retreat out of range. The cabin is uninhabited, but there is a small stockpile of preserved food (**4 Snacks** worth) as well as a spare **Hand Weapon** and a **Pepper Spray**.

**Path to 16 - Shallow Marsh:** In the near distance are the verges of a reedy, shallow marsh. There are no hazards on this path.

## 15 - Council Of Animals

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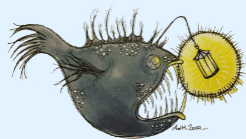
*The Fishers are surrounded by wild animals. There are bears, leeches, rabbits, hawks, salamanders, and more. All staring. All waiting.*

*There is an expectant silence in the air.*

**Opportunity:** If the party's "Sins" are 0: The animals part, revealing an overgrown shepherd's crook that was hidden in their midst. Tiny vines lace the old, sure wood, and any Fisher who uses it receives a **unique Hand Weapon** that adds +2 dice for the first three rounds of each Animal Combat and +1 die for the rest instead of just +1 die for the whole combat.

**Hazard:** If the party's "Sins" are 1+: A single **Leech, Mountain** inches out of the gathered animals and attacks the Fishers. If the party's "Sins" are 2+: A **Hornet, Single Giant** also buzzes forward to attack the Fishers. If the party's "Sins" are 4+: A **Raccoon, Devious** adds its chittering body to the fray. If the party's "Sins" are 6+: A **Bat, Shrieker** joins combat. If the party's "Sins" are 8+: A **Boar, Wild** joins combat. If the party's "Sins" are 10+: A **Bear, Wild** advances on the Fishers, roaring. If the Fishers all lose this combat, the animals take pieces of Equipment from them equal to half the number of Fishers (round up). The SB chooses what gets taken.

**Path to 16 - Shallow Marsh:** The party is either shepherded or chased (depending on their actions) out of the orchard and back through a dense wall of briars, finally emerging onto the verges of a reedy, shallow marsh. If the Fishers had at least 1 "Sin", they all suffer **1 Exhaustion** as they hurry through the briars.



## **16 - Shallow Marsh**

---

*The brush cover clears away, revealing a wide, shallow marsh. Startled by your appearance, a heron launches into the air, its wings beating thunderously as it passes overhead.*

*There seems to be no good way to cross this stretch. You'll either have to swing wide to find dry land, you'll have to force your way through foliage as you skirt the deepest parts, or you'll have to take a deep breath, resign yourself to getting muddy, and head straight through.*

**Hazard:** When the Fishers enter this area, they are confronted by two **Leeches, Mountain**.

**Opportunity:** There is also an old, **aluminum canoe** that has been abandoned in the reeds. If half of the Fishers (round down, minimum 1) spend their Actions repairing it, the party can travel through **18 - The Island In The Bog** without suffering any Exhaustion from the trip.

**Path to 17 - Dry Overlook:** To the south, the ground becomes rocky and slopes upward, making for a climb that---while unpleasant, at least does not leave you waterlogged. All Fishers that attempt this path must make an **Average (TN 4)** roll or suffer 1 Exhaustion.

**Path to 18 - Island In The Bog:** Ugh. There's parts where the muck is almost neck deep. All Fishers that attempt this path automatically take **2 Exhaustion** before struggling out onto the little island in the center of the marsh---unless the party repaired the **aluminum canoe**.

**Path to 19 - Amongst The Rushes:** The foliage is thick this way, but at least the water stays shallow. Unfortunately, there is a **Snake, Mottled Hunter** lying right in the path, and the Fishers will have to confront it and win if they wish to go this route.

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Eel, Unagi
- 2 - Catfish, Lurking
- 3 - Carp, Grass
- 4 - Carp, Grass
- 5 - Eel, Insidious
- 6 - Eel, Insidious

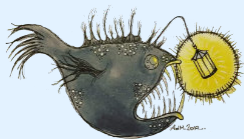
When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **17 - Dry Overlook**

---

*It's nice to have somewhere to wring out your socks.*

*The overlook gives you a fairly scenic view of the rest of the marsh while you*



*wait for them to dry.*

**Opportunity:** Fishers that Make Camp here **ignore the first point of Stress** they would suffer after breaking camp.

**Path to 20 - Narrow Cliff:** In the distance, you see the marshy earth sloping up, and then suddenly dropping away. You suspect you'll have to do some climbing in the future. There are no hazards on this path.

## **18 - Island In The Bog**

---

*This seems to have once been a fishers' paradise, but it was neglected by the people who used it most. There are bobbers and lines tangled in the reeds, lead sinkers and hooks scattered around the edges of the small shore, and non-decomposed snack packets infesting the loam and grass.*

**Opportunity:** Any Fisher may spend an Action to comb the island for useable material. All Fishers who do must roll a **Very Hard (TN 6)**. The first Fisher to succeed finds an unopened packet of **Artisan Boilies**.

**Path to 20 - Narrow Cliff:** It's another long slog through the marsh, but at the end you see the earth sloping up and then suddenly dropping away, suggesting a cliff or some other steep decline. All Fishers that take this path suffer **2 Exhaustion**---unless the party repaired the **aluminum canoe** at **16 - The Shallow Marsh**.

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Trashfish
- 2 - Trashfish
- 3 - Carp, Giant
- 4 - Carp, Goldenscale
- 5 - Snakehead, Invasive
- 6 - Turtle, Sagacious

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **19 - Amongst The Rushes**

---

*Insects drone and the rushes rattle in the wind, creating an insulating susurrus that dampens the sounds of the outside world. With the plantlife so thick that you can't see more than a foot past your face, time becomes a vague, shifting thing. You wonder if you'll emerge out the other side in a completely different century.*

**Hazard:** Casting lines here is difficult without wading into the marsh itself. Every Fisher that decides to fish here must choose: either make an **Average (TN 4)** roll and have your bait get caught in the reeds, wasting your Action on a failure, or cast normally but start Fish Combat with 1 Stress.



**Hazard/Opportunity:** The Fishers may wish to have one of their number scout ahead in order to avoid bumping onto some kind of dangerous animal while wading through the rushes. Scouting ahead costs an **Action**, but if no Fisher does this, the party runs into a **Snake, Mottled Hunter** when they try to leave the area.

**Path to 20 - Narrow Cliff:** At last the plantlife begins to thin and you see the marshy earth sloping up, and then suddenly dropping away. You suspect you'll have to do some climbing in the future. There are no hazards on this path.

#### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Pike, Voracious
- 2 - Pike, Voracious
- 3 - Bass, Fighting
- 4 - Carp, Grass
- 5 - Trashfish
- 6 - Eel, Unagi

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

### **20 - Narrow Cliff**

---

*A narrow path winds down the side of a sheer stone cliff. Far below it, a wide and grassy valley basks in the sunlight.*

**Hazard:** Fishers attempting to descend the cliff must make a **Hard (TN 5)** roll to keep their footing. Failure means they slip and tumble over the edge, barely managing to grab a hold of a rock or root and claw their way back up to safety. This ordeal is exhausting, and anyone who fails the roll takes **4 Exhaustion**.

**Primary Hazard/Opportunity:** Fishers may not Make Camp here, but each Fisher may spend their **Action** to lower the difficulty of the roll to descend the cliff to **Average (TN 3)**.

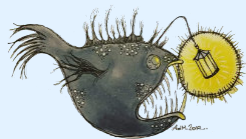
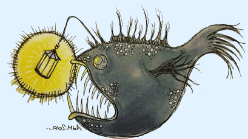
**Secondary Hazard/Opportunity:** Alternately, there are some fascinating holes and crevices in the rock wall. One Fisher may spend an Action to stick a hand inside one to see what they can find. And the answer to that question is a **Bat, Shrieker**, which immediately attacks the party. Left behind in the crevice afterwards is a set of **Skipping Stones**.

**Path to 21 - Sunlit Valley:** At the base of the cliff a wide, grassy valley awaits. Sweet, sweet terra firma. There are no hazards on this path.

### **21 - Sunlit Valley**

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*The grass here is as soft as any bed, and the wind makes soothing sounds as it rustles the warm blades. This would be a good place to take a nap.*



**Primary Opportunity:** Any Fisher that Makes Camp here ignores the next point of Exhaustion they would suffer.

**Secondary Opportunity:** Any Fisher may spend an Action to meditate here and learn a single Fishing Technique or Fighting Technique.

**Path to 22 - The Still Pond:** On the south side of the valley is a wide, deep pool. Its waters look sweet with mysteries. Unfortunately, you can see the hunched back of a **Boar, Wild** through the rippling grasses, and you'll have to confront it if you want to visit the pool.

**Path to 23 - The Crashing Falls:** On the north side of the valley is another cliff face, this one with water spilling down it in a crashing torrent from the glacial reservoir high above. There are no hazards on this path.



## **22 -The Still Pond**

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*This might be the perfect fishing spot. The wind is calm. Dragonflies flitter across the surface of the water. And all at once the fattest carp you've ever seen leaps from the pool, snagging a passing insect in its mouth, and slams down into the water with all the force of a piscine cannon-ball.*

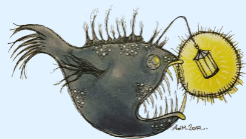
*Your hook is baited before you're even aware of having unholstered your fishing kit.*

**Path to 24 - The Lake's Edge:** Past the pool is a sandy stretch leading to the edge of a wide, perfect lake. There are no hazards on this path.

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Carp, Grass
- 2 - Carp, Grass
- 3 - Carp, Giant
- 4 - Carp, Goldenscale
- 5 - Carp, Goldenscale
- 6 - Koi, Ageless Master

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.



## **23 - The Crashing Falls**

---

*The roar of the falls all but obliterates background conversation, but that's alright. The pool at their base is perfect for fishing.*

**Opportunity:** Instead of Making Camp, any Fisher may toughen themselves by standing under the falls for as long as they can manage. This costs an **Action** and inflicts 1 Exhaustion, but that Fisher ignores the next 3 Stress they would take.

**Path to 24 - The Lake's Edge:** After another trek through the valley's grasses, you reach a sandy stretch leading to the edge of a wide, perfect lake. There are no hazards on this path.

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Eel, Unagi
- 2 - Eel, Unagi
- 3 - Carp, Giant
- 4 - Trout, Glacial Bull
- 5 - Trout, Glacial Bull
- 6 - Trout, Glacial Bull

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **24 - The Lake's Edge**

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*This is it. The fringes of the Fish Of Legend's domain.*

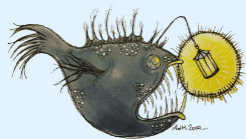
*The lake is quiescent. Nothing moves beneath its silver, mirrored surface. The water waits for you.*

*In the reeds by the bank is a wooden rowboat. Somehow, it is in pristine condition.*

**Path to 25 - The Lake's Center:** The rowboat is just wide enough to hold all of you. Calmly you man the oars and head towards the center of the lake. There are no hazards on this path.

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Trashfish
- 2 - Carp, Grass
- 3 - Bass, Fighting
- 4 - Carp, Goldenscale
- 5 - Pike, Voracious



## 6 - Eel, Insidious

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **25 - The Lake's Center**

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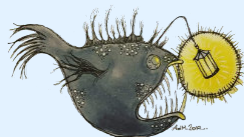
*This is it: the heart of the old region. If there is any truth to the stories, the thing that will save your village is here, beneath you.*

*Dip your hook, and may the ghosts of fishers past guide you.*

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - The Fish Of Legend
- 2 - Nothing
- 3 - Nothing
- 4 - Nothing
- 5 - Nothing
- 6 - Nothing

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.



## **SBing The Road Of Fish**

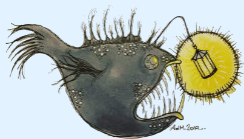
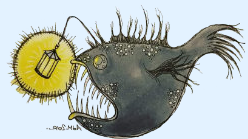
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This Scenario, despite being a little tougher for the players, is much easier to SB than The Truth Of The Grotto. If you're new as an SB and you've got experienced players, you may want to try running this first.

Because this Scenario is so structured (the Fishers travel in a roughly straight line until they reach the Fish Of Legend, and then they get one attempt each to catch it), the players will set the pace. Don't be afraid to prompt the players occasionally ("would you like to do this?"), but otherwise the Scenario will feed them important choices at fixed intervals. You just have to read the text and administrate fish and animal combat.

If this seems a little dull, you can absolutely do more, focusing on building mood and atmosphere with your narration (concentrating on little details like the hum of cicadas in the background, or the sound of the wind through the grass), or you can adapt the Scenario to fit your own setting or style, changing mechanics or fluff details until you have something more uniquely tailored to you and your group.

That isn't *required*, however, and Road Of Fish can just as easily make for a good casual Scenario for nights when you don't have the brain-energy for something else.



## **The Catch Of The Day**

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This Scenario is probably the closest to a 'normal' scenario from any other game. It takes place in a specific setting, with specific characters, but it otherwise is relatively open-ended.

If you are very familiar and comfortable with other tabletop roleplaying games but not yet convinced that you want to play a game that's purely about fish, this may be a good place to start.

### **Changes (Fishers In Time)**

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The Catch Of The Day takes place in Portswald, an idyllic coastal fishing community. In this Scenario, Portswald is both the Village and the Old Region, so the players don't get to create these things (unless you are very flexible and you don't mind modding the Scenario on the fly.)

Similarly predefined are Tragedy and Fish Of Legend. The Fish Of Legend is a being called Challu that sleeps beneath the waves. Challu doesn't like being disturbed, and---when a coastal trawler sweeps over its resting place---it destroys the town. Fortunately, the wave of energies that it releases to flatten Portswald has an unintended side-effect: it flings the Fishers (and only the Fishers) back in time several hours. This *does not* stop Challu from being netted again in several hours time, so---unless the Fishers find some way to prevent that---the Great Dreamer will be awoken again and again and the cycle will repeat endlessly.

This is the Tragedy.

Because this Scenario takes place over a set period of time, **each use of Make Camp** consumes one hour from the **Scenario Clock**, and **every third fishing attempt in the same loop** consumes one hour from the Scenario Clock. The Scenario Clock has **six hours** on it, and when the last one is used up the timeloop resets.

Whenever the timeloop resets, the Fishers start one hour further into the Scenario than the last time they looped.

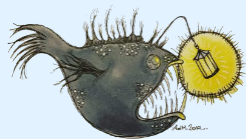
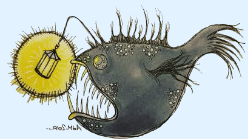
So, when the Scenario begins the Fishers have six hours on the clock. The first time they loop, they return to the start of the Scenario, but one of those hours is already used. The second time they loop, they return to the start of the Scenario, but two of those hours are already used, and so on.

If the Fishers loop in such a way as to cause them to have zero hours remaining, there is no longer enough time to prevent the Tragedy from occurring. The future becomes inevitable.

**Whenever the Fishers loop, they lose any Equipment they are currently carrying** (with some exceptions, spelled out elsewhere in the Scenario,) as well as their current Stress and Exhaustion, but they keep any Techniques they have learned.

Furthermore, **Fishers do not start this Scenario with any Equipment.**

...except for any specific pieces of Equipment that are unique to their Type



(such as Mining Charges for the Engineer), which they do start with, and which return to their inventory at the start of every loop.

For this reason, it is recommended that only one player play an Engineer in this Scenario. The consequences for a whole squad of engineers dynamiting every fishing location in Portswald may be narratively interesting, but they do skew the game balance a bit.

## **Intro**

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It is mid-afternoon on a quiet day in quaint, coastal Portswald when a blinding flash lights up the bay. And it doesn't stop there. The light comes on like a blazing wall, ripping up the shoreline, flattening the local businesses, and at last reaching you. You feel a moment of heat, and of dizzying dislocation, and then suddenly the light is gone and you're surrounded by a crowd.

Students and parents and volunteers and vendors congest the front lawn of the Portswald Schools complex, several with signs or banners proudly declaring that it is Whale Watch Day.

You blink.

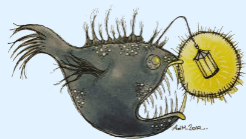
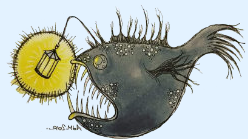
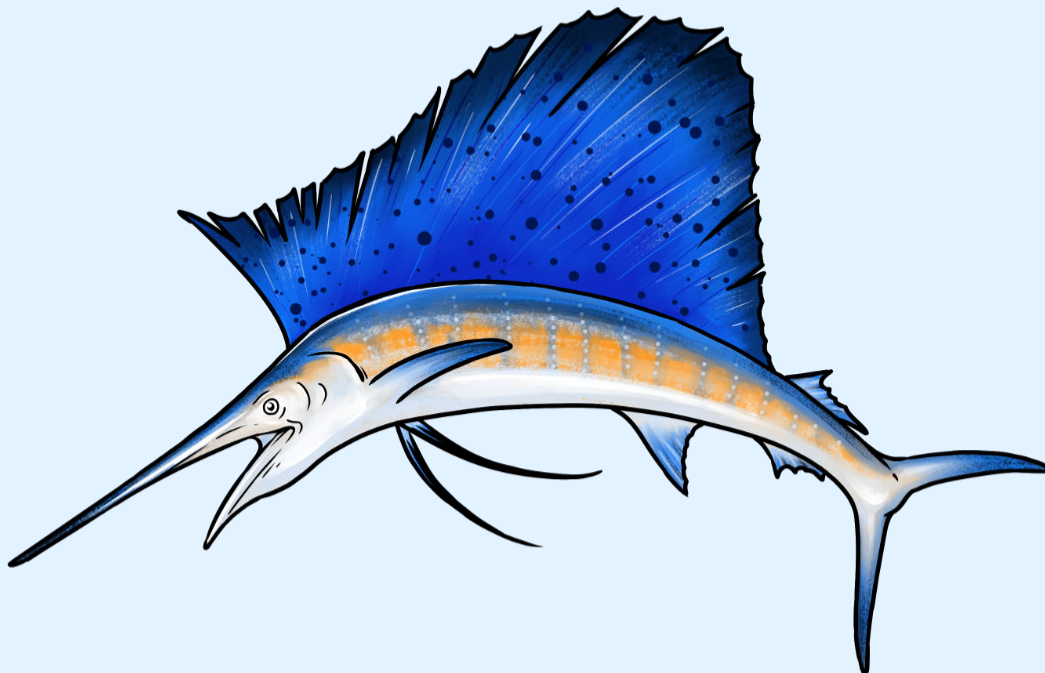
This is where you were this morning.

And judging by the position of the sun in the sky, it's morning again.

Around you, several people are also blinking and looking disoriented, but otherwise the festivities marking the start of Portswald Whale Watch Day are proceeding without a hitch.

What happened to you? And what about the people standing next to you, blinking in confusion as well?

Your only clue is that light from the bay.



## **Timeline Of Events**

---

**Millions Of Years Ago:** The great dreamer Challu crashes from orbit into the place that would become Portswald Bay.

**This Morning:** Portswald schoolchildren wake up excited, certain in the knowledge that today will be the official Portswald K--12 Whale Watch Day.

**Three Hours Left:** The whale watches begin. Children, parents, guides, and volunteers board the boats and set off into Portswald Bay.

**One Hour Left:** The whales are really incredible. Several of them breach spectacularly for the onlookers, and everyone gets sprayed.

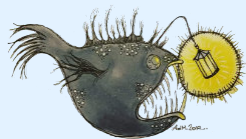
**Zero Hours Left:** The coastal trawler Cat's Cradle, while deviating from its normal route, accidentally snares Challu in its net. The awakened Challu releases an energy pulse that destroys the trawler and the town and---by accident---flings the Fishers back in time.

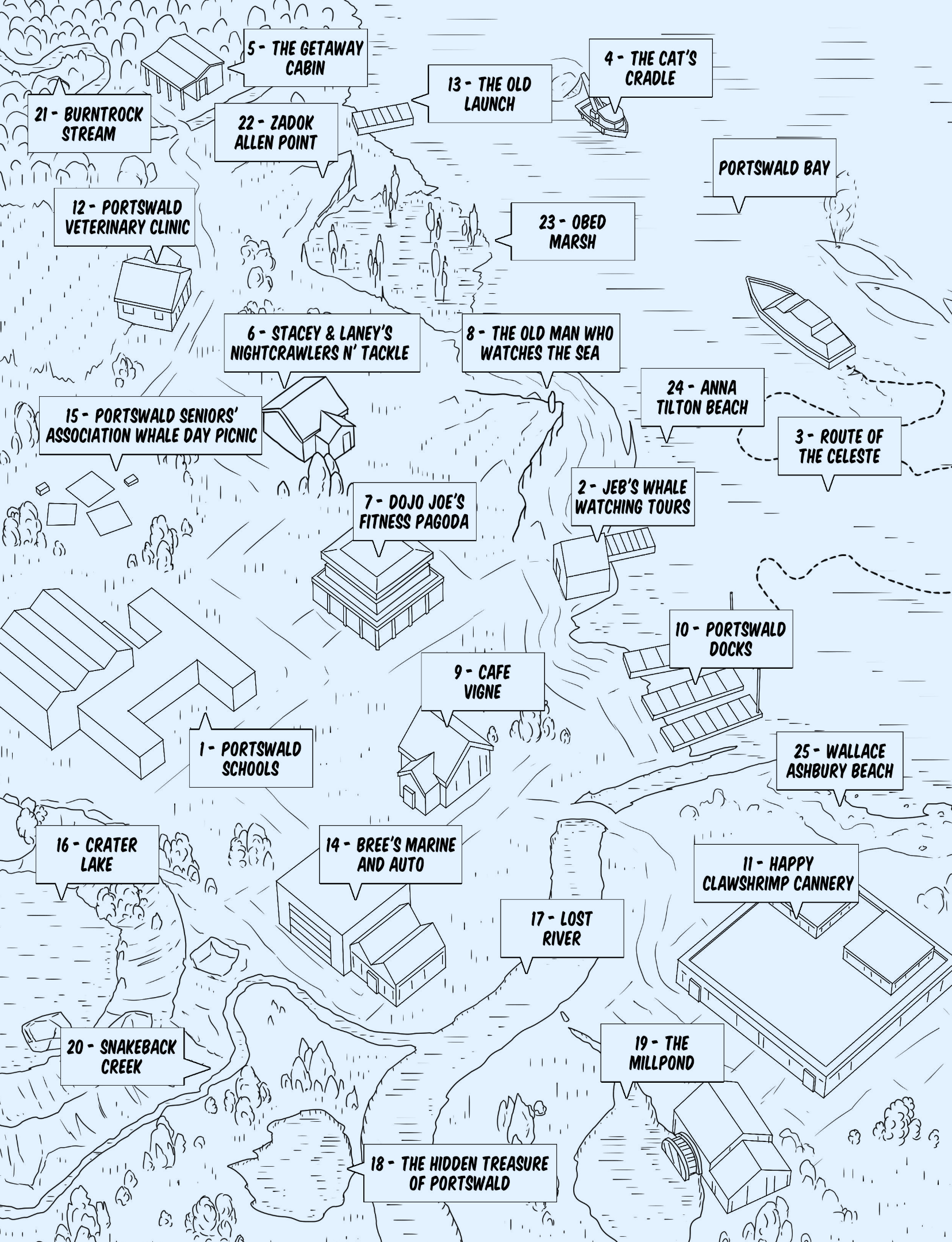
## **Portswald PD**

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Depending on the kinds of actions the Fishers take, they may end up getting the police called on them. Evading one or two members of Portswald PD is only a **Hard (TN 5)** roll, but if the Fishers have gotten the police called on them twice in one loop, that difficulty jumps up to a **Legendary (TN 7)** as the local department sends multiple cars. Fishers that fail to evade the police are held for one hour if this is their first time being caught, or 3 hours if it is their second time being caught, or until the end of the loop if they did something particularly egregious or were an especially dedicated repeat offender.

Fishers that are members of Portswald PD are not exempt from getting the police called on them.





21 - BURNTROCK  
STREAM

22 - ZADOK  
ALLEN POINT

13 - THE OLD  
LAUNCH

4 - THE CAT'S  
CRADLE

PORTSWALD BAY

12 - PORTSWALD  
VETERINARY CLINIC

23 - OBED  
MARSH

6 - STACEY & LANEY'S  
NIGHTCRAWLERS N' TACKLE

8 - THE OLD MAN WHO  
WATCHES THE SEA

24 - ANNA  
TILTON BEACH

3 - ROUTE OF  
THE CELESTE

15 - PORTSWALD SENIORS'  
ASSOCIATION WHALE DAY PICNIC

7 - DOJO JOE'S  
FITNESS PAGODA

2 - JEB'S WHALE  
WATCHING TOURS

10 - PORTSWALD  
DOCKS

25 - WALLACE  
ASHBURY BEACH

1 - PORTSWALD  
SCHOOLS

9 - CAFE  
VIGNE

16 - CRATER  
LAKE

14 - BREE'S MARINE  
AND AUTO

17 - LOST  
RIVER

11 - HAPPY  
CLAWSHRIMP CANNERY

20 - SNAKEBACK  
CREEK

18 - THE HIDDEN TREASURE  
OF PORTSWALD

19 - THE  
MILLPOND

## **1 - Portswald Schools**

---

*K--12, this brick complex houses the three schools that make up the Portswald district: Legrasse Elementary, Mason Middle, and Marsh High. Connecting them is a long looping driveway, bordered by a weedy but well-clipped lawn.*

All Fishers start at this location, unless the players and SB agree both that things should be otherwise.

**Sam Newbury** is an administrator at the school and the elder sister of Bree Newbury in **14 - Bree's Marine And Auto**.

**Opportunity:** Sam has a **family recipe for bolinhos de mandioca** that Bree wants, but she won't part with it easily, especially if she knows Bree wants it, since the two had a falling out that neither is willing to reconcile. However, Sam does want something for a display that the school's science department is creating. If the Fishers can get her **1 fish + 1 fish per Fisher** (or a flat 2 fish total, if this is the fifth loop or later) for a mini aquarium, she'll give them the recipe.

**Six Hours Left:** There is a great crowd of children, parents, teachers, volunteers, and vendors assembled here as the students get ready for an exciting day of whale-related activities and learning. Sam Newbury is impossible to find in the crowd.

**Five Hours Left:** The students have momentarily dispersed into the school. The dropoff loop is completely empty. Sam Newbury can easily be found in the school.

**Four Hours Left:** The crowd has returned! Busses and parent volunteers are picking up gaggles of students and driving them over to **2 - Jeb's Whaling Tours**. Sam Newbury is impossible to find in the crowd.

**Three Hours Left -> One Hour Left:** The school is empty except for administrative and janitorial staff. Sam Newbury can easily be found in the school.

## **2 - Jeb's Whale Watching Tours**

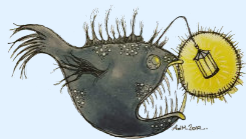
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*Just off of the Portswald Docks is the most popular company in town. Jeb's is run out of a squat wooden building with a small wharf behind it. Paint is peeling off the building's edges, but a hand-lettered sign advertising the times of the daily tours is in good repair.*

**Jeb, just Jeb** can be found here. He's a wiry man in his late sixties who looks every inch his age. Jeb runs the company, but he doesn't go on the tours. He says his presence is off-putting to the patrons. Whether or not this is true, Jeb is a trove of nautical stories, and he will tell one to the Fishers if they'll stop to listen (**roll 1d6** on the Jeb's Stories table). Jeb will only deliver one story per loop, but he has a spare lunch consisting of **2 Snacks** that a Fisher can talk him out of with a **Hard (TN 5) roll**.

**Jeb's Stories (roll 1d6):**

**1** - "Gotta love the proprietors of the Nightcrawlers n' Tackle. They're up early every morning, gathering worms, and they do a brisk business off of it. This season, their rental rods are usually gone right around first light, but they've



got some personal kit put away in the back. They've been known to lend it to people they like."

2 - "Howard---you know, the guy who spends all his time up on the bluff---he's a weird one. Carries that strange carved rod and mumbles on about the spiritual significance of clawshrimp. 'S just good eatin', I've always believed."

3 - "They're not supposed t'do it, but I've spotted trawlers sometimes in the protected waters on the west side of the bay. Lot of old bric-a-brac down there. Some of it looks like ruins. Old fish, too. Nothing I'd want pulled up out of the water and put in a can, if you understand what I'm saying." **The Fishers now know where Challu will awaken.**

4 - "'S an old fishing technique, but folks used'a throw herbs in the water to make the fish all sleepy, then scoop 'em up. 'Course, that's very illegal now, but think of what you could accomplish with modern tranquilizers!"

5 - "If you're anglers, you should really carry a lemon on you. One squeeze of juice really picks up the flavor of a fresh-caught fish." **The Fishers receive a Lemon, and Jeb will give them a Lemon in future loops if they ask for one.**

6 - "Look, Ahmad over at the cafe sometimes hears things I don't. I mean, maybe they're not all True Tales Of The Ocean, but even though he's a newcomer, he knows a lot about the town. Also he gave me these coupons for hareeseh. Nice of him. Can't use 'em, though. Sweets hurt my teeth." **If the Fishers go to 9 - Cafe Vigne this loop, they can spend the stack of coupons to gain 1 Snack per Fisher.**

**Opportunity:** As long as there are at least 3 hours left on the Scenario Clock, the Fishers can board the Celeste, wait for it to launch, and access **3 - The Route Of The Celeste** from here. The Fishers may **know where Challu will awaken** if they are on board the Celeste when the number of hours remaining hits zero.

**Six Hours Left -> Four Hours Left:** Waves lap at the wharf. The Celeste is here. Jeb is here.

**Three Hours Left:** Waves lap at the wharf. The Celeste is about to leave port. Jeb is here.

**Two Hours Left -> One Hour Left:** Waves lap at the wharf. The Celeste is gone. Jeb is here.

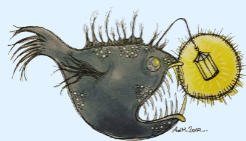
### **3 - The Route Of The Celeste**

*The Celeste, gleaming and majestic, unmatched in its ocean-going prowess, is the town's premier whale watch boat.*

*It's in moderately good repair, it has nothing visibly peeling or warped, and its name has been carefully detailed on the side.*

**Restriction:** This location can only be accessed from **2 - Jeb's Whale Watching Tours**, or from another boat in the bay.

**Constance Winters, the captain of the Celeste,** is a no-nonsense woman in her mid-fifties who conducts the whale watch tours with a briskness that, while



sometimes bordering on curt, doesn't diminish the audience's enthusiasm for seeing whales in the wild.

**Six Hours Left -> Four Hours Left:** Waves lap at the side of the vessel. The Celeste has not yet departed.

**Three Hours Left:** Waves lap at the side of the vessel. The Celeste is about to depart.

**Two Hours Left:** Waves lap at the side of the vessel. The Celeste has departed, but the shoreline is still near.

**One Hour Left:** Waves lap at the side of the vessel. The Celeste has reached its final position. If the Fishers Make Camp here with one hour left, the Scenario Clock ticks down to zero and the loop begins, but they can see where the flash of light in the bay is coming from. They now **know where Challu will awaken**.

#### **4 - The Cat's Cradle**

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*A fishing trawler fallen on hard times, the Cat's Cradle cuts a slightly disheveled figure as it plows through the waves. It is off of its normal route, and these waters are restricted to commercial interests, but times have been tough and following the law has been keeping the captain and crew from making enough to live on.*

**Restriction:** The Fishers may not reach this location unless they both **know where Challu will awaken** and have repaired the **old boat** from **13 - The Old Launch** or else secured some other means of transport.

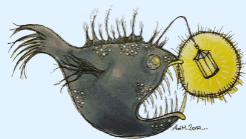
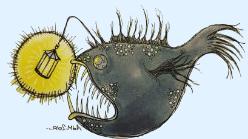
**Captain Terrence Whately** is the captain of the Cradle. An early fifties man with a full white beard, Whately looks like a sort of lean, wool-sweatered, economic hardship Santa Claus. He doesn't like the idea of being caught in waters where he isn't technically supposed to be fishing, but he likes even less the idea of going home with an inadequate haul. He refuses to deviate the boat from its course, and his burly crew will back him up on that. However, he will allow anyone who ends up on his boat to fish off the side. If they're illegally fishing too, they're less likely to report him to the authorities.

**Option:** Fishers that reach this location don't have to board the Cradle itself, and they may prefer not to, as Captain Whately will resist any attempts to alter his course.

**Hazard:** Parking a boat in front of Whately to head him off won't work here. Whately will play chicken, both parties will lose, and the loop will trigger as the sound of the collision and the wreckage drifting down through the water column awakens Challu.

**Opportunity:** Challu may be fished for from any boat in this spot *only* as long as **the Cat's Cradle is here** and the following conditions have been met: the Fishers have **canned clawshrimp chum**, they have **heavy-dosage marine animal tranquilizers** or **regional herbs**, and they have the **rod of renewed purpose**.

**Six Hours Left -> Three Hours Left:** Nothing moves beneath the surface. The Cat's Cradle is not here.



**Two Hours Left:** Nothing moves beneath the surface. The Cat's Cradle is in sight.

**One Hour Left:** The Cat's Cradle is here. Below the surface, a trawling net heads for the resting place of Challu.

**Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - The Fish Of Legend (Challu)
- 2 - Nothing
- 3 - Nothing
- 4 - Nothing
- 5 - Nothing
- 6 - Nothing

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

**5 - The Getaway Cabin**

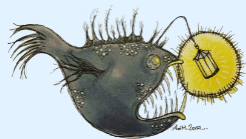
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*A small wooden cabin in good repair at the end of a long dirt driveway, this spot is a ways off of the closest side road, but it's not impossible to get to. Trail signs advertising "the getaway cabin" can be found every couple dozen feet, and the path is generally clear of debris. Around the cabin is a clearing, bordered on all sides but the driveway by moderately dense forest. There is a generator in the back, and a satellite dish on the roof.*

**Hazard:** This property is owned by **DVM Fumiko Steward**, the vet from **12 - Portswald Veterinary Clinic**, and it has a modern alarm system installed. Lately the alarm has been going off regularly and Fumiko and her husband have been at their wits' end as to why. If a cabin door or window is opened, Fumiko will come racing over to investigate, arriving five minutes after the tripping of the alarm. Opening any door without keying in a password triggers the alarm, but Fishers can realize this and bypass the system with a **Legendary (TN 7)** roll. Bypassing the alarm allows them to explore the area without being confronted by an angry Fumiko.

**Primary Opportunity:** Inside the cabin, on the dining room table, is a **list of prospective fishing locations**. It includes **21 - Burntrock Stream** and **22 - Zadok Allen Point**, but it also has a ton of scrawled notes about **17 - The Lost River**. The notes indicate that Fumiko's husband has been trying to solve the mystery of the river and its supposed treasure, and that Fumiko has gotten pulled into this presumably futile hunt. At the bottom of the list is the phrase "north, west, south...something. I'm sure I'm on the right track, but I keep wandering in circles."

**Secondary Opportunity:** Findable in the cabin is a set of **Artisan Boilies**, a spare **Rod**, **6 Snacks**, and a pack of **"Soda"**. It takes five minutes to locate these things.



**Opportunity/Hazard:** If the Fishers **Make Camp** here, a **Raccoon, Devious** will emerge from the surrounding forest, go up to the cabin, deliberately trip the alarm, and then attempt to bound off into the woods, chittering triumphantly. If the Fishers engage this creature in Animal Combat and defeat it, they can present the captured raccoon to Fumiko as the culprit that was messing with her alarm system. Fumiko will be extremely grateful---although somewhat weirded out that the Fishers were on her property---and she will immediately head off, raccoon in tow, to relocate it to the next town over. For the rest of the loop, Fumiko is gone from **12 - Portswald Veterinary** and the Fishers can burgle it without needing to pass a roll.

**Six Hours Left -> One Hour Left:** The wind stirs the trees. The area around the cabin is peaceful.

## **6 - Stacy And Laney's Nightcrawlers n' Tackle**

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*A folksy wooden shack on the edge of the woods, a short walk from the beach, Stacy And Laney's sells fishing supplies. In the mornings during tourist season, the place is especially lively, its little asphalt lot filled with cars with out-of-state plates.*

**Restriction:** Fishing Rods, Tackle Boxes, and most other fishing supplies are currently all rented out for the day, and **cannot be purchased here.**

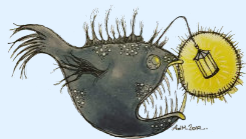
**Stacy, Laney's business partner,** is precise, high energy, and prone to worrying. She's the younger of the two, being in her late twenties, but she's also the majority owner of the tackle shop, and she does the books for the place---a process she finds much more relaxing than talking with customers. Stacy's family is from much further north and, if pressed for stories, she'll spin one of several hokey tales about a creature known as the Hudson Bay Goblin. She'll also direct Fishers towards **8 - The Old Man Who Watches The Sea** or **9 - Cafe Vigne** if they want local rumors.

**Laney, Stacy's business partner,** is in her early thirties. Laney is the more easy-going and customer-friendly of the two, but she's also an expert fisher and claims to have learned most of what she knows growing up in Barbados. She will, be suitably impressed by anyone who brings her **3 Uncommon or better fish** that they caught, and the first Fisher that **Makes Camp** at the shop to tell her the story of these catches will be taught a **Fishing Technique.**

**Primary Opportunity:** The first time each loop that the Fishers stop here, they can each get a Consumable item called **Nightcrawlers.** When used, Nightcrawlers provides a +1 die bonus to every roll the Fisher makes during the first round of a Fish Combat.

**Secondary Opportunity:** Neither Stacy or Laney packed lunch this morning, and this is still the busy season, making them reluctant to step away from the shop. If the Fishers can bring them **(Fishers + 1) Snacks,** Stacy and Laney will break into their own personal equipment and **lend the Fishers Fishing Rods and Tackle Boxes for the day.**

**Tertiary Opportunity:** If the Fishers ever manage to bring them **(Fishers + 1) x2 Snacks** in a single loop, Stacy and Laney will swear by **Stacy's mother's full name** (Madeline Wollenstonecraft Adel Jamison) to **lend them fishing kit**



**whenever they need it.** Bringing this up during later loops gets the Fishers kit for the day, no Snacks required, although it does confuse the two women a little, as they don't remember promising any such thing. Still, Stacy's mother's full name is an awfully specific thing to know, so it must have happened.

**Six Hours Left:** Stacy and Laney have just gotten in and the shop is bustling. The crowd is so thick that newcomers have to elbow their way through **(TN 4)**, suffering 1 Exhaustion if they fail.

**Five Hours Left:** The early morning crowd has dispersed and the proprietors are doing a brisk business, but no longer a frantic one.

**Four Hours Left:** There's only a few containers of nightcrawlers left from the morning's sales and business is still going strong.

**Three Hours Left:** Business has slowed a little and Laney is out collecting more bait.

**Two Hours Left:** Laney is back in the shop but Stacy is out collecting bait.

**One Hour Left:** Both proprietors are back in the shop and business has slowed to a trickle. The two women are considering closing for an hour or so to go run errands, but are conflicted over potentially missing a few late customers.

## **7 - Dojo Joe's Martial Fitness Pagoda**

*A nondescript concrete building, whitewashed, with "The Pagoda" painted on the side that faces the road, the only martial arts studio in Portswald would be doomed to sketchy obscurity were it not for the titular Joe's willingness to befriend every human or animal that comes through its doors.*

*The parking lot outside the pagoda is usually empty, and class attendance is sparse, but the place generally has a good reputation with locals---just not with newcomers, as its forbidding exterior and Joe's general weirdness don't do much to sell it to the average passerby.*

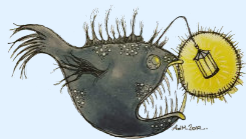
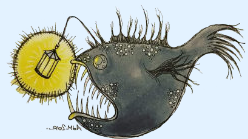
**Joe Sargent, black belt,** is the master of the temple. Joe Sargent, black belt, has also never declared exactly what it is that he has a black belt in. The material he teaches is mostly karate, but the material that he actually uses seems half made up, half fake. Not helping the matter is his wild-eyed stare and enthusiastic hyper-friendliness and passion for martial arts. At best guess, Joe is in his early fifties, but he's also explicitly said that he doesn't believe in birthdays, so it's anyone's guess how old he is.

**Primary Opportunity:** Once per loop, **Joe can be challenged** to learn new Fishing or Fighting Techniques. The entire party may fight him at once, and if the Fishers win, one of them **receives a new Fishing Technique, Fighting Technique, or Versatile Technique**---their choice which.

### **Joe's Fights:**

The first time Joe is fought, he announces that he is using **Hornet, Single Giant** style, and then fights as if he were that exact creature.

The second time he is fought, he uses **Leech, Mountain** style.



The third time he is fought, he uses **Centipede, Giant** style.

The fourth time he is fought, he uses **Raccoon, Devious** style.

The fifth time he is fought, he uses **Bear, Adult** style.

The sixth time he is fought, he uses **Snake, Ophidian Giant** style.

**Secondary Opportunity:** If a Fisher gives Joe the password **Ripple**, which they may have learned elsewhere, he will teach one of them a free Fishing Technique or Fighting Technique of their choice. This only works once, period, and if the Fishers try to use the password on subsequent loops, Joe will have a curious feeling that the password has already been used and will refuse to honor it.

**Six Hours Left:** Joe is cleaning the floors and getting ready for a day of martial arts and fitness.

**Five Hours Left:** The early class fails entirely to show.

**Four Hours Left:** Joe is quietly reading, flipping through pages of *The Book Of Five Rings*.

**Three Hours Left:** A class has finally arrived. Joe is training diligently and will not challenge the Fishers during this hour.

**Two Hours Left:** A **Hand Weapon** goes flying out the front door, nearly hitting a Fisher. Sheepishly, Joe offers to let them keep it.

**One Hour Left:** Joe starts tidying up his dojo to prepare for what he calls "the end of the world again". He won't explain what he means by this, but he'll hand the Fishers an energy bar and they can add a single **Snack** to their inventory.

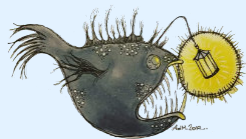
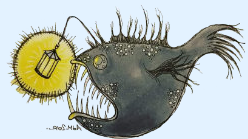
## **8 - The Old Man Who Watches The Sea**

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*A rocky bluff overlooking the sea, this spot would be a lovely place for a picnic if it weren't for the scowling, weathered-faced old man who makes this cliff his perennial haunt.*

**Howard Amorarte**, an old Spanish man, spends his time here most days. Regardless of the weather, he is almost a fixture on the shoreline. Locals mostly ignore him, but to tourists he is an occasional curiosity. Their interest usually fades, however, after a few minutes of talking to him. He's just too intense. In truth, Howard is fixated on the bay, and on legends of a being he calls "Challu" that will one day awaken and obliterate the town. Howard is an avid fisher and carries a rod covered in unusual carvings, which he insists is connected to the legend.

**Primary Opportunity:** If asked about Challu, Howard will say that the locals used to keep it placid by feeding it clawshrimp and dosed with tranquilizing herbs, then hauling it to the surface with a magical rod and beating it with oars. Although it would be culturally interesting to recreate this ritual, Howard adds, it probably isn't performable anymore. Nowadays, all the town's clawshrimp goes to the **11 - Happy Clawshrimp Cannery**, and there's **15 - Portswald Seniors Association Whale Day Picnic** going on in the field where the tranquilizing herbs used to be found---although modern veterinary tranqu



would probably be just as good as a substitute. Howard has the rod from the legend, but it's an antique. He's not going to just had it over to someone who hasn't earned it. Finally, anyone who wanted to perform the ritual would have to know where Challu sleeps, and then get there. Taking one of **2 - Jeb's Whale Watching Tours** or chartering a trip from **10 - Portswald Docks** might do it, although the latter is pricey and the former takes time. Jeb at **2 - Jeb's Whale Watching Tours** also occasionally mentions something about the legend, although he doesn't remember it reliably, so he might know more or he might not. And there's a busted-up boat at **13 - The Old Launch** that doesn't belong to anyone. It'd probably only be good for a one-way trip out into the bay, but it'd need a lot of repair first.

**Secondary Opportunity:** The **rod of renewed purpose** can be obtained from Howard, but he won't part with it easily. The rod, he claims, belongs only to those who have mastered the art of reel and hook. If the Fishers bring him **1 fish + 1 fish per Fisher** (or just 2 fish total, if this is the fifth loop or later), he will give them the rod as well as teach them the chant that activates it. Reciting the chant in front of Howard during future loops will cause him to give them the rod, no questions asked.

**Six Hours Left -> Two Hours Left:** Howard stands atop the bluff, staring intently out into the sea.

**One Hour Left:** Howard barely acknowledges the Fishers' arrival. "It comes," he says. The ocean waves roll, half-obscuring the sound of his words. He points out to sea. **The Fishers know where Challu will awaken.**

## **9 - Cafe Vigne**

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*A quaint little restaurant made from a converted, whitewashed colonial-style house, Cafe Vigne has an open porch and an interior dining space, and the day's specials are chalked onto a sign outside. "Noisette and kunafeh" is on the sign today, right above an illustration of a cup of espresso, a drop of cream, and a golden-brown pastry topped with pistachios.*

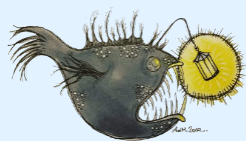
**Ahmad al Hamza**, a slim man in his late twenties, runs the cafe. His mother owns the building and his younger cousins attend Portswald High School, but the cafe does a better business with out-of-towners. Still, Ahmad is friendly and serves a menu that takes pointers from the cuisines of France and Jordan, making the spot popular with the few local regulars.

**Opportunity:** If the Fishers Make Camp here, they receive **+1 Snack** each and they may roll on the table for cafe rumors.

**Cafe Rumors (roll 1d6, reroll if the rumor is a repeat):**

**1** - "There's an old treasure buried in the lost river. A retiree claims to have stumbled over it while poking around there. He went north, west, south, west. Or something like that. The whole place is a maze, and honestly he doesn't have the best reputation for truth-telling."

**2** - "The original people who lived here used to appease something that made its home in the bay. They'd feed it clawshrimp and lace the water with soporific herbs to make it docile, then they'd drag it to the surface and beat the tar out



of it. Supposedly this kept it from rising out of the waves and flattening everything they'd built."

**3** - "Fumiko Stewart, the vet, has a cabin north of town. She and her husband are avid fishers and bought it as a getaway, but lately they've been at their wits' end. Something keeps tripping the house's security system. Every time they race over there to check it out, but they never catch the culprit."

**4** - "Bree Newbury can be a little brusque, but she runs the best auto and marine repair shop in town. And, okay, it's the *only* auto and marine shop in town, but the other day she let me borrow her tools in exchange for a small bag of beignets, so I'm doing what I can to send some business her way."

**5** - "Dojo Joe's a bit odd, but you can't deny his dedication to martial arts. He gave me a passcode for a free lesson, but I spend all my time here, so... Anyway, you can have it if you want." **One Fisher gains the password 'Ripple'.**

**6** - "Look, if you want rumors, you should go see Jeb at the whale watch tours. He hears things I don't. Howard, the old man who watches the sea, has also been here forever---but he can be a little strange. He's got a lot of stories about the bay, plus this weird, carved fishing rod he says belonged to the locals, but I wouldn't just send people to him. He gets kind of ranty, you know?"

**Six Hours Left:** The cafe is bustling.

**Five Hours Left:** The early morning crowd has thinned.

**Four Hours Left:** There's a sign saying "free samples" and the Fishers may spirit off **2 Snacks** worth of delicious, sweet kunafeh.

**Three Hours Left -> One Hour Left:** The cafe is moderately busy again. Most of the clientele is from out of town.

## **10 - Portswald Docks**

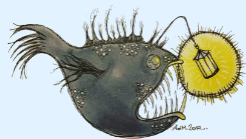
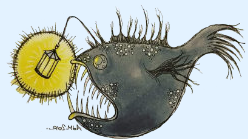
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*A well-maintained series of concrete piers adjoining several slightly older, now-unused wooden structures, the docks are a popular tourist spot, and a number of nearby restaurants, kitschy souvenir shops, and stands here are swarmed with people. There are also several boating companies offering chartered trips into the harbor, but the rates they have posted seem expensive.*

**Opportunity:** A chartered trip into the harbor can be obtained here, allowing the Fishers to **know where Challu will awaken** and even go to **4 - Cat's Cradle** if they wish. However the charters' schedules are full up for the day, and the Fishers must spend **2 fish + 1 fish per Fisher** (or just 2 fish, if this is the fifth loop or later) on the only bribable guide, who's a lousy fisher but wants to brag to his friends.

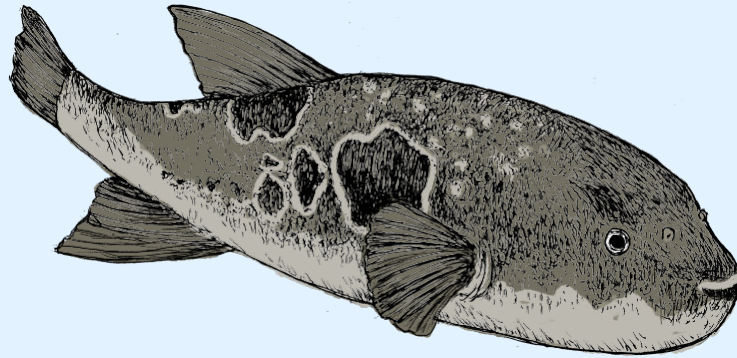
**Six Hours Left -> Two Hours Left:** The docks are bustling, lines are long, and the only thing that's accessible is the chartered boating trips.

**One Hour Left:** The crowds have finally thinned and it's possible to get to the fronts of some of the lines without spending an extraordinary amount of time. **Every Fisher gains a Snack.**



### Fishing Spot:

- 1 - Trashfish
- 2 - Bass, Fighting
- 3 - Bass, Fighting
- 4 - Eel, Unagi
- 5 - Sole, Common
- 6 - Sole, False



When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

### **11 - Happy Clawshrimp Cannery**

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*A large, robust warehouse and processing plant sits on a concrete lot overlooking the bay. There is a wide lot for delivery trucks that is heavily monitored by cameras, a medium-sized employees-only parking area with weeds growing at the edges, and a scraggly, tiny side lot half-hidden in the forest for visitor parking.*

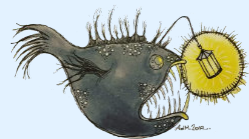
The cannery does not offer tours and the building is protected by locked doors and security, but there is a guard post overseeing the employee parking lot, and a quick chat with the guard on duty, **Lilah Smythe**, will bring the foreman out from the building if the Fishers ask to speak to a superior.

**Randall Stagg** is the foreman at the cannery. He's a balding man in his fifties and has a very casual, don't-sweat-the-small-stuff attitude about life. If asked about the cannery, he'll explain that clawshrimp chum is wonderful stuff. Just a pinch of it in the water drives most fish wild---to the point where old fishers used to use a pound of horse-tranquilizer just to even them out. Not that that's legal these days, mind. Too many rules and regulations preventing man from fishing the way nature intended.

If asked what a clawshrimp is, Randall will share that they "live real deep" and are "big as a man". He'll elaborate that the danger and difficulty in catching them makes them quite valuable.

**Primary Opportunity:** Canned clawshrimp chum can be obtained here, but the chum fetches an extraordinary price on the international market and the current batch is already all spoken for. Randall will part with a can, but only for the **hidden treasure of Portswald**, which his son's been obsessed with finding. Randall, personally, doesn't think it exists, although his boy keeps poking around **17 - The Lost River**. Once the Fishers have found the treasure (which is located at **18 - The Hidden Treasure Of Portswald**), they can simply tell Randall how to get there in exchange for a can of the chum.

**Secondary Opportunity:** Alternately, the players may elect to plan and execute a heist in order to **steal some cans** by passing a **TN 8 (Super Legendary)** roll. For every hour they spend casing the place, they can subtract 1 from that TN.



On a successful roll, they get what they need. Otherwise, the police get involved.

**Six Hours Left:** The first shift is still trickling in, and the night shift is trickling out. The lots are heavily guarded (+1 TN harder to executing a heist).

**Five Hours Left -> Four Hours Left:** The lot is quiet and calm. Lilah is reading a true crime novel.

**Three Hours Left:** Some workers are sitting in their cars during their break, eating an early lunch. A **TN 5 (Hard)** roll allows a Fisher to snag **2 Snacks** worth of lunch and bolt. If the Fishers do this and they remain at this location, or if they do it and then return to the cannery in the same loop, the police are called on them---the Fishers' Snack-theft having been caught on one of the lot cameras.

**Two Hours Left:** Randall Stag is pacing the lot, studying an inaccurate map of **17 - The Lost River**.

**One Hour Left:** One of the side doors has been left unlocked. Stealing some cans is -1 TN easier.

## **12 - Portswald Veterinary Clinic**

*The town's foremost (and only official) veterinary clinic is a small white house on the edge of a grassy field, with limited outside kennel space and a small but well-kept parking lot.*

*On the other side of the field, wind fans the tops of the trees in the adjacent woods.*

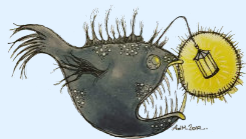
There are lots of scenic landscape photos from **5 - The Getaway Cabin** on the walls.

**DVM Fumiko Steward** is the vet on duty at the clinic. She looks very young despite being in her forties, and she will give a tired sort of laugh if anyone points this out. Aside from making small-talk, she is happy to assist with any animal-related emergencies that people bring to her.

**Primary Opportunity:** If the Fishers can convince her that they are likely to run into a dangerous animal (**TN 5**), Fumiko will give them a container of **Pepper Spray**.

**Secondary Opportunity:** Fumiko and her husband own a cabin on the north edge of town. Her husband is an avid fisher and Fumiko will recommend **21 - Burntrock Stream**, **13 - The Old Launch**, and **22 - Zadok Allen Point** to anyone that's looking for a place to fish from.

**Tertiary Opportunity:** **Heavy-dosage marine animal tranquilizers** can be obtained here, but not easily as they're not for sale. Instead, the Fishers will have to steal them, and that means either coming up with something creative (it's the SB's call what's creative enough to work) or waiting until Fumiko is out and then breaking in. Tripping the alarm at **5 - The Getaway Cabin** will always cause Fumiko to leave the clinic. While she's gone, one of the Fishers may make a **Hard (TN 5)** roll to break in and steal the right medicine. On a failure, the heist takes too long and the clinic's alarm system calls Fumiko back right in



the middle of the robbery.

**Six Hours Left:** Fumiko is not here yet. She's on her way over to open up the clinic for the day.

**Five Hours Left:** Fumiko is here. She's just arrived, and is opening the clinic.

**Four Hours Left:** Fumiko is here. She is doing paperwork.

**Three Hours Left:** Fumiko is here. She is examining a dog that has been showing a reduced appetite.

**Two Hours Left:** Fumiko is here. She is doing paperwork.

**One Hour Left:** Fumiko is here. She is trying to convince an escaped cat to come back out of the bushes.

### **13 - The Old Launch**

---

*This may once have been a rich family's private launch, but it has long since fallen into disrepair. An old metal boat lies beached, its keel resting on a tree stump amongst the debris of a place that not even the locals frequent.*

**Hazard:** The first time each loop the Fishers enter this location, they are attacked by a **Centipede, Giant** that wriggles out from under the loam and rushes towards them, antennae whipping in front of it.

**Opportunity:** There is an **old boat** here. It requires 3 Make Camps to fix it up, but this is waived if the party has **marine repair tools** from **14 - Bree's Marine And Auto**. Even so, the boat is only barely technically seaworthy and only good for a one-way trip. The Fishers must **know where Challu will awaken** in order to sail from The Old Launch to the **4 - The Cat's Cradle**, and once there they will need to wait until one hour is left on the Scenario Clock for the Cat's Cradle to actually arrive.

**Six Hours Left -> One Hour Left:** Birds sing, bugs move in the undergrowth, the carcass of a heron rots near the water's edge.

#### **Fishing Spot:**

1 - Croaker, Bellicose

2 - Sole, Common

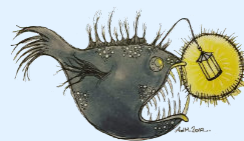
3 - Sole, Common

4 - Smelt, Tornado

5 - Sole, False

6 - Sole, False

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.



## **14 - Bree's Marine And Auto**

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*A converted house with a large garage, the paint is peeling on the sides of Bree's Marine, but a weathered wooden sign hanging from the mailbox lists regular work hours every day, and a pair of cats laze on the porch, watching butterflies flit over the tall grasses of the unmowed lawn.*

**Bree Newbury** is a mid-thirties woman in grease-stained coveralls. Originally from Cape Verde, Bree nevertheless has a Portswald accent and a manner that is both irritable and easy-going, making her an almost quintessential local. Bree fixes both cars and boats for the other citizens of Portswald, although she does more of the former and less of the latter. She doesn't do as much business for the wealthier out-of-towners, as they prefer to hire their technicians from the better paid staff at the harbor, and this is a recurring source of frustration for her.

**Primary Opportunity:** Bree has a set of **marine repair tools** that can be used to rapidly fix up the boat at **13 - The Old Launch**. However, Bree is only willing to loan out these tools if the Fishers spend 1 Make Camp helping her out with her work at the shop.

**Secondary Opportunity:** Alternately, Bree will **loan out her tools for free** to anyone who can get her **family recipe for bolinhos de mandioca** from her sister, Sam Newbury. Sam works at **1 - Portswald Schools**, and the two have been estranged for a while over a fight that they will both admit is dumb, but that neither is willing to apologize for.

**Six Hours Left -> Five Hours Left:** Bree is hard at work on a boat motor and not paying too much attention to what's happening elsewhere in the shop. If the Fishers wish to simply steal her spare tools, they can do so with a **TN 5 (Hard)** roll.

**Four Hours Left:** Bree is having a late breakfast of eggs and toast off a paper plate on the hood of a junk car, staring out at the road.

**Three Hours Left:** Bree is having a conversation over the phone when the Fishers arrive. It starts polite but exasperated, but ends with Bree loudly explaining that she can't do free repairs in exchange for "getting the word out there".

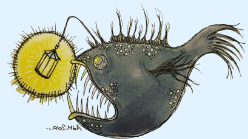
**Two Hours Left -> One Hour Left:** Business has slowed and Bree is staring out towards the road again.

## **15 - Portswald Seniors' Association Whale Day Picnic**

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*A jolly tradition dating some eighty years back, the Whale Day picnic is held every year in the same meadow up in the hills. The parking lot is dirt, and driving up to it takes a little bit of navigating unpaved, winding hill roads, but every year the picnic is a big social event for the aging members of the Portswald community, and members of town government who try to withdraw funding from the event usually get quickly voted out, so there's a fair bit of pomp, circumstance, and balloons adorning the meadow.*

*There are a few hundred people in attendance, not counting aides and caterers, and there's a small orchestra as well. Attendees wander the buffet*



*tables, assembling their 'picnic' meals, and then sit on blankets with their friends under the pale blue sky.*

**Primary Opportunity:** Regional herbs can be picked here, as long as the Fishers know what they look like. Some of the seniors know what they look like, but they won't provide that information without a little bit of bribery. The fish-fry part of the picnic is looking a little lack-luster this year, and they'd like fish worth **3 + the number of Fishers in Snacks** (or just 2 fish, if this is the fifth loop or later) before they'll cough up appropriate descriptions of the herbs. After that, gathering the herbs is easy and takes no time.

**Secondary Opportunity:** One of the retirees is also mumbling "north, west, south, west", although he isn't able to give context to what this means.

**Six Hours Left -> Five Hours Left:** Just the caterers, organizers, and members of the orchestra are here. Persuasive Fishers can score a total of **3 Snacks** with a TN 5 (Hard) roll to persuade the catering staff to spare a few hors d'oeuvres.

**Four Hours Left -> Two Hours Left:** The picnic is in full swing.

**One Hour Left:** As the Fishers arrive, one of the retirees announces abruptly that he's going home, and that things need to be tidied up before the end. His aide, confused but used to this, accompanies him dutifully.

## **16 - Crater Lake**

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*Formed, according to townsfolk and amateur geologists, in ages past by a meteor strike, this clear, cold-water lake sits in the hills above the town. It is a secret largely kept from tourists, who would swarm the spot if they knew about its bountiful fishing, and this has in turn helped the area to stay wild. The sounds of birds and bugs are loud on the paths leading up to the lake, and animals regard human visitors with curiosity---not the bored fear of creatures that are used to human presence.*

*A neglected wooden sign at the base of a faded trail warns hikers to be on the lookout for bears.*

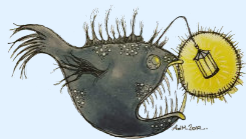
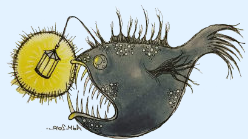
**Hazard:** Every time the Fishers fish here, there is a **1-in-6 chance of a Bear, Adult bumbling onto the scene** just as the Fish Combat is ending. If the Fish Combat was successful, the bear will immediately make a play for the catch. The Fishers may simply abandon the fish (and their dignities) and flee if they wish. If they don't immediately flee, they end up in combat.

**Six Hours Left -> Four Hours Left:** The conditions here are perfect for fishing. Every time you fish this location, **clear a point of Exhaustion**.

**Three Hours Left -> One Hour Left:** Clouds of biting flies have moved in. Every time you fish this location, **take a point of Stress**.

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Muskellunge, Abiding
- 2 - Snakehead, Invasive
- 3 - Bass, Fighting



4 - Sturgeon, Leaping

5 - Eel, Insidious

6 - Trout, Glacial Bull

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **17 - Lost River**

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*A fast-moving river snakes through marshes and walls of obscuring woodland. A handful of locals claim this place is cursed, and a few are adamant that no one should explore its depths. Others insist that there is a fantastical treasure available to anyone who manages to navigate the region.*

*Stories differ on how someone can find the heart of the Lost River, however blindfolds are a frequent plot element and this has led to a lot of locals falling into bogs.*

**Opportunity:** When the Fishers arrive here, they may **attempt to navigate the river** by picking four cardinal directions to explore in sequence. The correct order is north, west, south, west. Any other order will require the Fishers to wait an hour before trying again. If the Fishers navigate in the correct sequence of directions, they open up the route to **18 - The Hidden Treasure Of Portswald**.

**Six Hours Left -> Four Hours Left:** There is a **Snake, Mottled Hunter** sunning itself on the bank. A **TN 5 (Hard)** roll allows a Fisher to spot it before they disturb it.

**Three Hours Left -> One Hour Left:** A **Raccoon, Devious** is fishing for crayfish down by the bank. It will attack the Fishers if they land a fish while it is present. Before then, the Fishers can hand it a **Snack** and it will leave the area.

### **Fishing Spot:**

1 - Carp, Grass

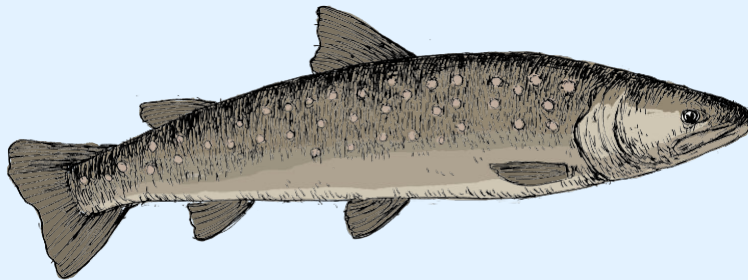
2 - Eel, Unagi

3 - Snakehead, Invasive

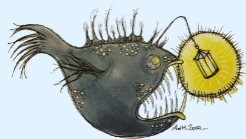
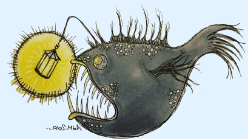
4 - Panfish

5 - Loach, Weather

6 - Smelt, Tornado



When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.



## **18 - The Hidden Treasure Of Portswald**

---

*Somehow, the disorienting geography of the Lost River resolves into a single, perfect meadow full of knee-high river grasses. At its heart is a flat, dark blue pool, and big, tantalizing shapes swim in its depths.*

**Restriction:** This location can only be reached by solving **17 - The Lost River**.

**Opportunity:** The **hidden treasure of Portswald** is here, but unfortunately it's just a *really good* fishing spot.

**Six Hours Left -> One Hour Left:** This is the best darn fishing place in Portswald.

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Koi, Goldenscale
- 2 - Koi, Goldenscale
- 3 - Koi, Goldenscale
- 4 - Eel, Insidious
- 5 - Turtle, Sagacious
- 6 - Koi, Ageless Master

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **19 - The Millpond**

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*A local fishing spot occasionally given out to tourists who want to test their wits against freshwater fare, the millpond isn't anything special, but it is well-stocked and you can keep what you catch.*

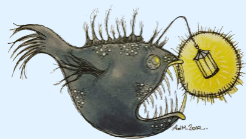
*Nearby is a crumbling watermill, dating back to the founding of the town. The mill has a little sign out front declaring it a historical site and urging visitors to keep out, but there is no one on duty to enforce this.*

**Hazard:** The first Fisher attempting to enter the mill runs into a Spider, Timekeeper unless they make a **TN 6 (Very Hard)** roll to spot its web in the doorway.

**Opportunity:** Inside the mill are a few items from when it used to be a museum, including a set of **Artisan Boilies** that somehow still appeal to fish despite having set as hard as rocks.

**Six Hours Left -> Five Hours Left:** The early rays of the sun bronze the surface of the water, and the fish are quite active, snapping at whatever drops into their domain. Fishers receive **+1 die on the first round of each Fish Combat** here.

**Four Hours Left -> Three Hours Left:** A pair of old local anglers are here, chatting about their craft while the fish refuse utterly to bite. Once per loop,



one Fisher can show them a Rare fish in exchange for a lecture on technique that the Fisher in question probably doesn't need. Sitting through this lecture gives the Fisher one **Fishing Technique** of the SB's choice.

**Two Hours Left -> One Hour Left:** A couple of out-of-towners are here, teaching their niece to fish. Once per loop, a Fisher with at least three Fishing Techniques can give them a few pointers, and the couple will share **3 Snacks** worth of their picnic lunch with the Fisher.

#### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Bass, Fighting
- 2 - Loach, Weather
- 3 - Gar, Armored
- 4 - Carp, Giant
- 5 - Pike, Voracious
- 6 - Pike, Voracious

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **20 - Snakeback Creek**

---

*A thin, winding stream surrounded by dense bracken and inhospitable briar, this is a rare spot even for locals, but the few who do frequent it claim that there is no better place in town for catfish or eel.*

**Hazard:** Entering this location requires an **Average (TN 4)** roll to avoid taking 1 Exhaustion from the scratching briars, branches, and fallen tree-limbs underfoot.

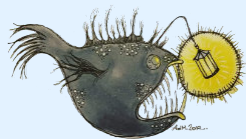
**Opportunity:** Once per loop, a Fisher may make a **TN 6 (Very Hard)** roll to scour the ground. Success discovers an only partially used can of **Pepper Spray**.

**Six Hours Left -> Four Hours Left:** The creek burbles quietly, running over fallen sticks and stones.

**Three Hours Left -> One Hour Left:** A **Snake, Mottled Hunter** is in the area, and it snaps at the first person to attempt fishing.

#### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Catfish, Lurking
- 2 - Catfish, Lurking
- 3 - Catfish, Lurking
- 4 - Eel, Conger
- 5 - Eel, Insidious



6 - Eel, Insidious

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **21 - Burntrock Stream**

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*A winding stream up in the hills, with clear water and noticeable fish, this spot is popular with vacationers. Parts of it are wide enough for swimming, whereas other areas are so shallow that visitors can walk to little islands in the center without the water going above their ankles.*

*This stream is the subject of a local legend, where creatures from the high country inland and creatures from the bay once met in combat, scoring the rocks in places a deep, charry black.*

**Six Hours Left -> Four Hours Left:** An **Eagle, Fishing** polices these waters, waiting for someone to make a catch.

**Three Hours Left -> One Hour Left:** A **Raccoon, Devious** ambles along the bank. It will allow the Fishers to fish uninterrupted if they throw it one **Snack** for the first time they fish, two for the second, three for the third, etc. This tally resets each loop.

### **Fishing Spot:**

1 - Eel, Unagi

2 - Eel, Unagi

3 - Loach, Weather

4 - Lionfish, Walking

5 - Lionfish, Walking

6 - Eel, Insidious

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **22 - Zadok Allen Point**

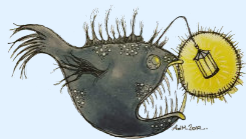
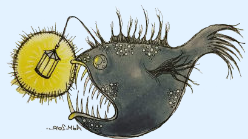
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*A rocky promontory near the Old Launch, waves crash at the base where the water runs deep, allowing for some exciting shoreline fishing.*

**Six Hours Left -> Three Hours Left:** Waves crash against the base of the point.

**Two Hours Left:** The Fishers catch sight of the **Cat's Cradle** off in the distant waters of the bay. It doesn't look like it's on a typical fishing route, and the waters it's in are ostensibly protected from commercial fishing.

**One Hour Left:** The Fishers catch sight of the **Cat's Cradle** off in the distant



waters of the bay. It doesn't look like it's on a typical fishing route, and the waters it's in are ostensibly protected from commercial fishing. If the Fishers Make Camp here, they find out what becomes of the Cat's Cradle and **know where Challu will awaken.**

**Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Bass, Fighting
- 2 - Bass, Fighting
- 3 - Cod, Atlantic
- 4 - Pufferfish, Tiger
- 5 - Croaker, Bellicose
- 6 - Mackerel, Seerfish

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

**23 - Obed Marsh**

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*An estuarial swamp, the marsh is a protected ecoregion and an essential spawning habitat for deep ocean Clawshrimp during the winter.*

*None of this prevents you from fishing it, however.*

**Six Hours Left -> One Hour Left:** The shallow brackish waters lap against banks of reeds, whose tips sway in the wind.

**Fishing Spot:**

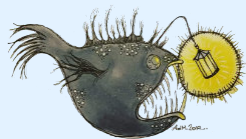
- 1 - Trashfish
- 2 - Eel, Unagi
- 3 - Pickpocketapus
- 4 - Sole, Common
- 5 - Shark, Turnip
- 6 - Eel, Insidious

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

**24 - Anna Tilton Beach**

---

*A once-pristine sandy beach, the tideline is now littered with rubbish and bits of plastic stick from the sand. Decades ago, this was a popular swimming spot, but only the occasional shoreline hiker or angler is found here these days.*



**Opportunity:** Once per loop, a Fisher may search here with a **TN 5 (Hard)** roll to find a **Net** half-buried in the sand.

**Six Hours Left:** A single **Trashfish** heaves itself out of the waters, beaching itself on the sand. It may be recovered by a Fisher.

**Five Hours Left:** A solitary hiker and his dog are picking up garbage and throwing it in a black bag, but the task seems endless.

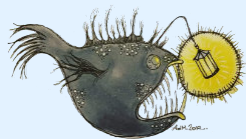
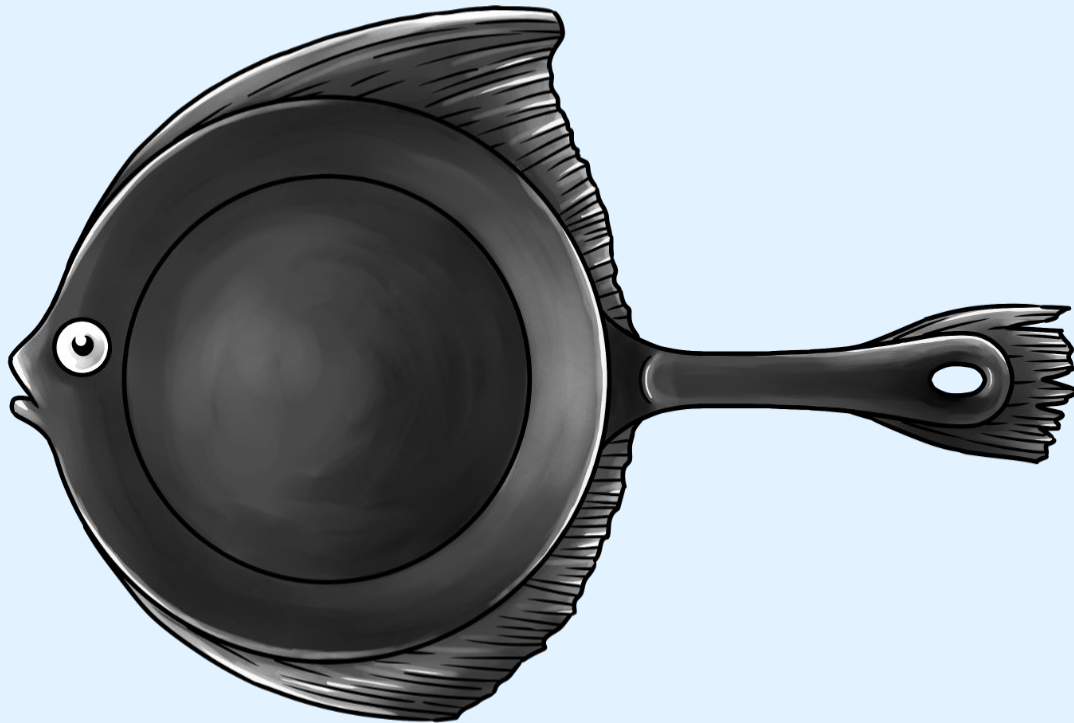
**Four Hours Left -> Three Hours Left:** Wind whips a plastic bag down the empty beach.

**Two Hours Left -> One Hour Left:** A car passes on the road nearby, and the driver tosses an empty soda can out the window. It lands on the sand.

### Fishing Spot:

- 1 - Trashfish
- 2 - Trashfish
- 3 - Panfish
- 4 - Panfish
- 5 - Whiting, Kisu
- 6 - Whiting, Kisu

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.



## **25 - Wallace Ashbury Beach**

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*Located off the sides of the docks, this is the premier beach in Portswald. There are refreshment carts and a large number of bathers, despite the season winding down.*

**Opportunity:** The lines for the carts are long, but if the Fishers Make Camp here, they can score **2 Snacks** total.

**Six Hours Left:** There are only a few early morning fishers standing in the surf, plus an out-of-towner doing yoga on the sand. No refreshment carts are here yet.

**Five Hours Left -> One Hour Left:** The beach is bustling. The refreshment carts are doing a very brisk business, competing with the nearby carts from the docks.

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Trashfish
- 2 - Bass, Fighting
- 3 - Bass, Fighting
- 4 - Croaker, Bellicose
- 5 - Whiting, Kisu
- 6 - Smelt, Tornado

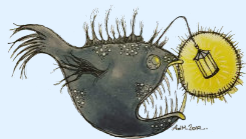
When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **Great Dreamer Challu**

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Challu is a strange and squamous underwater being with the following stats.

- Lives in Portswald Bay.
- 5 dice
- Will only bite at a hook that is baited with canned clawshrimp chum.
- May only be hooked if the Fishers have the rod of renewed purpose, otherwise it immediately breaks the line.
- Unless the canned clawshrimp chum has been treated with heavy-dosage marine animal tranquilizers or soporific local herbs, immediately releases a pulse of energy when it breaks the surface, re-starting the loop.
- Challu ignores a number of points of Stress equal to  $2x(2 + \text{the number of Fishers})$ .
- Challu may not select the same Gambit twice in a row.



- When Challu wins a Force Gambit, the Fisher must Tag Out at the end of that round.
- Each round, the Fisher may Strain 2 dice to inflict 1 Stress on Challu instead of removing 2 of its dice.
- At the start of Round 6, Challu loses 2 dice for the rest of the combat and the active Fisher suffers 2 Exhaustion.
- The first time Challu would lose combat, the fight becomes an Animal Combat. The round number, Challu's current dice, its Stress and Exhaustion levels, any abilities that Challu or the Fishers have used, etc, all stay the same. Any players that had Tagged Out of the Fish Combat *may* still join in this Animal Combat. Challu has simply risen from the water, and everyone is fighting him.
- If a Fisher loses combat against Challu, Challu releases its pulse of town-flattening energy and re-initiates the loop.
- Catch Bonus: You win.

## **Winning**

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Defeated, Challu slumps back into the waters of the bay. The crew of the Cat's Cradle are stunned, as are any other bystanders who got a good look at the being.

What happens next depends primarily on what the Fishers did during the current loop. The SB may want to take a moment and frame a quick scene with what each NPC the Fishers interacted with is doing at the time Challu falls, but it's just as valid to let the players shape the epilogue, by asking them what their characters are going to do immediately after winning, and then narrate from there.

## **SBing The Catch Of The Day**

---

This is a fairly complex Scenario, but it has lots of pointers built into it telling the Fishers what they need to do to stop Challu. If the Fishers simply bumble around and explore, they'll stumble onto one of the subquests, which will lead them to the main quest. If they search more methodically, they'll likely get an idea of Challu's location very quickly, and from there the other pieces will fall into place.

If the Fishers look truly lost, you may want to have a local drop a hint about **8 - The Old Man Who Watches The Sea**, as Howard effectively spells out the locations the players should visit to start the subquests.

Otherwise, the Scenario is relatively generous early on with allowing the Fishers to make mistakes. It's only later, after their first couple loops, that the stakes start to increase, and from there the pressure is on for the players to make the right decisions with the information they have and defeat Challu with the tools that are available.



## **The Ruby In The Mire**

This Scenario is unique in that it revolves around a series of encounters with an animal, rather than a fish. Although it does still involve catching a fish in the end, the Scenario antagonist (the Mussurana) steals the show.

Groups that like slightly more conflict and combat, as well as suspense or very light horror, may find this Scenario is best suited for them.

### **Changes (The Sickness And The Jungle)**

In this Scenario, parts of the setting are already defined. There is a jungle. There is a sickness threatening humanity. There is a small red fish that can cure that sickness, and there is a big snake that protects it. All other setting elements can be shifted around to match whatever world your group wants to play in. Ruby In The Mire could take place on an Edgar Rice Burroughs-ian Mars, or in the 1930s, or in a fantasy world with fairly advanced pharmaceutical technology.

### **Changes II (Cat And Mouse)**

Throughout this Scenario, the Fishers will encounter the Mussurana---a giant snake that seeks to keep the Fish Of Legend in its own clutches. Some appearances of the creature are scripted, and will happen whenever certain conditions are met. Others are less fixed.

To handle the Mussurana's appearances, this Scenario uses **Suspense**. When the Fishers move to a location, they will find that there are a variety of **Ambush Spots** to investigate. Investigating these spots can yield rewards, such as items or attempts at fishing, but these investigations also come at a cost. Every time a player investigates an Ambush Spot, the SB rolls **2d6** and adds the numbers together. This is called a **Suspense Roll**. On a **12+**, the **Mussurana attacks**.

Suspense builds as the Fishers search each area, so **each time the Fishers investigate an Ambush Spot and the Mussurana does not attack, the party gains 1 Suspense**.

And when someone rolls to see if the Mussurana will appear, **they add the party's current Suspense to the number they rolled**.

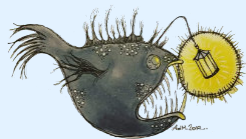
This means that the more Suspense is generated, the higher the chance that the Mussurana will appear.

Fortunately for the Fishers, **all Suspense is lost every time they get attacked by the Mussurana**.

Unfortunately for the Fishers, there is one more way that they can gain Suspense and two more ways they can be forced to make Suspense Rolls.

**Whenever the Fishers revisit an area, the party gains 2 Suspense**. And when they leave that area, **they immediately make a Suspense Roll** (unless they already got attacked while investigating the area).

Furthermore, fishing is dangerous, although it's not as risky as backtracking or staying in one place. **Every second time a Fisher announces their intention to**



fish a location, don't add any new points of Suspense, but do covertly make a Suspense Roll. If the total is 12+, the Mussurana appears after the Fish Combat is resolved.

### **Changes III (Seeking The Ruby)**

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Unlike other Scenarios, where the Fish Of Legend has a clear and definite resting place, Ruby In The Mire forces the Fishers to seek out the Ruby's location by gathering hints as to where it might be found.

At any time in the Scenario, the Fishers may Make Camp and choose to **Hunt The Ruby**. When they do, they receive none of the usual benefits of Making Camp, but they may roll **2d6** and attempt to get a 15+. If they succeed, the Ruby appears at a nearby location containing a Fishing Spot (SB's choice, but they must tell the party where the Ruby appeared), and the Fishers may move there and attempt to catch it.

Of course, **15+ sounds impossible**, but the Fishers also **add +1 to the roll** for every **Hint Of The Ruby** that they have collected.

**If they fail the roll, they also gain a Hint Of The Ruby.**

Hints can be found by investigating ambush spots and accumulate slowly over the course of the scenario.

Alternately, there is one location on the map (**18 - The Lair Of The Mussurana**) where the Fishers may always attempt to locate the Ruby without spending any Make Camp uses or needing to pass the roll. This comes with an obvious and clearly defined risk---the Mussurana is very familiar with those waters, and poking around in its nest site will guarantee an encounter. If the Fishers try to look for the Ruby there, one Fisher enters combat with the Ruby, and the rest of the Fishers immediately enter combat with the Mussurana.

### **Intro**

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The Red Sickness is sweeping the globe and conventional cures are doing nothing to stop it. In desperation, the Global Actionable Research Consortium has turned to investigating folklore and legends for hopes of uncovering medicines that have been lost to the mists of antiquity.

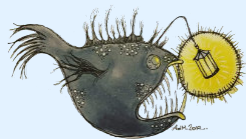
Their work seems to have paid off, as a fish has been discovered in the flooded jungles of the southern hemisphere that can delay or even reverse certain key symptoms of the Sickness.

You are part of a task force sent to rendezvous with the local GAR Consortium facility. They have been studying this area in semi-isolation, sending out updates on their progress by satellite link as they slowly narrow in on the location of the Ruby---the fish that could be processed into a cure.

Unfortunately, their last update is more than a week past due.

As the waters of the jungle speed by, and comforted by the rocking of the riverboat's deck beneath your feet, you go over your kit one last time.

If all goes well, you're about to save the world, so you might as well look good while doing it.



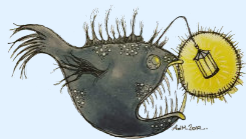
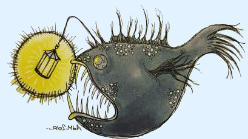
## **Let's Get Dire**

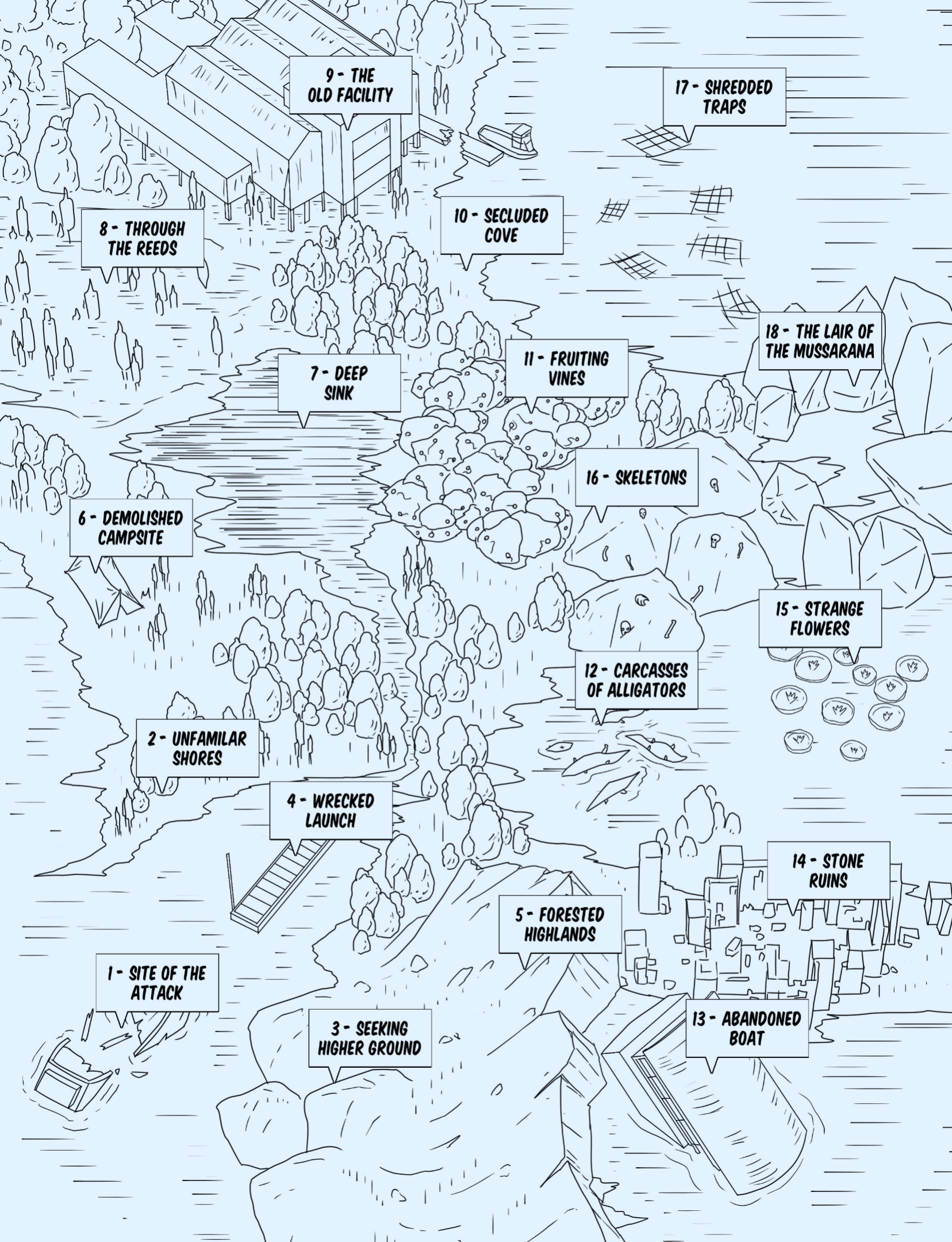
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For an especially serious Scenario, the SB can rule that at Scenario start d6 percent of the earth's population falls sick, and another 3d6 percent fall sick every time the party Makes Camp. At 100% sick, the Scenario is lost.

Get a sense of your group before you do this, and don't drop a high-stakes disaster-movie-fishing-adventure on a group that just wants to kick back and catch some bass.

Also, if you're running this Scenario for a young group and you want to use this optional tweak, make the sickness something like sniffles and a fever, rather than something scary.





9 - THE OLD FACILITY

17 - SHREDED TRAPS

8 - THROUGH THE REEDS

10 - SECLUDED COVE

7 - DEEP SINK

11 - FRUITING VINES

18 - THE LAIR OF THE MUSSARANA

6 - DEMOLISHED CAMPSITE

16 - SKELETONS

15 - STRANGE FLOWERS

2 - UNFAMILAR SHORES

12 - CARCASSES OF ALLIGATORS

4 - WRECKED LAUNCH

5 - FORESTED HIGHLANDS

14 - STONE RUINS

1 - SITE OF THE ATTACK

3 - SEEKING HIGHER GROUND

13 - ABANDONED BOAT

## 1 - Site Of The Attack

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*A murky stretch of flooded swamp, ripples cross the brown surface of the water, disturbing the waterweeds and suggesting movement underneath.*

**Cutscene:** The Fishers start in this location aboard a riverboat called The Charles Marlow. The boat has been proceeding slowly through the wetlands, navigating around shallow spots and sunken hazards, and it should only be a few more hours before the Fishers have reached the GAR Consortium facility to the north. After that, they'll have time for a meal, proper showers, and they'll get the communications equipment fixed up so the facility staff can get back in touch with HQ.

Unfortunately, this simple rendezvous isn't meant to be. A black snake, big around as an old-growth tree trunk, suddenly rears up out of the waters and strikes the boat. The Marlow shudders, and the snake continues its assault. Before anyone can figure out how to repel something of that size, cracks have opened up in the side of the boat, and then its planks are splitting, and then the jungle water is rushing in.

The snake seems to be focusing its attention entirely on the Marlow, coiling around and constricting the wreck even as it sinks.

The Fishers are able to get away, but they are only able to grab their starting Kits before they hit the water. Their feet can't touch bottom here, and so they strike out towards the nearest land.

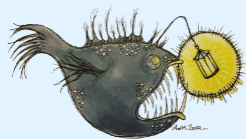
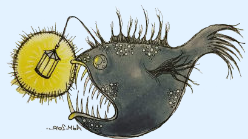
They can either head north towards the shore (**2 - Unfamiliar Shores**), east towards a rocky slope that heads up into the highlands (**3 - Seeking Higher Ground**), or northeast towards a broken dock that's floating by itself in the water (**4 - The Wrecked Launch**). The dock and the slope up to the highlands are a little further away (and the Fishers will take **1 Exhaustion** if they head in either direction), and heading towards the dock is especially harrowing, as it is explicitly not out of the water (add **1 Suspense** if the Fishers pick that direction), but what matters most is that the Fishers pick a direction quickly, as their toes are dangling over the deep and there's no telling what else is waiting beneath the surface.

If the group hasn't decided within five seconds, take each player aside individually and ask which direction they're heading in. Then have the group scatter according to the directions they picked.

**Opportunity:** If the Fishers return to this location, there is no Mussurana in sight and they may choose to explore.

**The Wreck Of The Marlow (Ambush Spot):** The boat sticks half-in and half-out of the water. It's been broken into two halves, and water has flooded most of the interior spaces, making the gear and supplies unuseable. However, Fishers can scavenge a **Hand Weapon**, a **Pepper Spray**, and **4 Snacks** by passing a separate **TN 5 (Average)** roll to locate each item.

**Water Weeds (Ambush Spot):** A dense thicket of water weeds blooms with white cluster-flowers. The stalks are edible, and can be identified with a **TN 4 (Average)** roll and harvested for **3 Snacks**.



**Floating Crate (Ambush Spot):** A crate has drifted free of the wreck of the Marlow and is caught on something beneath the surface. It contains a **Net**.

**Directions:** To the north across the water you see a small, muddy beach followed by dense foliage. To the east across the water you see a rocky slope that heads up towards the highlands. To the northeast is a broken dock, floating out in the water.

**Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Carp, Grass
- 2 - Carp, Grass
- 3 - Catfish, Lurking
- 4 - Catfish, Lurking
- 5 - Carp, Giant
- 6 - Carp, Giant

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **2 - Unfamiliar Shores**

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*The water gives way to a small muddy beach, followed by dense foliage.*

**Water's Edge (Ambush Spot):** There are some small, flat rocks just along the water's edge. The Fishers can gather up two **Skipping Stones** from them.

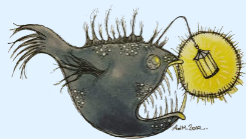
**A Shape In The Branches (Ambush Spot):** Something is hanging from the underside of one of the lower canopy trees. When investigated, it turns out to be a **Bat, Shrieker** and it attacks the party.

**Curious Berries (Ambush Spot):** Some strange, whitish berries can be spotted near ground level. A **TN 6 (Very Hard)** knowledge roll reveals that they are nauseating, and should be left alone. If the Fishers harvest them without knowing what they are, the party gain a unique Snack that should be marked as distinct from the other Snacks. When used, it inflicts one Exhaustion on the Fisher who consumes it.

**Directions:** To your east you see a broken dock, floating out in the water. A plume of smoke trickles into the air somewhere to the north. To the south is the wreck of the Marlow. The jungle ahead of you is lively with sound.

**Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Carp, Grass
- 2 - Piranha, Vegetarian
- 3 - Croaker, Bellicose
- 4 - Croaker, Bellicose



5 - Gar, Armored

6 - Lionfish, Walking

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

### **3 - Seeking Higher Ground**

---

*The ground slopes up to the east, leading away from the water.*

**Hazard:** This open area is scattered with rocks, many of which are great locations for reptiles that wish to sun themselves. The first time the Fishers pass through this area, one Fisher must make a **TN 3 (Easy)** roll to spot a **Snake, Lashtip** before it enters combat with the party.

**A Promising Boulder (Ambush Spot):** Do not increase your Suspense when you investigate this Ambush Spot. This large rock looks like it has something underneath. A Fisher who passes a **TN 5 (Hard)** roll to lever the boulder aside finds **2 Snacks** worth of grubs.

**Brightly Colored Lizards (Ambush Spot):** Do not increase your Suspense when you investigate this Ambush Spot. Lizards dart and run over a section of the rocky ground. They look pretty, but are bony and inedible.

**Odd Carving (Ambush Spot):** Do not increase your Suspense when you investigate this Ambush Spot. A carving on the side of a flat stone seems to depict a small fish. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby**.

**Directions:** To the north is a wrecked dock floating out on the water. To the east, uphill, are forested highlands. To the west is the wreck of the Marlow.

#### **Fishing Spot:**

1 - Carp, Grass

2 - Piranha, Vegetarian

3 - Croaker, Bellicose

4 - Croaker, Bellicose

5 - Gar, Armored

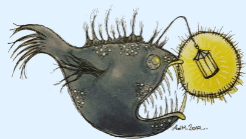
6 - Lionfish, Walking

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

### **4 - Wrecked Launch**

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*A dock floats out in the murky water, barren of boats or signs of human life. It does look like an ideal fishing spot, however.*



**Suspicious Ripples (Ambush Spot):** Something is moving underwater. You could get a better look at it if you got closer. If the Fishers investigate, **the Mussurana attacks.**

**Bobbing Packet (Ambush Spot):** A sealed packet bobs in the water just off the side of the dock. A Fisher must make a **TN 5 (Hard)** roll to grab it quickly, or else add 2 Suspense. It contains **Artisanal Boilies.**

**Curious Notebook (Ambush Spot):** A small booklet has been left near the edge of the dock. Its cover is water-stained. Its inside crawls with cramped handwriting, but you are able to decipher a few lines. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby.**

**Directions:** To the south the ground slopes upwards towards forested highlands in the southeast. A long ways off to the east is a shallow, boggy stretch of swamp with objects floating in the mire. To the north is a wide, deep lake. To the northwest is a trickle of smoke pooling above a flattened campsite. To the west and southwest respectively are a small island and the wreck of the Marlow.

#### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Carp, Grass
- 2 - Loach, Weather
- 3 - Loach, Weather
- 4 - Lionfish, Walking
- 5 - Gar, Armored
- 6 - Turtle, Sagacious

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **5 - Forested Highlands**

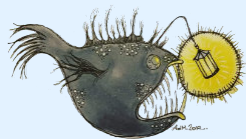
*These stony highlands overlook the entire region.*

**Opportunity:** While at this location, the Fishers may ask for a description of any area on the map. The SB does not have to provide them with any details that would only be visible from close up (such as things that are inside a structure, or written in fine print), and the SB can be vague or obscure some details, but overall they should provide an honest description of what the Fishers see.

**Overgrown Statue (Ambush Spot):** Do not increase your Suspense when you investigate this Ambush Spot. A small stone statue depicts a woman carrying a small fish in a bowl. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby.**

**Odd Stick (Ambush Spot):** Do not increase your Suspense when you investigate this Ambush Spot. An oddly segmented stick lies across the path. This is a **Centipede, Giant**, and it will attack if disturbed.

**Red Flowers (Ambush Spot):** Do not increase your Suspense when you



investigate this Ambush Spot. A cluster of bright red flowers can be found on the side of the trail. They are edible, and can be identified with a **TN 4 (Average)** roll, and picked for **1 Snack**.

**Directions:** To the west is a slope down towards the water. To the northwest is an abandoned dock floating untended. To the north is a marshy area full of long, cigar-shaped objects bobbing in the water. To the east is a riverboat, partially overgrown with vines.

## **6 - Demolished Campsite**

---

*A set of survival tents were pitched here on the dry ground, but their occupants are gone and the tents are flattened, their poles sticking out at crazy angles and their stakes mostly uprooted from the earth. There is a firepit, which seems to have been used recently as it is still smoking. There are also tracks, but they seem to loop mostly back to the site, except for several places where large, human-sized objects look to have been dragged into the water.*

**Opportunity/Hazard:** There is a **Raccoon, Devious** rummaging through the tents and, if it is driven off, the Fishers can scavenge **3 Snacks**, a **Hand Weapon**, and find a journal providing a **Hint Of The Ruby** by making a **TN 4 (Average)** roll to locate each.

**The Jungle's Edge (Ambush Spot):** There is something moving just beyond the treeline. If the Fishers investigate, one of them must make a **TN 6 (Very Hard)** roll to get out of the way of a **Boar, Wild** or else end up in combat with it.

**Something Buried In The Mud (Ambush Spot):** There is a shape half-hidden in the earth by the shore. It is a **Panfish**, trying to play it cool and avoid being discovered. The Fishers may simply pick it up. No angling is needed.

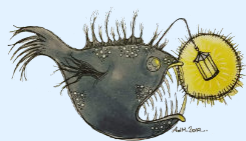
**Movement Along The Water's Edge (Ambush Spot):** There is a flash of color in the water at the shoreline. The Fishers spot something small jetting away. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby**.

**Directions:** To the south is a stretch of jungle. To the southeast is an empty dock floating by itself in the middle of a flooded area. To the northeast is a large lake. To the north is a shallow region full of reeds and other plantlife.

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Carp, Grass
- 2 - Piranha, Vegetarian
- 3 - Bass, Fighting
- 4 - Bass, Fighting
- 5 - Sole, Common
- 6 - Eel, Electric

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.





## 7 - Deep Sink

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*This wide lake has no apparent bottom.*

**Primary Hazard:** This area cannot be fished without a boat or other flotation device, and crossing it without either adds **2 Exhaustion** to each Fisher and **2 Suspense** to the group.

**Secondary Hazard:** Investigating any Ambush Spot here gives the Fishers **+1 Suspense**.

**Fragment Of A Fin (Ambush Spot):** A tiny fin-piece bobs all alone on the surface. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby**.

**Flecks Of Color In The Deep (Ambush Spot):** Something colorful can almost be seen through the murky water. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby**.

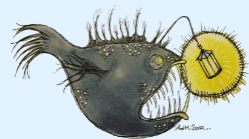
**Fish Eggs? (Ambush Spot):** You think you can see two round objects, almost in reach, below the surface. These are the Mussurana's eyes. **It attacks.**

**Directions:** To the south is a dock, floating unattended. To the southeast is a marshy area with long objects floating in it. To the east is a viney stretch of jungle, seemingly rich with fruits. To the northeast is a sheltered cover. To the north is a modern-looking facility built on stilts. To the northwest is a marshy area thick with plants. To the southwest is a campsite, flattened.

### Fishing Spot:

- 1 - Carp, Grass
- 2 - Carp, Giant
- 3 - Shark, Turnip
- 4 - Sturgeon, Leaping
- 5 - Carp, Goldenscale
- 6 - Koi, Ageless Master

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.



## **8 - Through The Reeds**

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*Thick stalks of water plants jut up from the shallows here, forming a swaying curtain of green.*

**A Body In The Water (Ambush Spot):** There is a shape like a human body resting face down in the water. It is actually a **Cannibarilla, Phragmites** and will attack upon discovery.

**Wind Through The Reeds (Ambush Spot):** Several of the reeds are rustling. It could be the wind. There is no sign of whatever caused them to move, but a **TN 4 (Average)** roll identifies the stalks of the reeds as edible and the Fishers can harvest **2 Snacks** from them.

**Fish Eggs (Ambush Spot):** There is a small cluster of what looks like fish eggs hidden along the side of one of the marsh plants. They have been eaten away at, apparently by something that left a small red scale behind. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby**.

**Directions:** To the south is a destroyed campsite, trailing smoke from its firepit. To the southeast is a wide, deep, stretch of water. To the northeast is a modern-looking facility built on stilts. It appears deserted.

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Catfish, Lurking
- 2 - Eel, Electric
- 3 - Piranha, Red-Bellied
- 4 - Piranha, Vegetarian
- 5 - Lionfish, Walking
- 6 - Eel, Insidious

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **9 - The Old Facility**

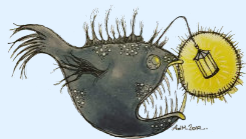
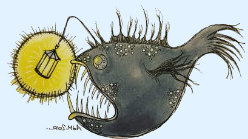
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*A series of prefabricated buildings sit on stilts above water level. There is a docking platform floating next to the facility, partially torn off its moorings. A chunk of it is missing.*

**Hazard:** There is no sign of the site's personnel, but a pair of **Centipedes, Giant** are crawling along the side of the building, and they will attack if the Fishers get too close without figuring out a way to chase them off.

**Opportunity:** Any Fisher that disembarks may search the area, making a **TN 4 (Average)** roll to find research records (gain **2 Hints Of The Ruby**), a **TN 4 (Average)** roll to find a crate of **4 Snacks**, and a **TN 5 (Hard)** roll to find a pair of **Harpoons** in the armory.

**Broken Windows (Ambush Spot):** Several of the clear plastic windows of the



facility appear to have been slammed out of their sockets, the frames around them bent and twisted as if by some giant creature forcing its way in. There is nothing to learn here, but the atmosphere is eerie.

**Satellite Transmitter (Ambush Spot):** The facility's communications equipment hasn't just been obliterated. Part of it has been dragged away into the swamp, making repairs impossible. The Fisher investigating this spot suffers **1 Exhaustion** at the realization that they can't call for help.

**Untouched Boat (Ambush Spot):** An undamaged motor boat is still anchored to the dock. It takes a **TN 4 (Average)** roll to get out to it safely without falling in the water and suffering 1 Exhaustion worth of panicked splashing, but if a Fisher does reach the dock the group gains access to a **fully-fueled boat**.

**Directions:** To the southwest is a wide shallow region full of tall water-plants. To the south is a deep lake. To the east is a secluded shore screened by a canopy overhead, and past that is a stretch of swamp where the trees have been hung with broken, shredded nets.

### Fishing Spot:

- 1 - Trashfish
- 2 - Sole, False
- 3 - Sole, False
- 4 - Sole, False
- 5 - Sole, False
- 6 - Panfish

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **10 - Secluded Cove**

---

*This small shore, overhung by the forest canopy, feels sheltered and safe.*

**Opportunity:** The first time Fishers rest here, they **decrease their current Suspense by -2**, to a minimum of 0.

**Broken Shells (Ambush Spot):** A cluster of large, broken shells lies near the shore. These are eggs, but of a size that dwarfs what most reptiles would lay. They are all broken. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby**.

**Discarded Object (Ambush Spot):** A small, square object lies half in and half out of the water. The object is a waterproof camera, and in its memory are several pictures of the Ruby. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby**.

**An Old Log (Ambush Spot):** An old log is lying on the shore. Something appears wedged under it. The log is actually a **Burrowgator**, but it won't attack the Fishers unless they attempt to move it. Underneath it is a waterlogged emergency supplies package containing **Pepper Spray** and a **Fishing Manual**.



**Directions:** To the west is a modern-looking facility with its foundation resting on stilts. To the southwest is a large open stretch of deep water. To the south is an abundance of vines, many of which appear to be dense with fruit. To the east is a stretch of stretch of swamp where the trees have been hung with broken, shredded nets.

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Catfish, Lurking
- 2 - Loach, Weather
- 3 - Lionfish, Walking
- 4 - Piranha, Vegetarian
- 5 - Pickpocketapus
- 6 - Carp, Giant

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **11 - Fruiting Vines**

---

*This portion of dry land is infested with fruit vines. Fruit, both green and ripe, is everywhere the Fishers can see.*

**Opportunity:** One Fisher may succeed a **TN 4 (Average)** roll to identify the fruit as figs, and the party may immediately gather **3 Snacks** total. From then on, every time the party **Makes Camp** here, they gain another **2 Snacks** total.

**Broad-Leafed Tree (Ambush Spot):** Something is hanging from the upper branches. Close inspection reveals a bundle of delicious plantains. The group gains **3 Snacks** total.

**Fruiting Vine (Ambush Spot):** A dense cluster of fruit are growing from the underside of a vine. There are **3 Snacks** total here, but reaching for them prompts an attack by a **Leech, Mountain**.

**Bone Figurine (Ambush Spot):** A small bone figurine lies on the ground, depicting a team of people fighting a snake. In the snake's coils is a small carved fish. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby**.

**Directions:** To the west is a vast, deep stretch of water. To the far southwest is an abandoned dock, drifting in the water. To the south is a dry hill, overgrown with plantlife, bits of white glinting between them. To the east is a rocky slope leading down into a pool, which seems ominous for some reason. To the northeast is a stretch of mire with shredded nets draped into the water. To the northwest is a small cove screened from the elements by a thick canopy overhead. Beyond that is a modern-looking facility, its foundation held above water level by prefabricated stilts.



## 12 - Carcasses Of Alligators

---

*The corpse of large alligators bob in the water, making for a field of the dead.*

**Bloated Alligator (Ambush Spot):** The carcass of this alligator is swollen from the jungle water. There is nothing to gain here.

**Bitten Alligator (Ambush Spot):** Something small seems to have gnawed at the side of this animal. There is a small red scale drifting in the water nearby. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby**.

**Unpleasant Alligator (Ambush Spot):** You can see ribs. Gross. Pass a **TN 4 (Average)** roll or gain **1 Exhaustion**.

**Directions:** To the south the ground rises up to a dry cliff. To the southeast is are old, overgrown stone ruins. To the east is a stretch of swamp with strange flowers growing out of the water. To the north is a dry hill, overgrown with plantlife, bits of white glinting between them. To the southwest is an abandoned dock, floating by itself.

### Fishing Spot:

- 1 - Piranha, Red-Bellied
- 2 - Piranha, Red-Bellied
- 3 - Piranha, Red-Bellied
- 4 - Piranha, Red-Bellied
- 5 - Pike, Voracious
- 6 - Pike, Voracious

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## 13 - Abandoned Boat

---

*An old riverboat rests here, covered in crawling vines. Only part of its keel is sunken into the mire.*

**Opportunity/Hazard:** Going inside the boat and **accessing any of the Ambush Spots** requires dealing with a **Hornet Nest, Giant**. However, once inside, the Fishers can scavenge the boat, making a **TN 4 (Average)** roll to find each item: a **Hand Weapon**, a **Light Attractor**, and a preserved bundle of **Soapwhyte**.

**Records Of An Earlier Expedition (Ambush Spot):** Despite careful preservation, these have almost rotted to unreadability. Still, there are lines that discuss a rare fish and its immortal guardian. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby**.

**Carved Map (Ambush Spot):** Something has been scratched into the walls. It appears to be a list of locations where a small fish was spotted. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby**.

**Rotted Boards (Ambush Spot):** A dark stain covers these planks. The Fisher



that's investigating must make a **TN 5 (Hard)** roll or plummet through them, taking 2 Exhaustion.

**Directions:** To the west is an elevated cliff covered in thick jungle. To the north is a stretch of marsh with what appears to be floating bodies in it. Beyond that is a dry area with what appears to be sections of worked stone visible through the trees.

### Fishing Spot:

- 1 - Eel, Electric
- 2 - Piranha, Vegetarian
- 3 - Catfish, Lurking
- 4 - Catfish, Lurking
- 5 - Gar, Armored
- 6 - Eel, Insidious

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## 14 - Stone Ruins

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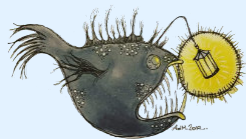
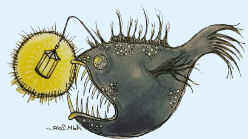
*Ancient structures lie in the jungle, their shapes swamped by plantlife but not entirely lost to the green. You could explore their insides, if you were so inclined.*

**Darkened Doorway (Ambush Spot):** A vine-curtained doorway leads into blackness. When the Fishers investigate, a **Bat, Shrieker** flies out. However, after dealing with it, the Fishers find several stone bowls decorated with fish motifs. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby**.

**High Ledge (Ambush Spot):** An elevated stone ledge looks out over the rest of the area. A **TN 3 (Easy)** roll detects a **Mountain Lion, True** and allows the Fishers to back away without angering it. A second, **TN 6 (Very Hard)** roll detects that there are a pair of stone knives on the ledge, both of which are suitable to serve as **Hand Weapons**. They can only be claimed if the mountain lion is driven off.

**Deep Pit (Ambush Spot):** There is a deep pit in the ground, its edges slick with moisture. A Fisher that climbs in can search the detritus at the bottom for tokens representing the Ruby, allowing the party to gain a **Hint Of The Ruby**. However, climbing into or out of the pit is a **TN 5 (Hard)** roll with a penalty of **2 Exhaustion** on a failure. The Fishers can lower this difficulty by creatively using their supplies and environment.

**Directions:** To the south is an old riverboat, overgrown with vines. To the north is a watery area full of strange flowers. To the northwest is a marshy area thick with floating bodies. To the west is a tall cliff covered in greenery at the top.



## 15 - Strange Flowers

---

*A field of unusual blooms blankets this stretch of the swamp. They smell sweet but in a sickly way, like a wound.*

**Weird Blossoms (Ambush Spot):** The flowers have an odd shape, and it may be good to get a closer look. Unfortunately, any Fisher who does so gets a good blast of the aroma in their nose, and this makes them sluggish. At the start of their next combat, they suffer **2 Stress**.

**Beneath The Surface (Ambush Spot):** There's something glittering beneath the plant cover. On close investigation, the Fishers find a scattering of red scales lying in the silt. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby**.

**Abandoned Pack (Ambush Spot):** A backpack is floating in the mire, untethered to any signs of human life. Its contents are mostly ruined, but there are **4 Snacks** that have been sealed in waterproof containers and one **Scorpion, Brush** that has more recently taken up residence. There is also a damp tablet that is nevertheless still useable---and which contains pictures of the Ruby---at the bottom of the pack. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby** if the Fishers go back for the tablet after dealing with the scorpion.

**Directions:** To the south is a set of overgrown stone ruins. To the southwest is a stretch of marsh with what looks like bodies floating in it. To the northwest is a hill with what looks like bones scattered through the foliage. To the north is a rocky area that slopes down into a wide pool of water. It gives you an ominous feeling for some reason.

### Fishing Spot:

- 1 - Piranha, Vegetarian
- 2 - Piranha, Vegetarian
- 3 - Carp, Giant
- 4 - Gar, Armored
- 5 - Pike, Vicious
- 6 - Koi, Ageless Master



When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## 16 - Skeletons

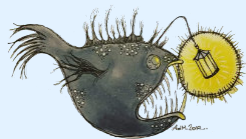
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*Thick plant cover blankets most of this elevated mound, and scattered between them are small, dense, white objects.*

*Bones, you realize.*

*This mound is covered in bones, and not all of them belong to local animals.*

**Snake Scat (Ambush Spot):** A dense, gross mass near the top of the hill contains the entire skeleton of a large river dolphin. The bones are cracked and



broken, and the leaving is fresh. Something gigantic seems to have been using this area as a lavatory, possibly for centuries. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby**.

**Bright Berries (Ambush Spot):** Bright berries grow along the mound's edge. A **TN 4 (Average)** roll identifies them as **Soapwhyte**.

**Discarded Pack (Ambush Spot):** A discarded backpack lies amidst the plants. It contains 2 Snacks worth of survival rations and a series of writings about the local ecology. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby**.

**Directions:** To the north is an area of jungle thick with fruiting vines. To the northeast is a rocky slope leading down into a pool of water, which gives you an ominous feeling. To the southeast is a marshy area with bright flowers growing out of the water. To the south is a stretch of swamp where long bodies float in silence.

## **17 - Shredded Traps**

---

*This boggy stretch of swamp has been strung with nets, seemingly to set the stage for the capture of a large animal.*

*All of the nets are broken, shredded methodically.*

**Submerged Object (Ambush Spot):** Something round lies beneath the water. Unfortunately, the item is a loop of rope, and the trap it's part of is still semi-functional. The Fisher must make a **TN 5 (Hard)** roll or get dragged up into the canopy by a snare, taking 1 Exhaustion and automatically losing any combats that occur before they are cut down.

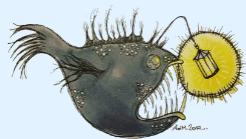
**Floating Container (Ambush Spot):** A small square object floats on the surface. It is a waterproofed container that has been filled with a series of writings about the Mussurana and how it has been here so long that the region has molded to suit its needs. The writings also talk about its relationship with the Ruby, and posit that the two enjoy a kind of symbiosis, where the Mussurana benefits from the fish's medical properties and in turn ensures that no predator will ever get near the creature. Gain **2 Hints Of The Ruby**.

**Snared Creature (Ambush Spot):** A thrashing, serpentine body is trapped under one of the nets. It turns out to be an **Eel, Electric**. Catching it requires first fatiguing the eel, which is difficult to do safely. A Fisher standing in the water immediately takes 2 Exhaustion, while a Fisher standing on a boat takes none. After this, the Fisher may claim the eel without needing to enter Fish Combat.

**Directions:** To the west is a large facility, seemingly deserted. To the southwest is a sheltered stretch of shoreline, followed by a dry region where the trees are heavy with vines and fruit. To the south is a rocky slope leading down into a pool of water, which gives you an ominous feeling.

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Carp, Grass
- 2 - Piranha, Red-Bellied
- 3 - Piranha, Red-Bellied



- 4 - Gar, Armored
- 5 - Carp, Goldenscale
- 6 - Pike, Voracious

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **18 - The Lair Of The Mussurana**

---

*A smooth, rocky stretch descends down into a deep pool. Bromeliads grow on the ledges and vines trail down, their tips almost resting in the water.*

*A feeling of uneasy calm permeates the area.*

**Opportunity:** If the Fishers wish, they may hunt for the Ruby here without needing to spend a Make Camp. This will put them into direct conflict with the Mussurana (see Changes III (Seeking The Ruby) on [page 243](#)).

**Worn Stones (Ambush Spot):** The rocks here have been worn smooth. In some areas they are even furrowed, as if they had been ground away by the passage of a gigantic creature. **Increase Suspense by +1.**

**Scattered Scales (Ambush Spot):** At the edge of the pond lies a small sprinkling of red scales. Gain a **Hint Of The Ruby** and **increase Suspense by +2.**

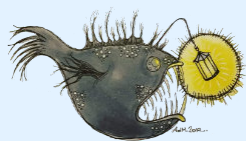
**Dirt Trails (Ambush Spot):** Silt and dirt streak the stones, heading in a long line down to the pool. Something dragged its body through mud and dirt before coming to rest in the waters here. **Increase Suspense by +1.**

**Directions:** To the west is a stretch of jungle thick with fruiting vines. To the north is an area of the swamp where the trees are draped with ripped nets. To the southwest is a hill covered in foliage. To the south is a marshy area where bright flowers grow.

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 1 - Nothing
- 2 - Nothing
- 3 - Nothing
- 4 - Nothing
- 5 - Nothing
- 6 - Nothing

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.



## **The Mussurana**

---

*A gargantuan snake, the Mussurana is not only predatory but also surprisingly intelligent. It has a demonstrated ability to plan, and it only strikes when it has judged the moment perfect for an appearance.*

**Habitats:** Marshes, sluggish streams, wetlands. Beneath the surface of murky waters in warm climates.

**Dice:** 4 (+1 die if it's being encountered in its lair)

**Special:** Ignores Stress equal to half the number of Fishers (round down) in the party. At the start of each round, picks a Fisher and assigns 1 Stress to them. When it wins a Finesse Gambit against a Fisher, it may inflict 1 Stress on them instead of removing 2 dice from their next roll.

**Loss Penalty:** You suffer 2 Exhaustion.

## **The Ruby**

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*A small, bright betta whose unique biology makes it immortal---not just ageless, but actively resistant to harm. Compounds collected from this fish could unlock a new age of medical breakthroughs.*

*It also has a very high Scoville rating.*

**Habitats:** Wherever the Fishers discover it (see Changes III (Seeking The Ruby) on [page 243](#))

**Dice:** 4

**Special:** The Ruby ignores a number of points of Stress equal to the number of Fishers in the party. The first time the Ruby would lose combat, it does not. If the Ruby gets away, the Fishers all take 1 Exhaustion, but it does not vanish permanently. If the Fishers found it by Making Camp and rolling a 15+, it remains in the area. If they found it by going to The Lair of the Mussurana, it disappears, but they can provoke a combat with the Mussurana to look for it again.

**Extra Special:** At the start of each round of combat with the Ruby, if the rest of the Fishers are not already in combat with the Mussurana, roll 1d6. On a 1 or a 2, the Mussurana shows up and enters combat with the rest of the party. If the Ruby is defeated, the party may automatically grab the fish and escape the Mussurana, ending the Animal Combat as well.

**Catch Bonus:** You win.

## **Winning**

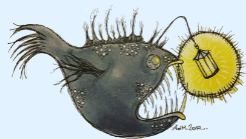
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The Fishers flee the jungle, Ruby in tow, Mussurana thwarted---for now.

Civilization is saved.

...although perhaps not every use of the new Ruby-based medical technology is going to be entirely ethical.

After all, how skilled could a fisher become if they were immortal?



## **SBing The Ruby In The Mire**

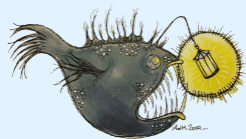
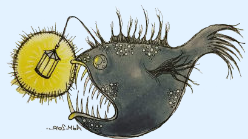
This Scenario is meant to feel tense and thrilling, but the goal isn't actually to bother the players. If someone in your group *really* doesn't like snakes, your mission is to make sure they don't have a bad time with this game. Change the Mussurana to a giant crocodile or crab. Give it googly eyes. Do whatever you need to do to avoid traumatizing anyone at the table.

On the flipside, if you've got a group that likes horror games, you can run this as probably the only fishing-based horror game in existence. Simply play up the atmosphere, build tension, show consequences to the actions the players take, and depict the Mussurana as a cunning, patient predator that could be anywhere.

Essentially, like with any game, you'll get the most mileage out of tailoring the experience to your gaming group. Listen to what they have to say, incorporate elements that they like, and give them all the material they need to collaborate with you on a story about snakes in a swamp.

## **SBing This Scenario, Part II**

It is possible that the players might try to solve this Scenario by never Making Camp and just taking more and more Exhaustion from lost combats and rolls until after they have explored every Ambush Spot. If the group does this, an optional rule is to force the group to Make Camp whenever a Fisher hits 10+ Exhaustion... or to have Fishers that reach 10+ Exhaustion be permanently eliminated from the Scenario, whichever the SB prefers.



## **Seasonal Migration Of The Transpacific Slaughter Eels**

---

In Seasonal Migration, the Fishers are cast as the defenders of their Village, tasked with safeguarding it against a stampeding horde of eels.

This Scenario is unique in that it puts the Fishers in a siege situation inside their Village, giving them a chance to build up the Village's defenses and interact with the denizens of their Village while the Tragedy stampedes towards them.

This Scenario *does not* entirely orbit around fishing the way the rest of the game does. In fact, most of the gameplay in Seasonal Migration is almost a separate minigame, and it relies on having a map that the players can see and interact with.

Groups that like tactical gameplay, or that want to spend more time with the characters in the Village, may get the most enjoyment out of this Scenario. Groups that prefer more narrative, less board-game-y gameplay may prefer to give it a miss.

This Scenario is well-suited to serving as a demo or convention game, although you'll want to print out the materials and familiarize yourself with the new mechanics before doing this.

### **Changes (That's A Nice Village You Got There)**

Seasonal Migration differs from the standard Rod, Reel, & Fist Scenario in several significant ways.

Namely, the Scenario is played *inside* the Village, the giant migration of Rottweiler-sized walking eels coming your way *is the Old Region*, and the gameplay revolves around building up Village defenses and stockpiling supplies until the migration has ended.

Like **The Road Of Fish**, gameplay is pretty structured in this Scenario.

Seasonal Migration consists of **12 Rounds**.

Starting with the second round, each round is divided into the **Player Phase** and **Eeeeeeeels! Phase**.

The **First Round** is an exception. Its order is Eeeeeeeels! Phase, Player Phase, and then Eeeeeeeels! Phase again.

**During the Player Phase**, the Fishers get a total of **5 Actions** shared among the group, and they may spend them on any of the options listed under **Player Actions**.

When the Fishers have used up their 5 Actions, or when they choose to end the Player Phase, the Eeeeeeeels! Phase begins.

**During Eeeeeeeels! Phase**, the SB controls the advancing swarm of Slaughter Eels. They follow the steps listed under **What To Do During Eeeeeeeels! Phase**.

When the SB has finished those steps, the Eeeeeeeels! Phase finishes and the round ends.



Whenever the rounds ends, a new round begins.

And at the end of round 12, if the players haven't been overwhelmed by eels, and if they haven't found and implemented another way to win, the migration passes the village by and **the players win**.

## **Intro**

---

The Slaughter Eel is truly a fascinating creature. Its life begins and ends in the Pacific Ocean but---apart from those two brief moments of contact---it spends very little time in its home waters. Instead, after every eelspawn, hundreds of thousands of the creatures clamber up onto the shore on their six spindly legs and they begin a migration that will take them around the entire globe before dumping them back into familiar seas.

These migration waves have created a bit of a problem for human civilization, as the eels travel light and forage as they go. Trees, metal beams, and lawns are all valid food sources for the creatures, and those unfortunate enough to live in a swarm-zone can find their houses picked down to the cinderblocks when a good-sized swarm rolls through.

Still, humans are endlessly adaptive, and the eel-threat hasn't prevented people from settling in regions that will be affected.

After all, property values are cheap, taxes are low, and once a year during eel-season things get a little interesting.

This is a story of one of those times.

## **Player Actions**

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There are lots of small ways the Fishers can work to keep their Village's defenses from crumbling and therefore prevent hungry, walking eels from swarming through the streets and gnawing on the woodwork.

Here are a few of them.

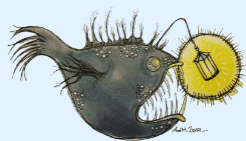
**Make Camp (1 Action):** One Fisher Makes Camp. They generate Snacks as if they were a party of 1. They can convert any of the group's fish into resources, as appropriate for each fish, but they must have the party's permission to convert fish this way.

**Build Defenses (1 Action):** Pick an open spot in any lane. There must not be any eels between the village and the open spot, or in the open spot itself. Build a Structure in that spot.

**Replace Defenses (1 Action):** Pick an open spot in any lane. There must not be any eels between the village and the open spot, or in the open spot itself. Remove the current Structure from that spot, then build a new one in its place.

**Distract (1 Action, 1 Fish):** Spend a fish and pick a space. Move all eels from that space into an adjacent space. This can be used to move eels to a different lane, or send them backwards, or even send them forwards.

**Fish Nervously (1 Action):** Go out behind the village and fish in the **Neighboring Body Of Water**.



## **What To Do During The Eeeeeels! Phase**

---

First, **Summon Your Eels**. Roll **1d6 + the current Round's number + 3**. You have that many **Eel Points**.

If it is **Round 8 or later**, the number of eels that you summon is instead **1d6 + the current Round's number + 5**.

Next, **Place Your Eels**. Spend Eel Points to place as many eels as you wish in any of the boxes on the rightmost side of the map. Bear in mind that different types of eels cost different numbers of Eel Points (see **Eel Types**).

If it is **Round 9 or later**, you may spawn eels in any spot other than the leftmost column, provided you are not spawning them inside of a building or spawning them past a building in the same lane.

Next, **Eels March**. Starting from top to bottom, left to right, the eels activate. Every eel acts according to its nature, and if there are multiple eels on a location, eels that cost more Eel Points activate before eels that cost less. If the effects of an eel or Structure are triggered during this step, resolve them.

Finally, if there are **Eels At The Gates** (i.e. if any eels have moved from the final leftmost space into the village), the SB distributes points of Stress between the Fishers equal to 2 Stress per eel inside the village and 1 Stress per eel in one of the three leftmost columns. The Fishers must then enter Animal Combat with a **Slaughter Eel Pack**. If the Fishers win, discard all eels inside the village and push all eels in the three leftmost boxes back to the second box from the right. If the Fishers lose this combat, the village's defenses fail and everyone flees, barely getting out ahead of the migration.

After resolving all these steps, assuming the village is still standing, **the round ends**.

## **Slaughter Eel Pack**

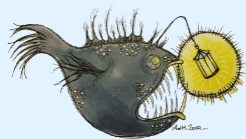
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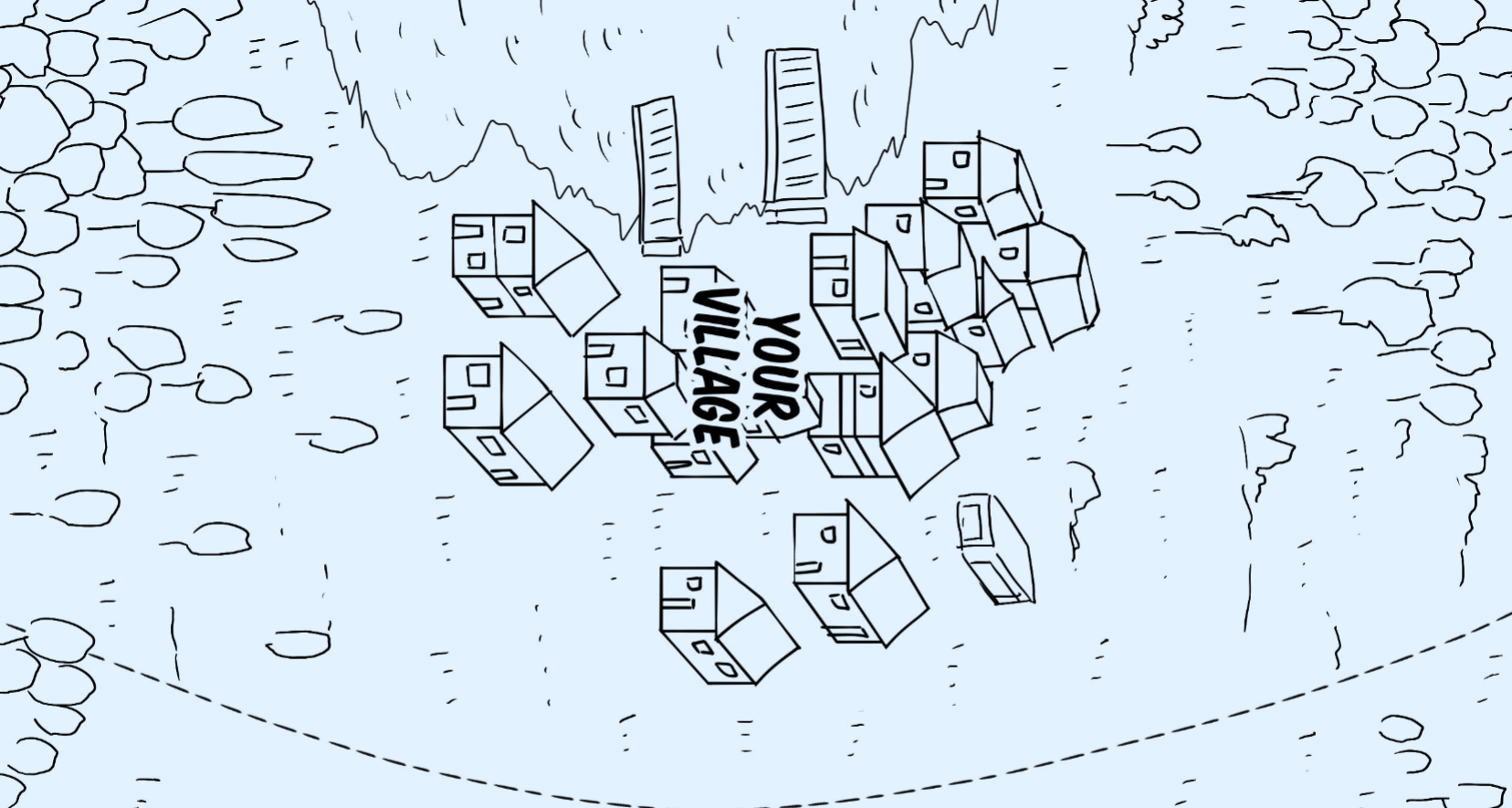
Habitats: Everything. Begins and ends its lifecycle in the Pacific Ocean. Borderline unstoppable on worlds without a Pacific Ocean.

Dice: 5

Special: At the end of the 3rd round and at the end of every round after that, permanently loses 1 die. Deals 1 Exhaustion to a Fisher instead of removing 2 dice from their Stand Firm Roll when it wins a Force Gambit against them.

Loss Penalty: 2 Exhaustion. If all villagers lose, the Village is overwhelmed.





**LANE 1**

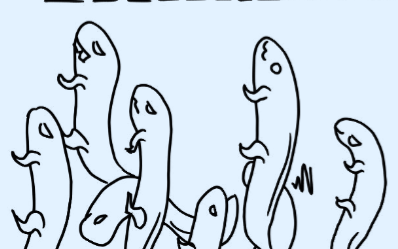
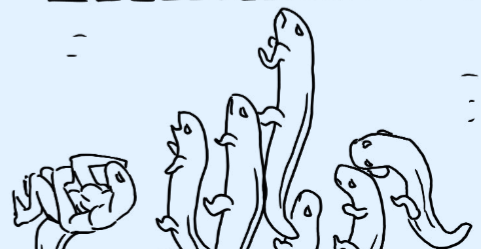
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**LANE 2**

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**LANE 3**

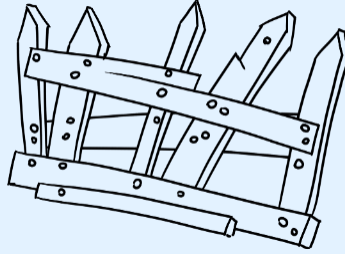
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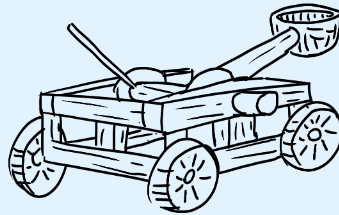
## Structures

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**Bulwark:** When an eel in this space attempts to move, if it is represented by a 4 or lower on the dice, it must move up or down (players' choice) instead of left or right. However, if the eel is represented by a 5 or higher on the dice, it instead destroys this Structure and moves normally.



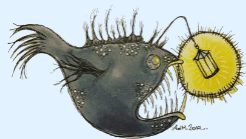
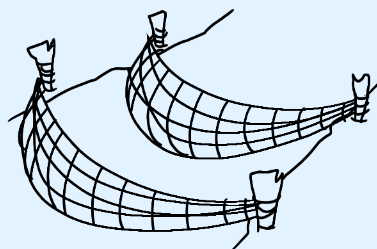
**Catapult:** At the start of every round, pick an eel and roll 1d6. On a 4, 5, or 6, that eel is hit and removed from play. On a 1, 2, 3 the catapult instead targets a space that is respectively 1, 2, or 3 spaces to the right of the intended target. If there are any eels on that space, the Fishers may pick one and remove it. Otherwise (or if the Catapult targets something off of the board) the shot is a clean miss. If an eel ever moves into the space containing the Catapult, destroy the Catapult.



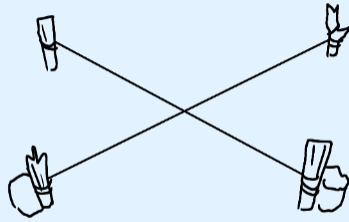
**Eel Pit:** The first eel to move or be summoned into this space is removed from play. When that happens, destroy this Structure. If multiple eels are moved onto this space at the same time because of a Distract Action, or for any other reason, remove them all from play and then destroy this Structure.



**Nets:** Eels that move into this space immediately stop moving. At the start of each round, if there are eels still in this space, place Nets on top of those eels. Any eels that are covered by Nets cannot move. At the end of each round, if Nets is covering any eels, destroy Nets.



**Tripwires:** Any eel that is represented by a 1 on the dice is removed when it moves into this space. Any eel that is represented by a 2 on the dice is removed when it moves into this space, but then Tripwires is destroyed. Any eel that is represented by a 4, or 5 on the dice destroys the Tripwires if it moves into this space. Eels represented by a 3 on the dice ignore Tripwires, as per their special ability.



## **Eel Types**

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Eels on the map are represented by d6s. The upwards-facing number on each d6 determines the type of eel that it represents. The number also determines how many Eel Points are needed to place it on the map.

**1 - Lil' Swarmer:** Moves 1 space to the left when it activates.

**2 - Lil' Sprinter:** Moves 2 spaces to the left when it activates

**3 - Jumpin' Sprinter:** Moves 2 spaces to the left when it activates, ignores Eel Pits and Tripwires. Structures ignored by the Jumpin' Sprinter do not activate when the Jumpin' Sprinter moves onto them and do not affect the Jumpin' Sprinter with their abilities.

**4 - Hungry Hungry Sprinter:** Moves 2 spaces to the left when it activates. The first time it encounters a Structure other than Nets, remove that Structure and this eel from play. If the Hungry Hungry Sprinter encounters Nets, just remove the Nets from play and leave the Hungry Hungry Sprinter on the board.

**5 - Swarmlord:** Moves 0 spaces to the left when it activates. At the start of each round, spawns 3 Lil' Swarmers on its space. This happens before Catapults can fire.

**6 - Eel Juggernaut:** Moves 1 space to the left when it activates. When it moves onto a space with Nets, destroys the Nets before they can activate. Must be hit three times with Catapults to be removed. Counts as 4 eels if it reaches the Village.

## **Neighboring Body Of Water**

---

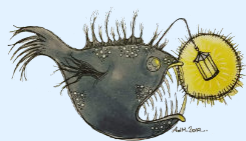
This is the spot where the Fishers can take a break from their frantic base defense to drop a line and hopefully catch something good.

This is a bit of an unusual fishing spot, and it works differently from other spots in other Scenarios, so read through it before someone fishes these waters.

### **Fishing Spot:**

2 - Smelt, Tornado

3 - Turtle, Sagacious



- 4 - Carp, Goldenscale
- 5 - Bass, Fighting
- 6 - Carp, Grass
- 7 - Carp, Giant
- 8 - Trashfish
- 9 - Eel, Unagi
- 10 - Eel, Insidious
- 11 - Koi, Ageless Master
- 12 - Trout, Glacial Bull

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 2d6. They encounter the corresponding result. Catching a particular fish does not remove it permanently from this spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. All fish types remain stocked in the Neighboring Body Of Water. Using Mining Charges only catches the number 6, number 7, and number 8 fish. No fish are removed permanently. Soapwhyte only affects this spot until the end of the round.

### **Winning**

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The Fishers win if they hold out until the end of round 12 without their village being overwhelmed.

### **SBing Seasonal Migration Of The Transpacific Slaughter Eels**

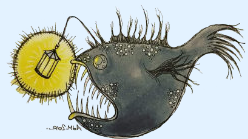
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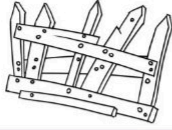
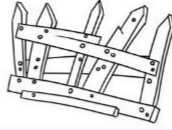
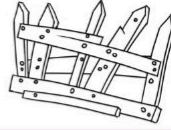
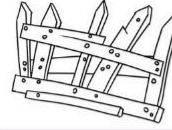
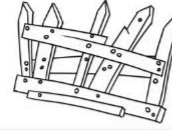
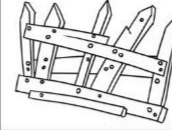
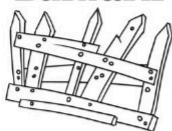
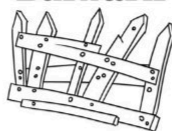
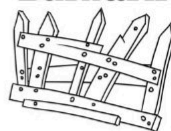
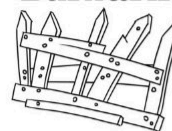
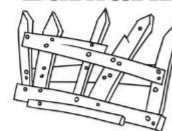
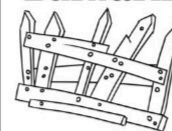
























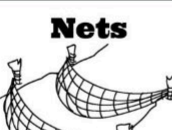
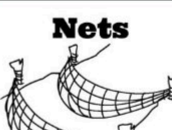
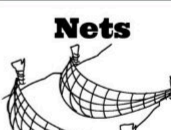
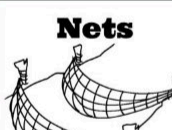
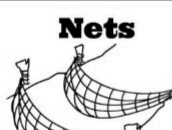
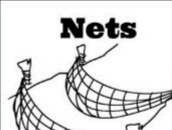


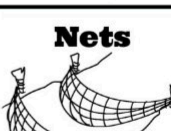
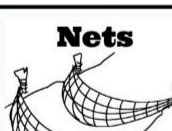
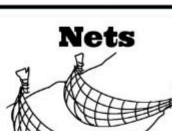
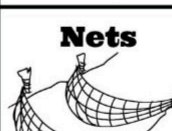












This is a remarkably different Scenario than the others. It plays like a board game, so don't be afraid to run it as such. However, taking a moment to dwell on characters in the village builds the players' connection to the setting, so don't be afraid to do that either.

If you're SBing this for a primarily board-game-y crowd, keep the roleplaying elements light.

If you're SBing this for a primarily roleplaying crowd, try to give some in-story descriptions and context for everything that's happening, and allow some downtime between rounds.

But overall, have fun and don't stress. This Scenario was written to run smoothly, and it should make for a quick evening of tower-defense-y, eel-siege-centric entertainment.



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## **We Demand An Aquarium**

Not every Scenario has to be complicated. Not every Scenario needs to involve trekking through the flooded jungle, saving towns from timeloops, or fending off hundreds of ravenous scuttling eels.

This Scenario, for example, is a simple fishing tournament.

Plus, maybe, some aliens.

### **Changes (Derby Fishing)**

In *We Demand An Aquarium*, an outside force (called The Interlopers) comes to the Village and demands that the Villagers establish a thriving, exciting aquarium for them to view when they return. If the aquarium is not ready by then, there will be consequences.

In addition to defining the Village, Tragedy, and Old Region, the players should also define **the Interlopers** at the start of this Scenario. Every player, plus the SB, should contribute one fact relating to who the interlopers are and why they want this aquarium built. These facts should match the overall tone of the setting (for example, the Interlopers might be tourists in a sleepy summer town setting, or they might be imperial messengers in a feudal Japan setting), but it's also possible to have the Interlopers be a wildly outside force---for example, highly advanced aliens demanding an aquarium from a small town in Arkansas.

Unlike other Scenarios, there is no one Fish Of Legend in *We Demand An Aquarium*. Instead, all caught and aquarium'd fish are worth a certain number of points. The points table is listed below.

In order to win the Scenario, appease the Interlopers, and prevent the Tragedy, the Fishers must have accumulated 30 points by the time (8 - the number of Fishers) Make Camps have been used.

### **Aquarium Points**

Fish that are brought to the aquarium instead of being turned into Snacks or thrown at bears can be exchanged for Aquarium Points, or AP.

AP values are listed below:

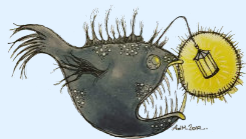
**Common Fish:** 1 Point

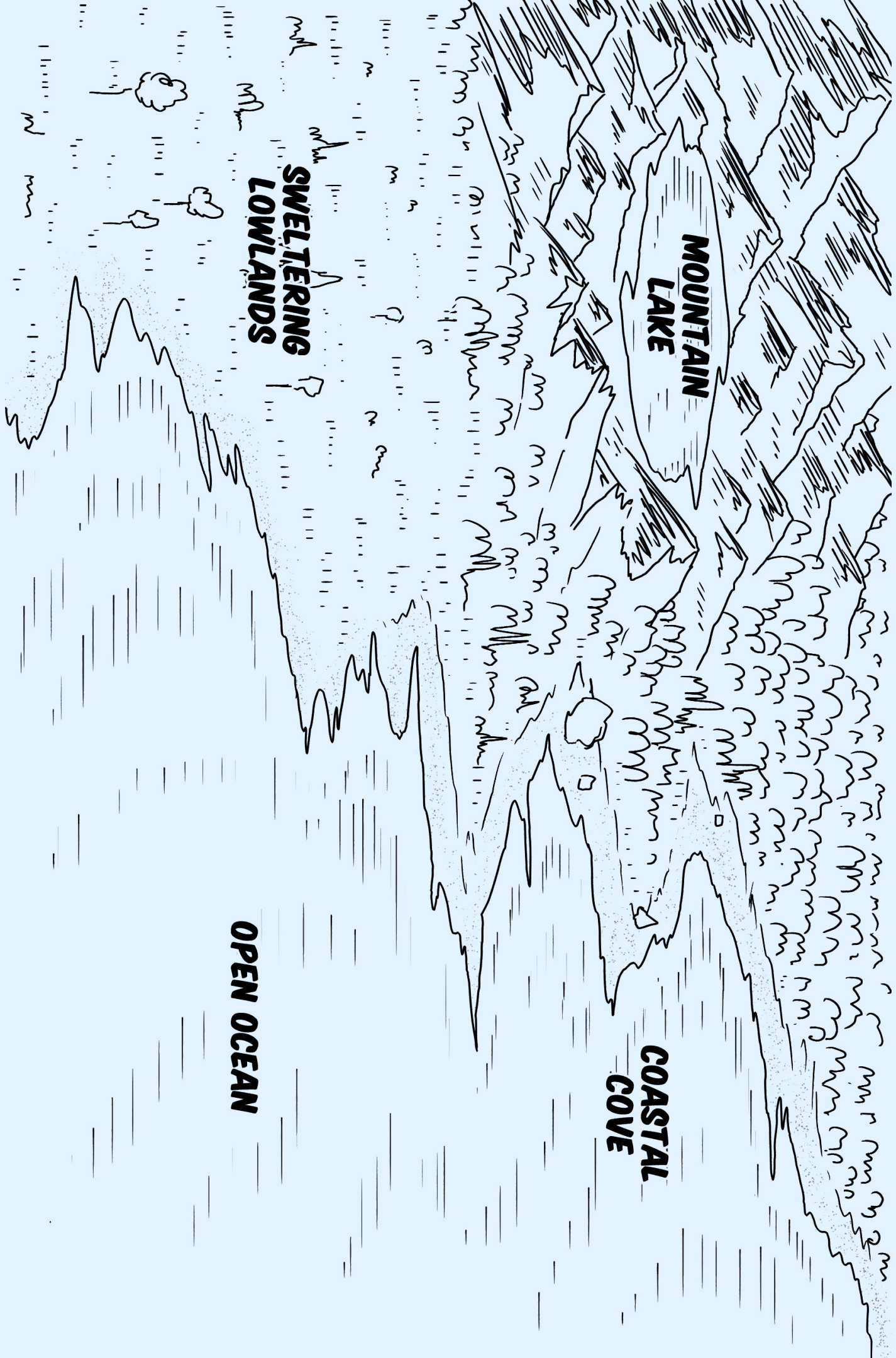
**Uncommon Fish:** 3 Points

**Rare Fish:** 5 Points

**Fish Of Legend:** 14 Points

**First Fish Of This Species In The Aquarium:** +1 Point





**MOUNTAIN LAKE**

**SWELTERING LOWLANDS**

**COASTAL COVE**

**OPEN OCEAN**

## **Intro**

---

The strangers arrive suddenly, taking your Village by surprise.

Their announcement is simple: "we demand an aquarium."

They tell you when you will have it built by, and what will happen if you don't, and then they leave.

For a moment everyone is stunned, but this doesn't last long.

There are foundations to set, enclosures to construct, and fish to catch.

If you work quickly, you may be able to have the visitors' project ready in time for their return.

## **Region 1 - Mountain Lake**

---

*This high-altitude lake has clear waters, reedy edges, and dragonflies whir through the air.*

*It would be a perfect spot, but for the abundance of wild animals.*

**Hazard:** Every time a Fisher announces their intention to fish here, the SB covertly rolls **1d6**. On a 6, roll another d6 and consult the following chart. On a 1 a **Bear, Adult** interrupts just as the catch is landed. 2 is a **Raccoon, Devious**. 3 is a **Mountain Lion, True**. 4 is a **Boar, Wild**. 5 is a **Salamander, Giant**. 6 is an **Eagle, Fishing**.

### **Fishing Spot:**

- 2 - Eel, Insidious
- 3 - Turtle, Sagacious
- 4 - Loach, Weather
- 5 - Char, Arctic
- 6 - Bass, Fighting
- 7 - Carp, Grass
- 8 - Bass, Fighting
- 9 - Muskellunge, Abiding
- 10 - Sturgeon, Leaping
- 11 - Trout, Glacial Bull
- 12 - Airchovies

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 2d6. They encounter the corresponding result. Catching a particular fish does not remove it permanently from this spot. Using Mining Charges only catches the number 6, number 7, and number 8 fish. No fish are removed permanently. Soapwhyte used on this spot only lasts for three fishing attempts.



## **Region 2 - Sweltering Lowlands**

---

*A series of rivers and marshes stretch across the area, but the heat is almost intolerable.*

**Hazard:** Every second time a Fisher fishes here, they gain **1 Exhaustion**.

### **Fishing Spot:**

2 - Turtle, Sagacious

3 - Eel, Insidious

4 - Carp, Giant

5 - Gar, Armored

6 - Piranha, Vegetarian

7 - Carp, Grass

8 - Piranha, Vegetarian

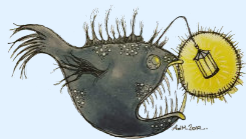
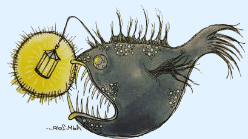
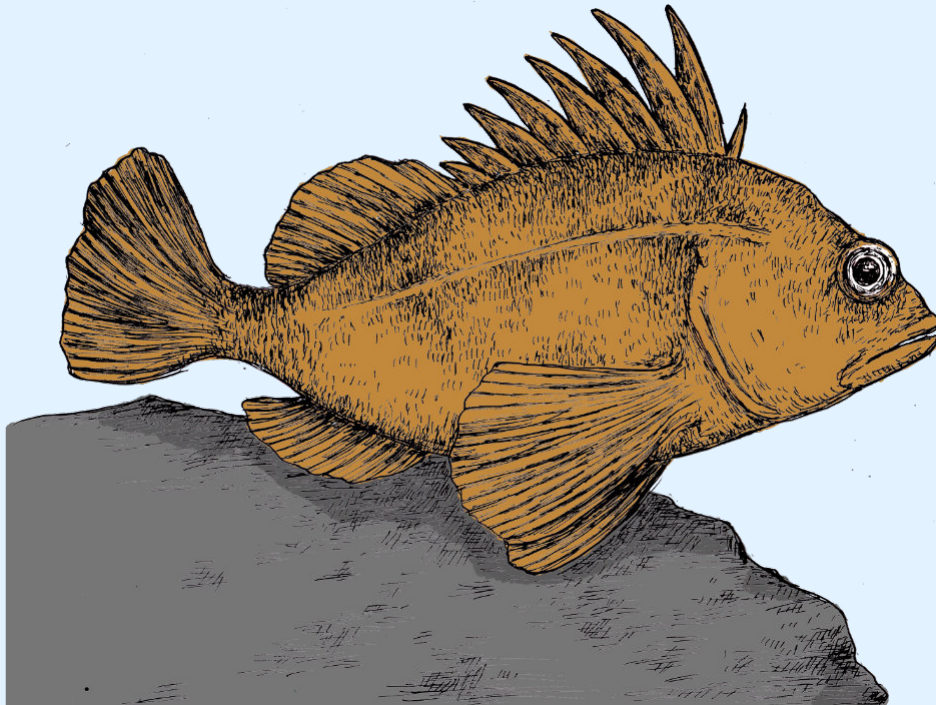
9 - Piranha, Red-Bellied

10 - Eel, Electric

11 - Pike, Voracious

12 - Stingray Of Near-Universal Levitation

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 2d6. They encounter the corresponding result. Catching a particular fish does not remove it permanently from this spot. Using Mining Charges only catches the number 6, number 7, and number 8 fish. No fish are removed permanently. Soapwhyte used on this spot only lasts for three fishing attempts.



### **Region 3 - Coastal Cove**

---

*The shoreline is wide and the sea breeze is refreshing, and there is only a small scattering of trash on the sand.*

*Unfortunately, the winds pick up closer to the ocean, and each cast is at risk of being flung back at the Fishers.*

**Hazard:** Fishers here start each Fish Combat with **+1 Stress**.

#### **Fishing Spot:**

- 2 - Eel, Insidious
- 3 - Turtle, Sagacious
- 4 - Lionfish, Walking
- 5 - Char, Arctic
- 6 - Whiting, Kisu
- 7 - Bass, Fighting
- 8 - Trashfish
- 9 - Croaker, Bellicose
- 10 - Smelt, Tornado
- 11 - Panfish
- 12 - The Lohengrin Engine

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 2d6. They encounter the corresponding result. Catching a particular fish does not remove it permanently from this spot. Using Mining Charges only catches the number 6, number 7, and number 8 fish. No fish are removed permanently. Soapwhyte used on this spot only lasts for three fishing attempts.

### **Region 4 - Open Ocean**

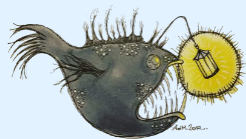
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*Reaching this region is difficult, as the waves are high, but determined Fishers can navigate the waters in search of challenging catches.*

**Hazard:** At the start of each Fish Combat here, Fishers must make a **TN 5 (Hard)** roll. On a failure, they take 1 Exhaustion trying to keep their boat steady.

#### **Fishing Spot:**

- 2 - Turtle, Sagacious
- 3 - Eel, Insidious
- 4 - Marlin, Brass
- 5 - Mackerel, Seerfish
- 6 - Eel, Unagi
- 7 - Cod, Atlantic



- 8 - Pufferfish, Tiger
- 9 - Pickpocketapus
- 10 - Sailfish, Wild
- 11 - Shark, Firefighter
- 12 - The Last Miniwhale

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 2d6. They encounter the corresponding result. Catching a particular fish does not remove it permanently from this spot. Using Mining Charges only catches the number 6, number 7, and number 8 fish. No fish are removed permanently. Soapwhyte used on this spot only lasts for three fishing attempts.

### **Winning**

Once the Fishers have reached 30 Aquarium Points (or used up their Make Camps and accumulated too much Exhaustion to catch another fish), the Scenario concludes.

If their aquarium is fully stocked, the Interlopers are impressed. If not, their reaction may depend on how well the Fishers did. In this Scenario, the Tragedy can be partially averted.

What that means in the story is up to the SB, but it may leave room for a follow-up adventure---either to find one last show-stopper of a fish for the aquarium, or to find a way to undo the actions of the Interlopers.

Either way, it's a good hook into another Scenario.

### **SBing We Demand An Aquarium**

Because this Scenario features lots of fishing, it can be run with multiple Swamp Beings. The way this works is simple. Whenever a player announces their intention to fish a location, another player who is not current fishing takes over as SB for that Fish Combat.

This mode is best used when everyone at the table is comfortable with the basic rules. For groups that prefer a single SB this is obviously entirely optional. On the other hand, for groups that want to take co-SBing even further, We Demand An Aquarium can be run without any formal SB at all. In that case, everyone SBs as needed, and everyone plays a Fisher as well, trading off so that everyone gets to play the fish side of combat and everyone gets to play as the Fisher.



# Legacy Mode

You are a group of heroic Fishers. A tragedy is set to descend on your Village, but at the center of the Old Region, there is a cure. The Fish Of Legend waits in a silent hollow, dreaming of fathoms deep. Catch it, and your Village will be saved.

At least for a while.

Welcome to Legacy Mode.

## **Legacy Mode Overview**

---

Normal gameplay in Rod, Reel, & Fist is very Scenario-oriented, and for groups that prefer long campaigns it can be hard to get around that. After all, once the Village has been saved, what is there left to do?

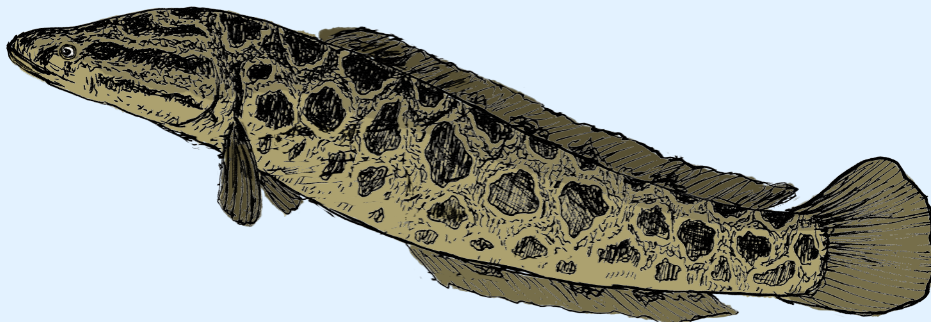
Legacy Mode answers that question and allows campaign play by adding a randomized Old Region that changes based on your adventures in it.

It also opens up the possibility for Rod, Reel, & Fist to be run as a pseudo-boardgame---if you have friends that want to put the story elements aside and just focus on the dice.

In Legacy Mode, you might have a fish that needs to be caught once a generation, or the first Fish Of Legend could impose a curse on the Fishers that forces them to continue protecting the Village, or the forces of the Tragedy may return to the Village again and again, requiring the Fishers to always stand ready.

Whatever the set up, just one trip into the Old Region isn't going to be sufficient, and multiple generations of Fishers are going to need to brave its shifting expanse until their work is done.

So build your setting, gather your group, and get ready for a roguelite fishing adventure.



## **Randomizing The Old Region**

The first thing you're going to need to do in Legacy Mode is create your starting Old Region. To do this you're going to want a stack of printed paper hexagons. They should be cut out, so you can move them around and fit them together, and they should be large---or at least big enough to write on comfortably.

Alternately, if you are doing this over the internet, you can use a digital hex map that lets you and your players make edits.

## **Establishing The Map Size**

For a very small Old Region, you're going to want 7 hexes.

For a medium Old Region, you're going to want 19 hexes.

For a large Old Region, you're going to want 41 hexes.

## **Populating The Hexes**

For each hex, do the following:

- If this is the first hex that you've picked up, mark it as the Entrypoint. It will serve as the hex where the Fishers enter the map. The Entrypoint can never be removed from the map and it can never lose its Entrypoint status.
- If you currently have fewer than 3 fishing spot hexes (for a small map), 5 fishing spot hexes (for a medium map), or 7 fishing spot hexes (for a large map), any hex you pick up is automatically going to be a fishing spot hex. Consult the fishing spot table and skip the random roll to determine whether this hex is a fishing spot.
- If you already have the minimum number of fishing hexes for your map size, do the next four steps back-to-back.
- Roll 1d6. If you get a 5+, this hex is a fishing spot. Consult the fishing spot table.
- Roll 1d6. If you get a 5+, this hex has a hazard. Consult the hazard table.
- Roll 1d6. If you get a 5+, this hex has an animal. Consult the animal table.
- Roll 1d6. If you get a 5+, this hex has a reward. Consult the reward table.
- Ask your group (or decide for yourself) what this hex is. Is it a field? A slope? Part of a ruined cityscape? Write a quick phrase describing the hex onto the hex itself.

Afterwards, pick one hex with a fishing spot. Add the Fish Of Legend to it, displacing a fish of your choice from the spot if need be.



## **Fishing Spot Table**

---

Add the fishing spot template (below) to the hex.

For each empty slot on the template below, roll 1d6.

- 1--3: Pick a common fish and add it to this hex.
- 4--5: Pick an uncommon fish and add it to this hex.
- 6: Pick a rare fish and add it to this hex.

### **Fishing Spot Template:**

1 -

2 -

3 -

4 -

5 -

6 -

When a player announces their intention to fish this spot, roll 1d6. They encounter the corresponding result. When a result has been encountered, remove it from the spot and replace it with 'Nothing'. On a 'Nothing', the SB rolls again or chooses which of the remaining fish appear.

## **Hazard Table**

---

Roll 1d6.

- 1--3: There is a 4 TN obstacle here with a loss penalty of 1 Exhaustion. What is it?
- 4--5: There is a 5 TN obstacle here with a loss penalty of 1 Exhaustion. What is it?
- 6: There is a 6 TN obstacle here with a loss penalty of 1 Exhaustion. What is it?

## **Animal Table**

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Roll 1d6.

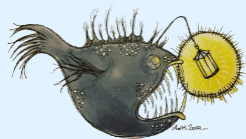
- 1--3: Pick a common animal and add it to this hex.
- 4--5: Pick an uncommon animal and add it to this hex.
- 6: Pick a rare animal and add it to this hex.

## **Reward Table**

---

Roll 1d6.

- 1--3: 1d6-2 (minimum 1) Snacks can be collected in this hex. If the hex has a hazard or animal, the Snacks are guarded by the hazard or animal.



- 4--5: Pick an item and add it to this hex. If the hex has a hazard or animal, the item is guarded by the hazard or animal.
- 6: Pick a Technique. There is an instructor or manual in this hex that can teach the Technique to a single Fisher. If the hex has a hazard or animal, the instructor or manual is guarded by the hazard or animal.

## **Constructing The Map**

---

Either by yourself as the SB, or as a group taking turns, place each hex onto a flat surface where your group is going to play. If you have a spare sheet of cardboard, you can use little loops of tape to secure the hexes in place, but you probably don't want to glue them down.

Every hex that gets placed should be connected by an edge to at least one other hex. The first hex breaks this rule and can be placed anywhere on the surface, but otherwise you should never hit a point where you have a free-floating hex anywhere on the map.

Once every hex has been placed, the SB designates one hex with a fishing spot as the location of the Fish Of Legend. With that done, you're ready to play.

## **Restoring The Board**

---

Each time you finish playing a game in your custom Old Region, do the following to the map:

- Remove 3 hexes of your choice. This may not reduce the total number of hexes below 7, it may not reduce the map below the minimum number of fishing spots, it may not remove the Fish Of Legend's fishing spot, and it may not create any 'floating' hexes that cannot be accessed by the rest of the map. If removing a hex would do any of these things, remove a different hex. If no hexes are valid for removal, skip it.
- Add 3 hexes. These hexes are created and placed just as they would be if this were a new map being created.
- Animals Reproduce: For each animal still on the map, roll 1d6. On a 6, add a copy of that animal to a neighboring hex so long as no other animals are there.
- Animals Migrate: For each animal on the map, roll 1d6 and make a note of the direction the 1 is pointing in. The animal moves one hex in that direction if possible, or stays put if the 1 is pointing straight up or straight down.
- Animals Arrive: add 1 animal (for a small map), 3 animals (for a medium map), or 7 animals (for a large map), distributed between any hexes that do not currently have animals in them.
- Fish Reproduce: For every fishing spot, roll 1d6. The fish in the corresponding numbered slot reproduces, filling an empty slot if available, or rolling 1d6 again and replacing the fish in that slot. The Fish Of Legend does not spawn and may not be replaced.
- Restock Fish: For every slot in a fishing spot that is still empty, roll 1d6 and add a new fish according to the Fishing Spot Table.

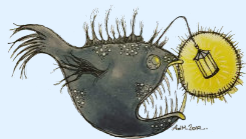
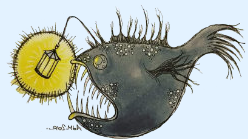
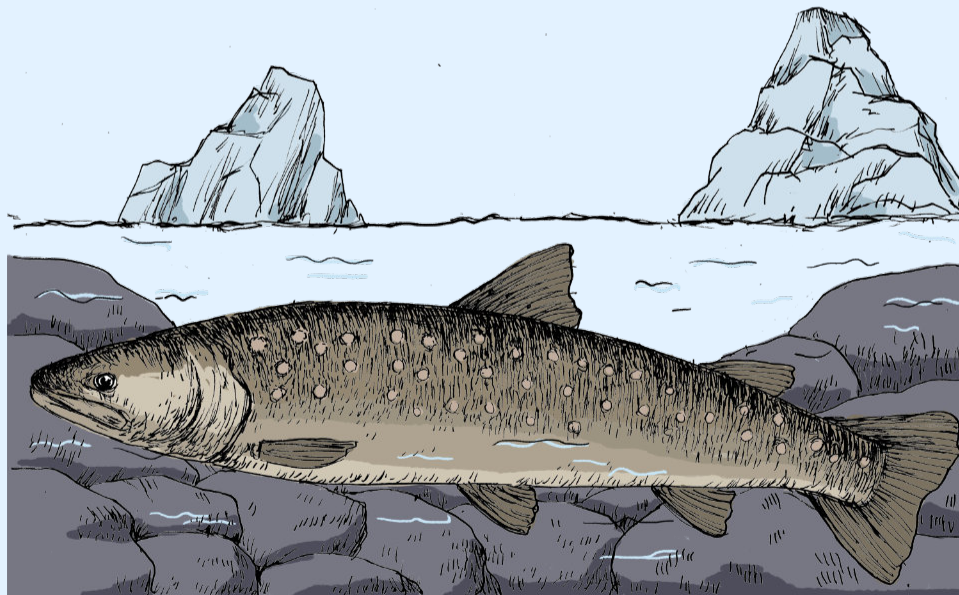


## Handing Things Over To The Next Generation

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Each time you finish playing a game in your custom Old Region, do the following for the Fishers:

- **Set Aside Your Current Generation:** They are now NPCs in the Village or they have left to continue their lives elsewhere. Each player chooses the fate of their character and narrates it.
- **Create A New Generation:** Every player creates a new Fisher and chooses their Type, Temperament, and the member of the old generation that they studied under. These new Fishers do not start with the standard Kit from character creation (Rod + Tacklebox + one Equipment or Technique pick) unless they choose to have not studied under anyone, in which case they are created as normal.
- **Retain Techniques:** Each player rolls 1d6 for each of the Techniques that their character from the previous generation had. On a 5+, they pass this Technique down to a Fisher in the next generation that chose to study under them.
- **Retain Heirlooms:** Each player rolls 1d6 for each of the pieces of Equipment that their character from the previous generation had. On a 5+, they pass this Equipment down to a Fisher in the next generation that chose to study under them. Rods and Tackleboxes are always automatically passed down this way as long as the new generation member can use them, no roll required, whereas Snacks and Fish are never passed down. They are eaten.
- If any Fisher did not get a Rod and a Tacklebox but is able to use them, they receive both of those things now.
- Decide on a new Tragedy that is threatening the Village.



## **Making Your Mark**

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- If the map is ever completely cleared of animals during the session (or if it's reduced to just 1 animal for a small map, 3 animals or less for a medium map, or 4 animals or less for a large map), after the session roll 1d6 for every hex and, on a 5+, add an animal via the Animal Table to that hex. Then add the tag to your Village "Under Scrutiny". If your Village is already Under Scrutiny, upgrade the tag to "Government Interest". If it already has Government Interest, add "Outside Forces In Town" to the Village. These tags represent an escalating amount of attention that is being paid to the Village's ability to consistently run wild animals out of the surrounding area. In a more normal setting, this might indicate a federal conservation agency objecting to the Village's actions, but in a less grounded setting this might mean that the government wants to recruit from the Village elite soldiers who have a proven record of fending off bears.
- If a fishing spot is ever emptied, mark it as having +2 Depleted counters. At the start of each new game, every Depleted fishing spot rolls 1d6 for each Depleted counter it has and then removes the corresponding fish from its spot. The Fish Of Legend may not be removed this way. At the end of each game, any spot that has at least one fish loses a Depleted counter, if it has any.
- If the Fish Of Legend was caught, remove its hex entirely. Replace that hex with a new hex, creating it just as you would if you were generating a new map. Then create another new hex, give it a Fish Of Legend, and then add it to the map.

## **Winning And Losing**

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A typical game of Legacy Mode lasts for four generations, although you may choose to have a longer or shorter campaign if you wish.

Each generation, the Fishers get 9 - (the number of Fishers) Make Camps to catch the Fish Of Legend.

If they fail, mark the failure on the Village sheet. The SB explains how the Tragedy befell the Village, and the players explain how the Village was able to survive. Then list one Lasting Consequence and add it to the Village sheet.

If the Fishers instead succeed, mark the success on the Village sheet. The SB explains how the Tragedy was averted and the players explain one cultural element (such as a new building, or an annual festival, or a change in how some villagers treat each other) that resulted from their success.

When Legacy Mode has ended, the SB narrates one final look at the Village, taking in the changes that have resulted from the Fishers' successes and failures, and then the scene fades to black.



# Gratitude

This project would not have been possible without the invaluable assistance of the following people.

## **Backers**

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### **SWAMP BEING**

Ian Hamilton

### **Fish From Another World**

Bandicoot Roo

### **All I Survey**

Beate Schulz, Josh Geller

### **The Legendary Fish**

Alexander Anderson, Danielle Carne, Cbat007, Joe Cronin, Michael Epstein, Copper Frog Games LLC, Omar's World of Comics & Hobbies, Star West Morgan

### **Renown Angler**

Kamil Szaśiadek, Elliot B. Tullis, Angela Walters, Joshua Zuccalo

### **Ambush Zoologist**

Anna June Johnson-Betty, Chase Walker

### **Swamp Ichthyologist**

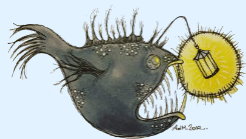
J Boyes, Tyler Brunette, Mark Campos, Devon "Dusky Grouper" Oratz, Chris James, Sean Richer, Ichthyologist of the Cosmic Gantry

### **Fishing Type**

Kenny Brightwell, Ev, FAK & KCB, Clay Gardner, Josh Murphy

### **Old Region Explorer**

AlfonzoM6, Taylor Chelliah, Vincent Garcia!, Jack, Adam Kraus, Don Parsley, HodorsMom Remmell, The Freelancing Roleplayer, anonymous, Kevin



(K-man567) Yan

### Full Tacklebox

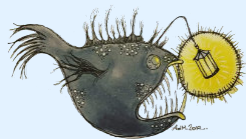
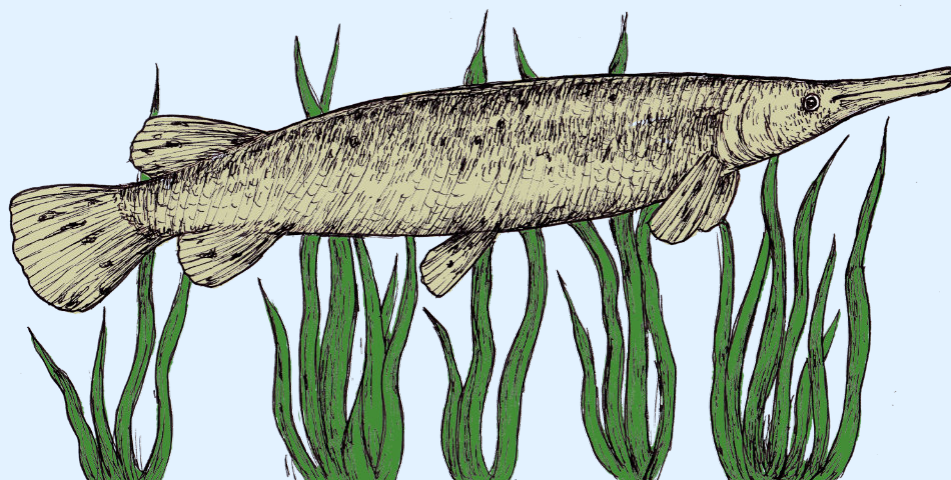
Steve "Wolf" Fisher, Mister Lamp, Guillaume "Gilyu" Mercier, Masahiro Odaka, Adam Vass

### A Nibble On The Line

ç®;¶±¥©#, Rune Æther, Nathan Arnold, Arometer, John Austin, James Avery, Rob Backstrom, Steven Bond, John Bowlin (virtuadept), Laura Burns, Joe Bush, John C, Riccardo "Malbet" Caverni, Richard Chan, Edouard Contesse, Jason Corley, Coal The Coward, Tyler Crumrine, cue\_t2, Jonathan "Buddha" Davis, Dodostad, Christopher Doornbos, Dylank120, ESD, Mark Fenlon, Karsing Fung, M. Phoenix Gibbs, GoldenH, Judd M. Goswick, GravCon, Dylan Green, Jack Gulick, Erik Hansen, Ian Hart, Clinton Hedges, Herbie Hicks, IceTorture, Serenity Kaysdatter, Keith, PJ Kelly, Max Kindred, Mark R. Lesniewski, Geza Letso, Justin Ling, Kris M, Craig Maloney, Jonny mann, Christopher McDonough, Connor McGinley, Patrice Mermoud, Mikailos, Adrian Minter, Lucas Moody, Owen Meldrim Moore, Charles Moulton, MrHickup, Liam Murray, James Myers, Matthew Nielsen, Ray Nolan, Zack Norwig, Lisa Padol, Kyle Vincent Parker, Reverance Pavane, Pete Petrusha, John Phillips, Patrick Powers, Thomas "Newt" Pring, R1s1ko, RakkettRahu, rathiri, Carl Rigney, Adam Robertshaw, Laurance Roth, Grant Ruhoff, Matt S., Mendel Schmiedekamp, Nick Scratch, Eric See, Oh SeungHan, Kai Sheng, Gunnar Smits, SnufferinSnagglepuss, Trip Space-Parasite, Michael Stevens, Curtis Takahashi, L. Talis, Josue "Azazer" Tavarez, Kyle Templeton, Danielle Thomas, timothy, Brendan Toliver, Tim Tregeagle, Robert Turk, Peter "Chewie" Underwood, Russell Ventimeglia, Bárbara y Víctor, Jason Viens, Brock Wager, Jon Welfare, Drew Wendorf, Vincent Hadi Wijaya, Benjamin Willshire, Samantha Wolf, Steve Xander, zemesan

### Watching The Water

Colin Fredericks



## Contributors

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### Joe Bush (Cover Artist, Artist, Graphic Design, Video Editing And Mixing, Project Consultant)

Joe is a game designer and artist known for Heroines of the First Age, Oubliette, Summoner's Grimoire, and Wasuremonogatari. He works almost exclusively in digital art, favoring stylized work with a distinct anime and manga feel. Joe's projects range through fantasy, science fiction, horror, and Japanese themes. He is the owner of Voidspiral Entertainment where he works full time on game development and commissions.

### Decorafis Studio (Artist)

Decorafis is a graphic design and illustration studio based in Indonesia. Decorafis has more than 8 years experience and works with clients from around the world. They can be reached at [www.fiverr.com/decorafis](http://www.fiverr.com/decorafis)

### Richard Kelly (Project Lead, Designer, Writer, Layout, Publishing)

Richard is a freelance writer and designer of games like The Dawnline and Firefighter Sharks In Space. He has also written content for Oubliette Second Edition, Heroines of the First Age, Pathogen: Unclassified, Wicked Pacts, Splinter, and Golden Sky Stories.

### Tais Lemos (Artist)

Tais Lemos is an illustrator with a graphic design background. Tais works with both digital and traditional mediums, creating rich and expressive illustrations for any kind of project. More of Tais work can be found at <https://www.tlemos.com/>

### Lurienn (Artist)

Lurien is an artist whose work can be found at <https://www.artstation.com/mivlen>

### Hanna Marine (Artist)

Cartoonist and illustrator from Amherst, MA. Grew up loving cartoons, comic books and video games, her art is inspired by fantasy, science fiction, and a love of cute things.

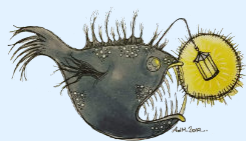
Has even more art at [www.hannamarine.com](http://www.hannamarine.com)

### Martalia (Artist)

Martalia is an illustrator and watercolor artist who can be reached on Instagram @martaliadraws

### Absentia dMorte (Artist)

Absentia is an artist whose work can be found on Instagram at @absentia\_dmorte



### **Lisa Sacchi (Artist)**

Lisa Sacchi is an illustrator whose work can be found at <https://lisasacchi.weebly.com>

### **Jonas Wittmann (Artist, Graphic Design, Layout)**

Jonas Wittmann is a freelance illustrator and graphic designer based in Düsseldorf, Germany. With painting and drawing having been preoccupations since his earliest teenage years, he always ensured to make extra time for an art project here or there over the years.

Additionally, he has always been an enthusiast for tabletop role playing games like 'Shadowrun', 'Vampire: The Masquerade', and 'The Dark Eye', usually sketching characters and scenes as they happen during play sessions.

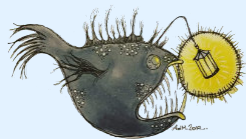
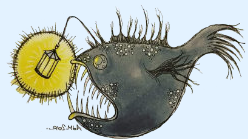
This turned out to be a fortunate coincidence for the production process of 'Rod, Reel and Fist', for which Jonas has provided his skills as an artist, designer, layout editor and play tester.

### **Tristan Yuvenco (Artist)**

Kumusta!

Greetings from the bustling metro of Quezon City, Philippines. I'm Tristan Yuvenco and I make illustrations and designs for publication, animation, games, and agencies. I've worked with Cartoon Network, Scholastic Inc., Arthur A Levine Books, Lemonade Illustration Agency, TBWA/SMP, The Phillipine Daily Inquirer, among others. When I'm not drawing, I try out food, play games, watch shows, and pet the family dog. I am very fond of animation, video games, traveling, and stories.

More of my art can be found at [trisketched.com](http://trisketched.com)



**Setting Name:**

VILLAGE

TRAGEDY

**ROD, REEL,  
& FIST** 

IMPORTANT PEOPLE

OLD REGION

FISH OF LEGEND

**Character Name:**

TYPE

DESCRIPTION

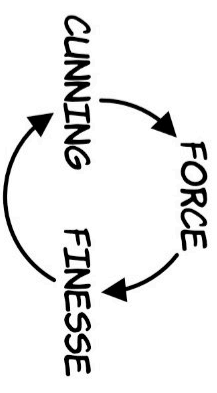
TEMPERAMENT

EQUIPMENT

TECHNIQUES

FISH

# ROD, REEL, & FIST



# ROD, REEL, & FIST

A village stricken by tragedy. A group of plucky young fishers. An ancient region, reclaimed by nature, and the wish-granting fish that waits at the heart of it.

## WELCOME TO ROD, REEL, & FIST.

**A FISHING RPG?!** Possibly the first of its kind, players take on the roles of heroic fishers trying to save their village by making a truly legendary catch.

**EVERYONE CAN PLAY:** Rod, Reel, & Fist is suitable for ages minnow and up.

**SIMPLE BUT DEEP:** Catch fish and ward off hostile animals using a "rock, paper, scissors, dice" combat system that relies on clever resource management, reading your opponent, weighing risk versus reward, and knowing when to step back and let your teammates help.

**BUILD YOUR WORLD:** Easy-to-follow rules help you to design your own setting---either by yourself or collaboratively with your friends.

**ENDLESS ADVENTURE:** Six scenarios, a tower defense minigame, a roguelike Legacy Mode, alternate settings that re flavor the game as a space opera, cyberpunk adventure, or a martial arts odyssey, and a whole lot more can be found inside.

**BEACH EPISODE COMPATIBLE:** Splice Rod, Reel, & Fist into your current campaign for a light-hearted sidequest or a hot-blooded mini tournament arc.