



# THE WILDSEA

by Felix Isaacs

FREE BASIC RULES

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# Overview

This document, the **Free Basic Rules**, is a far deeper look into the world of the Wildsea than the previous free iterations of the game – it's not a playtest, it's not missing art assets, and it has everything you need to get a feel of the basics of the setting and rules. read it, play a few games and, if you like it, there's twice the content waiting for you in the full release.

For questions and comments you can get in touch in a few different ways...

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## The Setting

Some three hundred years ago the empires of the world were toppled by a wave of fast-growing greenery, a tide of rampant growth spilling from the West. This event, the **Verdancy**, gave rise to the world you'll explore as you play – a titanic expanse of rustling waves and sturdy boughs known as the **Wildsea**.

Now chainsaw-driven ships cut their way across dense treetop waves, their engines powered by oilfruit, ropegolems, honey and pride. Their crews are a motley, humanity's weathered descendants rubbing shoulders with cactoid gunslingers, animated wrecks and silkclothed spider-colonies, humanesque slugs with driftwood bones and other, stranger things. Each has a role and a reason to be out on the Wildsea, and it's their stories – your stories – that this game is designed to tell.

The Wildsea hungers and grows, roots still questing down into the world's depths as its waves ripple with life. Spits of ancient earth and the heights of old-world monuments now serve as ports, cities, farms and jails, each with their own laws and ways. The years after the Wildsea's arrival were harsh, and by the time the art of sailing was rediscovered most old cultures had splintered into new, often unrecognisable forms. The economies of the verdant world are unpredictable and ever-changing, but there's always value to be found for those willing to brave the perils of the wild.

## The Game

Your character is a **wildsailor**, part of a crew cutting their way across the island-studded wilderness of the treetop sea on a vessel of your very own. You'll clash with survivor cultures and wild beasts, scavenge and salvage for wreckage and tradegoods, chase rumours and uncover secrets. The focus of this game is on exploration, progress and change – you'll define the world of the Wildsea as you sail it.

Adventures on the Wildsea start as **hooks**, elements of the setting or of a character's history with the potential to blossom into an **arc** – a story for you and your crew to experience. While playing through an arc you roleplay scenes, montages and journeys to make decisions, take actions and resist your baser impulses. Completed arcs, and the triumphs and disasters within them, will allow you to develop your character as you play.

Decisions are made through the **conversation**, a collaborative process that keeps all players at the table involved in the outcome of an event. The Wildsea's GM figure, the **Firefly**, is there to ask the right questions to keep the conversation flowing, as well as to bring the rules into play when necessary.

## The Rules

Rolls are made using **d6 dice pools**, quickly assembled from the information you have on your character sheet and the situations your characters find themselves in. Dice rolled in this way help to direct the conversation toward outcomes of triumph, conflict or disaster. Whatever the result, the story moves forwards.

**Tracks** are used as a visual reference for many aspects of your character, their relationships with various factions and developments in the wider story. Their boxes are marked or cleared by your actions.

You'll also collect **resources**, anything from salvage and charts to living secrets and forbidden spices. These resources are tracked on your character sheet, and can be combined or sacrificed for various effects. Their precise uses and qualities are drawn out as your group's own unique version of the Wildsea develops.

## What's Not In This Document?

A whole lot, to be honest! While pretty big, this Free Basic Rules edition of the Wildsea only covers about half of the content from the core book. You'll find more bloodlines, origins, and posts, more pre-made hazards and locations to use them in, a deeper look at the rules and how the Firefly can tailor them to their table, and a slew of extra art and setting information.

What you have here are the basics, the keys to an overgrown and mysterious kingdom. And if you like what you see, there's so much more where that came from.

Sail safe, people. Enjoy.

– Felix



The Waves of Jatter's Hand

# CHAPTER 1 SETTING





**It was a stupid idea. Tarak knew it, & her grandfather knew it. The leaves were so full of life they scorched the skin with a touch. Beasts the size of mountaintops wound their way through the shade of the lower trunks. Rootquakes shook the treetops, reconfiguring them, pushing remnants of a world long dead up to the surface.**

**It was a stupid idea to look at the rusting, dented hull pushed up between the leaves before them, a stone's throw away, & think it would ever sail again. The seas her grandfather once charted had long been emptied. There were no waves to crest, no currents to ride.**

**It was a stupid idea. Obviously. But still...**

## Core Concepts

This page highlights the most important aspects of the world – the core concepts of the Wildsea. If you have a little more time, the rest of the chapter delves into more detail.

### The Treetops are a Sea

Though made up of branches and leaves rather than water the treetops still act as a traditional sea in many ways; there are **waves** (formed by the natural contours of the canopy), **ports** (built onto what little solid ground remains), and a vast number of **ships** (their hulls supported by branches). While it's possible to move through the canopy without a vessel of some kind, to do so for any length of time is a huge risk.

### Land is Scarce and Valuable

Mountaintops and large chunks of earth or debris caught up in the canopy act as islands and archipelagos, fiercely guarded by their inhabitants. The settlements built on these outcroppings of remaining land are constructed with safety more in mind than comfort, leading to ramshackle appearances and multiple layers of defence against the ever-threatening waves.

### Plant Growth is Rampant

The plants of the sea grow at a dramatically accelerated pace, but only when connected to the **ironroots** (the huge mile-high trees that act as the foundation for the canopy you'll sail). A cut branch will stay inert, but another will have grown in its place within hours. Though the upper limits of the sea may have settled the topography is constantly changing, and every now and then an unexpected spurt of growth claims a ship or colony.

### Open Flames are Forbidden

Almost all cultures have prohibitions against the use of fire while at sea, and for good reason. Flame burns hot and long on Wildsea wood, and spreads at a terrifying pace. If a fire does break out even the most bitter enemies will likely put their differences aside to fight it together.

### Crezzerin Corrupts on Contact

Secreted by some of the Wildsea's more dangerous vegetation, crezzerin is a potent toxin. Brief contact does little more than sear skin, but long-term exposure warps both body and mind in terrifying ways. This, along with the threat of predators and falling, keeps most sailors on their ships during long voyages.

### The Economy is Barter-Based

With much of the pre-verdant world's technology and resources lost in the murky depths around the roots, salvage and recycling are particularly important. The economy is based on barter, usually of food or materials but sometimes acts of service (bounty boards are a common fixture in most settlements, allowing locals to farm out tasks and have others solve problems they can't deal with themselves).

### It's a Weird, Weird World

The Wildsea setting is designed to be low-magic, high-weirdness. It's a world of unusual creatures, woken spirits and unbelievable abilities, but they're mostly tangibly connected to the waves themselves – there's very little in the way of wands and spellbooks, or magical study. The practice of twisting the world in mysterious ways is referred to as **arconautics**, literally a delving into the unknown and uncanny.

# The Rustling Waves

Capricious. Beautiful. Dangerous.

There are many ways to describe the branch-and-leaf waves of the wildsea, but no single word could ever do them justice. They're a sprawl of life, or of many lives; nature at war with civilization and itself, a churn of growth and wind and trade and blood.

**The first thing most notice is the movement.** Whether through the kiss of high-altitude winds or the constant motion of beasts and insects, the canopy of the wildsea is never at rest - in fact, the effect is similar to that of the waves of the old salt sea, swells and tides and all. Even a ship at anchor still sways gently from side to side, moving with the rise and fall of the branches beneath its hull.

**The second thing is the sound,** another constant in a changeable world. Leaf on leaf, branch on branch, the rattle and buzz of uncountable insects, the calls of birds and lemurs and sailors at the rail. Tree-shanties are sung and secrets shouted, and ship's hearts roar deep within their hulls.

Life makes noise, and the wildsea is nothing if not full of life.

**The third thing, which should have been the first, is the danger.** It's not that everything out on the waves wants to kill you, it's that enough of it does that it makes no difference. There are beasts that hunt ships, eager to feed on the scraps in their wake or the wreckage they leave at the end of their usage. Insects build hives in timber and flesh, more than mindless in inscrutable ways. Even spirits hunt, and are hunted in return. And, a deeper presence beneath the layers of prey and predation, leviathans lurk... and bide their time.

## Important Terminology

Though much of the setting is designed to be uncovered and defined through play, there are a few terms you should know before diving in.

### Pre-Verdant

Commonly abbreviated to **Pre-V**, this describes anything that has survived from the old world without being corrupted by the oddities of the wildsea.

### Ironroot

The foundation of the wildsea, the ironroots are the titanic trees whose sprawling branches make up the majority of the wavetops.

### Tallshank

A massive tree that dwarfs even the ironroots, sometimes spearing miles above the rest of the canopy.

### Spit

A temporary landmass resting on the surface of the canopy, impermanent but sturdy enough to colonize. Spits take many forms, from the picked-clean bones of a leviathan to chunks of old world material.

### Island

A larger landmass in no danger of being swallowed by the sea. Most islands are the tips of mesas and mountaintops, or the upper-reaches of still-standing monuments.

### Reef

A collection of junk, usually mechanical in nature, either on top of or just below the leafy waves. Reefs are hazardous to ship hulls but extremely sought after regardless, often hotspots for salvage operations.

### Rift

A gaping hole in the sea that leads down to the darkened roots far below, the kind of place a sensible sailor steers clear of at all costs.

### Crezzerin

A mutative chemical substance found all across the wildsea, often particularly concentrated in leaves and tree-sap. It's crezzerin that drives both the rampant growth of wildsea plants and the hyper-accelerated (and increasingly uncanny) evolution of its creatures.

## Rough Timeline

**300 years ago:** An explosion of fast-growing greenery known as the Verdancy unrolls across the land. Within days the known world is covered with forest, mile-high trees whose roots churn entire civilizations to mulch. Those with foresight move to higher ground. They are, as far as they can tell, the only survivors.

Pocketfuls of these survivors are hit by their first high-altitude winter. Entire cultures are lost to biting cold, lack of water and virulent new diseases.

**300-280 years ago:** More die. Few thrive. Though there is an abundance of food and wood, fresh water is scarce and crezzerin-contaminated rainwater burns. Most believe the world has ended.

**280-240 years ago:** A new generation is born - few, but strong. They don't fear the surrounding treetops as their parents do, striking out in rags to hunt and explore, searing themselves terribly on the chemical coating of the leaves.

**240 years ago:** Tarak Tar works with her grandfather, a sailor of the now-buried seas, to build a ship capable of crossing the treetops. A hull of old iron reinforced with wildsea wood, an engine fuelled with honey and rotting fruit, a rudimentary chainsaw running the height of the prow to cut them a path. Against all odds, they succeed.

**240-20 years ago:** Thousands of ships are built, bridging the gaps between cultures and bloodlines. The old world is mostly forgotten as new generations are born, raised to view the canopy surrounding them as a sea to be tamed. A short-lived and foolish war scars the north, setting it ablaze. Entire cultures dedicate themselves to keeping that fire from engulfing the rest of the world, yet it burns still - a constant reminder of the apocalyptic danger that untamed flame represents.

**The Present Day:** The ideas of a saltwater sea or of land larger than a mesa seem absurd to most, fairytales. Blood, salvage and exploration drive the economy. The world is different, but it thrives once more.





## The Layers of the Sea

There are **six distinct layers** to the forest that ate the world, with only the upper three considered safe enough for travel and habitation. They are...

### The Skies

A broad blue expanse above, the skies are home to insects, birds and the occasional airship (though strong winds and frequent storms make reliable air travel impossible). Most that settle the skies base themselves on mesas, mountainsides or floating cities, often suspended by arcomagnetism or alchemical ingenuity.

### The Thrash

The topmost layer of the great iron-rooted trees that make up the Wildsea, the thrash is a place of life and trade, a forest canopy studded with mountaintops, reefs of wreckage and ramshackle cities. What remains of civilization is mostly centred on these last spits of land, and ships sail the leafy seas surrounding them.

### The Tangle

Though the thrash is thick enough to sail it's the tangle that most large ships rest their hulls on, where the branches of the sea begin to thickly intertwine. Insect and animal life thrives in the half-dark heat, and it can be moved through in relative safety with enough preparation and skill.

### The Sink

A layer lower than the tangle lies the sink, where wrecks often lodge themselves and the largest creatures of the Wildsea rule. As thick as the tangle but far more dangerous, the sink is named for the treacherous properties of its branches - whether through natural or unnatural means, most vessels that make their way down to the sink find it almost impossible to reclaim the surface.

### The Drown

The point of no return, the drown is where branches thin and light dies. The trunks of the ironroots loom in the darkness, some hundreds of feet across. There are huge areas of the drown that have never seen the sun, and others where the gulf between ironroot trunks defies mere distance.

### The Darkness-Under-Eaves

The roots of the wildsea and the bones of the old world.

*The less said about this place the better.*







## The Core Four

The four species represented here are those most commonly found building communities across the waves; the Ardent, the Ektus, the Gau, and the Tzelicrae. Each have their own strengths and weaknesses, and are uniquely adapted to life on the treetop seas. There are others... But for this free edition, we'll focus on these.

### The Ardent

The post-verdancy descendants of ancient humanity, forged by hardship and disaster. The ardent vary in terms of culture, traditions and appearance, just as their human ancestors did, but they share a common trait in perseverance. They are a race of survivors; tough, weathered and naturally attuned to the spiritual elements of the rustling waves.

### The Ektus

Fibrous cactoids from the Icterine east, the world-forest robbed the ektus of the dunes and waterfalls of their ancestral home. Most now travel the seas, determined to prove themselves in a world that tried to snuff them out. Though ektus bodies come in a variety of shapes and sizes, they typically stand head and shoulders above the next largest person in any given room.

### The Gau

The gau are grown rather than born, cultivated within the warm darkness of fungal colonies before being sent out into the world when they come of age. Though each surviving colony has its own traditions and biological quirks, natural curiosity and a sense of adventure are common traits among all but the most conservative gau.

### The Tzelicrae

Each tzelicrae is a hive-mind of spiders, thousands of them, which has shaped, bargained for or stolen a humanesque form. Many tzelicrae spin themselves silken exterior, or inhabit discarded clothes and armour much like a hermit crab huddling within a shell. A rare few win the lottery of skin, passing unnoticed among the communities of other bloodlines.

## Wildsailors

What makes a wildsailor?

Heading out onto the waves as part of a ship's crew is the first step, but that alone does not a wildsailor make. It's a willingness to explore, to engage, to cut and bite and tread where sense or logic drive others back to safety.

Some wildsailors love the sea. Others respect it, or fear it (the healthiest approach, in all probability). But whatever their attitude every wildsailor is drawn, inexorably, to the rustling waves.

### Crews & Goals

Few wildsailors make it alone, or at least not for very long. Most band together into crews with others who share similar goals. Though these are manifold and often unexpected, the most common are...

#### To Explore

Some crews sail just to find out what's over the next wave-peak, forever chasing the unknown - there's an endless variety of cultures and creatures on the waves of the wildsea, and even the most dedicated explorers will never exhaust the possibility of new and unexpected encounters.

#### To Salvage

Be it wrecks, reefs, or ruins, there's always something of value to be found. Salvagers seek to root out and utilize the scraps that others leave behind, often delving deep beneath the thrash and into eerie, long-forgotten places to do so.

#### To Hunt

Whether for the thrill of the chase or the rewards it brings, a large number of wildsailors spend their time hunting - sometimes beasts, sometimes bounties, and sometimes much stranger marks. But a hunter is a hunter, whatever form their prey takes.

#### To Trade

Though the economies of the wilds are unstable, merchant crews quickly learn how to identify what a customer needs and get it to them for the right price. These crews tend to focus on diplomacy, politics, and the intricacies of import and export.

#### To Adventure

Some would say that any trip out onto the waves is an adventure in itself, but that doesn't stop certain crews from embracing a more thrill-seeking lifestyle. Adventurous crews are as likely to find themselves in a pitched battle against marauders as a friendly wavetop race, as likely to end up scaling cliffsides as brawling in a dockside bar-room.

#### To Escape

Not every spit or island is a pleasant place to live, either due to the ravages of the nearby waves or the culture of the place itself. Sometimes the dangers you don't know are preferable to the dangers you do.

# Travel

Even the shortest journey across the seas is a dangerous prospect, but trade, mapping and exploration promise bounty enough to offset the risk. Though the waves are vast they're also crowded, and it's rare that a journey between even the closest ports ends without crews sighting, greeting and, occasionally, skirmishing with each other.

## Charts & Mapping

Current charts are a highly valuable resource when away from port. As the roots of the Wildsea writhe and quest for ever-deeper sources of nourishment the topography of the rustling waves above shifts and changes in kind. Trade routes alter, animal migrations change and entire spits of land are dredged up from below or abruptly returned to the depths.

An exchange of charts is a mark of respect among ships meeting peacefully at sea, even if the exchange isn't physical - sometimes all it takes is an update to an existing map to mark out a new spit or recently-emerged threat to make such a meeting worthwhile.

## Sailing

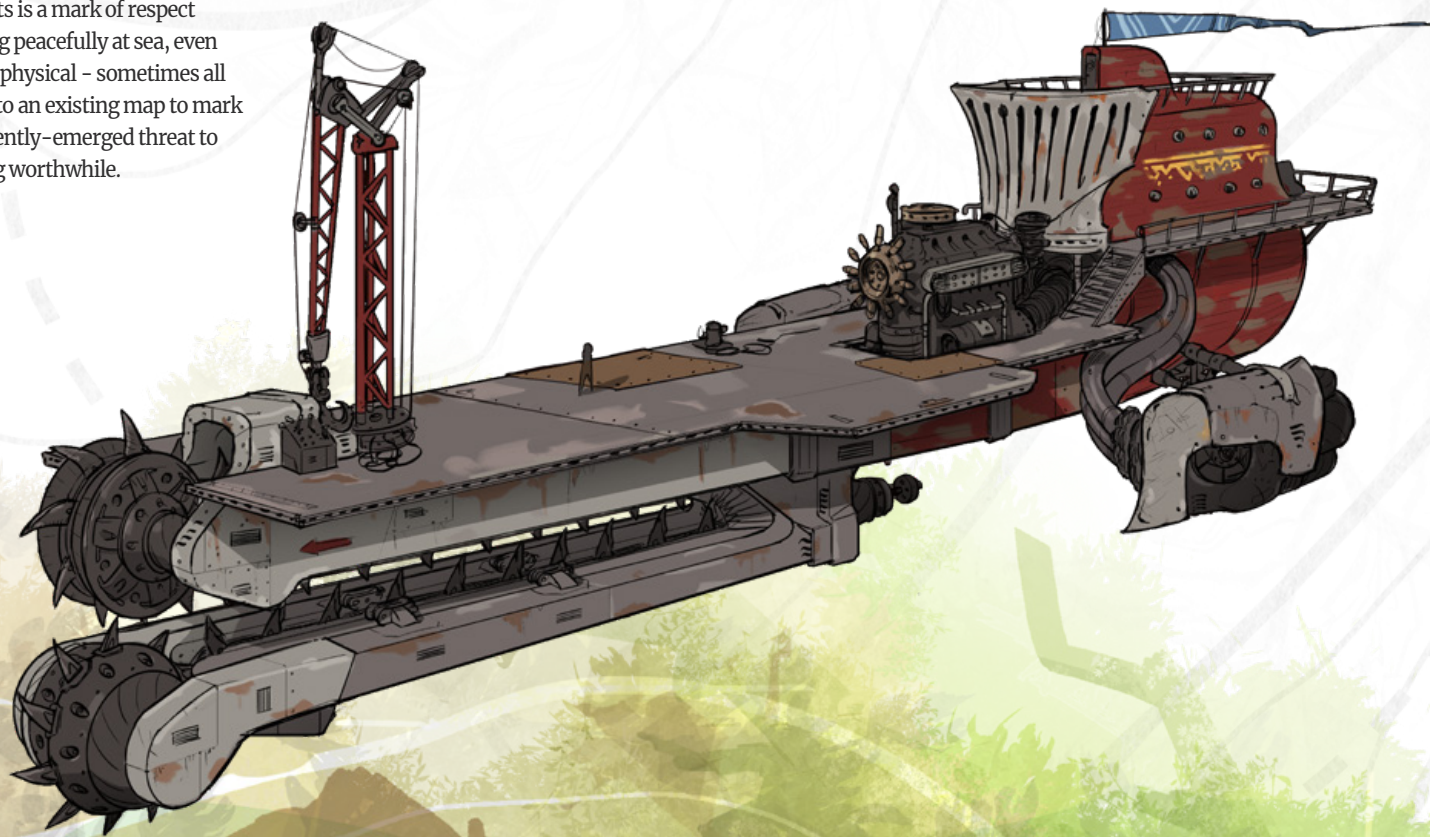
A curious term for a world with few sails, where most ships are powered by hulking engines and cut through waterless waves with brute strength, but the old sea-going term 'sailing' has stuck around nonetheless.

Sailing the rustling waves is not the easiest thing to do, but it's safer (and usually faster) than the alternatives. You have a crew to watch your back and help you out, you have a (hopefully) strong hull and a good set of seals between you and the waves themselves, and you have the ability to stop the ship, drop anchor and wait out any adverse weather or quake that threatens to capsize you.

## Ships

Wildsea ships come in a dizzying array of shapes, sizes and designs, some of which seem wholly impractical (and some of which most definitely are).

Most ships have a few things in common - a hull, an outer deck and inner compartments, a bridge with some kind of steering column (usually isolated from the waves in case the ship has to dive down below the thrash) and a method of propulsion, a combination of engine and bite. The bite is particularly important - an arrangement that cuts or drags or pulls the rest of the vessel through the branches of the sea. Ships are also large enough for a complement of both crew (experienced sailors who take charge and make decisions) and undercrew (less experienced, still learning the ropes).





## Danger at Sea

The life of the wildsailor isn't for everyone. It takes a special breed of brave (or a healthy dash of stupid) to want to face the seemingly endless dangers of the sea.

It's a weird world out there.

## Crezzerin

The trees of the Wildsea grow with astonishing speed, broken branches sprouting new shoots within minutes. Crezzerin is the eldritch chemical that causes this rampant regrowth, suffusing the sap, fruit and leaves of the iron-roots and the smaller trees that feed parasitically from them.

Caustic to the touch and dangerously corrupting, skin that comes into contact with crezzerin is left seared and blackened. Prolonged contact lets the chemical seep into both body and mind, though its effects can be countered with the liberal application of certain salves and spices.

A good alchemist can use crezzerin as the base for numerous body-altering concoctions, and mystics burn and inhale the vapours to commune with the secret heart of the sea.

## Spores

Disturbances below the tangle often throw clouds of spores into the air, their effects varied and unpredictable. Some are mere obstacles, choking clouds that block out the sun until dispersed by the winds. Others are infectious, worming into skin and wood before bursting forth with terrifying speed. Still others are hallucinogenic, bringing with them dreams and visions of the under-eaves or other, stranger places.

## Cults & Cultures

Though there exist treaties and agreements between the majority of settlements ensuring a degree of safety, a meeting at sea or landfall at a new island always comes with the potential of danger. Cannibals, cultists and pirates are always looking for the opportunity to strike, and some salvagers take a rather more proactive approach than is strictly necessary.

## Weather & Waves

The wildsea is a world of extremes, and nowhere is that more apparent than in its weather.

The high altitude means that driving winds are a part of life wherever you are. Storms are common and varied, coming with anything from lashings of lightning to rains of teeth and sizzling fat. Even clear days come with their own dangers, the heat of the sun bringing creatures of the lower depths up to bask and leaving sailors slick with sweat - an enticing scent for many of the more predatory beasts.

The waves below are as capricious as the skies. Bloomtides can catch ships and push them for miles on a wave-crest of blossom. Rootquakes reform the treetop topography as the great trunks that support the sea shift and settle. Semi-sentient rifts roam, maws of threshing branches. Roach-rivers spill through the leaves.

## Mire

Not all of the wildsea's dangers come from without. Mire is insidious, the slow degradation of thought and morals and reason that creeps up on you in the untamed places between ports. Most manage it as best they can - by seeking out wonders to match the horrors they witness, or by indulging in drink, drugs and relaxation in the quieter moments. Those that fail to manage their mire sink further and further into their own cruellest natures, eventually reduced to little more than a beast of the waves themselves.

## Flora & Fauna

Perhaps the most dangerous aspect of the Wildsea is the fact that you'll never be sailing it unnoticed. Strange forces sped the adaptation of numerous old-world species, which have carved out their own unique niches and territories. When you leave the relative safety of land it's their world you're stepping into.

Insects are the most numerous denizen of the waves, hives and colonies grown huge off of the crezzerin'd bounty of the sea. Smaller specimens tend to gather in swarms, moving from food source to food source, but smaller is an imprecise term in the verdant world - an insect might be the size of a thumbnail, of a hand, of a house or ship or city.

After them comes beasts and birds, the descendants of those that managed to adapt quickly enough to their new environments to flourish. Of these, foxes and wolves both deserve a special mention - each area has its own variations, some far stranger than you might expect. Similarly strange are the more predatory plants, often as beautiful as they are deadly.

Finally there's the bizarre, the unworldly sorts shaken into existence by the movement of the roots. Forgotten gods, ossified titans and the ghosts of lost ships all have their place in the order of the sea.



**"Watch your heads!"**

**Etzico's workshop was a confusion of leaf-rubber cables and bubbling vats, amberware vials spread out across their workbenches like scattered stars.**

**"It's beautiful," one of the children whispered, just loud enough to be heard over the din. Etzico turned with an expansive gesture.**

**"Ah, what do I hear there? A young rattlehand-in-the-making?" The child shrugged, suddenly self-conscious. "Never be afraid to follow a dream, young one. Especially a dream of making something bigger than yourself."**

**He slapped a switch on a nearby worktop and the children jumped as one, startled by the sudden hiss as a chemical vat boiled over.**

**"Now," he said, his voice dropping to a stage-whisper, "Who wants to take a look at the acid maw?"**

**Turns out they all did.**

## Technology

The wildsea sits in an awkward technological niche, with chainsaw-prowed ships rubbing hulls with sailboats, gas-bloated dirigibles floating above beast-drawn chariots. You're as likely to be hit with a crossbow bolt as a bullet, and far more likely to fall to the serrated edge of a squirrel-jaw blade.

But why? In a world with access to ancient technology, modern innovation and a surfeit of smart, driven engineers to develop new techniques, why are blades and sails still common?

Industry. Or rather, the lack of it.

The wildsea has no widespread industrial movement, no centralized or standardized push toward technological innovation. People use what they have available nearby, what works in a pinch and whatever they can cobble together from driftwood and salvaged metal. The few places solid enough to have factories have to rely on tenuous supply-chains, and most materials used for building and development are second or third-hand, at best. Wood is common, but anything beyond that is hard to collect and even harder to reshape.

And then there's the restriction on fire. Without internal combustion, heat-exchanges and steam-power machines have to rely on low-grade chemical batteries (if they're lucky) or hand-cranked and sweat (far more common). Without fire there's no smelting, and without smelting the metal available is scarred and battered.

### Common Technology

There are some technologies that the setting treats as standard, either as things that might be salvaged from the average wreck or created in large, solid settlements. Of these the most ubiquitous are...

- ◇ Ship-Mounted Chainsaws
- ◇ Chemical Engines
- ◇ Salvage-Made Clockwork
- ◇ Chains, Ropes and Pulleys
- ◇ Bone-Carved Blades
- ◇ Crossbows and other String-Tension Weapons
- ◇ Chemical-Propulsion Firearms

## Spirituality

There's a strong spiritual presence to the rustling waves, as one might expect of a world where the vast majority of civilization was swallowed by an apocalyptic catastrophe. The precise nature of this spirituality differs from region to region, but as a general guide the following information will stand you in good stead.

### Spirits and Spectres

The denizens of the rustling waves have no doubt about the existence of the soul. Ardent ancestors whisper and advise, tzelicrae husk-drifts sift the memories of long-dead swarms and any wildsailor lost at sea might walk back into port as an anchored spirit, their bodies still warm but leached of essential physicality.

But there's still debate over what the soul is - what it encompasses, how closely it relates to the person that existed before, even if it ever needed a person there to begin with. Perhaps the soul is a memory, or bundle of memories, left to linger after death? Perhaps an artefact of thought itself? A gift from the absent divine?

## Arconautics

Arconautics represents concentrated weirdness in an already weird world, the art of delving into the mysteries of the uncanny and turning the inherent strangenesses of the wildsea to your benefit. It's not quite magic, not quite science, but something that sits between the two - a bundle of unnatural laws and consequences controlled.

### Basic Principles

The first step to harnessing arconautic power is to find an element of the natural world with some strangeness to it. Once you've found that element you need to obtain it, or at least a fragment of it, and learn how to tap that power for yourself. One person might keep a chameleon that can alter their colouring as well as its own, another might forge a hammer out of supramagnetic ore, or a grppling hook out of still-moving leviathan bones.



# Civilization

Islands on the wildsea stand out like stars in a hungry cosmos, fragile constellations of civility and law amid the vast expanse of the wilds.

But civility (and, by the same token, law) are relative terms - with the massive split of culture and the harsh conditions that followed the verdancy, even the comparative safety of solid ground can be a dangerous and unpredictable place.

Most permanent settlements take the form of port-towns, trade hubs ringed with docks and jetties that rely on passing ships to bring them building materials and supplies. Many of these hubs have smaller, artificial islands surrounding them, well-defended buildings that tend to sprawling farm complexes of parasitic fruit-trees, breeding pens and apiaries.

Spits are likely the second most common type of civilization - rougher than ports, and even more reliant on trade and barter to survive. A spit might consist of a piece of old stone, a leviathan bone or a wrecked ship with decks divided into streets and apartments built into long-cold smokestacks. Spits tend to be far more crowded thanks to the limited building space available, or spread drunkenly out onto the waves with wooden platforms and stationary barges to give more space.

The rest of the civilized world is a mess of roving ship-colonies, rolling mycosanctums, floating skyports and tallshank branch-towns. Each of these places has their own ways of living, their own festivals and conventions, and most definitely their own laws - it might be illegal to throw objects off of the side of a high-port, for example, or not to duel when challenged in a particularly overcrowded spit, or to leave your fruit to spoil in a place ravaged by seasonal hunger.

## Ports and Harbours

What defines a port? A place to rest and a place to repair - those are the essentials that every wildsea port strives to offer, the minimum they can do to attract passing ships and increase their chance of trade and bounty. While it's true that not every port offers these two particular services in an official capacity, you'll rarely ever go wrong when looking for...

### Junctions

Junctions are meeting and sleeping places for all who need them, but they mostly cater toward wildsailor crews. A junction offers private rooms, repairs, medical treatment, beds, food, drink and entertainment, and usually has a series of boards for bounties and crew requests. Junctions also often have separate counters for sending and receiving mail.

### Shipyards

Anything from a jetty and a toolbox to a full warehouse-style workshop with space for multiple vessels, shipyards may not always be able to make their own ships but their workers will always have a crack at repairing yours if you provide payment (and occasionally your own materials).

*Most ports will also offer a complement of other services, non-essential but extremely useful, which we've collected in the box to the right.*

## Scratch

The lowest form of barter, scratch is a catch-all term for the mushroom-stems, rusted bolts and chips of amber that end up filling a wildsailor's pockets after a journey. Most places will happily trade a drink or a meal for a handful of scratch, but it can't be used to buy anything substantial.

## Non-Essential Services

Though every port has its own cultures and traditions the prevalence of wildsailors has ensured that most offer at least a few extra luxuries.

### Smokehouses

Open flame on the Wildsea is a dangerous proposition, but tobacco (and other narcotic burnables) remain popular. Smokehouses are typically sturdy stone buildings that allow patrons to indulge in such vices without fear.

### Shadow-Springs

These are hot springs (natural or artificial) surrounded by layers of tar-sealed canvas and reinforced walls, used as a combination of clothes-washing, bathing and decontamination facilities.

### Cartoika

Small libraries of ever-changing maps and charts watched over by keen eyed cartographers, these places serve the dual purpose of allowing crews to mingle and having them familiarize themselves with the current topography of the nearby waves.

### Chop Stations

Extracting the most nutrition from the strange beasts of the wildsea is an art form in itself. Chop Stations are meat preparation and grill-houses where the workers will render a creature down into every edible cut and prepare it for cooking or long storage. This service is performed free of charge on the understanding that the chop station takes roughly a quarter of every specimen for themselves.





# CHAPTER 2 MECHANICS



**The storyteller sat straight-backed and still. She had no eyes but, if she had, they'd surely have been closed in reverence.**

**"No gods, then," she signed, the light from the fireflies playing across her spined hands as she spun her tale. "No gods and no sand, no hint of the world left save the clothes they shivered in".**

**The children around her exchanged glances, reassuring. This was a story they know, but not one they'd ever seen told like this.**

**"They spent that night caressed by clouds, cold on their high mesa, bees quiet. The leaves around them rustled, spoke like fresh ghosts."**

**A sharp intake of breath from one of the young, though none turned to scold them. Sound was less important here, in this circle.**

**"But nights never last, and though the sun was tired she pulled herself up over the horizon again. The world was different... but the light was the same."**

# The Wild Words Engine

The framework of rules for the Wildsea is provided by the Wild Words engine. It's low on crunch, focused instead on letting narrative, character and setting develop during play, but there are a few important rules. That's what this chapter is for – as a player, almost everything you need to know before sitting down to play can be found here.

Before you play you're also going to need a couple of things for your table.

## A Firefly

One of your group needs to take on the role of GM, to describe situations, play NPCs, threaten the crew with monsters and marauders and keep the story you're all pushing for running along smoothly. In the Wildsea, the GM is referred to as the **Firefly** – a guide to the world for the rest of the crew, just as fireflies lead ships to safety on the waves. *If your group would prefer a more collaborative experience, the appendix to this book has a section on **Dragonfly Rules** – a way of playing the game where the duties of the GM are split between everyone at the table rather than given to a single player.*

## A Set of Dice

The Wildsea uses ordinary six-sided dice, referred to throughout these rules as **d6s**. You'll never be rolling more than six dice at a time, and if you're the Firefly you'll hardly ever (though may occasionally) need more than one. A digital dice roller works just as well for this too.

## A Character Sheet

Each player at the table needs a character sheet, or at least a piece of paper or laptop that you'll use to record and reference information about your character. You'll find a printable sheet at the end of this document, and there's a reference page in this chapter that gives a brief run-down of everything you'll see on the sheet.

## A Crew Sheet

Chapter 6 of this document holds the information necessary to build a ship, a roving home on the waves owned by the entire crew. The information for your ship is recorded on the Crew sheet, shared between all players at the table. There's also a reference page for the crew sheet in this chapter that gives a brief run-down of everything ship-related.

## A Running Example

Learning rules can be hard, especially when you've only got some text to draw from. To hopefully make things a little easier the rest of this document will contain a running example of play, which you'll find in boxes on the right hand side of some pages. This example follows **Todd** (an ardent corsair), **Laura** (an ardent hacker), **Freya** (a gau rattlehand) and **Kyllian** (an ektus alchemist) as their Firefly runs them through a short arc.



# The Character Sheet

This page gives an overview of the different parts of the character sheet, in brief. You'll find this information useful as you read through the rules.

## 1. Quick Reference

A handy guide to constructing the most common dice pool for a variety of actions, and a table of related results.

## 2. Background

This details a character's bloodline, origin and post, as well as their name and a little bit of descriptive text. These choices define the core of your character and may also have an impact on social situations.

## 3. Edges

General areas in which a character excels. When you take actions that line up with one of your edges, you gain an extra d6 on your roll.

## 4. Skills

More specific areas a character excels in. Skills are ranked from one to three, and give dice in relevant situations.

## 5. Languages

The languages a character can speak and understand. Like skills, these are ranked from one to three. The higher the rank, the greater your grasp of the language.

## 6. Aspects

These are the few traits, gear pieces, or companions that make you unique. Far more permanent than resources, these give your character special abilities and act as a measure of their health. Aspects can add advantage dice to certain rolls.

## 7. Resources

The temporary things that your character has scavenged from the seas; old clothing, battered weapons, wreckage and food, charts and secrets. These can be used to craft, trade, or add advantage dice.

## 8. Milestones

A place to keep track of major and minor milestones, used for advancing your character.

## 9. Drives

A character's drives represent their immediate and long-term goals.

## 10. Mires

A character's mires are the vices and curses that drag them down. The effects of these are mostly roleplay-based.

## 11. Temporary Tracks

A space to record temporary conditions, such as benefits and injuries, that allow (or force) your character to act in a different way. These conditions usually fade after affecting your character a number of times. This space can also be used for personal progress tracks.

# THE WILDSEA

OFFICIAL CHARACTER SHEET

### HOW TO PLAY

TO ROLL	1	RESULTS
EDGE (1d6)	1	LUMPH [6]
SKILL (UP TO 3d6)	2	CONFLICT [5/4]
ADVANTAGE (UP TO 2d6)	3	DISASTER [3/2/1]
		TWIST [DOUBLES]

### EDGES

GRACE	IRREVERENT	3	INSTINCT
SHARPS	TECHNICAL		TIDES
VEILS			

### ASPECTS

NAME	6	Trait/Gear/Companion
NAME		Trait/Gear/Companion
NAME		Trait/Gear/Companion
NAME		Trait/Gear/Companion
NAME		Trait/Gear/Companion
NAME		Trait/Gear/Companion
NAME		Trait/Gear/Companion
NAME		Trait/Gear/Companion

### BACKGROUND

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

PLAYER: \_\_\_\_\_

BLOODLINE: \_\_\_\_\_

ORIGIN: \_\_\_\_\_

POST: \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

### SKILLS

BRACE	HAIR	4	SENSE
BREAK	HAND		STUDY
CONCOCT	HUNT		SWAY
COOK	OUTWIT		TEND
DELVE	RATTLE		VAULT
FLOURISH	SCAVENGE		WAVEWALK

### LANGUAGES

LOW SOUR	5	KA SPIT
CITHONIC		EE-BITE
SAPREKK		OLD HAND
GAUDIMM		SIGNALLING
KNOCK		HIGHVIN
BRASSTONGUE		

### MILESTONES

MAJOR	8	OR

### RESOURCES

SALVAGE	7	CIMENS

### DRIVES

9

### MIRES

10

### WHISPERS

### CHARTS

### TEMPORARY TRACKS

NAME	11	Benefit/Injury/Track
NAME		Benefit/Injury/Track
NAME		Benefit/Injury/Track



# The Crew Sheet

A sheet shared by everyone at the table, with information on your ship, undercrew, passengers, cargo, and the way various factions see you.

## 1. Name

A place to record the name of your vessel.

## 2. Ratings

A set of six named tracks representing the strengths and weaknesses of your ship. Each rating starts with a single box, and additional boxes are added to the tracks depending on your design, fittings, and undercrew choices.

## 3. Design

An overview of the main structure of your ship, comprised of size, frame, hull, bite, and engine. Each of the choices you make here directly impacts the ship's ratings, but can also have narrative effects.

## 4. Fittings

Additional modifications made to your ship over time to better suit your crew's activities as you cross the rustling waves. Fittings are split into five categories: motifs, additions, rooms, armaments, and outriders. Some fittings may also add to your ratings.

## 5. Conditions

A place to note down any structural damage the ship has taken, or any short or long-term effects that might change the way it handles.

## 6. Undercrew

A space for recording the details of the undercrew, the NPC officers, gangs and animal packs that help keep your ship running smoothly. Each undercrew entry has a track of its own and works similarly to a character aspect. Some undercrew choices may also add to your ratings.

## 7. Stakes

Used to purchase parts for your ship, stakes are a unique resource shared by the crew.

## 8. Reputation

A set of short tracks used to mark the opinions that certain important factions within the wildsea have of you as a crew. Each Reputation track contains three distinct boxes - respect, fear and favour.

## 9. Cargo & Passengers

A section dedicated to the contents of your cargo hold and passenger compartments.

## 10. Notes

A space for miscellaneous notes, useful for recording details on possible story hooks and important information that has the potential to affect the entire crew. Can also be used for a quick sketch of your ship!



# Structure

The game follows a particular structure to help the story flow, a mix of **scenes**, **montages** and **journeys** to suit the various situations you'll find yourselves in. There's a quick rundown of them here for reference, but you'll learn more about them over the next few chapters.

## Scenes

Most of your time playing will be spent in scenes, short bursts of action, exploration and discovery that give you a chance to develop the narrative and roleplay your character.

Scenes are treated as a conversation between every player at the table, with the Firefly breaking in to ask questions and enforce rules where necessary. When that conversation leads to moments of uncertainty or drama, **action rolls** are used to determine the outcome.

## Montages

Periods of rest, unhurried exploration and training are usually treated as montages, condensing the mundane but necessary parts of an adventure into the shortest time possible. They let each character undertake a **task**, a long action that benefits the crew in some way or uncovers something about your location.

Montages are the most common way to explore new ports, allowing characters to split up to find information and resources before meeting up as a group again for the start of the next scene.

## Journeys

Journeys allow your crew to take to the waves in your ship, cutting your way to a new destination. While you travel you'll take turns at the helm and on watch (or at other stations around the ship), making decisions and facing challenges as you make progress across the waves.

Journeys should never be taken lightly. The wildsea is a hostile place, and the longer you sail the more risk your ship, crew and characters face.

## The Conversation

This is the natural back-and-forth between players and Firefly that drives a story forward, the exchange of ideas, intentions and actions. The rest of the rules come into play as a reaction to this conversation, not to halt it but to focus it in a particular direction when necessary. Keeping the conversation flowing is one of the keys to a good session of the Wildsea.

The Firefly has a role to play in this, but there are some ways you can help out as a player too.

### Make Decisions

On the wildsea, indecisiveness gets you killed. Of course, decisiveness may also get you killed (or perhaps horribly maimed) but at least there'll be a purpose to it.

### Ask (& Answer) Questions

Don't be afraid to ask questions, in or out of character - an answer could suggest an action you might not have otherwise considered. That answer doesn't have to come from the Firefly, either; offering your own thoughts and opinions is a great way to keep the conversation flowing.

### Take Action

When the time comes to act, be bold and take the plunge. Don't think about the rules, or how you can get the most benefit from the mechanical side of the game - think about what your character would do and how they'd do it, and stay true to that.

### Mute Topics if Necessary

The rustling waves are harsh and unforgiving by nature, but that doesn't mean your conversation has to be. It's often worth taking a few minutes to discuss the tone you're aiming for before you start to play, or to mute any topics that you don't want to be a part of your crew's ongoing story.

## The Conversation in Play

**Firefly:** You're passing under a crooked tallshank when there's a long, grinding crunch from somewhere below, and the ship lurches awkwardly to a halt. The engines are running, but the leading edge is still - an eerie silence descends.

**Todd:** This tallshank we're under, any signs of habitation?

**Firefly:** Not that you can see, though you'd have to head up into the branches to make sure.

**Kyllian:** Not good. I'm going to head over to the prow, take a look over the side and see if I can make out anything through the leaves that we might have run up against. And someone kill the damn engine, we're wasting fuel!

**Freya:** I'm on that. I was tinkering with some salvage on the deck when we stopped, which is probably scattered all over the place now. I'll sigh, leave the clean-up for later and sprint toward the engine block.

**Firefly:** Okay then Freya, you turn off the engine without any trouble. Kyllian, you can't see anything through the leaves - if you want to know what stopped you you're going to have to head down there for a closer look.

**Kyllian:** Count me out of that one, that's really not my scene. I am, however, going to head down to the front cargo space and check the interior, make sure we haven't got any serious damage. I'll grab Laura on the way, she's more the climbing type. Laura, fancy a quick trip into the tangle?



## Focus

Focus is a kind of 'narrative spotlight', which will move from character to character during the game. It shifts naturally in response to the conversation - whenever your character is doing something interesting, the focus is on you. When you finish, another player will take it for a question, comment or action of their own.

## Shifting Focus

Ideally, every character (and thus every player) will have some time in the spotlight throughout the course of a game. The wildsea works best when the whole crew are involved in a situation, reacting to eachother's ideas and decisions.

If you feel like you've had the focus for too long, **try to pass it off to one of the other characters**. You can do this within the fiction of the game by asking another member of the crew a question, or by involving them in an action you're taking.

The Firefly will also be keeping track of focus. If a member of the crew hasn't had the chance to contribute for a while the Firefly will likely shift focus back onto them with a reaction, prompt or question.

## Hijacking Focus

Some crew members may have the ability to hijack focus, taking it from an opponent, ally or element of the world before they can act. There are two simple rules to follow here...

- ◇ If you're hijacking from another player they have to agree - it was their time to shine, after all!
- ◇ The focus always returns to whatever it was hijacked from when your time in the spotlight is done.





# Tracks

A **track** is a named string of boxes or circles that are filled, or '**marked**', to measure progress towards an event, accomplishment, or danger. They're used pretty often during play, for everything from the condition of your character's gear to your progress on a jaunt across the waves.

But tracks do more than measure progress - they're an excellent **visual reminder** as to what your character could (or should) be doing in a particular scene or situation. Marks on a track leading up to something negative? Maybe you should try to clear those off. Empty boxes on a track you want to fill? Might be worth finding out how to fill them.

## The Basics

Here's an example of the kind of track you'll run into a lot, one set by the Firefly to measure progress toward a particular event.

### The Festival of Hives

Even though the track hasn't been marked yet, it's already giving you information. The **name** of the track, **The Festival of Hives**, clues you into what it's counting up to and what's likely to happen when that final box is marked. The **length** of the track (3 boxes) lets you know how many marks it'll take for something to happen.

Imagine you and your crewmates are spending time in port. When the sun goes down, the Firefly marks off the first box on the track, like so...

### The Festival of Hives

Now you have your next bit of important information. When the sun goes down, the track gets marked - you most likely have two days left until the festival begins. And, sure enough, when the sun goes down on your third day in port...

### The Festival of Hives

... the Firefly marks the last box, filling the track completely. Bees swarm the rooftops and the streets run with honey and laughter. The Festival of Hives has begun!








## Naming Tracks

Most of the tracks you'll come across will already have names, either taken from the pages of this book or made up by the Firefly as they reveal a new track to the table.

If you get the chance to name a track, try to go for something that makes sense at a glance. The easier it is to understand, the better it is at conveying information!

## Marking Tracks

When something advances a track, (for good or ill) you **mark** it, putting a single line through one of the boxes. There's a whole host of actions and events that might mark a track, including but not limited to...

-  A crewmember's actions
-  The passage of time
-  The results of a die roll
-  A decision made
-  The use of a resource
-  Events in the wider world
-  An advancing story or plotline

The specifics of marking a track are very much down to the situation. For some, the conditions are strict - a character's aspect tracks (measuring the condition of their traits, gear and companions) are marked by damage or the use of certain abilities, and very little outside of that. In contrast, a track made to earn the trust of a local merchant NPC might be marked by doing favours for them, supplying them with useful resources, buying their wares, or even telling the right kind of joke.

Some tracks might be marked normally in one way, but accelerated in others. **The Festival of Hives** on the left might start early if an enterprising crew brings extra supplies, for example. The reverse is possible too - a particular event or environmental effect may make marking a track impossible (in the case of **The Festival of Hives** this could be a problem with the supplies or a serious sporestorm rolling in that halts preparations).

If you ever need extra information on how you might mark a track, **ask your Firefly** - they'll likely drop a few hints as to how you could proceed.





## Clearing Tracks

Marks aren't always permanent. Sometimes an event or ability will **clear** a box on a track, removing a mark rather than making one. Healing an aspect, for example, will clear marks that represent damage, and buying from a merchant's direct competitor would likely set your friendship with that merchant back a step.

## Burn

A **burn** is a special kind of mark that can't be cleared without expending considerable extra effort. Represent it by putting a cross through whichever box is burned, rather than the usual line, like so...

### The Festival of Hives

Burn is usually the result of a serious event or complication with lasting consequences. A bite from a leviathan might burn boxes on a ship's Armour track rather than mark them, showing structural damage that's difficult to repair. If you need to remove a burn, ask your Firefly - there will always be a way, but it might not be easy.

## Impact

In situations where something has a serious impact on a track, you'll be able to mark more than one box. Perhaps your crew has a track running to investigate the circumstances of a portside murder. Finding evidence or a successful witness interview would likely mark one box, but having a spiritually inclined crewmate summon the spirit of the deceased for direct questioning would have a lot more of an impact, marking more boxes than usual and shortening the investigation considerably.

You'll find out more about impact (and how to increase it) over the next few pages, but for now, all you need to know is...

- ☞ With **normal** impact: Mark **one** box
- ☞ With **high** impact: Mark **two** boxes
- ☞ With **massive** impact: Mark **all** boxes

## Open, Hidden & Secret Tracks

Most tracks are **open** - everyone at the table can see how many boxes they have and when they're being marked or cleared. This usually gives a good sense of how much progress it will take to trigger an event.

Some tracks are **hidden** - you know they exist, but not how long they are or how much you've marked them. With these tracks, the Firefly may give you some in-game hints when you're getting close to marking the final box.

Finally, some tracks are **secret** - they're created to track your progress toward something without your knowledge. Perhaps a particular course of action you take has unintended side effects, or a trusted friend is slowly working up the courage to stab you in the back. Whatever they're counting toward, you'll only become aware of secret tracks when you unwittingly mark the final box and the Firefly reveals their secret.

## Track Breaks

Imagine there's a rootquake on the way: the Firefly sets three tracks, each describing part of the experience...

### The Rumbling Begins

### The Rootquake Proper

### Shifting and Settling

This is just fine, but there's an easier way to represent the growing and waning intensity of the rootquake by using **track breaks**. These are extra lines on a track that show when something major is about to change (and if the track is open, how long that'll last in terms of marks). Here's an example...

### The Growing Rootquake

Track breaks aren't just a great way to save space, they're a reminder that certain events *should* shift and change as they progress; evolving situations help keep the narrative moving and prevent longer scenes and journeys from getting stale.

## Tracks in Play

**Firefly:** Laura, you were down below decks when the ship lurched to a stop, am I right?

**Laura:** Yeah. I hear Kyllian calling out to me and head up. So, we've hit a snag, yeah?

**Kyllian:** Could say that. Something under the waves.

**Laura:** Right, I'll grab one of the guide ropes and take a look. Do I need to roll to get down there?

**Firefly:** No, you're close enough to the ship for the guide rope to keep you reasonably safe. Might be a different story if there was more pressure on you though.

**Laura:** Got it. So I lower myself down into the tangle and take a look around. What do I see?

**Firefly:** You feel the temperature rise as you descend into the leaves. You're surrounded by swarming insects, but if I remember right, you don't have to mark damage for that?

**Laura:** Not unless they're particularly big, no - my Wilds Explorer aspect lets me reduce impact on bites and stings.

**Firefly:** So it does. Well, the insects are an annoyance, but nothing you haven't handled before. You make your way around to the leading edge and find the problem - there's a rusted iron chain tangled in it, leading off to the east.

**Todd:** In the direction of the tallshank?

**Firefly:** That's right. Looks to be some kind of ship-snare. I'm setting a track, **Called By The Snare**. I'm marking the first box too, for the jolt the ship made when it got tangled up.

**Freya:** Hmm... I'm guessing we don't want to be here when that fills up. How long do we have?

**Firefly:** It's a hidden track, so you don't know exactly... But it's safe to assume 'not long'.



**Kedrik had seen a lot of pirate bands in her time on the waves, and these were hardly the most impressive - a ragtag group of ardent, their clothes branch-torn and stained with sap.**

**That said, the crossbow they had aimed her way looked to be in perfect working order.**

**"We can do this the easy way," a voice floated out from the back of their group, "or the hard way". The one with the crossbow gestured with an appreciable attempt at menace.**

**Kedrik sighed, flexing thousands of tiny arachnid muscles under her jacket. About as inventive as they were impressive, it seemed.**

**"Would you mind terribly if I chose option three?"**

**The crossbow bolt pierced the unexpectedly empty jacket as it fell, its wielder having a fraction of a second to consider his mistake before being overwhelmed by a wave of spiders.**

# Actions

When your character does something during the game, it's referred to as an **action**. Usually, performing an action is as easy as stating your intention out loud. "I want to open that door", "I draw my pistol", or "let's see what this bastard has to say for himself" all let your group know you're performing an action.

Most actions are entirely **freeform** - if it feels right for the situation and you think your character has a chance of pulling it off, you should go for it.

## Action Rolls

Sometimes the action you want to attempt will be **difficult, dangerous, or dramatic**. In these cases, the Firefly may ask for an **action roll** - a roll of the dice to determine whether your action results in **triumph, conflict or disaster**, and whether there were any unexpected narrative **twists**. The specifics of these outcomes are on the next page, while the rest of this section details how to roll and read your dice.

There are four stages to any action roll...

1. Building a Dice Pool
2. Describing Your Action
3. Rolling and Reading the Dice
4. Playing the Outcome

There are also some situations where the way you make a dice pool or read the results are a little different; these are covered during the next few chapters.

## 1. Building a Dice Pool

Actions are rolled with between one and six **d6s**, by making a pool and looking for the highest result. To create a dice pool for your action, you can draw from...

Edge (1d6)

+

Skill or Language (up to 3d6)

+

Advantage (up to 2d6)

**Edges, skills, and languages** are found on your character sheet, representing the ways you most effectively tackle problems. If one of your edges is appropriate for the action, it adds **1d6**, and if one of your skills or languages is appropriate, it adds **d6s** equal to its rank. **You can only gain the benefit of one edge and one skill or language per action roll.**

An **advantage** is anything you can use from your possessions or situation that works in your favour. This might be a piece of the **environment**, a **resource**, an **aspect** of your character (such as a trait or piece of gear), or even a **helpful crewmate**. If you have an advantage that helps with your action, it usually adds **1d6**, but if you have many different sources of advantage, the Firefly might raise this to **2d6**.

*If you're attempting an action roll but have nothing to draw from to make your pool, roll 1d6 and count triumph results as conflicts instead.*

## 2. Describing Your Action

As you build your dice pool, you should also be describing your intentions and approach – how is your character performing this action? What methods are they using and what are they trying to achieve? This helps other players visualize what you're doing and aids the Firefly as they consider possible outcomes.

The way you phrase your actions will often have narrative effects. For example, saying “I open the door as softly as possible” will give you a very different outcome than “I kick open the door and leap into the room,” or “I pull the door out of its frame with my grappling hook”.

## 3. Rolling and Reading the Dice

When your dice pool is ready, you roll all the dice in it at once, then read off the **highest number** as your result.

You should also read off whether you got any **doubles**. The number shown on the doubles doesn't matter, just whether two (or more) dice came up the same (managing a triple or higher still counts as a double, so there's no mechanical difference to the outcome of the roll).

*Example: A roll of 2, 3, 5 would give a result of 5. A roll of 1, 2, 2, 3 would give a result of 3 with doubles.*

## 4. Playing the Outcome

Reading off your result kick-starts the conversation again, usually with a description of what the outcome of your action looks like in-game.

In some cases you'll be describing the effects yourself, in others, the Firefly will take the reins. If there's a twist involved, the description might be a group effort, as other players suggest possible unexpected outcomes.

### Action Roll Results

6

#### Triumph

A complete success with no drawbacks. If you're affecting a track, this lets you mark or clear a box.

5

#### Conflict

Still a success, but with a drawback of some kind (such as taking damage or losing a resource). If you're affecting a track, this usually still lets you mark or clear a box.

4

#### Disaster

A failure that also introduces a narrative complication or drawback of some kind. If you're affecting a track, this usually doesn't let you mark or clear at all.

3

2

1

Doubles

#### Twist

An unexpected outcome in addition to the usual result, often something small but potentially useful. This twist can be suggested by any player at the table, but the Firefly has the final say.

## Actions in Play

**Todd:** Well, I suggest we make ourselves scarce before whoever set that snare up arrives!

**Laura:** Agreed. I'm going to try to untangle this chain from the sawprow then, that should get us going again. You killed the engine, right? I don't want this thing starting up again as soon as the chain's free...

**Freya:** Yep, it's off. Be careful though – that's still a ship-sized chainsaw you're messing with.

**Firefly:** Freya's right – however you approach this, it's likely to be pretty dangerous, so I'm going to ask you to get a roll ready. Focus is on you!

**Laura:** And I'm ready for it! I think I'll try something simple first, just yanking the chain free. I can use my legs to push against the hull, and I've got the guide-ropes to keep me stable...

**Firefly:** Sounds like a d6 of advantage. What else have you got?

**Laura:** My Iron edge feels like it's going to work here, and I've got the Brace skill at rank 2, which seems fitting. That's 4d6 in total, so it could be a lot worse. Well, here goes nothing...

*Laura rolls her dice pool, getting a 1, 2, 4 and 5.*

**Laura:** Five's my highest, that's a conflict!

**Firefly:** Well, the good news is that you've pulled that chain free of the leading edge, but you weren't exactly quiet about it... The ship is free, but you hear more bells ringing in the distance – I'm marking that track again.



# Twists

**Twists** occur whenever a roll of the dice comes up with a double – they don't replace the usual result, but instead signify that something extra and unexpected has happened (usually related to the action or situation that caused the roll). *Twists are often something beneficial, though they don't technically have to be.*

**Twists aren't decided by the player that rolled the dice.** Instead, they're thrown over to anyone else at the table, including the Firefly – if anybody has an idea for the effect of a twist, they can put it forward in the moment. Here's an example...

*Reya rolls to convince a surly engineer to work on her crew's damaged ship, getting a triumph with a twist. Leo, one of the other players, suggests the twist could affect the engineer's stock - he has a surplus of the materials needed, which might lower the price of the repairs.*

If there are multiple ideas put forward for a twist, it's up to the Firefly to choose which one best fits the situation at hand, but they might defer to the player that rolled instead (especially if it's something that affects their character's backstory). Here's a continuation of the previous example...

*Cody, playing another one of Reya's crewmates, suggests that the engineer might recognize a family resemblance in Reya's character to a previous customer. After all, Reya's grandfather was pretty famous around these parts. The Firefly loves this idea, but checks with Reya first, as it directly affects her character's history. She's completely in favour, and the conversation continues with that extra detail thrown in.*

## The Limits of a Twist

It's easier to set out what a **twist** can't do than what it can; though some twists have explicit mechanical benefits (such as a twist rolled while defending allowing a counterattack), most are a purely narrative experience. They allow players to step into the Firefly role for a moment and contribute their ideas to the wider story. Because of the flexibility they offer, it's really up to your table to determine whether a twist would be 'too powerful' in a given situation, but there are a few hard rules you should stick to. **Twists should never...**

- ❖ Invalidate or override the result of the roll that caused them (a disaster with a twist is still a disaster, just one with an unexpected narrative extra)
- ❖ Force a player to accept something about their own character that they hadn't planned themselves (so in the example above, creating a grandfather for Reya's character in the moment would have been a step too far)

*You'll find more examples of, guidance on, and alternate rules for using twists in the Firefly chapter of this book.*





## Cut

'Cutting' a dice roll is represented by removing a number of results **after** the roll is made, **starting with the highest**. The larger the cut, the less likely you'll get a straight success or doubles.

*Example: A roll of 1, 5, 5 and 6 would usually give a result of 6 with doubles. If you had to cut two results, you'd remove a 6 and a 5, giving a new result of 5.*

### Cutting for Difficulty

If the action you're attempting is particularly unlikely to succeed, the Firefly will ask you to cut for difficulty. Sometimes it means you're attempting a harder-than-average action (such as climbing onto the back of a rampaging beast versus climbing a wall), sometimes that you're approaching a task in a way that makes it less likely you'll succeed (such as trying to pick a lock with a splinter of bone rather than a normal lockpick).

The Firefly will usually warn you of **cut** as you describe your approach. This gives you a chance to reconsider your methods, try to get the most out of your dice pool, or at least ready yourself for a higher chance of disaster.

### Cutting for Precision

When in combat with a creature, you can **cut 1 result to aim at a particular part with precision**. This often allows you to deny the creature access to some of its special abilities, or to deal extra damage by hitting a weak point. Cutting for precision is voluntary, but must be requested **before** you roll.

### Cutting for Impact

If you want to achieve more than you'd usually be able to, you can **cut 1 result for extra impact** (you'll find more information on impact in the next column). Cutting for extra impact is voluntary, but you have to request it **before** you roll your dice.

### From the Jaws of Victory

Cutting often leads to unexpected conflicts and failures, so play into that as the conversation continues! You were so close - what went wrong? Or, if you managed a decent success even with the cut, how did your character pull that off against the odds?

## Impact

Impact is a measure of the effect your action has on the world, usually determined by the approach you're taking and how effective it is. There are four levels: **low**, **normal**, **high**, and **massive**.

*Example: Karabet picks up a chair and swings it full-force at the marauder squaring up to him in a dockside junction, an action with normal impact. If the marauder had been completely unaware and unable to defend themselves, the Firefly might have bumped the impact up to high, and if the marauder had been holding onto the chair as well to diminish the force of the blow, the impact would likely have been low.*

If your action will have higher or lower impact than usual, the Firefly will let you know, though sometimes not until the action is in full swing.

### Low Impact

Your action is weaker, having less effect on the world. This might reduce the number of boxes you mark or clear when affecting a track, or downgrade the raw power of whatever you're attempting (such as only letting you kick a panel out of a door rather than kick the door fully open).

### Normal Impact

Most actions you take throughout the game will have normal impact, with no special rules to follow at all.

### High Impact

Your action is stronger and has more effect on the world. This normally lets you mark or clear an additional box when affecting a track, but in some circumstances might upgrade the raw power of whatever you're attempting (such as letting you kick a door off of its hinges rather than just kick it open).


### Massive Impact

Usually reserved for damage from ship-mounted armaments, an action with massive impact is terrifyingly potent. If you're marking a track, mark every box (and if you're kicking a door open you might take part of the wall with it as well, even if you didn't mean to).

## Actions in Play, Alternate

- Todd:** Well, I suggest we make ourselves scarce before whoever set that snare up arrives!
- Laura:** Agreed. I'm going to try to get this chain off of the sawprow. Do I have to roll for that?
- Firefly:** Definitely, and since you're doing it while dangling off a rope in the middle of the thrash, I'm giving you a cut of one.
- Laura:** That's fair... Now, how am I going to do this?
- Freya:** Ooh! Don't you still have some of those rust-beetles we picked up back at Myrin? Would they be interested in the chain?
- Firefly:** Definitely! They're voracious little things, so I'm actually going to increase your impact.
- Laura:** Great, that works for me! Time to build that dice pool. I'm hanging awkwardly but my grace edge helps with that, so that's 1d6 already. I'm going to use my break skill here too - I don't care about keeping the chain intact as long as the ship gets free.
- Firefly:** Your beetles will give you an extra d6 of advantage too, but you'll risk losing them if something goes wrong.
- Laura:** Sounds like 1d6 from my edge, 2d6 from my skill, and 1d6 from risking those beetles. 4d6 in total. Not great with the cut, but it'll have to do. That's... 1, 1, 5 and 6. Cut the 6 and that's a conflict with a twist.
- Firefly:** The chain falls free after a few seconds, your beetles making short work of it with their increased impact. They're a little over-zealous though, so you take two marks of Spike damage as they search for more food. Anyone got an idea for a twist?
- Todd:** She could grab a length of chain before it falls, getting a new resource?
- Laura:** Nice! I'll add 'Rusted Chain' to my salvage.



A dramatic illustration of a massive, orange and white dragon breathing fire, with a character on a bridge below. The dragon is the central focus, breathing a stream of fire. Below it, a character is seen on a wooden bridge, holding a red rope. The background is a lush, green landscape with mountains and trees. The overall style is painterly and intense.

**CHAPTER 3  
PLAYING  
THE GAME**



**Saprekk was not an easy language to learn, or so the common wisdom went. With its complex forms of address, low rolling tonalities and pause-based punctuation it had a decent number of barriers to the non-cactoid tongue, and even more to those without a tongue at all.**

**Argan was, unfortunately, a member of that last group. Ghost-driven and rusting, the old ship's horn that acted as his voice-box was hardly the most precise of instruments.**

**But three years on an ektus dredging-crew had given him the time he needed to learn the basics, and it was moments like these where those basics could pay off. He stepped forward, clearing his throat with a metallic groan, and put his hand on the spined shoulder of the mercenary in front of him.**

**"Hey there, friend," he intoned, the saprekk quite literally rusty but passable. "I hear you've got some knowing 'bout a certain captain, fellow by the name of Karabet..."**

## SCENES

Most scenes focus on exploration, interaction or combat (often a mix of the three). As a player you'll be choosing which actions to take, rolling dice for them if they're difficult, dangerous or dramatic, and engaging the Firefly and the rest of the crew with questions and in-character dialogue.

### Scene Basics

To run a scene you need to know **who's** in it, **where** they are and **why** they're there – the conversation can take over from that point.

The **who** is easy, as scenes typically involve the entire crew. This gives every player at the table (including the Firefly) a good chance to get some time in the spotlight and contribute to whatever is going on. While you can run scenes with only a fraction of the crew (or even a single character if it makes sense for the story), those kinds of situations are usually better handled with a montage. *You'll learn more about montages in the next chapter.*

The **where** is usually pretty easy as well, as the Firefly will make clear the kind of location you're in at the beginning of a scene. Usually this'll be obvious, as scenes will be happening in chronological order – if you were walking up the stairs to the deck of your ship in the last scene, you'll probably be on deck in the next one. If this isn't the case (for example, if there's a significant amount of time or a location change in between scenes) the Firefly should make that clear.

The **why** is the most important part, so if you're not sure you shouldn't be afraid to ask questions. Every scene should have a purpose of some kind – it might not be a grand one, and it might not even be one that moves the main narrative of your adventure forward, but it should be there.

### Scene Examples

The rest of this chapter deals with the archetypal scene types you'll find yourself in, moments of **exploration**, **interaction** and **combat**. But before you leap into the specifics, here are a few examples of what a crew of wildsailors might find themselves doing during a scene out on the rustling waves of the wildsea...

- ◇ Exploring an ancient ruin, brought up to the surface by a recent rootquake.
- ◇ Hagglng with a merchant over the exchange rate of salvaged copper bolts to fresh wormapples.
- ◇ Clambering between the whiplike branches of the the thrash in pursuit of a glistening beetle.
- ◇ Chatting idly with your crewmates as you cruise across the leafy waves.
- ◇ Fending off a horde of hungry squirrels as they zero in on your galley.
- ◇ Chasing the broken-branch wake of a leviathan moving through the tangle beneath you, harpoons at the ready.
- ◇ Sawing and blasting your way through a gnarled branch blocking your ship's progress into a hidden grove.
- ◇ Listening to tall tales in a junction, ale in hand, waiting for that snippet of information that will expose a spy.
- ◇ Climbing the rigging of a beached soilship, seeing plumes of woodsmoke racing closer and closer.
- ◇ Docking at a spit as a festival roars with life around you, coconut shells on strings hanging between the rooftops.
- ◇ Picking your way silently through a nest of sleeping pinwolves toward an ancient artefact.
- ◇ Tuning your trisketar before a battle of the bands, one crew of troubadors against another.
- ◇ Fishing for eel-snouted foxes as your crew scrape recent catches free of their valuable oils.
- ◇ Tangling toe-to-toe with tzelicrae marauders, their ship's bite gnawing at your own hull.
- ◇ Battling the effects of a personal mire as you negotiate with a black market trader for medicines.
- ◇ Sharpening your blades and discussing your plan of attack as you draw close to a protoleviathan's nest.
- ◇ Standing atop a mountain, surveying the path you walked to get there, your crewmates smiling at your side.



# Exploration

Exploration is important, especially when you're entering a new area. Who knows what secrets are hidden down side-streets, cosseted by the waves or buried in the risen ruins of the pre-verdant world?

## Points of Interest

When you start a scene or enter a new area the Firefly will describe the most important features of your location. This description will usually cover at least one **point of interest**, something intriguing or possibly useful that your characters could interact with.

This is a good time to ask questions like "what can I see by the \_\_\_\_\_?" or "what else do I notice about the \_\_\_\_\_?", making sure that every player is imagining the same kind of scene in their mind.

In response to your questions the Firefly might simply give an answer or require you to do something (like get closer or roll an action) before you can learn more.

## Different People, Different Interests

You can even angle your questions around **creating new points of interest** that can help out your crew, or even your specific character. Asking "is there anything we can take cover behind?" might prompt the Firefly to add another point of interest to the scene that can be used in just that way. This gives you more to interact with as you play, and also clues the Firefly into what your possible intentions might be (allowing them to tailor the narrative accordingly).

Below are a few example questions, ones that both gain you information and suggest possible points of interest to the Firefly.

- ◇ "Where's the light coming from in this ruin? Is there a hole in the roof?"
- ◇ "I imagine they'd have to store their whisky somewhere - are there any barrels around?"
- ◇ "What kind of tool is the rattlehand using as she works on the ketra's outrider?"

## Collecting Resources

While exploring a scene you should be on the look-out for opportunities to scavenge resources that might come in useful on your travels. These can come from a variety of sources - picking over wrecks or corpses, clearing the vaults of forgotten ruins, taking down and butchering animals or even plucking produce straight from the waves. As a general rule **if something isn't nailed down, you can take it**.

When you gain a resource you should note it down on your character sheet. Larger resources (such as full crates, weighty machines or animal carcasses) might be taken back to your ship as **cargo** and noted on the ship sheet instead.

When rolling to acquire a resource, certain results can give it a **tag**, a descriptor that changes how it might be used. Some characters may also have aspects that let them acquire resources with special tags, or multiple different resources from the same roll. You'll learn more about resources and possible tags on page 64.

While trying to ferret out resources from the environment the Hunt, Tend, Sense and Scavenge skills will often be useful. In more civilized areas, social skills like Flourish, Outwit or Sway will likely garner better results.

The **results table** below is specifically tailored for **rolls made to acquire resources**.

6

### Triumph

You gain a solid example of whatever resource you were looking for, untainted by waves or use or time.

5

### Conflict

You gain a resource with a negative tag - it can still be useful, but it won't exactly impress anyone.

4

### Disaster

You either fail to find what you're looking for or ruin the resource in the process of collecting it.

3

2

### Twist

The resource you gain has a unique or positive tag, provided by you or another player at the table. Unusual resources are more valuable and often have a wider variety of uses.

Doubles

1



# Interaction

Scenes are where you're most likely to encounter NPCs, either as free agents or representatives of the various major factions active on the Wildsea.

Interacting with NPCs can be a great source of information, as they're likely to have access to some knowledge that your characters lack. Some NPCs, such as merchants, may also have resources you can purchase or barter for. Others might even be persuaded to join you temporarily as a passenger, or even permanently as a new member of the undercrew.

## Approach

When trying to get information or favours out of an NPC you'll likely have to make an action roll. Be sure to match your approach to the kind of NPC you're talking to. A wily trader should be approached differently to a frightened child, for example, or a straight-talking engineer, or a mystic sage. The Flourish, Outwit, and Sway skills come in particularly useful here.

## Language

Being able to communicate with someone in their native or favoured language can be a real boon as far as conversation goes, even if you only know a smattering of it - it shows respect, dedication and a willingness to learn.

Languages can also stand in for other social skills you might be lacking in a pinch, though the Firefly will likely impose cut or reduce impact in these situations.

Finally, languages offer a huge amount in terms of cultural information. Learning to speak saprekk will naturally expose you to ektus culture, history and legends, and while you might not be as familiar with them as someone raised in an ektus colony you should be able to call on simple facts and roll for deeper concepts.

## Knowledge

What exactly does a character know about the world of the wildsea? That's a question that's ultimately up to the players, the Firefly and the needs of the situation, but there are a few guidelines.

### Implicit Information

*The sea is made of trees. The coming winter is going to be hard. Pinwolves probably won't make great pets.* These are the kind of facts that every character should have access to **without the need to roll** - they might come out as an answer to a question posed to the Firefly or, for more confident tables, simply be said and assumed to be true.

Your character will also have implicit information about **their past, their family and the elements that make up their own background**; a ridgeback will know the names of the most famous mountaintop islands, a hacker will be able to identify a good number of plants and trees without issue. If it's something you feel your character should know, something they'd have likely picked up over their time at sea or something that they'll call upon often to fulfill their role on the crew, **you should never have to roll for it.**

### Possible Information

*What are the exact properties of these leaves when they're stewed? Which of a pinwolf's glands contribute to their stiling, staccato movement? What trade routes do writling ships take as autumn rolls on and they finish their voyages for the year?* These are more specialized questions that require specialist knowledge. A steep, alchemist or navigator would have a chance to know these answers, but a corsair or screw would likely be completely in the dark. **Roll for information like this**, either to recall it or to study materials you have on hand.

### Impossible Information

There are some mysteries that are simply beyond the knowledge of anyone you could care to name, some things only understood by an extremely select few. The history of the pre-verdant world, the precise nature of the Under-Eaves... these are things that a character might guess at, but will likely never have a concrete answer for.

## Interaction in Play

- Firefly:** The door to the cabin bursts open and a figure stumbles out - an ektus, chin thick with beard-like spines. As soon as he sees you he starts ranting in saprekk, cringing away from you with his hands outstretched as if to ward you off.
- Laura:** Oh damn... Does anyone here actually speak saprekk? Can we understand him?
- Todd:** I've got a smattering...
- Firefly:** Todd, you can get the edge of it. He's talking about some kind of terrible event, and his comrades belowdecks. That's all you get.
- Laura:** We need information. I'm going to roll, uh, try to get him to give us more. Grab him by the shoulders and shake him?
- Kyllian:** Wow, I'm glad you've never tried to calm me down in a crisis.
- Laura:** Well, has anyone else got a better idea?
- Todd:** Than that? Yeah, several!
- Laura:** Okay then, you go for it!
- Todd:** Right, I've only got a smattering of saprekk but I think I'll be able to get this across. I'm going to use sway and iron, try to communicate that we're friends and that we mean him no harm. Can I get an advantage if I make a show of putting my weapon down as I do that? I want to be as reassuring as I can.
- Firefly:** Definitely, but you'll still be cutting one.
- Todd:** No problem. That's a six - nope, that's cut - a five. Not too bad.
- Firefly:** Nice job! The ektus grabs your hammer once its discarded, holds it as if he's ready to attack you, but when you don't make an aggressive move his ranting slows and he visibly calms.
- Laura:** Alright, that probably was a better plan.



# Combat

Whether a bar-room brawl or an ambush at sea, combat on the wildsea is usually a quick and brutal affair – blades are drawn, pistols primed, and blood (or some equivalent) almost inevitably spilled.

Whatever the specifics, combat has an element of tension – you'll have to act and react quickly, and others might live or die due to your decisions.

## The Golden Rules of Combat

When teeth are bared and notched blades drawn, there are a couple of things you should keep in mind to have the best experience possible. These are...

- ◇ **You don't need a weapon to enter the fray.** Use your fists, your resources, the environment around you – anything's a weapon if you try hard enough, and the damage rules reflect that.
- ◇ **You don't need combat skills to help out your crew.** Ingenuity can make up for a lack of training, as can a willingness to take some risks. Combat-related skills like Hack, Hunt or Break give you a broad range of options, but other skills can stand in when you're in the right situation.
- ◇ **Focus is fluid, and still determined by the narrative.** Just like any other scene, the spotlight will pass from character to character to elements of the world as it best fits the story. The Firefly will be tracking focus to make sure nobody gets left out, but if you have a burning desire to do something you should take the plunge and do it!
- ◇ **Focus gives you the opportunity to do more than just attack.** When the spotlight is on you, it's your time to shine – plan, position, question, discover, do whatever it is that makes your character special.
- ◇ **You'll never die before you're ready.** Damage may mount up, injuries may compound, but death on the wildsea is a narrative event, not a mechanical one – if it's not your time yet, you'll always pull through.
- ◇ **A foe undefeated is not a combat failed.** Outsmarting, escaping, or driving off an opponent is just as valuable as cutting them down, and will often have more interesting narrative consequences.

## Is Combat an Essential Part of the Game?

The wildsea is a bright, beautiful, dark, dangerous place. Most crews that head out onto the rustling waves will find themselves in dangerous situations before too long, either at the hands of bandits or the jaws of a relentless predator... But *most* does not mean *all*.

If your group wants to run a game or campaign of the Wildsea without explicitly delving into combat and bloodshed, it's entirely possible. Diplomacy, trickery, and bargaining can be just as effective as a blade when wielded with conviction.





## Focus in Combat

There's no initiative or standard turn order to follow once blades are drawn; the spotlight moves from character to character just as it does during any other part of the game, giving a member of the crew the chance to take some kind of action before swinging to something else. There are a couple of extra things to keep in mind though...

## Actions and Reactions

Combat is usually a lot choppier than a scene based on exploration or interaction, with more shifts in focus for dramatic happenings and death-defying escapes. Characters will likely be **reacting** to events (such as incoming attacks or changes in positioning) as often as they're taking actions themselves.

*Example: A chameleocuda lashes its tail like a whip, aiming at Kerend, an ironbound dredger. The Firefly prompts Kerend's player for a reaction in response to the attack - probably to get out of the way or somehow mitigate the incoming damage.*

### How Long is an Action?

As long as it needs to be to achieve something important. It's not the length of an action that matters in combat, it's whether you got to do something you enjoyed.

## The Focus Tracker

Because of the increased number of reactions the Firefly might use a **focus tracker**, a quick set of tracks to show how many times different characters have acted (A) and reacted (R) over the course of a combat.

- ◇ Kerend: ARAA
- ◇ Simica: RAAR
- ◇ Marcus: AAR

*In the above example Kerend has had the majority of the focus, with three actions and a reaction. Simica has also had the focus four times, but hasn't acted as much - they're probably due some time in the spotlight soon. And Marcus is lagging behind a little having only acted twice and reacted once - maybe the Firefly will have him react to something next time the focus changes.*

## Combat Terms

Though combat scenes tend to play out just like any other scenes, they do have a few more terms you might want to be aware of (especially if you're in a combat-focused crew).

### Range

An attack is either classed as **Close Quarters (CQ)** or **Long Range (LR)**. Close quarter attacks can hit nearby opponents, and long range attacks (unsurprisingly) can hit opponents farther away.

- ◇ When using an LR weapon to attack a nearby foe, you take a cut of one on your action.
- ◇ When attacking a distant foe with a CQ weapon (by throwing it, for example) you take a cut of one on your action.

### Damage

The creatures and pirates you'll likely be fighting have aspects and tracks of their own, which can be damaged just as yours can. A successful attack usually marks a single box on one of these tracks - an attack with increased impact, or using a damage type that's more effective (such as a serrated weapon against a fibrous foe) marks an additional box. The more enemy tracks you fill, the likelier they are to surrender, flee or die.

*When you're attacked, enemies will deal various amounts of damage. A weak hit may only deal one or two marks against you, whereas a powerful blow could deal anywhere up to six. If you'd ever take damage to an aspect that would exceed its track, either take an injury with a track equal to the remaining amount or deal burn to that aspect equal to the remaining amount.*

### Effects

When attacking you may have the chance to inflict an effect as well as your damage, such as staggering your target or setting them on fire. Effects often give advantage on future attacks against a creature, or negate some of their inherent strengths or abilities.

*A list of damage types and suggested related effects are found on the next page.*

### Positioning

The fictional positioning between a character and their opponent can be extremely important - it helps determine range, may give an advantage related to the environment and can even activate the benefits of certain aspects.

### Loss

Relating directly to a character's resources, some actions you decide to take (or damage you suffer) might cause you to lose a specific resource (either temporarily or permanently). Attacking with a glass bottle may smash it, for example - you'd lose the resource, but might be able to pick up a new resource 'shards of bloody glass' at the end of the fight. Sometimes a resource is lost without being destroyed - plucked out of your hand or pack or knocked over the edge of a ship, for example.

### Injuries

Most often caused by unique or powerful attacks, catching a disease or taking a large amount of damage that can't be absorbed by an aspect. While you're affected, an injury might...

- ◇ Force you to cut on some actions
- ◇ Take away a skill or sense
- ◇ Add negative effects to some actions

*Injuries are represented by temporary tracks on your character sheet.*



## Damage Types

A list of the Wildsea's twelve damage types, and the sorts of effect they might cause in the right situation.

### Blunt

Crushing damage, good at stunning and breaking. This might come from a club, hammer or tail swipe, or impact with an object or the ground at high speed. It could cause bruising or leave a target with broken bones.

### Keen

Cutting damage, good at slicing and bleeding. This might come from a cutlass, claw or sharp-edged leaf, and will likely leave wounds that need bandaging to prevent heavy blood loss.

### Spike

Piercing damage, good at penetrating and impaling. This might come from a spearhead, arrow or bite, or high-speed impact with a sturdy branch at the wrong angle. Lasting damage to internal organs is a real possibility.

### Hewing

Chopping damage, good at splitting and breaking. This might come from an axe or the claws of a particularly powerful creature, and hewing injuries are likely to come in the form of lost limbs and bone breaks.

### Serrated

Sawing damage, good at ripping and tearing. This might come from a jagserry, sawtooth prow or any other kid of serrated edge, and will leave ragged-edged wounds that scar prominently.

### Toxin

Poison damage, good at sickening and confusing. This might come from tainted food or plant venom, and will usually cause illnesses and short-term loss of senses.

### Acid

Corrosive damage, good at melting and searing. This might come from... well, acid (and other caustic or corrosive substances). It's likely to disfigure or blind, even if only temporarily, or dull and damage nerves.

### Blast

Explosive damage, good at stunning and shattering. This might come from gunshots, massive sounds or the impact of nearby detonation, such as from cannonfire. Likely to leave a sufferer dazed, confused, deafened and staggering, and can definitely break bones.

### Volt

Electrical damage, good at shocking and paralysing. This might come from lightning strikes or electrically-charged weapons, and is likely to temporarily knock an individual out as well as leaving burns.

### Frost

Cold damage, good at slowing and freezing. This is most likely to be an environmental threat, caused by winter winds and exposure, but some creatures can manipulate cryonic glands as a weapon. Causes shivering, numbness and invites future illnesses.

### Salt

Crystalline damage, good at drying and banishing. This might come from spirits or dessicants, and can leave weird and arcane complications or rough, tender skin.

### Flame

Forbidden damage that burns, melts and inspires fear. Comes from fire, or occasionally searing liquids - not something you'll run into very often, unless you're extremely unlucky.

## The Threat of Death

Death on the wildsea is a narrative event, not a mechanical one. It's an option always open to you - an ending for your character, when the time feels right. Whenever you take a serious enough injury, run out of space to mark damage on any of your tracks or are put into a position you can't escape without stretching narrative plausibility, death is there as a final option.

## Resistance

Some aspects or situations may give your character **resistance** against a particular source of damage, damage type or effect. In these cases, **reduce the amount of damage you mark by one box**. Resistance to an effect or injury (like being thrown or poisoned) reduces its impact - a powerful detrimental effect will be reduced in scope, and a weaker one can be shrugged off entirely.

## Weakness

Some aspects or situations may give your character a **weakness** against a particular source of damage, damage type or effect. In these cases, **increase the amount of damage you mark by one box**. Weakness to an effect or injury increases its impact - even the weakest effects will be able to bowl you over, and injuries will last longer and have more detrimental effects.

## Immunity

Being **immune** to a source of damage, damage type or effect is exactly what it sounds like - **you take no damage at all**. Effects and injuries are ignored too.

## Stacking & Cancelling-Out

Think of **Weakness - Immunity - Resistance** as a ladder for each damage type, and an instance of these words appearing on your character sheet as a step up or down a rung. *If you have two resistances to a certain type of damage, count that as an immunity. If you have an immunity and a weakness, treat it as a resistance. If you have a weakness and a resistance, they cancel each other out.*



# Combat Results

The mechanics behind actions and reactions in combat are the same as for any other situation – you state your intent, build your dice pool, roll it and play out the results. The only difference during combat is with reading results: attacking and defending have their own special results spread.

## Attacking

An attack could take the form of a strike or shot with one of your weapons, an unarmed lunge or grapple, or even a clever use of the environment. When attacking you'll have a choice of inflicting damage or an effect (and sometimes you'll get to deal both!).

Having a weapon makes attacking a little easier – you get to use it for advantage dice and it reliably lets you deal a specific damage type. If you don't have a weapon to hand that doesn't mean you're out of options though – it just means you need to get creative!

### Attack Roll Results

6

#### Triumph

Your attack lands on its target, a powerful blow. You'll likely deal some damage, and might inflict an effect associated with the damage type if it suits the situation.

5

#### Conflict

Your attack lands on its target but something goes wrong – you still deal damage and maybe an associated effect, but you might also take some damage, suffer an effect yourself, lose a resource or be put into a less favourable position.

4

#### Disaster

Your attack either misses its target, or lands and does no damage. You'll definitely take some damage or an effect yourself, and might lose a resource or be put into a less favourable position as well.

3

2

1

Doubles

#### Twist... or Critical

An unexpected narrative effect or, if you're in a particularly bloodthirsty mood, a critical hit which increases your impact.

## Defending

Your opponents don't roll for their attacks. Instead the Firefly declares what they're doing (or attempting to do) and you roll for your reactions to those attacks, mitigating or avoiding the damage in a way that best suits your character – this might be by dodging out of the way, attempting to knock a blade or charging foe aside, or simply leaping under the nearest table.

Like your own attacks, enemy attacks can deal damage or hit you with effects. The better your roll, the more likely you are to escape unharmed.

### Defence Roll Results

6

#### Triumph

You completely avoid whatever threat was incoming – you take usually take no damage, effects or loss of position (though some powerful opponents may have aspects that make even a triumph dangerous).

5

#### Conflict

You avoid the worst of the situation, but something goes wrong – you'll take either damage, an associated effect, a negative change in position or the destruction (or temporary denial) of a resource.

4

3

2

1

Doubles

#### Disaster

You're hit square-on, and everything goes horribly wrong. You'll definitely take damage, and likely an associated effect and loss of resource or position as well.

#### Twist... or Counter

An unexpected narrative effect or, if you're eager to punish your attacker, a counter that deals a mark of damage against them (if in range).

## Combat in Play

- Firefly:** It's the old ektus' shout that gives it away, a wordless cry of warning as he points to the sky.
- Freya:** Oh damn, I knew this was going too smoothly. What can we see?
- Firefly:** Three dark shapes descending fast on dust-coloured wings –
- Kyllian:** Oh god damn it, it's those mothryn assassins from Kyther! I knew we should have finished off those bastards when had the chance.
- Firefly:** Perhaps you should have... before you have the chance to scatter for cover their leader dives, knife outstretched. Give me a reaction, Todd – how are you defending yourself?
- Todd:** I'm meeting this head-on. I'm going to leap at him as soon as he gets close enough, try to avoid the knife and bring him out of the sky at the same time.
- Firefly:** Sounds dangerous, but possible if you manage a double for that counter-attack – roll with a cut of 1.
- Todd:** That's Teeth, my hammer... Looks like 4d6. Okay... Yes! That's a conflict with doubles, even after the cut! I'll use them for a counter.
- Firefly:** You don't manage to avoid the knife entirely – take two marks of keen damage as it slashes at you. But you do manage to tangle yourself up with it, and you both hit the deck hard. Focus is open, people.
- Laura:** And I'm taking it! An attack on the one Todd's got down, do I get advantage for that?
- Firefly:** You do indeed, it came down hard.
- Laura:** Right, so I'm going to try and sink my grapple into it and then yank it away from Todd, maybe even off the side of the ship. I think Iron's going to work for this...



**“Landfall!”**

**The exodus began before the ship was even tied, crew and undercrew alike leaping the last few feet over the rustling waves to land on Kyther’s junk-strewn docks.**

**After weeks at sea, shore leave is a hard thing to say no to.**

**The char was the first to go, haring off toward the open-air bazaar to trade in delicacies. A gallant set of deck-gunners were next, shouting and laughing as they made their way to the nearest smoke-house, tobacco and pipes already in hand. One waved over her shoulder - they’d be gone for some time.**

**The ship’s alchemist was slower to disembark, but no less eager. With injuries beyond even his arcane knowledge he dragged himself in the direction of Jeritzo’s Lot, an expansive and well-renowned hospital-tent. Treatment would be expensive, but essential.**

**And for the rest of them? Malligan’s. Honey-mead. Home.**

## MONTAGES

Montages allow your crew to benefit from one of the most useful tropes of the big screen, the condensing of long periods of time into short but narratively-useful snapshots. During a montage every member of the crew gets a moment of focus to get one thing done, allowing the crew to split and pursue their own stories and wants without fear of slowing the game down too much or being caught off guard.

Though montages can be a good source of relaxation, try not think of them exclusively as ‘downtime’. They can be just as useful a tool in driving the plot and the action along as a scene!

As a crew of wildsailors, the most likely times your Firefly will offer you the chance at a montage will be...

- ◇ When reaching a new port, and wanting to explore various areas quickly
- ◇ When stopping for the night on a journey or expedition
- ◇ When tooling up or preparing for a potentially dangerous encounter
- ◇ When sharing a song, a story or a meal that gives everyone some time to rest
- ◇ When splitting up to gather information or supplies
- ◇ When pursuing your own interests and projects after long periods of socializing

### Tasks

A montage **isn’t** there to track the individual actions you take - that’s handled with scenes. A montage instead allows you to condense larger periods of time into brief but useful moments, known as **Tasks**.

As a player, your role is to decide what task you’re working towards and then use your moment of focus to describe how you accomplish it. This can sometimes involve a roll, a loss or exchange of resources, or even just engaging in the conversation with the Firefly and the other players. There’s a list of general tasks you can attempt over the next few pages (**exploration, acquisition, recovery and creation**), but don’t be afraid to request something outside the box.

### Requirements

Some tasks may require you to have access to a specific place or resource before they can be performed. A character wouldn’t be able to gather specimens in an area with no plants or wildlife, for example, or go fishing without something to be used as a rod, bait or net.

### Rolls & Advantage

Most tasks work in the same way as any other action, only requiring a roll if they’re difficult, dangerous or dramatic. Even though a task might be complex, you don’t need to roll multiple times - **one roll is enough** to carry you through to the end. You can apply advantages to these rolls from having a favourable environment, useful aspects or appropriate resources as usual. Even if you need to use a resource to achieve a task (such as using a specimen to heal, or salvage to repair) that still counts as an advantage, just as it does with a normal action.

You can also add advantage to a task roll by working together with a crewmate (or other friendly NPC). That said, you can’t be everywhere at once - if your montage involves you being in one particular place you may not be able to help a crewmate in another.

### Fiction First

Don’t worry too much about anticipating the possible requirements for your tasks. Often the way you describe something will make it clear exactly how you’re trying to accomplish it, and if there’s any doubt the Firefly will jump in and ask you to clarify.



# Exploration

A common piece of advice for adventure-based tabletop games is that you should avoid splitting the party whenever possible - it often leads to characters being left out of plot developments and important moments.

But when it comes to montages you can safely turn this thinking on its head. Especially when there's a new location to explore, there's great benefit in splitting the crew up to cover more ground. You might use a task to...

- ◇ Track down a particular individual or service
- ◇ Chase a lead that relates to your character's drives or personal backstory
- ◇ Indulge your curiosity in a particular aspect of a place's architecture or culture
- ◇ Talk to NPCs to gain some local knowledge
- ◇ Discover routes or options for further exploration that you can tackle later as part of a scene

## Setting Up the Next Scene

Sometimes your exploration will lead you into a situation that demands the attention of the entire crew. If this happens, make it clear to the Firefly - "Can we wait to do this bit until everyone meets up again?" is a perfectly acceptable sentence to throw into the conversation. That way you get the benefits of your task, finding something that moves the plot forward, but everyone at the table gets to share in the experience as soon as possible by turning it into a scene.

## Rolling to Explore

A huge variety of skills can come into play as you're exploring a location (though in many cases you won't have to roll at all). Movement skills like vault and wavewalk can help with the physical traversal of the environment, social skills like sway can let you glean information from others, and language skills can clue you into cultural details and unexpected conversations that other crew members would miss.

# Acquisition

Scrabbling around for bits of old stone and rusted machinery is hardly the most elegant way to spend your downtime, but it can be one of the most productive. Using a montage to focus on acquisition might take the form of...

- ◇ Trading your cargo or resources with an NPC merchant (or another wildsailor)
- ◇ Combing the locale for interesting or unique things that might not be missed
- ◇ Fishing, hunting or herb-gathering
- ◇ Petty theft and pickpocketing
- ◇ Gathering rumours from a local tavern
- ◇ Collating information into a fresh chart

## Acquisition Results

When rolling for these kinds of tasks you'll usually be using the same results table you would for a resource-gathering action during a scene. It's printed on page 32, but we've included it here as well for ease of reference.

6

### Triumph

You gain a solid example of whatever resource you were looking for, untainted by waves or use or time.

5

### Conflict

You gain a resource with a negative tag - it can still be useful, but it won't exactly impress anyone.

4

### Disaster

You either fail to find what you're looking for or ruin the resource in the process of collecting it.

3

2

1

Doubles

### Twist

The resource you gain has a unique or positive tag, provided by you or another player at the table. Unusual resources are more valuable and often have a wider variety of uses.

## Specific Acquisition Tasks

Though you can likely trade for salvage or specimens if you're in a settlement, one of the easiest ways to acquire new resources during a montage is to fall back on your own skills. The following specific tasks are useful for acquiring certain types of resource, especially if the accompanying roll is bolstered with an appropriate skill, edge or aspect.

### Scavenging

**Requirement:** An area with potential for salvage. For sorting through detritus for useful pieces of scrap or machinery, allowing you to gain **salvage**. *The scavenge skill will always be useful here, but rattle, study or delve might also come in handy in a pinch.*

### Hunting

**Requirement:** An area with the potential for beasts. For tracking and bringing down animals and insects (or rendering and carving bodies) to use as **specimens**. *Unsurprisingly the hunt skill comes in useful here, but hack and break could be useful in the right situation.*

### Gathering

**Requirement:** An area with the potential for vegetation. For identifying and collecting useful plantlife and produce as **specimens**, anything from fruit to mushrooms to predatory orchids. *The tend skill is an easy go-to, but sense, hunt or cook might help you spot and collect rare ingredients.*

**Ikra could barely remember the time before he took to the sea. He'd travelled reaches, seen leviathans push their bulk up through the leafy waves like living monoliths, tasted the vicious, viscous mingling of blood & sap...**

**But he'd never smelled anything quite like the meal in front of him.**

**Canteray (more of an artist than a cook, as he often said) looked at him expectantly.**

**"What... Is it?" Ikra asked, keeping his voice as neutral as possible.**

**"Wolf meat & cactus oysters cooked in a reduction of spider-silk wine & peppering spice."**

**Ikra stared at the bowl in front of him.**

**"With rice."**

## Recovery

It's part and parcel of a wildsailor's life to suffer a few scrapes from time to time, or a horrendous infection, or the loss of a limb or two - the rustling waves are vast, harsh and hungry, and constant contact with their creatures and weirdnesses takes its toll.

Using a task to recover can help you deal with lasting injuries, marked aspects and mounting mire, as well as general maintenance of your ship. This might take the form of...

- ◇ Spending time healing yourself with specimens or using salvage to repair your gear
- ◇ Letting a ship's surgeon tend to your wounds
- ◇ Visiting a portside hospital or treatment centre
- ◇ Drinking and laughing your mire away at a junction-house
- ◇ Using salvage and cargo items to repair damage to your own vessel
- ◇ Putting your ship into drydock for repairs

### Recovery Results

Removing damage during a montage has its own results table below, which can be used for healing and repair in other situations just as easily.

## Recovery Roll Results

6

### Triumph

Heal two marks of damage to an aspect, ship rating, injury track or mire.

5

### Conflict

Heal one mark of damage to an aspect, ship rating, injury track or mire.

4

3

### Disaster

Add an extra mark of damage to an aspect, ship rating, injury track or mire.

2

1

### Twist

You don't consume the resource used to carry out your recovery.

Doubles

## Specific Recovery Tasks

The resources listed as a requirement in the tasks below assume your character is healing or repairing with little outside help. If you're in a port or settlement being tended to by or working with others, substitutions and alternative methods of payment will likely be possible. Clever use of your skills, edges and aspects can make healing far more effective and less resource-intensive.

### Healing

**Requirement:** An appropriate specimen.

For tending to your own wounds or giving medical aid, allowing you to clear marks from a trait or animal companion. *The tend skill lets you work on yourself and others, and the cook skill can be useful too. The specimen used should fit the kind of damage that's being healed - curative herbs and such will always be appropriate, but even something as simple as a branch could help fix a broken leg by acting as a splint, for example.*

### Repairing

**Requirement:** An appropriate piece of salvage.

For refurbishing broken mechanisms and armour, allowing you to clear marks from gear or mechanical companions. *The rattle skill is reliable, but scavenge or even cook might work in the right situations. Repairing damage to a ship's ratings or structure will usually cost several pieces of salvage, or an appropriate piece of cargo.*

### Relaxing

**Requirement:** An appropriate whisper.

For time away from the savagery of the sea, relaxing allows you to clear marks from your mires. *A whole host of skills can help here, depending on what you think best suits your character's recovery. Social skills might help them laugh their troubles away, sway could help them relax in a smokehouse or shadow-spring, hunt could aid on a relaxing fishing trip - the cost of a whisper is steep, but you can approach the task however you see fit.*



# Creation

In a world where salvage and specimens come fast and loose, learning to throw them together in a pinch is an incredibly useful skill for your arsenal.

Using a task to create allows you to combine resources, granting temporary aspects for yourself or your crewmates. This might come in the form of...

- ◇ Lashing together some salvage to create a weapon or tool useful for the situation
- ◇ Mixing alchemically useful specimens to create a potent but potentially dangerous concoction
- ◇ Cooking a meal for yourself or your crewmates, to fortify them against hunger, cold or sickness

## Temporary Aspects

These temporary aspects come with a name, a track and some kind of useful ability related to the resources used. Whenever you benefit from the ability, you mark the track. **When a temporary aspect's track is fully marked the effects wear off and it's gone forever.**

Normally a temporary aspect created using the cook or rattle skills only applies to a single crewmember, but certain character choices relax this restriction.

### Creation Results

The precise nature of a new creation is a little more fluid than the results of others tasks, relying on Firefly input and more of a conversational back-and-forth. As well as the usual results table below we've offered some examples as guidance.

### Creation Outcomes

The benefits you create while cooking and crafting are freeform, meaning you should work together with your Firefly to determine exactly what you can achieve before you roll.

This could be something mechanical, narrative or both; a measure of damage resistance, a new weapon, access to an ability you wouldn't normally have or even a number of extra ranks in a skill or language. You'll find more information on temporary benefits in the Characters Chapter.

*Example: Kyllian is attempting to create a meal that will offer whoever consumes it protection against cold temperatures. He suggests using steaming rice as a base and then seeds from a scorpion pepper, and the Firefly agrees. Kyllian's result is a 5, a conflict. The Firefly rules that whoever eats the meal will have their core temperature raised, giving them resistance to frost damage and cold environments, but will also sweat and cough constantly.*

## Specific Creation Tasks

When creating something you'll usually be combining at least two resources of some kind. Clever use of your skills, edges and aspects can make creating far more effective and less resource-intensive.

### Cooking

**Requirement:** Two specimens.

For gaining some delicious fortification against the dangers of the waves, with effects based on the flavours of the specimens used. *The cook skill lets you make traditional dishes with ease, but the tend skill would work just as well for soups, broths and herbal teas. Flavour is important here for determining the effects of a creation.*

### Concocting

**Requirement:** Two resources (specimens or salvage).

For concocting potions that allow you to transfer the properties of the resources used and have them alter the drinker's form or abilities for a short time, with effects based on the properties of the resources used. *The cook skill is an easy go-to, but break, tend or even hack could also work for extremely simple mixtures.*

### Crafting

**Requirement:** Two pieces of salvage.

For allowing you to repurpose salvage into useful gear; it won't last too long but should get the job done. The effects are based on the qualities of the salvage used. *The rattle skill can be used for a wide array of gear, but some characters might use other skills to create specialized equipment (such as break to create a rough-and-ready ranged weapon, or salvage to make a tool or piece of armour).*

Creation Roll Results	
6	<b>Triumph</b> The recipient of your creation gains a temporary benefit related to the resources used.
5	<b>Conflict</b> The recipient of your work gains a temporary 2-track aspect, but there are downsides inherent in using it. Alternatively it might grant an aspect without a downside, but that doesn't quite offer the intended benefits.
4	<b>Disaster</b> You've created something that might work as a bizarre ornament or culinary curiosity, but little else. It gives no benefits whatsoever.
3	<b>Twist</b> Your creation gives an unexpected benefit in addition to the usual result, something small but useful.
2	
1	
Doubles	

# Projects

There are some activities that fall outside of the timescale of both actions and tasks, such as writing a book, assembling a complex machine or learning a language. These are **projects**, multi-stage tasks that are completed over the course of several montages. Whenever you have the chance to perform a task, you can choose to work on a project instead.

## Starting a Project

Like actions and tasks, projects are mostly freeform. You might start a project to earn the trust of a recalcitrant passenger, to study an ancient artefact or even to build an outrider ship from scratch. Once you've decided on the scope of your project the Firefly will set you a project track to fill, which you can note down on your character sheet.

*Example: Freya wants to create a set of goggles for each crew member that will protect their eyes from the radiance of the Icteric sun. She tells the Firefly of her intentions - a crafting task would be able to make a single pair, but making so many definitely suits a project. The Firefly sets a six-track for her to fill to represent the scale of the task at hand. She notes it down on her character sheet, and will work on it in her spare time as the crew draws closer to their destination.*

## Working on Projects

There are multiple ways to mark off the boxes of a project track - you'll likely use a mixture when working on your own projects, depending on the situation.

### Time

You can often mark off a box just by spending some time working on a project, even without rolling; study, practice and hard graft all have their place. Not all project tracks can be marked in this way, however.

*Example: Freya draws up some plans and schematics for the goggles, making sure they'll work for the various bloodlines that are part of her crew.*

### Rolls

A quicker but riskier way to make progress on a project is to roll for it, just like you'd roll for a normal action.

*Example: Freya rolls with Sharps and her Rattle skill, using the ship's workshop to give herself an advantage.*

### Resources

Sometimes the best way to get a project moving along nicely is to spend one of your resources on it. Some projects, such as crafting, might require specific resources to be used before they're completed.

*Example: Freya chips down some salvaged amber plating from a recent wreck to act as lenses, and one of her crewmates supplies pinwolf-leather to work as straps and housing.*

### Aid

Just because you started a project yourself doesn't mean you have to finish it alone - others may offer you their aid, giving their skills and expertise as a reward or favour.

*Example: A trader they meet along the way has some impressive onyx spectacles of his own, and Freya gets friendly enough with him to study their design and ask about the process of making them.*

## Projects in Play

- Firefly:** Well you won't be moving into the ruin until the sun goes down, so this seems like a good time to give you a montage. Are there any tasks you want to attempt as you wait?
- Todd:** Not for me, I think I'm just going to relax. I'm pretty sure I've earned it after our run-in with those smugglers.
- Firefly:** Yeah, I think you have. I'd love to relax but I'm pretty conscious of this arm wound, so I'm going to choose clean it and bandage it as best I can.
- Kyllian:** Probably a wise choice. Relaxing will clear a point of mire for you Laura, and Todd that sounds like a Heal. You know how that works?
- Freya:** Yep.
- Firefly:** Great. Anyone else?
- Kyllian:** Well, the deck's covered in mothryn dust-motes now, and I think I might be able to use those as a component. I'll collect some up, then head down to my lab alcove and see if I can concoct anything exciting. A salve, maybe?
- Freya:** Well while they do that I'm going to keep an eye out for anything interesting we might pass. I don't think there's really a task for that... Can I just roll for it instead?
- Firefly:** Yes, that would work. Kyllian, I'm setting out a three-track for you, 'possible salve', and I'll mark the first box now. Right then! The engines growl pleasantly as you cut through the treetops. By sundown, you've...



## Longer Montages

In most montage situations a single task is enough to do whatever you need to do, an important or useful thing that passes the time until the next scene comes or the journey continues.

There are exceptions, though not many. When the crew are waiting for a particular event and have little else to do, taking multiple tasks to represent time spent idling could be appropriate. This is particularly useful in longer campaigns where the seasons change, as it's natural for wildsailors to hunker down in a settlement and work on their own projects (and basic survival) during the leafless months of the year.

In these situations it might be worth taking two, or even three tasks as part of an extended montage.

## Timing Extended Montages

In terms of real-world time they're best used at the very end of a session. Montages have a way of dovetailing into new scenes based on the information characters acquire - with multiple tasks this information runs the risk of being overwhelming, so leaving a follow-up scene until the beginning of the next session gives the Firefly time to plan ahead a little and focus on the most important possibilities presented.





**It took a few seconds for the engine to kick into gear, but when it did the entire village knew it; a lion-like roar of combusting chemicals and steam-driven pistons drowning out the rustle of the waves.**

**Locals shouted back and forth as they loaded crates, struggling to be heard over the noise. Gau sporelings skipped stones off the side of the dock, trying to bounce them off of branches and up onto the deck. Ships were a rarity here - the crew pretended not to notice the clattering as they checked their charts and marked out routes.**

**The territory wasn't a particularly harsh one, but that wasn't the point - every trip across the waves was a journey into the unknown, a flirtation with danger.**

**Elders looked on, silent, from their porches. The ship would return, those crates full of fresh herbs and foreign medicines.**

**... Or it wouldn't.**

# JOURNEYS

Journeys move you from one place to another, usually by means of a ship. They also allow you to discover new locations and opportunities as you travel, and to define some truths about the Wildsea itself.

## It Starts With a Ship

The game tends to assume that you own a ship of your own in some form, but just in case you don't (or if attaining one is part of your personal story) we've added some information on how you might do that over the next few pages, as well as a quick primer on some of the elements of your ship that will naturally come up during a journey. *For a deeper explanation of the ship's features and mechanics, as well as the rules on how to create your own, head to page 126.*

## Sequence of Play

Journeys tend to follow a particular sequence of events, laid out below and explained in more detail throughout the rest of this chapter.

### Departure

Readying your ship to set sail as the Firefly creates journey tracks for you to fill. This is a time for your crew to pick up cargo and passengers, hire undercrew to work for you and choose where on the ship you'll station yourself for the duration of the journey.

### Progress & Encounters

The choices you make as you travel allow your ship to progress through a journey, and may end up in you coming across encounters too - moments of tension or oddity that might require something as simple as a choice or as complex as a scene to deal with. This sequence of making progress and dealing with encounters repeats as your journey track fills.

### Arrival

Once the journey track is full you sight your destination, then decide how to approach and what to do when you arrive. Ports are usually well-equipped to deal with a wildsailor's troubles, and arriving at one is a great opportunity to deal with any damage your ship (or crew) might have taken out on the waves.

## Journey Examples

Before we delve into the specifics of crossing the sea here are a few narrative examples of what you might find yourself doing out on the waves...

- ◇ Racing to make a trade meeting with the impatient captain of a merchant vessel.
- ◇ Cutting your way through a particularly thorny patch of the tangle, beady-eyed squirrels watching as you struggle.
- ◇ Hunting the famed Whitecollar Snare, a leviathan fox too beautiful to live.
- ◇ Exchanging fire with a marauder submersible, unexpectedly risen next to you as you rested at anchor.
- ◇ Churning and listing as ironspine cactus-spikes gouge at your hull.
- ◇ Competing in a race against other ships, your hull and engines screaming at the strain.
- ◇ Dredging up the wreckage of a pre-verdant vessel, pushed into the thrash by a recent rootquake.
- ◇ Searching for a particular bounty-head, the eyes of your crew straining for a glimpse of their distinctive airship.
- ◇ Smashing through a poorly-erected pirate barricade, deck guns firing and chainsaw prow roaring.
- ◇ Resting at anchor in the shade of a tallshank's crown, waiting for a storm to pass.



# Departure

The departures phase allows both players and Firefly to prepare for the journey ahead.

When getting ready to depart on a journey you should set your **Destination**, make any **Preparations** you might need and have each member of the crew choose their **Station**. While you do this, the Firefly will create a set of **Journey Tracks**.

## Destination

Nobody heads out onto the Wildsea without a very good reason. Your first point or order should be to set a destination that will mark the end of your journey, usually a port or settlement of some kind but occasionally a creature you're hunting or a ship you're aiming to meet.

Setting a destination is as easy as stating your intentions out loud and agreeing on them as a group. For example...

- ◇ *"We're heading to Kyther, up North - there's an old steep there that owes us a favour."*
- ◇ *"We need pinwolf staccatomygdala to help Tzal cure the slowsight plague, probably a decent number of them. Time to find a pack of the bastards."*
- ◇ *"The priest-captain of the Dated Summit wants to meet us somewhere in Jawbone Straight, says we'll know the place when we see it."*

## Changing Destinations

Not every journey goes as planned. Some would say that very few journeys go as planned, in fact. If your crew decide to change their destination for any reason, tell the Firefly so that they can make a new set of Journey tracks for you (more on those on the right).

## Preparations

There are a few other things you might want to consider before leaving port. Some groups may want to treat this stage of departure as a montage, others as a scene, others as a simple checklist.

- ◇ Hiring extra gangs or officers for your undercrew.
- ◇ Taking on passengers.
- ◇ Picking up some cargo.
- ◇ Picking up extra information on the surrounding waves, often from junctions, cartoikas, smokehouses, and shadow-springs.
- ◇ Planning a route, usually to include or exclude certain areas.

## Undercrew & Passengers

Most ports will give you the opportunity to hire on new undercrew (usually at the cost of an initial payment of salvage and a nominal share of future earnings) or pick up a passenger or two (who will often pay their fare half up-front, half on delivery). Junctions and noticeboards are good places to pick up both.

## Cargo & Information

Both usually cost, but can be invaluable in the right circumstances. Larger trade goods should be bought cheap for export and sold to places willing to pay top scratch. Information comes at a premium, but may translate into useful knowledge on hazards that might be faced or areas to avoid.

## Route Planning

Only available if you have local knowledge at hand (such as from a local captain or a cartoika) and a chart to consume, planning your route in advance will give you a shorter, safer journey with a number of options (supplied by the Firefly) of where you might avoid or drop by. For example...

*The crew of the Sokoliov find a cartoika, a map-house full of information on the local waves. By consuming a chart of their own they plan their route, the Firefly informing them of a wondrous tallshank, the common routes of some mothriny assassins, a floating bazaar-port, and a roach-river. They can choose to encounter or avoid these for sure.*

## Stations

For optimal operation of a ship certain stations have to be manned, but there are other positions a crewmember can keep that allow them particular options or opportunities during a journey. We'll keep the details brief here and delve into them when relevant over the next few pages, but before the ship leaves port your crew should decide if anyone is...

### At the Helm Essential

When at the helm you control the ship's speed and direction.

### On Watch Essential

When on watch you roll to see what the ship is about to encounter as the journey progresses.

### Tending the Engine Optional

When tending the engine you have the option of overloading it with fuel for a burst of speed if necessary.

### Cartographizing Optional

When cartographizing you keep a look out for landmarks and distinctive places, using them to sketch out a new chart.

### Watching the Weather Optional

When watching the weather you gain some idea of what future weather conditions will be like based on your meteorological and environmental assessments.

*Crew members not at a particular station are assumed to be busying themselves with other small tasks around the ship.*

## Journey Tracks

As you prepare to depart the Firefly will set a hidden progress track for your journey.

### Progress

The essential journey-related track, **marked every time the ship makes progress toward their goal**. Once the last box on the progress track is marked, you've reached your destination. The length of a progress track is decided by the Firefly based on your proposed route - taking a direct path will make it shorter, swinging out of your way to avoid dangers or make extra stops will make it longer.





# Progress

Once you're out on the waves the narrative relies on your choices and dice rolls to progress. Each member of the crew will take turns at the helm and on watch (you can determine the order yourself).

## At the Helm

When you take the helm you have direct control over the ship, and can choose one of the following three options - Cut a Path, Forge Ahead or Drop Anchor. Each choice has both narrative and mechanical consequences.

### CUT A PATH

- ◆ **Narrative:** You travel at a decent speed while keeping the ship and crew as safe as possible, and give whoever is on watch a good chance of spotting oddities early.
- ◆ **Mechanical:** You mark a single box on your progress track. When the watch roll is made you can usually choose to encounter whatever is sighted or steer clear of it. Without any problems.

### FORGE AHEAD

- ◆ **Narrative:** Your passage across the waves is rough but swift, the roar of engines and cracking of branches heralding your arrival. Watch is almost a formality - you have little chance of coming within visual range of anything without being spotted yourself.
- ◆ **Mechanical:** You can mark two boxes on your progress track. When a watch roll is made you'll usually blunder straight into whatever encounter is rolled, or damage your ship trying to avoid it.

### DROP ANCHOR

- ◆ **Narrative:** The ship stops so everyone on board can rest with minimal fear of interruption. The undercrew take over watch duties, keeping their eyes out for dangers to the ship. This is the safest way to spend the night-time hours, and a great opportunity to work on personal projects and ship repairs.
- ◆ **Mechanical:** You and your crew have time to take a montage while the ship is at rest. The undercrew keep watch for danger, and no other watch is rolled.

## Challenging Terrain

Some areas of the wildsea are more difficult to traverse than others, especially for certain types of ship. A vessel that relies on a chainsaw-type prow might find a thicket of iron-hard vines almost impossible to traverse, whereas one with centipedal legs could pick its way across with no problem at all, for example.

When cutting a path or forging ahead in challenging terrain the character at the helm may have to make an additional ratings roll to determine whether they manage to make any progress. More information on these rolls can be found in the encounters section of this chapter.



## On Watch

As one player is deciding which option to pick at the helm, another should be putting their character **on watch**. When it's your watch you decide whether you're going to spend some of your resources to make a **Discovery**, or to leave things up to chance and make a **Watch Roll**.

### Watch Rolls & Threat

If you decide to make a watch roll, **roll a single d6** and check the result against the table below to determine what your character has spotted. The result of your roll is open for everyone to see, but you won't know the specifics of the encounter until it's introduced by the Firefly (check the table below for the result of this roll).

While the player on watch explains their discovery or rolls to determine what the crew encounter, the Firefly also **rolls 1d6** to determine the level of potential threat. A result of 6 represents a danger-free opportunity, a 5 or 4 gives a hazardous encounter with a useful pay-off, and a 3, 2 or 1 indicates that there's an immediate danger to the crew with little pay-off. The result of the Firefly's threat roll is **hidden**, but owning a chart of the area you're travelling through makes travel a little safer - **in these circumstances the Firefly rolls 2d6 and takes the higher result**.

## Watch Roll Results

### Peace

An entire watch passing without a sighting of anything out of the ordinary. You might experience...

- ◆ A watch so uneventful you have time to take a **montage**. Useful for healing and repairing.
- ◆ A **meeting** called by one of the crew or undercrew, a time to exchange information and make plans.
- ◆ A chance for one of the crew to tell a **tall tale**, allowing another crewmate to gain a whisper.
- ◆ A stretch of calm ripe for the breaking - create a **tree-shanty** to lift spirits and learn about the world.
- ◆ A problem or event concerning the **undercrew**, such as a fight, a sickness or a personal discovery.
- ◆ A time for **reflection**, confronting and coming to terms with your actions. Usually heals mire.

### Order

An encounter with one of the various cultures living across the wildsea. You might experience...

- ◆ A **ship** passing within hailing distance, anything from a trading ship to bug-fishers to pirates.
- ◆ The discovery of an **outpost**, usually supplying a nearby port (such as a drilling rig, farm or refinery).
- ◆ A **survivor** of some terrible disaster, stranded and waiting to be rescued.
- ◆ A **wreck** or **ruin**, a remnant of past expansion now abandoned and ripe for salvaging.
- ◆ A **cache** of cargo or supplies, left by those trying to make the sea a little safer... or by smugglers.
- ◆ A sign of **conspiracy**, perhaps pointing to an impressive secret or shadowed truth.

### Nature

An encounter with something born of the wild unknown, or a feature of the sea. You might experience...

- ◆ A change in the **weather**, affecting the sky above, the branches below or both.
- ◆ A natural **feature** of the rustling waves. Useful for orientation when pathfinding and mapmaking.
- ◆ A **wonder** of the waves, a sight that fills the crew with hope. Heals mire.
- ◆ A **horror** of the wilds, an experience that leaves a lasting scar. Marks mire.
- ◆ An unsettled place sturdy enough to moor your ship - **landfall**. Useful for finding resources.
- ◆ A sighting of (or tussle with) the **true wilds**, in the form of a plant, creature or force of nature.

## Progress in Play

- Firefly:** You pull out of the port, squirrel-gulls and dragonflies scattering in your path. Who's at the helm and who's on watch?
- Todd:** I'll take the helm first, I think. And Kyllian...?
- Kyllian:** Yep, I'll take watch. We want to make the best time possible, right? At least until we've reached that fungal stretch.
- Todd:** Yeah, but we don't know these waves like the one back home. We'll Cut a Path for now.
- Firefly:** Got it! The engine roars and the sawprow kicks up a spray of broken branches and torn leaves around you. I'm marking a box on your progress track.
- Kyllian:** Okay, and for my watch roll I get... a 3. That's nature, right?
- Firefly:** It is indeed. And let me roll the threat... Okay, gotcha.
- Laura:** You don't tell us that, right?
- Firefly:** That's right. What I can tell you is that after a few hours of swift progress, Kyllian, you spot something - a dash of red among the waves ahead. You're moving fast, but not so fast that you can't warn Todd.
- Kyllian:** Yep, I raise a hand and let him know there's something close by. What is it?
- Firefly:** It's a pitcher plant, a huge one... You can only see the curling lips of its mouth, but from the size of it you reckon the chamber it leads to could hold your ship several times over.

## Discoveries

Choosing to make a discovery while on watch allows you some creative input into a newly discovered location. As long as the location is something that might be recorded on a map or chart, it's viable as a discovery.

When you make a discovery the Firefly still makes a threat roll. You may have narrative agency over what the location contains, but you still don't know what condition you'll find it in.

### Making a Discovery

To make a discovery first choose one of your charts. This will give you some information about the locale, and possibly the kinds of resources you'll find there (using a 'Salt-Stained Chart', for example, might imply the discovery is near a salt-water waterfall).

Once you've chosen a chart the next step is to add one of your whispers. It's these wild words that breathe life into the discovery - they allow you to describe an event, a cultural facet or a happening in the location you've discovered. The whisper 'A Welcoming Fleet', for example, might imply there's a rootless family moored in the area, or a naval battle in progress with one side looking for help).

Both the chart and whisper are lost during this process.

### Discovery Examples

A **Bronze Inscription + Toothstorm** might lead to...

- ◆ An ancient metal temple with a rowdy tooth-selling bazaar
- ◆ A huge copper-coloured plant with a ravenous maw
- ◆ A living storm chained to an ancient obelisk

A **Tattered Map + Howls on the Wind** might lead to...

- ◆ A pinwolf graveyard
- ◆ A pre-verdant library settled by a strange cult
- ◆ A trade channel with a constant noisy gale

A **Hasty Starchart + Never Alone Again** might lead to...

- ◆ An abandoned mountaintop island with an eerily silent monastery
- ◆ A rift filled with phosphorescent fungal constellations
- ◆ A floating city-port with a warm, welcoming atmosphere





## And, While You Make Progress...

Taking the Helm and going On Watch are essential, but there are other stations that crewmembers might fill – they're not strictly necessary to the running of the ship, but they can make a journey much easier than it would otherwise be.

### Tending the Engine

When you're stationed at the engine you have three choices that you can make, usually in conjunction with whoever is at the helm. The first is to make minor adjustments in the engine room, the second to give your ship a burst of speed and the third to run more quietly than usual.

#### TEND TO THE ENGINE

- ◆ **Narrative:** A quick fix here, an adjustment of valves there. You're not really *doing* much, but you're poised to act in case anything goes wrong.
- ◆ **Mechanical:** Doesn't use a resource or give any additional benefits as you travel, but allows you to immediately hijack focus if there are any problems or issues relating to the engine to attempt an instant fix or bypass.

#### OVERLOAD THE ENGINE

- ◆ **Narrative:** You shovel extra fuel into the engine, probably much past its technical capacity. The burst of power it gives you is impressive, but unsustainable.
- ◆ **Mechanical:** Uses a resource suitable for fuel. Either increase impact on a roll made to take advantage of the ship's temporary power or speed, or mark an additional box on the journey track while moving.

#### MUFFLE THE ENGINE

- ◆ **Narrative:** You surround the engine with bedding and whatever else is to hand – it's not perfect, and it doesn't reduce the noise of the bite, but it means you'll be able to travel quieter than your usual.
- ◆ **Mechanical:** Uses a soft, muffling resource. Either increase impact on a roll made to take advantage on the ship's new quieter profile or stealthily leave an area without making a roll (only if you haven't yet been spotted).

### Cartographizing

Cartographizing allows you to slowly create a chart of the area you're travelling through – the Firefly sets a pathfinding track, and every time you find a particularly important landmark (such as an island, a spit, a horror, or a wonder) that track gets marked. When the track is fully marked you gain a chart – add it to your resources and name it after the area you're passing through, or something related to one of the landmarks (a Chart of the Rustling Wastes, for example, or Map of the Reften Surrounds).

### Watching the Weather

Just as important as watching the waves, watching the skies clues you in to weather changes before they happen, allowing you to plan for or avoid dangerous weather. When you're watching the weather, roll 1d6 just as if you were on a normal watch, but use table on the right to read your results...

## Weather-Watching Results

### Clear Skies

Whatever the weather was doing before, it clears. For the next part of your journey you might have...

6

- ◆ A period of comfortable sunshine that brings easy-to-hunt creatures to the surface.
- ◆ A light rain followed by a blossoming of flowers and ripening of fruits.
- ◆ A strong but pleasant wind that clears away sporeclouds and mists and increases distance visibility.

5  
4

### Continuation

The weather continues as it is, for good or ill – storms rage, periods of uncomfortable warmth drag on or, if you're lucky, perfect sailing conditions persist.

### A Change for the Worse

The weather is about to turn against you. For the next part of your journey you might have...

3  
2  
1

- ◆ Driving rain or hail that lowers visibility and makes it harder to perform actions out on deck.
- ◆ Blazing sunshine that threatens heatstroke, evaporates liquids and brings out hordes of stinging insects.
- ◆ A living storm or other bizarre weather phenomenon bearing down on you, hateful and hankering.

## Encounters

Once your watch roll is made the Firefly will describe a potential encounter. It's up to you as a crew to decide whether you engage with the encounter or not.

### Avoiding an Encounter

If you don't like the look of what your watcher spotted, or have more pressing matters to attend to, you can try to avoid the encounter. In some cases this is as easy as steering well clear of whatever it is - giving a newly-discovered island a wide berth, for example. Your journey continues and you choose a new pilot and watcher, no harm done.

In others you might have more trouble. You may need to make a ratings roll to escape a pursuing ship, or sacrifice a specimen to distract a predator. Avoiding an encounter is far harder when Forging Ahead.

### Engaging with an Encounter

Engaging with encounters can be both lucrative and dangerous. The Firefly will likely give clues as to the relative threat of an encounter as they introduce it, but you'll never know for sure until you engage. If you do decide to engage with the encounter it'll usually take the form of a **choice**, a **challenge** or a **scene**.

### Choice Encounters

Brief and simple, the outcome of the encounter will depend on your choice. The Firefly will provide you with options, and it's up to you as a crew to pick your course.

*Example: Your travels are interrupted by a flare on the horizon, illuminating the evening sky. Do you investigate, and risk an ambush or trick, or do you sail on by and risk mire, or the ire of your undercrew, as you ignore a potential distress call?*

### Challenge Encounters

Usually used when there's a threat of some kind to your ship. The Firefly will ask the player at the helm to make a ratings roll that best fits the situation, and the outcome will depend on the result of the roll.

*Example: A nearby ship launches a salvo at you from their shrapnel cannons. The Firefly asks for a ratings roll to see if it can be avoided, or how badly the ship will be damaged - maybe Speed to avoid the worst of it, or Armour to tank the incoming damage, or Tilt to dive quickly beneath the thrash to avoid the shot.*

### Scene Encounters

Used most often when an encounter involves leaving your ship, in these cases you'll be plunged into a new scene entirely. Make the most of your time during these scene encounters, as it may be difficult to return once the journey is done.

*Example: The wildsailor on watch spies a broken-down tower off to the east, silhouetted drunkenly against the horizon. Drawing closer you can see signs of habitation there, colourful tents and ropeways fastened to the sloping structure, and a port at thrash-level with a few ships docked. This might be a good place to pick up cargo or information, if you have the time to dock...*

## Encounters in Play

- Firefly:** The pitcher's maw quivers as you draw closer. What are you intending to do?
- Laura:** I mean, on the one hand there's bound to be some kind of treasure in there. On the other hand it'll be from the wrecks of ships just like ours.
- Freya:** Right... And it's not like we don't have cargo already, and places to be.
- Laura:** Still, though...
- Freya:** You want to do it, don't you? You want to investigate the giant ship-eating plant.
- Laura:** I heft my jagserry up, testing the edge of the blade with my thumb and smile at Freya. Yeah, I definitely do.
- Kyllian:** If this goes wrong, you're going to have to make it up to us somehow.
- Laura:** Only if we survive!
- Freya:** That... doesn't reassure me. But okay, I'm in.
- Todd:** Me too. Let's head as close to this thing as we can without putting ourselves in danger.
- Firefly:** Okay, well I'm going to ask a ratings roll for that. Stealth, if you could.
- Todd:** We are not the stealthiest ship, but... Okay, that's a 2, a 3 and a 5. Conflict.
- Firefly:** Ha, okay. Well you manage to quiet your engine enough to get alongside the pitcher without being dragged in and you were right - there are ship hulls down there. But... you don't entirely escape notice. You catch a glimpse of something large a spiderlike in the darkness of the pitcher's gut, which hisses before withdrawing into a sizeable wreck. It knows you're there, and it's waiting.
- Laura:** Fighting spider monsters in the belly of a giant pitcher plant? This is my kind of encounter.



# Arrival

When your progress track is filled you've reached your destination, and the journey ends. The Firefly will describe the port you've arrived at, and you'll be able to disembark safely (hopefully). Whether you pull into port, drop anchor, signal for a ferry-vessel or clamber through the branches toward your destination is up to you.

## Portside

Once you're portside you should tend to your needs, unless you have other pressing story-based concerns.

## Healing

Few journeys end without the crew suffering some kind of damage. While a ship's surgeon can patch up most injuries and rid your aspects of marks, a portside surgeon (when paid with resources) will likely do a more thorough job, with cleaner facilities.

## Relaxation

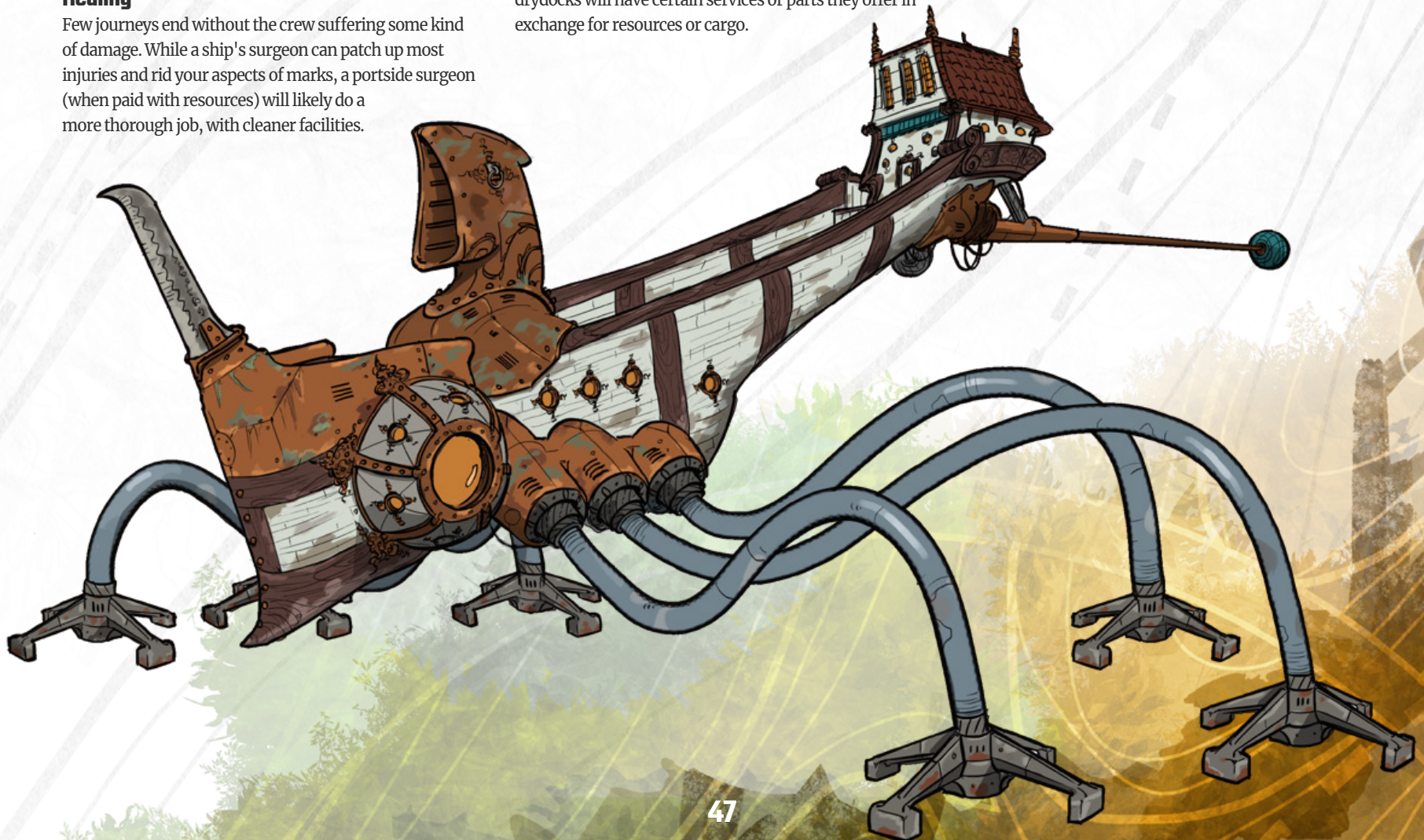
Mire tends to accrue faster out on the open waves, those dark thoughts sloshing around inside your brainpan churned up by the constant danger and lack of civilization. Dealing with it in ports is usually a lot easier than dealing with it out on the waves, by seeking out a junction to drink in, a smoke-house to indulge vices or a shadow-spring for a long, hot bath.

## Drydock

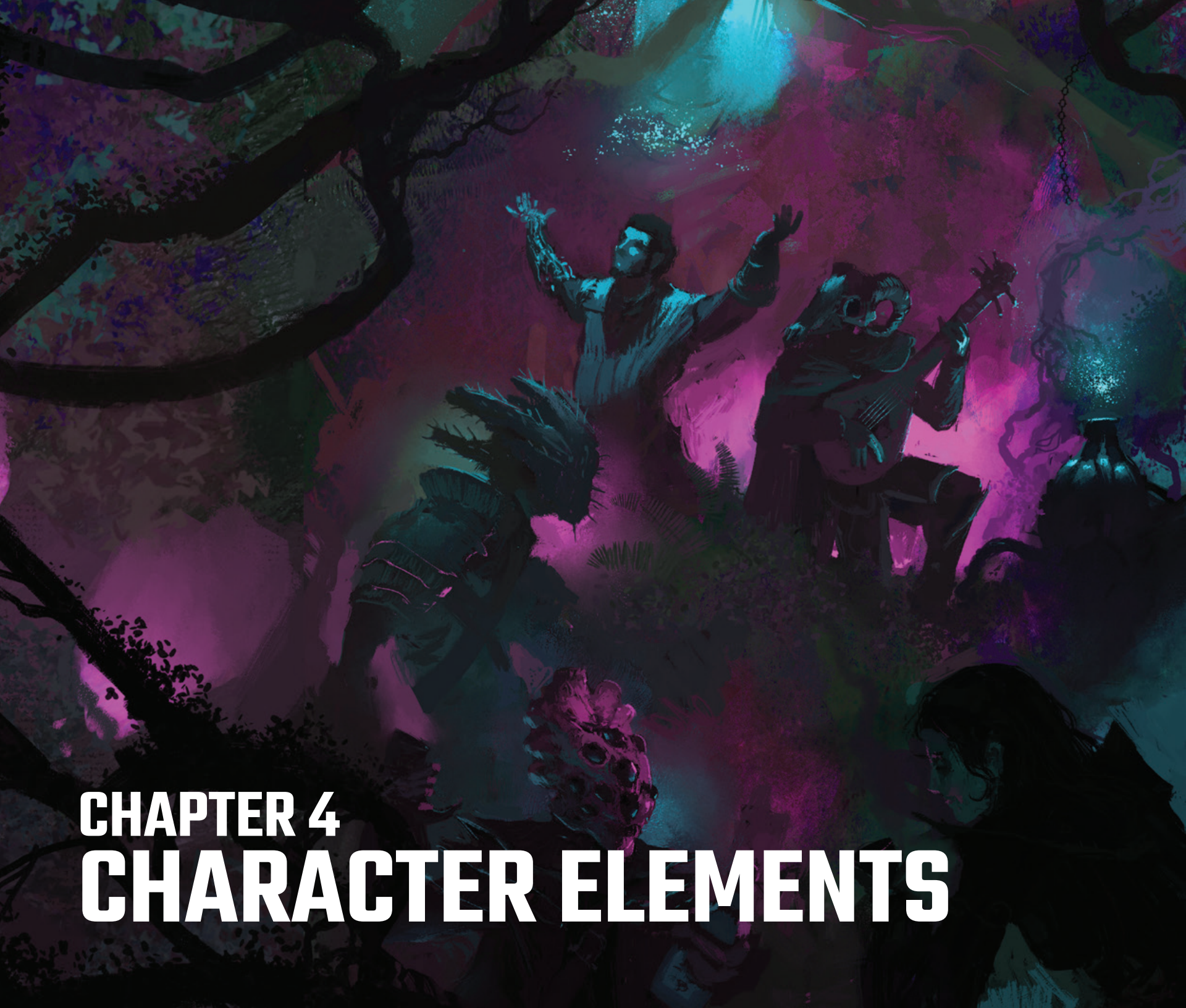
Repairs, alterations and additions can be made to your ship at a drydock, though they come at a price. Most drydocks will have certain services or parts they offer in exchange for resources or cargo.

## Ship Security

Having your ship stolen every time you leave it unattended to engage in portside scenes and exploration would be terribly, terribly dull. In all but the most piratical and morally bankrupt ports, assume that leaving some of your undercrew behind will keep your ship safe from harm. Alternatively, assure your ship is taken care of by the dockworkers by buying their attention with a resource or favour.







**CHAPTER 4**  
**CHARACTER ELEMENTS**



**“You’re far from perfect.”**  
**Kallyridge looked from the spore-streaked paperwork in her hands to the crestfallen applicant on the dock below her. The few feet between them may as well have been miles - the gulf between employment and yet more wasted time.**

**“You were the navigator on the Red Sparrow, and again on the Calumnist, and then a third time on the Southern Dawn.”** The applicant nodded. **“Three ships. One torn apart by lackey-thorn, one lost after cutting through the midst of a pirate war, and one sent to the under-eaves with all hands on board... except you.”**

**The applicant nodded again.**  
**Kallyridge groaned.**

**“You don’t see a pattern there?”**

**The applicant shrugged.**

**“At the very least, I’m tenacious.”**

# Character Background

All characters in the Wildsea are a combination of three main elements - a **Bloodline**, an **Origin** and a **Post**.

A **Bloodline** sets your character’s species, letting the rest of the table know what you are in the most basic sense (especially physically).

An **Origin** determines how your character lived their early life, letting the rest of table get a handle on the kind of culture you’re most used to.

A **Post** describes the kind of niche your character fills within the crew, the particular set of skills that make them valuable as a wildsailor.

The combination of your bloodline, origin and post is referred to as your character’s **Background**. Your background can have a big influence on how your character can interact with the world, and how the world will treat them in turn. Some settlements may be easier to explore for characters of a particular bloodline (such as the high hanging buildings of tzelicrae cities), or the citizens wowed by someone with the talent to take a particular post (such as the innate respect a frontier town might pay to a hacker). Each choice you make carries with it a narrative risk and reward.

## The Rest of this Chapter

The bloodlines, origins and posts on offer, as well as the process of character creation, are covered in detail in the next chapter. The rest of this chapter is devoted to running over the elements that all characters share: **the information on a character sheet**.

# Edges

Edges represent the way your character is most used to solving problems and tackling challenges, the approaches they're usually the most effective with. When you attempt something using an edge you're in your element - when rolling, you can **add 1d6 to your dice pool**.

Edges also add a lot of **narrative flavour** to the rest of an **action roll**, changing the way a skill or aspect gets used in play. Rolling to gather specimens using the **Tides** edge might mean you're focusing on quality, whereas rolling with **Veils** might let you gather those specimens without letting anyone else know, or without disturbing local wildlife.

The edges on offer are **Grace, Iron, Instinct, Sharps, Teeth, Tides, and Veils**.

## Grace

### An edge of elegance, precision, & agility

You're at your best when you're free to move, using superior mobility and unexpected speed to run rings around a problem. Grace gives you the edge when dodging and balancing, performing acrobatic feats, and attacking with lighter weapons.

## Iron

### An edge of force, determination, & willpower

You're at your best when relying on direct action, using sheer grit to carry you through. Iron is often used for weathering incoming damage, keeping your cool in tense situations, imposing your will on others, and attacking with heavier weapons.

## Instinct

### An edge of sense, intuition, & reaction

You're at your best when going with the flow, acting without a plan, and trusting either your gut or your body's natural senses. Instinct is often used to react to unexpected events and hazards, learn more about the world around you, and connect with the weirder elements of the waves.

## Sharps

### An edge of logic, wit, & planning

You're at your best when you can bring intelligence and preparation to bear, relying on the knowledge that your mind (or tongue) are sharper than any blade. Sharps is often used to solve problems, untangle complexities, design or create new objects, and outmanoeuvre others in verbal conflicts.

## Teeth

### An edge of savagery, passion, & destruction

You're at your best when letting loose, exposing the wilder parts of your nature, and damning the consequences. Teeth is often used to inflict fear on others, to destroy objects and relationships, to disregard convention, and to make brutal, uncompromising attacks.

## Tides

### An edge of exploration, learning, & lore

You're at your best when relying on your knowledge of the waves, the quirks and secrets of the wildsea that others might write off as mere folktales. Tides is often used for unearthing secrets and mysteries, spinning engaging tales, charting new courses, and steering ships.

## Veils

### An edge of shadows, ciphers, & secrecy

You're at your best when your influence is near-impossible to detect, managing situations from behind the scenes. Veils is often used to go undetected or cover your tracks, to backstab and betray, and to manipulate others in both social and combat situations.

## Using Edges

While the primary effects of your edges are easy to grasp (mechanically to add 1d6 to your dice pool, narratively to flavour an action you're taking), they serve a few other functions as well. Your edges are...

### Flexible

Don't fall into the trap of thinking that certain edges are **required** for certain things - that's not how they work. You can easily swing Iron, Grace, or Teeth to add to a roll made to attack, but Tides might apply if you have some knowledge of the target you're exploiting, or Sharps if you're using some pre-planned tactic, or Veils if you're lining up a backstab, or even Instinct if you're just launching yourself into a dangerous situation without any idea of how it'll turn out!



## Informative

If you're ever at a loss for what to do in an unfamiliar situation, look to your edges for a hint. Even if you don't have a skill that's appropriate, if one of your edges can come into play that gives you the single d6, you need to start putting together an action roll.

## Reliable

Edges are broad and permissive by design, intended to encapsulate a wide variety of behaviours and situations. If you're attempting something, you'll almost always be using an edge to help you out unless it's *completely* out of your wheelhouse.



## Edges in Play

- Firefly:** The councillor leans back in his chair, multi-jointed fingers steepled. It can be hard to read the expression on an ironbound's face, but he looks pretty unimpressed by your arguments.
- Kyllian:** Well, unimpressed or not, we need access to that tower. We could beg, but...
- Laura:** Screw that - we might not be the most convincing crew when it comes to fancy words, but we have Todd. You want to talk some sense into him?
- Todd:** With pleasure!
- Firefly:** Alright Todd, I know you're usually more the hammer-first type, but are you treating this as a social roll?
- Todd:** That I am. I was thinking of using Iron - just trying to convince the guy through sheer force of will... but he's an ironbound, and a city councillor. He's probably sat there through thousands of angry tirades.
- Firefly:** Yeah, you're onto something there. If you just tried to convince him straight-out, you'd be taking cut - maybe even lowered impact.
- Laura:** Oh, Teeth then? Are we going to try to threaten this guy into submission?
- Todd:** Not exactly. Tides.
- Firefly:** Tides?
- Todd:** That's right. Tides and Break, to be more precise. I'm not going to try to convince this guy that he should let us in because we're angry, or desperate. I'm just going to point out that I know councillors are elected by popular vote here, and I also know how long it'll take until that tower falls... and I know how to whisper words in the right ears about the councillor that could have stopped it.
- Firefly:** ... Damn. No cut, Todd. Make your pool.

**Malligan's was the kind of place you went to find people with many blades & few scruples, somewhere between training ground, alehouse & butchery. The smell hit her like a hammer, sweat & spice. A familiar bouquet.**

**The clientele were a rough sort, but honest in their own way - they dealt in blood & salvage, & they were comfortable with it. Junkers played cards with dissident cultists, pirates drank alongside pirate-hunters. Malligan brooked no bloodshed within her walls, less there was money riding on it.**

**Freya nodded to one scarred marauder, gave a half-mocking salute to a retired captain in one of the corners. This place fit her crew like a glove.**

## Skills

Skills are areas in which your character has training or a natural advantage, making it more likely for you to succeed when taking related actions. The skills on offer are **Brace, Break, Cook, Delve, Flourish, Hack, Hunt, Outwit, Rattle, Scavenge, Sense, Study, Sway, Tend, Vault and Wavewalk.**

### Skill Ranks

Each of your character's skills has a rank, starting at one and topping out at **three**. When used as part of an action, **skills add a number of d6s to your dice pool equal to their rank.**

*Example: Jevin is attempting to climb up a crumbling wall. They have the Grace edge, which gives them 1d6, but that's not exactly great odds. Luckily they also have the Vault skill, at rank 2. That gives them an additional 2d6 on their roll, making their pool 3d6 (for edge + skill) before they've even factored in any benefits from their aspects or environment.*

### Skill Flexibility

Skills on the Wildsea aren't quite as broadly applied as Edges, but many can still be used in a wide variety of situations. Each of the skill write-ups gives you bullet-pointed examples of what they can be used for in-game, but **these are by no means your limits** - if you can think of a clever use of a skill that fits the situation, we encourage you to attempt it!

*Example: Jevin doesn't have the Vault skill, but they do have Break at rank 3. They tell the Firefly they're going to take advantage of the wall's ruined state, smashing handholds into the sturdier parts and using their knowledge of destruction to avoid the weakest ones.*

### Do I Have the Right Skill to...?

It doesn't matter, at least not to the greater story - you can run across the waves without wavewalk, you can steal through the shadows without slink, you can find important salvage without scavenge. Having a skill means you're **better** at doing something, not that you're allowed to do something. You're allowed to do anything... or rather, you're allowed to *try* anything (results may vary catastrophically).

### BRACE

A skill of defence, hard-headedness and immobility. Use brace to weather the ravages of weather, exhaustion and those that want to see you fall. *This might take the form of...*

- ◇ Clinging to life in the toughest situations
- ◇ Shrugging off attempts to manipulate or confuse you
- ◇ Blocking or parrying an incoming attack
- ◇ Keeping your footing through a storm or rootquake
- ◇ Shouldering your way through a crowd

### BREAK

A skill of fragments, shockwaves and hammer-blows. Use break to smash through stone, metal and machinery, working against the efforts of civilization. *This might take the form of...*

- ◇ Reducing a building or obstacle to rubble
- ◇ Charting a course through ruins and wreckage
- ◇ Relying on hammers and fists in a skirmish
- ◇ Assessing a structure's stability and weakpoints
- ◇ Setting and disarming explosives

### COOK

A skill of spices and speculation, meats and fruits and heat. Use cook to prepare meals, brew herbal drinks or alcohol and concoct unusual chemical solutions. *This might take the form of...*

- ◇ Using specimens to create meals and beverages
- ◇ Developing bolstering dishes to prepare for danger
- ◇ Concocting and catalyzing unstable chemicals
- ◇ Handling heat sources safely in tense situations
- ◇ Butchering, rendering and storing specimens

### DELVE

A skill of dust, remnants and forgotten ways. Use delve to explore the ruins of the old world, traversing barriers and unearthing secrets. *This might take the form of...*

- ◇ Abseiling down a collapsing passageway
- ◇ Squeezing through narrow spaces and collapses
- ◇ Cracking locks and disarming ancient traps
- ◇ Scrambling through wreckage and detritus at speed
- ◇ Interpreting pre-verdant art and artefacts



## FLOURISH

A skill of showmanship, rhythm and performance. Use flourish to enchant or dazzle those around you, worming your way into their heart with blade or a word. *This might take the form of...*

- ◇ Telling stories with dramatic flair
- ◇ Dressing or acting to stand out and be noticed
- ◇ Fighting with poise, flow and balance
- ◇ Creating art and music that stirs the soul
- ◇ Inking skin with memories of triumph and loss

## HACK

A skill of sweat, sap and serrated blades. Use hack to carve a path through the rustling waves, imposing order on chaotic growth. *This might take the form of...*

- ◇ Chopping or slicing your way through the wilds
- ◇ Charting a course through snarled, confusing waves
- ◇ Rushing into combat with axes, saws and blades
- ◇ Identifying the hazards of an unknown plant
- ◇ Spinning tales of petalled leviathans and living rifts

## HUNT

A skill of observation, marksmanship and precise action. Use hunt to turn the tables on the sea's many predators, and pick the best of their trophies. *This might take the form of...*

- ◇ Tracking effectively across hostile terrain
- ◇ Lining up shots from afar in a fight
- ◇ Reeling off information about beasts you've bested
- ◇ Rendering kills into useful specimens
- ◇ Showing off trophies and hard-won scars

## OUTWIT

A skill of shadows and secrets well-kept. Use outwit to avoid threats, or to move them right to where you want them. *This might take the form of...*

- ◇ Moving silently, quietly and quickly
- ◇ Surprising opponents before melting away again
- ◇ Infiltrating spaces that are definitely off limits
- ◇ Disguising your voice, scent or even your whole self
- ◇ Talking smoothly and lying disarmingly

## RATTLE

A skill of mending, maintenance and adaptation. Use rattle to weave oddments and salvage into workable equipment in a pinch, or to tinker with gear and objects. *This might take the form of...*

- ◇ Using salvage to repair damaged gear
- ◇ Understanding schematics and blueprints
- ◇ Spewing confusing jargon or incisive questions
- ◇ Crafting temporary gear with odds and ends
- ◇ Patching up a ship to keep it running 'til next port

## SCAVENGE

A skill of searching, spit and polish. Use scavenge to root out valuable salvage from dross, to pick treasure from trash. *This might take the form of...*

- ◇ Locating and collecting useful salvage
- ◇ Weighing the worth of an object or trade
- ◇ Using damaged mechanisms effectively
- ◇ Turning the environment to your benefit in a brawl
- ◇ Identifying the properties of refuse and oddities

## SENSE

A skill of glances, insight and intuition. Use sense to push your awareness of the world past its usual limits, both in terms of environmental awareness and social understanding. *This might take the form of...*

- ◇ Honing one of your senses to gather information
- ◇ Reacting to an unseen or unexpected attack
- ◇ Detecting and defining nascent whispers
- ◇ Becoming aware of attention focused your way
- ◇ Empathizing effectively with others

## STUDY

A skill of meticulous recording and focused investigation. Use study to learn the import of details others would miss, make connections and sort information. *This might take the form of...*

- ◇ Creating a chart as you travel a new area
- ◇ Discovering evidence in the aftermath of an event
- ◇ Slowly improving your knowledge of a language
- ◇ Determining a pattern, flaw or weakness
- ◇ Gleaning information from cryptic notes

## SWAY

A skill of convincing, arguing and capitulating with aplomb. Use sway to convince others to act or hold back from acting, or to change hearts and minds to suit your purposes. *This might take the form of...*

- ◇ Convincing others to change their minds on a topic
- ◇ Making friends and influencing people
- ◇ Taking the reins of a crowd's emotion
- ◇ Bandyng words while absorbing information
- ◇ Threatening through inference

## TEND

A skill of healing, sustenance and recovery. Use tend to heal injuries to the crew, nurture plants and soothe minds. *This might take the form of...*

- ◇ Using specimens to heal an injured crewmate
- ◇ Growing and harvesting fruits, herbs and spices
- ◇ Calming and understanding the emotions of others
- ◇ Devising and discussing new medical treatments
- ◇ Concocting weird or restorative potions and salves

## VAULT

A skill of dizzying heights and impressive acrobatics. Use vault to climb, leap and tumble your way through an environment at speed. *This might take the form of...*

- ◇ Scaling rigging, walls or leviathan-hides
- ◇ Landing safely after falling from a great height
- ◇ Dodging away from incoming damage
- ◇ Leaping from rooftop to rooftop during a chase
- ◇ Controlling a glider as you soar through the skies

## WAVEWALK

A skill of seared soles, brachiation and animalistic elegance. Use wavelwalk to personally navigate the wilds without the use of a ship, despite the danger. *This might take the form of...*

- ◇ Leaping from branch to branch as they sway
- ◇ Swinging on vines or grappling-ropes
- ◇ Passing through foliage without fear of crezzerin
- ◇ Brachiating as fast as others can sprint
- ◇ Discovering the secrets of the surrounding waves

**Translation was something Garrun had gotten used to over the years.**

**Indenya did alright with a smattering of the more common blood-langs, but Carrington was a slow learner. Then there was Kovir's mumbled raka spit (already hard enough to understand coming through that damn beard), and even Zaritze's cursing had to be fluttered from knock into old hand for the benefit of their lemurs.**

**Still, nowhere near as bad as his first crew. All saprekk, all the time, no matter who they were talking to. You could only watch the ship's char shout and point at ingredients for so long before it became embarrassing.**

**And every now and then - rare, yeah, but sometimes - he got a genuine burst of pride. And here, in this crowded bar in an Icterine junction, thorns and fibre wall-to-wall, hearing Carrington order in halting saprekk made him smile.**

# Languages

Like skills, languages you know are given **ranks** (from 1 to 3). Unlike skills, these ranks are named: **Smattering**, **Knowledge** and **Fluency**.

You don't usually need to roll the dice to benefit from your language ranks - if you have a smattering of Saprekk, you'll be able to converse with others that speak it... to a degree.

Here's a rough guide to what each rank means in terms of your overall ability.

## Smattering

Having a smattering of a language allows you to use and understand simple words and sentences without a problem. You can order food, chat about a few common wilds-related topics and pronounce names with reasonable accuracy.

## Knowledge

Having knowledge of a language allows you to engage in normal conversation without a problem; you can discuss a wide range of topics, give opinions and precise directions and easily follow conversations at the speed of a native speaker (even if you miss a word here or there).

## Fluency

Being fluent in a language shows you have complete mastery of it - you can read, write, listen and speak without the fear of misunderstanding or being misunderstood.

## Dialects

One of the only times your Firefly will ever ask for an action roll to check your understanding is when you come across a dialect that deviates far from the language you know. Even fluent speakers can be confused by the intricacies of a dialect grown in isolation, and the Wildsea is full of little enclaves and oddities where they might spring up.

## Using Your Languages

Learning a language has a way of immersing you in the lore and culture surrounding it, a bundle of references, historical facts and turns of phrase.

This is what you'll likely roll your languages for most of the time - to **draw on cultural knowledge** and **gain information**.

*Example: Freya speaks a smattering of Saprekk. She can understand a little of conversation happening at the bar of the Junction they're visiting, but what's more important are the tar-scrrawl tattoos on one of the speakers - they mark him as an outcast and a dissident, exactly the kind of ektus her crew needs to make contact with.*

Each language entry on the page to the right also comes with suggestions of the kind of lore a learner might have access to.

You might also use languages to...

### Make Friends

Being able to communicate with an NPC in their own natural language (rather than the catch-all common tongue of Low Sour) is a great way of building rapport, putting others at ease.

### Impress Others

Particularly appropriate when using the less common or more difficult to learn languages, such as brasstongue, which have a limited number of speakers often with highly specialized knowledge.

### Gain Extra Information

People love to be a part of the in-group, in general, and showing an NPC that you can slip into their language as needed may encourage them to share information with you that wouldn't normally be shared with 'outsiders'.



## Low Sour

All characters start with a free fluency in Low Sour.

A mongrel language that has developed in the years since the shattered post-Verdancy cultures started making contact with each other. *Low Sour is the closest thing to a 'common tongue' on the waves, and doesn't come with any particular lore or cultural knowledge besides what every wildsailor would know about the world they live in.*

## Chthonic

An ancient human language, once split into thousands of unique dialects spoken by different groups of ardent survivors and now slowly merging into one true tongue again. *Lore might include the details of ancient human rituals and spirit-knowledge, as well as cultural information on the ardent.*

## Saprekk

The thick, rolling tongue of the ektus, almost entirely unchanged despite hundreds of years of development on the wild waves. For non-ektus to have learned even a smattering of Saprekk is often seen as a great mark of respect. *Lore might include tales of deserts, heat, and winds, as well as cultural information on the ektus.*

## Gaudimm

A chemical language of subtle twitches and soft clicks used by the gau. Though the structure and grammar are surprisingly easy to learn, pheromonal bursts are required to communicate complex concepts. *Lore might include detailed knowledge of caves, tunnels, and the progression of rot, as well as cultural information on the gau.*

## Knock

The hissing, chattering voice of the tzelicrae hive-minds. Many of the sounds are impossible for a single mouth to form, so most outsiders that learn Knock speak a simplified form, relying partly on gesture. *Lore might include a deeper understanding of insects and arachnid habits, as well as cultural information on the tzelicrae.*

## Brasstongue

A clipped and precise language used by experienced traders, adapted from the punch-cards of ancient ordinator. Knowledge of Brasstongue is likely to garner respect among merchants and grifters. *Lore might include cargo routes and tales of great sales or negotiation tactics.*

## Raka Spit

The rapid patter of hunting-families and leviathaneers, known for its incredible depth of descriptive words. *Lore might include facts about the beasts and birds of the waves, and great conquests of hunters across the wilds.*

## Lyre-Bite

The lilting tongue of poets and songwriters across the wild waves, well-suited to performances and long-form poetry. *Lore might include ancient pre-verdant songs and a deeper understanding of whispers.*

## Old Hand

An entirely gesture-based language with no spoken component, perfect for those naturally quiet types. Old Hand has existed since before the Verdancy, and has changed remarkably little despite the passage of years. *Lore might include expansive descriptions of long-lost relics.*

## Signalling

An unspoken code broadcast with flags, flares, or signal-lamps, often known by experienced travellers, military types and smugglers. Relies partly on colour. *Lore might include information on various ships, weather types, and seagoing hazards.*

## Highvin

Exceedingly difficult to master, Highvin is a primarily written language often found on old pre-verdant ruins. Usually understood by scholars, antiquarians, and treasure-hunters. *Lore might include details of the pre-verdant times, though always fragmentary.*



**“She’s doing that thing again. With the bugs.”**

**It was an uncharitable tone. Kepra looked over at their navigator, sat cross-legged at her platform by the prow, then back to the grimacing wildsailor that had spoken up.**

**“Unsettling, isn’t it? Twists you up inside, that feeling of weirdness. That power.” The sailor nodded. Fireflies danced in the night air.**

**“Yeah, it is for me too. Tell you what though,” Kepra continued, laying a massive thorny hand casually across the sailor’s shoulders, “You ain’t never going to hear a complaint about it out of me. Know why?”**

**The sailor met Kepra’s petaled gaze with defiance, but it couldn’t last. There were fireflies on his shirt, on the deck, a constellation of them around the navigator’s post. She clapped, dreamily, and they rose as one and scattered to the north-east.**

**■ “Cause she just found our next port.”**

## Aspects

Your aspects are the things that make your character distinct, giving them new abilities and unique ways to tackle challenges on the wildsea. You can have eight aspects in total (though most characters will begin play with 4 or 6, additional aspects are gained through character progression).

There are three types of aspect - **Traits**, **Gear** and **Companions**.

- ◇ **Traits** represent the benefits of training and experience, or the innate functions of your biology.
- ◇ **Gear** acts as a catch-all term for the weapons, armour and tools that your character relies on.
- ◇ **Companions** can be anything from a trained animal to a construct, a living spell to a captured spirit; something that fights alongside you, acts as a mount or scouts out places you wouldn’t normally be able to access.

### Reading an Aspect

Each of the bloodlines, origins and posts you’ll find in the next chapter has a set of aspects for you to choose from, but before you get there you’ll need to know what information to look out for. All aspects have the same three components; a **name**, a **track** and a **rule**.

#### Name

The name of an aspect doesn’t just give it flavour, it gives it narrative power. Whenever you roll for an action, you can add 1d6 if one of your aspects would help, based on their name (a dagger would give you an extra d6 when attacking, obviously, but perhaps also when prying open a chest or threatening someone secretly in a crowd).

#### Track

When your character takes damage you have a choice - take an injury, or mark it off an appropriate track. The longer your aspect’s tracks are, the more punishment you can take before suffering a serious injury.

Some aspects also let you mark their track to access special benefits. If an aspect’s track is ever fully marked you lose access to any advantage dice, rules or other benefits it would usually offer.

#### Rule

The main meat of an aspect is how it lets you add to, change or break the usual rules of the game. An aspect might let you do something impossible for other characters, deal a certain damage type, resist harm from a variety of sources, gain extra information from the firefly or even change the way you read dice results.

### Aspect Examples

There are hundreds of pre-made aspects available throughout this book to suit different types of characters and styles of play. Here are a few examples taken from the next few chapters...

#### **Towering** 5-Track Trait

You stand head and shoulders above most others.

#### **Shank Worker** 4-Track Trait

Increase impact when working on a project using wood, sap or blossoms.

#### **Nothing Stays Buried** 4-Track Trait

Mark to identify a hidden or forgotten space in your vicinity by gut feeling alone.

#### **Jagserry** 3-Track Gear

The archetypal hacker weapon, a sawtooth sabre that deals CQ hewing or serrated damage.

#### **Hexed Tooth** 3-Track Gear

Mark to levitate and control exposed bone.

#### **Iron-Ring Jacket** 3-Track Gear

You’re resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Blunt, Spike, Serrated, Toxin, Volt.

#### **Swarm-Scout** 3-Track Companion

A single spider you can send ahead as a scout, allowing you to see and hear at a distance.

#### **Prow-Nose Porcupine** 2-Track Companion

Not the easiest creature to pet, but you learn to live with it. Ignore cut caused by pain or discomfort.



## Beyond the Name

Some aspects also come with a line or two of descriptive text, especially aspects where the name might not be quite enough to clue you in on how they look or function within the fiction of the game. These descriptions can help you gain advantage dice from an aspect, just like their name can.

*Example: One of the crew wants to grab the attention of a group of hackers drinking at the local junction, so she slams her own jagserry hard enough to bite down into the wood of the table. If this had been another type of weapon it might have angered the drinkers, but the jagserry's description points out that it's the 'archetypal hacker weapon' - they're more likely to be impressed, see her as one of their own or forgive the interruption.*

## Aspect Damage

When your character takes damage, it'll likely be directed to one of your aspects and taken in the form of marks on that aspect's track. **You choose which aspect the damage is dealt to**, but it should be one that narratively fits the damage being taken - a piece of gear might work well to absorb damage from an incoming shot, a trait maybe damage dealt straight to your body.

*Example: A marauder's cannonball smashes through the deck next to Hegvin, showering him with splinters and dealing two marks of spike damage. Hegvin's player chooses to mark that damage to the character's Ragged Longcoat aspect, judging that the coat would be most likely damaged by such as event.*

## Abstract Damage & Injuries

Some traits might seem too abstract to absorb damage in this way at first - Nothing Stays Buried, an example on the opposite page, is a unique action that a character knows how to perform - how can that be damaged? By a blow to the head, a ringing in the ears, a distracting, painful slice. You can afford to be a little abstract in the way you mark damage, to traits especially.

And if you *really* don't have an aspect that can take the damage for you (or if you choose not to use an aspect, or if all of your aspect tracks are full), you should probably take an **injury** instead (see page 69 for more detail on injuries).





## Developing Aspects

As your character grows in strength and experience, you'll have the chance to **develop** your aspects. This might come in the form of adding new rules to them, removing or altering rules that act as a hindrance or drawback, or even just changing the name or descriptive text to give you advantage dice in different situations. This development takes **time** (usually the length of a project), costs **milestones** (signifiers of progress and experience which are explained a little later in this chapter), and will usually change the length of the aspect's **track** (removing boxes if the aspect is getting stronger or more complex, adding them if you're introducing new limitations or complications).

To develop an aspect, choose one of the options from the box on the right and alter the aspect's track accordingly. For example, if you wanted to add an extra damage type to one of your weapons, you'd choose the type and then remove one box from the aspect's track.



### Remove One Box

- ☞ **Result Upgrade:** Turn a **conflict** into a **triumph** (in a niche situation).
- ☞ **Add Damage:** Gives the aspect a new damage type (either Blunt, Keen, Spike, Hewing, Serrated, Toxin, Acid, Blast, Volt, Frost, Salt, or Flame) and a range (either CQ or LR).
- ☞ **Useful Utility:** Such as creating light or heat in a limited area - small but helpful things.

### Remove Two Boxes

- ☞ **New Sense:** Gain a new way of sensing the world, or expand an existing sense. *If a new sense is particularly potent, remove 3 boxes rather than 2.*
- ☞ **Resist (General):** Reduce damage by 2 marks and impact on all effects from a particular element of the wildsea, such as spirits or beasts.
- ☞ **Increase Impact:** Have a higher impact on your actions (in a niche situation or on a specific action).
- ☞ **Resist (Damage):** Reduce damage taken by 2 marks on three incoming damage types (chosen from Blunt, Keen, Spike, Hewing, Serrated, Toxin, Acid, Blast, Volt, Frost, Salt, or Flame).
- ☞ **Learn a Secret:** Ask the Firefly for some information. *If the circumstances you can use this in are particularly broad, remove 3 boxes rather than 2.*
- ☞ **Repair:** Clear a mark of damage from a track in a particular situation.
- ☞ **Create a Resource:** Create a particular rare resource. *If you want to be able to create a resource from a pool of three options, remove 3 boxes rather than 2.*

### Gain One Box

- ☞ **Limit:** Attach this to an existing rule. That ability can be used either as a task, once per scene, or must be marked to use (if using burn, add another box).
- ☞ **Consume:** Attach this to an existing rule. That rule can only be used if you consume a resource.

### Don't Add or Remove Any Boxes

- ☞ **Name or Description Change:** Change an aspect's name, or add/change an aspect's descriptive text. *This may change the way it offers advantage dice.*



## Combining Aspects

Instead of developing a single aspect as your character evolves, you might want to take two existing aspects and smash them together. This can give some unusual results depending on the aspects you choose, but also serves the triple purpose of saving space on the character sheet, keeping your number of aspects under the maximum seven allowed, and giving you some beefier tracks to absorb large amounts of damage. Just like developing an aspect, this process takes time and milestones.

### Creative License

When you combine two of your existing aspects, you'll...

- ☞ Give the new aspect a name
- ☞ Give the new aspect a type (trait, gear, or companion)
- ☞ Give the new aspect a track (length equal to the sum of the two combined tracks, maximum eight boxes)
- ☞ Add all of the rules from both combined aspects

This is a great time to get creative, as long as you can justify the change in your character's aspects from a narrative viewpoint. Here are a couple of examples (one straightforward, one a lot stranger) of how you might combine two of the aspects mentioned on page 88, the *Jagserry* and *Hexed Tooth*...

#### Squirreltooth Jagserry 6-Track Gear

A serrated sabre hewn from the jaw of a protoleviathan squirrel. Deals CQHewing or Serrated damage, and can be marked to levitate and control exposed bone.

#### Sawtooth Tattoos 6-Track Trait

Jagged tattoos of hexed ink run the length of your arms, shifting and hungry. They deal CQHewing or Serrated damage, and can be marked to levitate and control exposed bone.

Though the resulting track length and rules are the same in both of the combined aspects above, the flavour for each is very different, and they'll offer advantage dice in different situations.

## Creating Unique Aspects

If none of the existing aspects quite fit your character concept, you can create a completely new aspect instead. To create a new aspect, you'll need to...

- ☞ Choose the aspect's type (trait, gear or companion)
- ☞ Start with a track (a five-track for traits and gear, a four-track for a companion to represent the flexibility of having a semi-independent ally)
- ☞ Add one or more rules from the box on the left (changing the track length as detailed, minimum one box and maximum eight boxes)
- ☞ Give the resulting aspect a name and, if you wish, some descriptive text

Creating an aspect from scratch should be done with the help (or at least the approval) of the Firefly. Just like developing or combining aspects, this process takes time and milestones.

### The Truly Unique

If you have an idea for something that isn't covered by the options to the left, talk it over with your Firefly and give it a try. If it needs adjusting, do it after playing a session. Keep doing that until it feels right. If you're not sure how many boxes should be on the track, go with three and adjust it up or down depending on how it feels during play.

## Unique Aspect Examples

Here are a few unique aspects made with the rules on the left. Each one also lists the type and rules used to create it.

#### Silver Carp Style 3-Track Trait

A fighting style practiced by those of your family fleet, developed to turn away blades. You're resistant to Keen, Spike and Hewing damage. *Trait + Resist Damage*

#### Spinning Rabir 4-Track Gear

A metal instrument that resembles a spinning-top. Produces a calming drone that repels insects when spun. *Gear + Useful Utility*

#### Plasm Gauntlets 3-Track Gear

Viscous slime-like gauntlets that deal CQAcid damage. Consume a specimen to immediately clear a mark of damage from this gear. *Gear + Add Damage + Repair + Consume*

#### Dream Spider 3-Track Companion

A tiny arachnid that catches dreams in its spectral web. Use a task to pluck a secretive dream from a nearby individual (details supplied by the Firefly). *Companion + Learn a Secret + Limit*





# Resources

The wildsea is a scavenger's paradise. Wrecks are taken apart for iron and machine parts, beasts provide meat and bone, and the waves themselves offer a bounty of fruits, fungi, and living secrets eager to burrow into active minds.

These are your **resources** - the useful oddities that your crew will collect during their travels. There are four broad categories - **salvage**, **specimens**, **whispers**, and **charts**.



## Risking Resources

As well as the listed uses for each resource type on the right, **all resources can be used to gain advantage on your action rolls**. This only applies if they fit the situation; throwing a handful of cogs as a distraction before an attack makes sense, but those cogs would likely be no help with picking a lock.

There's a catch, though - using your resources in this way puts them at risk. If your roll is **disaster**, or if you **take damage** as part of the action, there's a good chance the resource will be damaged (in the form of gaining a negative tag) or outright destroyed.

## Tags

Some resources will have one or more **tags** attached, descriptors that mark a resource as being unique. Tags often change how a resource can be used during play - a *Rotten Lemon* might be useless for cooking but still useful to trade, whereas a *Pure* or *Medicinal Lemon* might serve as the base of a healing tonic.

## Developing & Discovering Tags

When your crew comes across a particularly interesting resource you might have the chance to develop a new tag, giving it a property that might help (or hinder) the narrative. This tag, once developed, becomes a part of your world. You might also be able to discover new tags by researching or experimenting with your resources.

## Salvage

Salvage describes inorganic material plucked from wrecks, ruins, and corpses. It might take the form of torn canvas, shards of metal, curious artefacts, or poorly-made weaponry.

Salvage is most often acquired by using the Scavenge skill, by looting stores, combing through engine rooms, or taking apart machines and mechanisms. The Scrutinize skill may also help you identify particularly useful or valuable items when looking through a shop's inventory or a corpse's pockets.

You can use salvage to...

- ✦ **Repair** damaged gear (usually by using a task)
- ✦ **Craft** new temporary gear (by using a task, though more complex creations might be a full project)
- ✦ **Attack** your foes if you don't have a dedicated weapon

## Possible Tags

- ✦ **Sturdy**: Clears an extra mark when used to repair damage to an aspect track, or an injury.
- ✦ **Ornate**: Has far more worth than usual.
- ✦ **Broken**: Almost useless for its intended purpose.

## Salvage Examples

Broken Ship's Wheel, Moth Lantern, Bronze Rings, Cat's-Eye Topaz, Ancient Sawn-Off, Mouldering Tome, Inscribed Hatchet, Stone Cube, Ancestor's Ceramic Mug.

## Scratch

While most barter on the wildsea is done using resources, smaller things (such as a low-quality beer or a storyteller's musings) are often paid for with **scratch**, the odds and ends left behind by more valuable resources that have passed through your hands.

Scratch is too small to bother keeping track of - usually consisting of old fruit seeds, amber fragments, insect wings, and splinters - but is enough that your character should always be able to grab a cheap drink in port. Mechanically, this means you don't have to go about adding and removing resources every time you want a basic amenity.



## Specimens

Specimens are the organic bounty of the wildsea, usually taken from insects, beasts, or the waves themselves. They might take the form of meats and organs, chitinous shells, spices, fruits, fungus, or bones.

The Hunt skill is useful for taking down beasts and carving their corpses for useful parts, as well as for fishing with a rod or spear. The Harvest skill is used to collect leaves, roots, and spices; anything that grows out in the wild that might come in useful.

You can use specimens to...

- 👉 **Heal** damaged traits (usually by using a task)
- 👉 **Cook** fortifying meals that offer temporary traits when consumed (by using a task, though a grand feast would likely be a full project)
- 👉 **Attack** your foes if you don't have a dedicated weapon

### Specimen Tags

- 👉 **Pure/Medicinal:** Clears an extra mark when used to heal damage to an aspect track, or an injury.
- 👉 **Heirloom:** Has far more worth than usual.
- 👉 **Rotten:** Makes you sick if you eat it.

### Specimen Examples

Springfox Ruff, Scorpion Stinger, Nasturtium Peppers, Green Strawberries, Pouch of Salt, Beast-Blood, Snowspice, Curving Bones, Tiger Limes.

## Whispers

Whispers are wild secrets that leap from mind to mind, parasitic words with a will of their own. They can be a single word or a short phrase, but they can only exist in one mind at a time - when spoken, a whisper is lost.

Whispers often worm their way into your head as you witness the horrors and wonders of the wildsea, or they can be traded-for in the weirder bazaars, but a canny wildsailor might seek them out in other, stranger ways...

You can use whispers to...

- 👉 **Discover** secret information related to their wording (by whispering them under your breath)
- 👉 **Twist** the narrative of the world in your favour (by speaking them aloud, which allows you to create a **twist** related to the whisper)
- 👉 **Force** a change (by shouting them, creating a high-impact **twist** that's completely out of your control)

### Whisper Tags

- 👉 **Echoing:** Can be used twice before fading.
- 👉 **Hungry:** Twists made with a hungry whisper remove an element of the world, rather than add one.

### Whisper Examples

Ravenous, All's Well that Ends, Tree of Souls, Damned by Fate, Cut to the Quick, Soft Melodies, Sped and Bundled, Sparks on the Breeze, New Wave Carriageway, Forgotten.

## Charts

Charts are the lifeblood of travel, documents that record the location of spits, islands, hazards, and trade routes. They're often kept in locked navigator cabinets on ships, or in specially made libraries (known as 'cartoikas') in port. A chart can be anything from a traditional map to a journal of trading routes, a star chart to a pre-V carving.

Like whispers, charts are difficult to acquire outside of ideal circumstances. They can be traded for in port or when you meet another friendly ship, or plucked from the strongboxes of old wrecks. Some characters are also able to scribe charts as they travel.

You can use charts to...

- 👉 **Discover** new locations out at sea (usually by combining them with other information you know)
- 👉 **Record** safe routes between certain locations (usually after a successful journey, which makes subsequent journeys easier as long as you have the chart)

### Chart Tags

- 👉 **Faded:** Almost impossible to read.
- 👉 **Detailed:** Shows far more information than normal.

### Chart Examples

Red-Ink Trademap, Journal of Old Routes, Channeler's Song-Sheet, Dredge Record, Silken Chart, Promise-Tattooed Hand, Route-Inscribed Plating, Low Star Chart.

## Cargo

Sometimes your crew will happen upon resources that are so large, or present in such high amounts, that they can't just be picked up and carried around (usually salvage or specimens). Finds like these should be treated as **cargo** instead of regular resources, recorded on your ship sheet instead of your character sheet. Note that most pieces of cargo you find will need to be transported back to your ship, which might require a dedicated scene or a montage task to accomplish unless you have NPCs around that can help with such tasks.

Cargo isn't as easy to obtain as normal resources, but you can use the same skills to attempt it in the right situations.

You can use cargo to...

- 👉 **Barter** for upgrades to your ship, in which case a single piece of cargo acts like a new stake (though not every shipyard will have exactly what you want)
- 👉 **Disassemble**, breaking it into three or four smaller pieces that are then recorded as regular resources
- 👉 **Repair** large amounts of structural damage to your ship even without the aid of a shipyard or repair crew

## Cargo Tags

Cargo rarely has tags of its own, but if it does, they're likely to be unique to it. A barrel full of delicately spiced meat might have the **Time-Sensitive** tag, for example, to make clear that it will go off and lose its value before too long, and a living animal transported in the hold might be **Dangerous** or **Ornery**.

### Cargo Examples

Free-Standing Clock, Crate of Spike-Wine, Makadrill Carcass, Collection of Statues, Fruiting Lemon Tree, Tamed Springfox, Chest of Icterine Tobacco, Canting Spore Colony, Barrel of Ancient Whisky.

**“You didn’t have to do that.”**

**Veris sighed, turning her back on the cabin as it began to smoulder.**

**“Yes.” Her expression was unreadable. “I did.”**

**Romanoska watched her as she trudged back to the ship. Clenched fists, deliberate steps. He’d seen their corsair cut down pirates by the dozen, laugh as mothryn harpoons rained down on the deck around her, tear the jaws of a snapperpillar from her own leg with nothing more than a grunt of effort & a wild smile.**

**But that shack, outwardly no different from any of the others? Whatever she’d seen in there, to drive her to flame as a recourse...**

**Romanoska shivered despite the heat of the growing blaze.**

**Whatever she’d seen in there, maybe it was better that it burned.**

## Mires

The wildsea takes its toll on those that sail it, bringing out more of their insecurities, phobias, and savage tendencies the longer they stray from port. These are your mires, the things that drag you down.

### Mire Tracks

Every character has a set of three mires, chosen during character creation, and each of these mires has a special two-box track. Here’s an example...

- Your trigger finger itches uncontrollably
- Metal around you sparks and crackles
- The sky is too distant – it calls to you

### When to Mark Mire

Your Firefly will usually tell you to mark mire in response to an event you're caught up in, something you're forced to do against your better judgement or as a consequence of discovering or witnessing something truly disturbing. Here are a few examples...

- ☞ You witness the death of a member of the undercrew
- ☞ You're forced to eat or drink something beyond description to survive
- ☞ You see one of the horrors of the waves
- ☞ You step foot in a place not intended for visitors, a place that you know doesn't want you there
- ☞ Your journey extends past its expected length due to damage or delays
- ☞ You're betrayed by an individual you'd come to trust
- ☞ You suffer a particularly savage attack from a beast, especially unexpectedly
- ☞ You turn to cannibalism without prior agreement
- ☞ A choice you make leads directly to the death or injury of a passenger or friend

Essentially, whenever your character experiences the horrors of the sea or turns to savagery where civility would do, you mark a box of mire.

## The Effects of Mire

As soon as one of your mire boxes is marked, it'll start having an effect on your character. Some of these are mechanical, tangible, defined – some of them are left more up to your interpretation.

### Narrative Effects

If **one box of a mire is marked**, let hints of the condition bleed through into your roleplay. Perhaps you shy away from choices that would usually be easy, or bring the effects of the mire into a description of a related action.

If **both boxes of a mire are marked**, the mire should be at the forefront of your roleplay when possible, informing your choice of words and actions. Things you'd usually be able to do might be impossible, you may not be able to quell fears or vices, and the way you describe your actions to the other players should make it clear that your character is suffering.

### Mechanical Effects

The effects of mire aren't merely narrative either. Whenever you try to act in a way that **contradicts** a mire, you **automatically cut a number of dice equal to the amount of marks on that mire track** (such as trying to balance on a high branch with a mire marked that relates to instability or vertigo).

## Clearing Mire

While the easiest way to remove a mark of mire is by playing to your **drives** (see the page on the right for details), it's not the only way. You will also be able to clear mire by...

- ☞ Encountering an unexpected wonder while travelling the rustling waves (will clear one or two marks depending on whether you merely see the wonder or have a chance to interact with it)
- ☞ Setting time aside at port for rest or relaxation (though it'll likely cost you some resources)
- ☞ If your ship has a surgeon, they may also be able to help in more extreme cases, through the application of soporific drugs or amateur psychotherapy



# Drives

Everyone at sea has goals they want to achieve, dreams to chase, and secrets to uncover. These are your drives, the goals that keep your character going – and making progress on these drives can pull your character out of even their darkest moods. Here are a few examples...

- ☛ Find my lost family
- ☛ Rid myself of the Karka parasite
- ☛ Discover and loot unexplored pre-verdant ruins
- ☛ Hunt and capture the Great White Wolf
- ☛ Decimate the Ripsong Marauders

## Using Your Drives

Whenever you achieve something that advances or satisfies one of your drives, you have a couple of options to choose from...

### Gain a Whisper

You gain a whisper that relates to the drive in some way, making it easier to tie that drive in to the narrative in the future.

### Clear a Mark of Mire

Immediately clear any one of the marked boxes on any of your mire tracks.

### Gain a Minor Milestone

Once per session you can add a minor milestone to your character sheet as the result of advancing one of your drives. Name the milestone something related to the drive in question.

### Gain a Major Milestone

Completely satisfying a drive can give a major milestone if you wish, but if it does you'll need to wipe that drive off of your sheet and choose a new one to replace it. When you gain a major milestone in this way, name it based on the drive that was satisfied. You can only do this once per session at most.





**There was a turtle by the door, red clay shell covered in towers; a leviathan writ in miniature, product of some youthful artistic urge.**

**The door was amber-glass, a smoky sliver of the stuff. She tried not to meet her reflection's eyes as her prosthetic flexed, iron fingers snapping shut reflexively.**

**She knocked again. Glanced up, took in a mane of spore-streaked hair and an encyclopedia of scars.**

**Gods, she looked so old.**

**The turtle's face was angled upwards. She was in the process of nudging it gently with her foot when the door opened, suddenly enough that she went for her sabre on instinct - a telltale sign of years on the rustling waves.**

**The man at the door looked her up and down before the realisation hit.**

**"Sammy?"**

**And then she was in her father's arms, and twelve again, hot tears on turtleshell. She was home.**

# Milestones

Milestones are narrative achievements that you can record on your character sheet to use as fuel for various advancements; extending the length of an aspect's track, adding a rank in a skill or language, or even gaining a new aspect entirely. They're split into two types, **minor** and **major**.

Milestones represent things that are important for your character - whether an event is worth recording a milestone over is entirely your decision.

## Minor

You can record a minor milestone once per session, usually immediately after an event that you want to have a small but lasting effect on your character. You might do it after accomplishing a personal goal, taking part in a particularly memorable NPC encounter, or surviving a hard-won fight.

Minor milestones come in the form of short memorable sentences related to the situation that caused them, much like a whisper. You write the sentence yourself, so you can tailor it to how you want your character to advance. 'De-fanged a Giant Snake', 'Showed Barton He Was Wrong', and 'Escaped the Cave-In' are examples of minor milestones.

## Major

These work in the same way as minor milestones, but should only be recorded once per narrative arc. They have a larger, long-lasting effect on your character, so choose your memorable sentence carefully!

'Solved the Mystery of Taurobol Tower', 'Took Down the Mawship Dawntongue', and 'Visited the Under-Eaves' are examples of major milestones.

## Extra Milestones

The Firefly may also give out an additional minor milestone to the entire crew after a particularly impressive shared achievement, or a major milestone as a reward for completing a narrative arc. These don't count towards your normal limits, but it's the Firefly that chooses when to offer and what to name them.

# Milestone Projects

Once you have a milestone under your belt, you can consume it to start **advancing your character**, improving their tracks, skills, and aspects. To do this, you start a special project (a montage action discussed on page 64) which can only be filled through the use of appropriate milestones. **Using a task with a minor milestone marks 1 box, and using a task with a major milestone marks 3 boxes.**

**You don't need to roll while taking these tasks** - instead describe what your character does to improve themselves with a **narratively appropriate** milestone (representing your character growing from their experience). You can also spend up to three minor milestones at once, marking multiple boxes, as long as they're all narratively appropriate.

Here's a quick breakdown of the tracks you can create, and how many boxes you'll have to fill to reap the rewards.

**Add a box to an aspect's track . . . . . 3-Track Project**  
**Develop an aspect . . . . . 3-Track Project**  
**Gain a new skill rank . . . . . 3-Track Project**  
**Gain a new language rank . . . . . 3-Track Project**  
**Gain a new aspect . . . . . 6-Track Project**  
**Combine two aspects . . . . . 6-Track Project**

When you make the track, title it something that makes it obvious what you're working towards - *Improving my Wavewalking*, for example. Once the track is full, update your character sheet and start your next Milestone Project!



# Personal Tracks

The final section of the character sheet is reserved for any personal tracks you might need to keep an eye on (such as project tracks, or tracks for temporary gear), but will likely be most used for **benefits** and **injuries**. Personal tracks are usually constructed like aspects - some might have special rules, but most are purposefully broad in terms of scope.

## Benefits

Benefits are temporary bonuses that your character is subject to. Think of them like limited-use aspects, if that helps. Essentially, the wording of a benefit tells you **narratively** what you're able to do with it, but the **mechanical** implications of that are left until the benefit is used. They might give you the chance to...

- ☞ Absorb incoming damage or detrimental effects
- ☞ Increase impact on an action without cutting
- ☞ Gain bonus dice on certain actions
- ☞ Gain an ability you wouldn't usually have access to
- ☞ Gain temporary ranks in a skill or language

When you gain a benefit, the Firefly will set a track for it. Every time you use it you mark its track; when the final box on the track is marked, you lose the benefit entirely.

A benefit might also be lost if you go too long without using it. The 'Well-Fed' benefit, for example, probably wouldn't last more than a few scenes.

### Something for the Future

If you found a benefit particularly fun or useful, you might not want to wipe it off your character sheet entirely when it's used up - feel free to keep it around and make it a personal mission to try and get a permanent version as your character travels (such as by making a unique aspect with the rules on page 91).

### Benefit Examples

#### **Spicy Meal** 5-Track Benefit

A warming presence in your belly.

#### **Icterine Spike-Wine** 4-Track Benefit

Tears at the throat but seriously insulates the stomach.

#### **Paralyzing Net** 3-Track Benefit

Mark to stun or tangle a nearby target.

## Injuries

An injury is like a 'negative benefit' - something you have to suffer the effects of until you fully mark its track. They're most often caused by special monster attacks, catching a disease or taking a large amount of damage that can't be absorbed by an aspect.

While you're affected, an injury might...

- ☞ Force you to cut on some actions
- ☞ Reduce the impact of some actions
- ☞ Take away a skill or sense
- ☞ Add negative effects to some actions, no matter the roll

Injury tracks can be marked by bed rest, medicinal treatments, and some surgeon abilities. When the track is fully marked, the injury is healed.

### Walking it Off

Serious injuries, like a broken bone or lasting sickness, will have to be treated medically for your character to recover. Lesser ones can be 'walked off', allowing you to mark their track every time they negatively affect you (so continuing to fight while dazed would shake the effect off after a couple of affected actions, for example).

### Injury Examples

#### **Sporelung** 4-Track Injury

Cut on rolls for physical exertion and stealth.

#### **Karka Parasite** 8-Track Injury

Tightens around your heart whenever you laugh.

#### **Acid-Splashed** 2-Track Injury

Your jacket sizzles and smokes from time to time.







**CHAPTER 5**  
**CHARACTER CREATION**



**The crew cut an odd silhouette as they waited, framed against the setting sun through the junction's amber-glass window.**

**An ironbound, body made out of pottery shards and old rig-rope.**

**A mothryn with broken wings, leaning back in her chair and absentmindedly sharpening the teeth of her jagserry. An ardent with three prosthetic limbs and a glint of flame behind their eyes, and an ektus sat too close to them that anyone would mistake it as mere friendship.**

**The crew of the Harkened Hawk had only been together for a few years, but they had a bond that would last a lifetime.**

## Quickstart Characters

Created by choosing one **Bloodline**, one **Origin** and one **Post** from the lists on the next page, and then following the quickstart instructions for each choice through the rest of this chapter. This gives you a character with skills, aspects and other elements split evenly between the three parts of your background – perfect for new players and those taking part in a one-shot.

*Example: Vic wants to get into a game as soon as possible, and doesn't have the time to browse through all of the options available. They decide to create a quickstart character, and look at the bloodline, origin and post descriptions on this and the next page. Ektus, Shankling and Corsair all stand out to them, so they note down the page numbers and work through the quickstart kits on each of those pages. With all choices made, they've got a character ready to go!*

When picking skills and languages from a quickstart kit, you can pick the same one multiple times (so you might take the Chthonic language three times when creating an ardent character, for example). **As long as you don't raise the rank of any individual skill or language above three**, you're in the clear.

### Personalisation

Never be afraid to make one-to-one switches as you put together your character – one skill for another, a suggested aspect for another that catches your eye. Perhaps none of the resources offered by a kit suit you – in that case, make up a few of your own, or take one from the example lists on pages 64 and 65.

If you find yourself making multiple substitutions, you might find a freeform character is more your speed!

## Freeform Characters

Freeform character creation gives you maximum freedom. You pick or create every facet of your character, allowing you to make something unique – hopefully exactly what you want to play. It'll take more time than a quickstart character, but also offers far more flexibility. You'll also benefit massively from creating your character with the other players in your group, which can be a great session zero activity.

When creating a freeform character you have the choice of starting as a **Young Gun** or an **Old Dog**. Young guns have limited choices, forcing you to focus on exactly what you want, and give huge scope for growth and development through a campaign. Old dogs are on par with a quickstart character in terms of power, better for one-shots.

### A Unique Background

A freeform character should still have a bloodline, an origin and a post), but they doesn't have to be pulled from the options presented in this chapter. This is your chance to define yourself entirely as you like – make a gau-ektus hybrid with aspects from both, write your origin as 'sky city' or your post as 'rancher' – as long as it fits the tone of your game, you should feel free to go for it (or stick with the official ones, it's entirely up to you).

### A Young Gun begins with...

- ◇ 3 Edges
- ◇ 8 Skill or Language ranks (maximum starting rank 2)
- ◇ 4 Aspects taken from any bloodlines, origins or posts
- ◇ 4 Resources
- ◇ 3 Drives and 3 Mires

### An Old Dog begins with...

- ◇ 3 Edges
- ◇ 15 Skill / Language ranks (maximum starting rank 3)
- ◇ 6 Aspects taken from any bloodlines, origins or posts
- ◇ 6 Resources
- ◇ 3 Drives and 3 Mires

**The quartermaster looked the new recruit up and down. it wasn't a quick process - not only was the man something approaching eight feet tall, he had muscles the sailor didn't even know an ardent's body could hold.**

**"I'm guessing you were born on the old mountaintops, yeah? A ridgeback?"**

**"How did you know?" the recruit intoned, every word falling like a stone slab as they reached up to adjust the ram-skull mask that covered their face.**

**"Just a hunch. Ever, uh... Ever worked on a ship before?"**

**"No. But I learn quickly."**

**The quartermaster looked around the bustling docks around them, at the complete absence of mountain.**

**"You're... Pretty far from home," was all he could think to say.**

**The recruit regarded him, expression hidden by his mask.**

**"Not far enough."**

## **Bloodlines on Offer**

Your bloodline describes what you are, a truth written in blood or sap or chitin. You'll be instantly recognizable as a member of your bloodline, unless you go to impressive lengths to hide it.

The bloodlines on offer are Ardent, Ektus, Gau, and Tzelicrae.

### **Ardent [Pg 70]**

The descendants of those humans that survived the explosive growth of the wildsea. The ardent are natural survivors watched over by ancestral spirits.

### **Ektus [Pg 72]**

Towering, spine-studded cactoids whose deserts were eaten by the verdancy. The ektus are strong, resilient and in tune with their natural surroundings.

### **Gau [Pg 74]**

Fungal humanoids set free from their old homes by this new world of rot and growth. The gau are swift and spry, making the best of their freedom.

### **Tzelicrae [Pg 76]**

Secretive spider-colonies wearing humanesque skins. The tzelicrae are mysterious and unsettling, masters of movement and mimicry.

## **Origins on Offer**

Your origin denotes the kind of environment you lived in before you became a wildsailor. It doesn't need to be where you grew up, though it can be - it could also be a place or culture that left a lasting impact on you.

The origins on offer are Ridgeback, Rootless, Shankling, and Spit-Born.

### **Ridgeback [Pg 78]**

Raised on mountaintop islands, battered and hardened by the elements. Ridgebacks are larger and much tougher than the average wildsea denizen.

### **Rootless [Pg 80]**

Those born to the seafaring life, on a ship cutting through the rustling waves. The rootless learn how to handle the dangers of the sea from a young age.

### **Shankling [Pg 82]**

Those that spent their early lives in cities hanging from the boughs of tallshanks, the wildsea's largest trees. Shanklings usually have devil-may-care attitude and a great head for heights.

### **Spit-Born [Pg 84]**

Raised in the relative safety of an island or ruin caught up in the wildsea's growth. Most spit-born value trade, trust and hospitality to strangers.



## Posts on Offer

Your post denotes your position on the ship, or at least the kind of activities you've trained for while travelling the rustling waves.

The posts on offer are Char, Corsair, Dredger, Hacker, Hunter, Rattlehand, and Tempest.

### Char [Pg 86]

Culinary masterminds who use meats and spices to imbue their dishes with lasting positive effects.

### Corsair [Pg 88]

Dextrous masters of close quarter combat, ready to take on anything that threatens their ship.

### Dredger [Pg 90]

Scavengers who trawl wrecks and ruins for loot and treasures. Most dredgers can gain entry to closed-off areas and pick out valuable trinkets at a glance.

### Hacker [Pg 92]

Brave souls who take blade and acid to the verdant sea, carving paths for their companions. Hackers thrive when armed with hewing and serrated weapons.

### Hunter [Pg 94]

Patient trackers who bring in food and supplies for their crews. Many hunters specialize in bringing down a particular type of quarry.

### Rattlehand [Pg 96]

Wilds engineers with a passion for salvage. The average rattlehand is at their best when repairing ships or crafting new, unusual gear.

### Tempest [Pg 98]

Those that have tasted the storm, and come back changed – destructive dervishes of thunder and lightning.







## ARDENT **BLOODLINE**

*The weathered descendants of the ancient human race.*

The ardent are the Wildsea form of the human race, the descendants of those humans that survived the verdancy and lived through the harsh years that came after. They are ethnically and culturally diverse, although in recent years have begun banding together to form trade partnerships, military alliances and fledgling nations.

The ardent are human in appearance, but with a genetic tendency toward looking and being rough, sinewy and weathered. Even the weakest of the ardent are still far better suited to the world of the Wildsea than their human ancestors.

### **Carved by the Waves**

Though the changes from their ancestral human stock may be minimal in terms of appearance, they run far deeper than the surface – the ardent excel in sheer survivability, with even their souls clinging tenaciously to the material realm after death. The poisons and plagues of the rustling waves seem to pass them by, and even simpler hazards like spoiled food are easily ignored.

### **Ancestral Echoes**

The ardent are far from the only creatures on the rustling waves to have a connection to the more spiritual side of existence, but theirs might be the most curious – spirits bonded to family lines, offering wisdom and aid to those that listen. Different ardent cultures and groups interact with these spirits to varying degrees, but it's rare to find one that ignores or denies their existence completely.

### **Questions to Consider**

When you incorporate elements of the ardent into your character, consider the following questions...

- ◇ How far back can you trace your ancestry? Do your family still tell tales of those that fled to the mountains, or were trapped in broken architecture as it rose on branch and wave?
- ◇ To what extent does the spiritual side of your bloodline affect your life? When your ancestors contact you, what form does it take?
- ◇ What pushed you toward the life of a wildsailor? Was it something you felt born to be, or a choice that became clear due to some happening or event?

### **Alternate Presentations**

Perhaps the most obvious alternate interpretation of the ardent would be to cast them as true humans, clinging on to existence in the wake of the verdancy without having undergone the adaptations noted in their fiction. The aspects presented could also work very well to represent a more bestial character, a humanesque individual that draws from other mammalian concepts.



## ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During Quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

### **Tough as Nails** 4-Track Trait

You're a natural survivor. Rolls made to treat or heal an injury you're suffering from treat conflicts as triumphs.

### **Ghostsight** 3-Track Trait

You can clearly see spirits and the spectral realm.

### **Strong Stomach** 3-Track Trait

Reduce the impact of poisons, diseases and sickness.

### **Ironclad Mind** 4-Track Trait

You are immune to hallucinations, mesmeric and mental compulsions.

### **Guide My Hands** 3-Track Trait

Burn to borrow a measure of an ancestor's competency, gaining two ranks in any skill for the duration of a scene.

### **Sporescarf** 4-Track Gear

Thickly-woven fibres sealed with tar. Resist the effects of bad air and airborne spores.

### **Pre-Verdant Heirloom** 3-Track Gear

A vestige of the long-buried past. When you would mark mire you can choose to mark this instead.

### **Segmented Torc** 2-Track Gear

Crafted from reclaimed wreckage, said to hold the luck that others lack. Whenever you gain a temporary benefit, increase that benefit's track by one box.

### **Ajna** 4-Track Gear

A stringed instrument designed to be played by a duo, one using a bow and one plucking with spectral fingers. Mark to allow all present to see spirits and the spectral realm for the duration of a song.

### **Scimitar** 4-Track Gear

A curved blade that deals CQ keen damage.

### **Machete** 2-Track Gear

A trusty blade used as a tool as often as it is a weapon. Deals CQ hewing damage. Increase impact when clearing vegetation with this gear.

### **Hand Crossbow** 4-Track Gear

A compact crossbow. Deals LR spike damage.

### **Ragged Longcoat** 3-Track Gear

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Blunt, Keen, Spike, Hewing, Serrated.

### **Ancestral Spirit** 3-Track Companion

You're haunted by a benevolent spirit. Mark to learn a secret from the spectral realm (once per scene).

### **Watch-Wolf** 3-Track Companion

A loyal lupine companion that will defend you to the death. Deals CQ spike damage.

### **Grizzled Ratter** 3-Track Companion

A sly ship-born feline, adept at pursuing tiny creatures. Mark to create a resource, *Hunter's Offering*.

## QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose ardent as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

### **Edge (Choose 1)**

Iron, Teeth, Tides

### **Skills & Languages (Choose 5)**

Skills: Sense, Sway, Tend, Vault, Wavewalk

Languages: Chthonic, Old Hand

### **Resources (Choose 2)**

Salvage: Stone Fragments, Highwood Planks

Specimens: Caged Bird, Milkweed

Whispers: Grove of Twisted Trees

Charts: A Copper-Coloured Chart

### **Drive (Choose 1)**

Solve problems in ardent settlements

Make amends for an ancestor's wrongs

### **Mire (Choose 1)**

The call of the under-eaves grows strong

Your ancestors whisper of their disappointment



## EKTUS **BLOODLINE**

*Proud cactoid wanderers from the Eaten East.*

Fibrous and towering, the ektus embody pride and stability in the face of hardship. Though their ancestral deserts were lost to the hunger of the verdancy's roots they survived, and some of their oldest kings still remember the days of sand and soil.

The typical ektus is cactoid, long-limbed and weighty, their fibrous skin decorated with spines, blooms and rough-healed scars. Though they lack identifiable facial features each ektus is set apart from their fellows by size, posture, bloom-scatter and head-shape. Despite this the flowers growing on an ektus are far from decorative, and many double as sensory organs.

### **Ancient Culture Preserved**

The ektus are the longest-lived of the bloodlines (save perhaps for those that exist in a permanent state of un-life), and many of the oldest specimens claim to remember, if a little vaguely, the time before the wildsea's arrival. While this sheds little light on the specifics of the wider pre-verdant world, it has had the effect of keeping various ektus enclaves (which were as split as those of any other bloodline during the verdancy's apocalyptic arrival) culturally homogenous, at least for the most part.

### **The Eaten Desert**

Many ektus still hold a strong connection to the Icterine, a blazing hot reach of ironspine cacti far to the west. It's not the current state of the reach that intrigues and pulls them back, but its history - in the pre-verdant era the desert played host to a huge empire of red and white stone, the greatest achievement of this now-scattered civilization.

### **Questions to Consider**

When you incorporate elements of the ektus into your character, consider the following questions...

- ❖ What is your connection to ektus history, or the eaten desert? Is it a legend you hold in your heart, or a ghost of the past you're trying to move on from?
- ❖ Do you trim your spines for the benefit of those around you, or leave them long to scratch and catch on your fellows?
- ❖ Though lacking a mouth, ektus still eat (usually by crushing food in their hands and absorbing the juices). What delicacies have you discovered on your travels that keep you coming back for more?

### **Alternate Presentations**

Ektus are treated as singular cactoid entities by the rules, but their cultural focus on grafting might be played up into creating an individual composed of many cactus specimens grown together, working in harmony. Alternatively the spined element could be downplayed to make a more traditional plant-based bloodline - an ektus based on intertwined bromeliads perhaps, or lilies, or roses.



## ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During Quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

### **Towering** 5-Track Trait

You stand head and shoulders above most others.

### **1000 Needles** 3-Track Trait

Deal spike damage to any creature that attacks you with their own body in close quarters (such as with tail or bite attacks).

### **Iris Blossom** 2-Track Trait

You can see heat the way others see colour.

### **Heliovore** 3-Track Trait

Heal a mark of damage on any one of your traits after spending a day in strong sunlight.

### **Cactus-Flesh Filtration** 3-Track Trait

Use a task to give any liquid resource the 'Pure' tag.

### **Longspine** 4-Track Trait

Your body is covered in iron-hard spines that deal CQ spike damage.

### **Tar-Scrawl Tattoos** 3-Track Trait

Resist the effects of bad air and airborne spores.

### **Solid Footing** 4-Track Trait

Treat conflicts as triumphs when attempting to avoid being tripped, pushed or forcefully moved.

### **Grafted Limb** 3-Track Trait

An ancient seal of a trade and fealty. Burn to call attention to this trophy and request a favour from another non-hostile ektus - it should not be refused.

### **Stone-Bound Histories** 3-Track Gear

A tattered tome of ancient stories handed down by the eldest ektus survivors of the pre-verdant days. Use a task to gain a sliver of Pre-V information.

### **Zephyrskin Drums** 4-Track Gear

A set of hip-drums decorated with saprekk-influenced patterns. Zephyrskin drums heat the air around them when played.

### **Tower Shield** 5-Track Gear

An immense shield of wood and iron, built to last.

### **Wedge-Axe** 4-Track Trait

A long-handled axe that deals CQ hewing damage.

### **Heavy Chakram** 3-Track Gear

A set of weighty throwing blades, dealing LR keen or hewing damage.

### **Desert Harness** 3-Track Gear

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Spike, Hewing, Serrated, Frost, Flame.

### **Catekora** 3-Track Companion

A quilled, fibrous feline with a penchant for firing spines when provoked. Deals LR spike damage.

### **Burrowing Bees** 2-Track Companion

Flightless desert bees that crawl across your body. You are immune to damage and effects caused by swarms.

## QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose ektus as your bloodline, you gain the following bonuses...

### **Edge (Choose 1)**

Iron, Sharps, Tides

### **Skills & Languages (Choose 5)**

Skills: Brace, Break, Hack, Sense, Tend

Languages: Saprekk, Brasstongue, Highvin

### **Resources (Choose 2)**

Salvage: Porous Stone, Bronze Locket

Specimens: Scarab Shell, Iron-Hard Needles

Whispers: A Desert Lost to Time

Charts: A Dusty Chart

### **Drive (Choose 1)**

Solve problems in ektus settlements

Seek out relics of the eaten desert

### **Mire (Choose 1)**

Your thorns cut, scratch and catch

Your vision dims, your blooms wilting



## GAU BLOODLINE

*Fungal explorers gifted freedom by the rustling waves.*

The verdancy was a death knell for many cultures, but for the gau it was a flourishing – an opportunity to leave the warm, safe darkness of their mycosanctums and explore a new world of rot and growth.

Most gau have flexible limbs and mottled fungal flesh, but the differences between various families are vast. Some gau lack eyes while others have many, some sprout tendrils, others spore-sacs, while yet others are sculpted remarkably close to an elfin visage of humanity lost.

### **Mycosanctums**

Somewhere between a ship, a spawning-ground and a fortress, a mycosanctum is a living construction of protective fungus (sometimes miles across). In the pre-verdant times they were usually located in shadowed marshes and mountain caverns, but much like their inhabitants they've gained a lot more mobility since the world-forest came.

Living within a mycosanctum for an extended period as any other bloodline than gau is often a less than pleasant experience. Those that try find their clothes and hair thick with spores, their noses (if they have one) clogged or streaming depending on the chemical breezes of the day, and the food... Well, best not talk about the food.

### **Yearning Growth**

Gau biology is something of a puzzle, even to the most learned scholars and surgeons. While each family has certain traits that are passed on over the generations, an individual gau also seems to change and adapt to fit their environment at an impressive pace. In a world of mutative crezzerin this may not seem unusual on the surface, but it's the process that makes it unique – an ironbound might build their own body, or a tzelicrae craft their preferred skin, but the fungal form of a gau adapts to what the individual *wants* it to be, without training or conscious effort.

### **Questions to Consider**

When you incorporate elements of the gau into your character, consider the following questions...

- ◇ How many of your family traits show in your form, and how much of you is a response to the yearning growth?
- ◇ Did you grow within the confines of a mycosanctum and, if so, what was from the outside world that tugged at you to leave?
- ◇ How much kinship do you feel with other gau out on the waves, especially those with vastly different lives to your own?

### **Alternate Presentations**

Gau physiology is already extremely flexible. A gau colony or character could be based not so much around mushrooms but instead mold, or lichen, or even something far less common on the wildsea like seaweed or coral.



## ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During Quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

### **Luminous Patches** 4-Track Trait

You can shed light at will.

### **Unfurling Flare** 4-Track Trait

A flexing mantle of myconic flesh that unfurls to increase your physicl size. Treat conflicts as triumphs when intimidating smaller targets.

### **Camouflage Mottle** 3-Track Trait

Increase impact when using hiding or moving stealthily in either a natural or urban environment (choose which environment when you take this trait).

### **Fungal Tendril** 3-Track Trait

You have an additional tendril-like limb, allowing you to hold and manipulate more objects than usual.

### **Mycofiltration** 2-Track Trait

You can see perfectly within sporeclouds, and you resist the effects of bad air and airborne spores.

### **Spore-Sacs** 4-Track Trait

Mark to obscure your current area with a dense cloud of spores.

### **Naturally Hallucinogenic** 3-Track Trait

Your sheddings have mild psychotropic properties. Mark to create a rare resource, *Hallucinogenic Spores*.

### **Fungal Fortress** 3-Track Trait

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Keen, Hewing, Toxin, Acid, Frost.

### **Proliferation** 3-Track Trait

Burn to grant an ally a copy of any one of your aspects (other than this one) as a temporary benefit. The benefit's track is equal to the original aspect's track.

### **Medicine Pouch** 3-Track Gear

Others rarely ask where the medicines are collected. Use a task to create a rare resource, *Medicinal Herbs*.

### **Nurturing Pitch-Jar** 2-Track Gear

A blackened glass jar that holds an eager colony of ironroot mold. Use a task to create a specimen copy of any piece of salvage you own, with the 'fungal' tag.

### **Jag-Lash** 4-Track Gear

A leather cord studded with teeth or salvaged metal. Deals CQ serrated damage.

### **Spore-Slinger** 3-Track Gear

A sling-like contraption for lobbing spore-bombs, dealing LR toxin or blast damage.

### **Pangoshroom** 4-Track Companion

A slow-moving but well-armoured fungal companion that wants nothing more than to keep you safe.

### **Sporehund** 3-Track Companion

A loyal companion that deals CQ toxin damage.

### **Cordysect** 3-Track Companion

A slow-flying beetle riddled with fungal growths. Mark to gain a burst of dense sensory information from its surroundings, revealing oddities and secrets.

## QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose gau as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

### **Edge (Choose 1)**

Grace, Instinct, Veils

### **Skills & Languages (Choose 5)**

**Skills:** Delve, Hunt, Outwit, Vault, Wavewalk

**Languages:** Gaudimm, Raka Spit

### **Resources (Choose 2)**

**Salvage:** Fluted Stone, Fossilized Fungus

**Specimens:** Fat-Bodied Beetle, Sourvine Extract

**Whispers:** Mycosanctum Rumbblings

**Charts:** A Chart of Many Colours

### **Drive (Choose 1)**

Solve problems in gau settlements

Help other gau explore the wider waves

### **Mire (Choose 1)**

Your flesh turns brittle, making it harder to move

You leave a trail of spores as you move



## TZELICRAE BLOODLINE

*Spider-colonies wrapped in humanesque skins; thousands of tiny arachnid minds threaded like beads on a string to produce a full, rich sentience.*

Becoming a more common sight across the Wildsea by the year, the tzelicrae are spider colonies raised to sentience through an unknown and mysterious process. Though technically thousands of individual minds and bodies working together, most tzelicrae think of themselves as a singular being. Though no more or less likely to be dangerous as any other denizens of the Wildsea, fear and distrust of them runs deep in many communities due to their unsettling attempts at mimicry.

### **Self-Made Swarms**

In their earliest form the tzelicrae are a coherent swarm, arachnid masses with little in the way of a defined shape. As their minds develop with age they naturally incorporate parts of their surroundings into the swarm, most often rags, canvas and pieces of salvage. These, combined with spidersilk, serve as the foundation of the adult tzelicrae's body – a shell to protect the swarm within.

From this point a tzelicrae is considered mature, but self-improvement is a constant process. Some test the limits of their control by adding additional limbs or unusual materials, others by adopting additional spiders into their colony to increase their mass and weight. Many adopt the shapes and mannerisms of other Wildsea creatures, particularly of the other common bloodlines – a very lucky few of these win the Lottery of Skin, obtaining and inhabiting a cast-off body to puppeteer.

### **Hive-Mind Perspective**

The level of individuality a colony settles at varies from tzelicrae to tzelicrae. Some refer to themselves as a collective 'we', organizing and compartmentalizing their minds to allow different areas to consider alternate viewpoints at the same time. Others revel in the singular 'I', with every component spider working and thinking in perfect harmony.

### **Questions to Consider**

When you incorporate elements of the tzelicrae into your character, consider the following questions...

- ◇ What are you made of, in terms of outer layer? Bone and silk, canvas and brass, stolen skin or something else entirely?
- ◇ Have you ever had a true disagreement with yourself, a topic or opinion on which your colony is split?
- ◇ Have you incorporated spiders from other tzelicrae throughout your life, or adopted foundlings? What memories have such additions gifted you?

### **Alternate Presentations**

Though tzelicrae are arachnid by default, there's no reason yours *has* to be. A hive-mind colony of termites or bees would work just as well, or perhaps even of something even more bizarre – squirrels, maybe, or miniature machines?



## ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During Quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

### **Arachnid Mobility** 2-Track Trait

You never cut for difficulty when climbing.

### **The Lottery of Skin** 4-Track Trait

Choose either Ardent, Ektus or Gau. You can pass as a member of this species under casual inspection.

### **Ersatz Limbs** 4-Track Trait

You have one or more additional arms, allowing you to hold and manipulate many objects at once.

### **Tremorsense** 2-Track Trait

You can feel even the smallest vibrations in the air and ground around you.

### **Gossamercraft** 3-Track Trait

Mark to produce a resource, *Silk-Like Web* (either dry or sticky).

### **Manifold Linguist** 3-Track Trait

You count as fluent when communicating with intelligent insects, hive-minds and other tzelicrae, regardless of languages used.

### **Spiderbite** 4-Track Trait

You have a set of fangs that can deal CQ toxin damage.

### **Shirk the Skin** 5-Track Trait

Burn to leave your skin for a short period. When outside your skin you are a mass of moving spiders, and can easily move through small spaces and climb any surface.

### **Shroom Hookah** 3-Track Gear

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Keen, Spike, Serrated, Hewing, Toxin.

### **Motley Carapace** 5-Track Gear

You've incorporated an assortment of discarded armour pieces into your skin.

### **Hush-Silk Garments** 4-Track Gear

Your clothes are woven of fine silk that naturally dampens sound, making even your dramatic movements almost entirely silent.

### **Iron Satchel** 4-Track Gear

A secure, wearable lockbox that can only be opened by a single specific spider within you.

### **Blade of Husks** 3-Track Gear

A ritual weapon made from the chitin of lost colony-members. Deals CQ keen or salt damage.

### **Swarm-Scout** 3-Track Companion

A single spider you can send ahead as a scout, allowing you to see and hear at a distance.

### **Rogue Doomsayer** 3-Track Companion

An unsettled fragment of personality. Mark to request a dark and unbidden (but likely pertinent) thought from the Firefly.

## QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose tzelicrae as your bloodline, you gain the following bonuses...

### **Edge (Choose 1)**

Grace, Teeth, Veils

### **Skills & Languages (Choose 5)**

**Skills:** Outwit, Sense, Study, Vault, Wavewalk

**Languages:** Knock, Chthonic, Saprekk, Gaudimm

### **Resources (Choose 2)**

**Salvage:** Frayed Ropes, Patterned Canvas

**Specimens:** Spider Husks, Venom Extract

**Whispers:** A Prison of Skin

**Charts:** A Port Manifest in Knock

### **Drive (Choose 1)**

Solve problems in tzelicrae settlements

Show others they are wrong to fear your kind

### **Mire (Choose 1)**

Spiders escape your skin, striving for individuality

Your movements are staccato, disturbing



## RIDGEBACK ORIGIN

*Raised on a mesa or mountaintop island. Solid ground, but far from safe.*

In the earliest days of the verdancy many mountain-dwelling folk considered themselves divinely spared from the forest that ate the world. Unfortunately, their sanctuaries quickly turned to graveyards; the harsher weather and lack of food meant that many died from exposure and disease, and those that clung on too often found dark solace in cults or cannibalism.

Those days are over now, for the most part, but their influence still shows. Those raised on the ridgebacks are built larger and stronger than their kin, and often worship strange, tenuous godlings.

### **Sturdy Ground**

Unlike most on the wildsea, children growing up in ridgeback communities did so with solid ground under their feet and interaction with the waves around them as an option rather than a necessity. Despite their colonies being larger than most they produce comparatively few sailors, with most drawn to tasks making use of their unique environment - mining, stoneworking, smithing and cattle-herding.

### **Gods for the Godless**

While many small settlements (and even some larger cultures) have deities and godlings that they worship or sacrifice to, organised religion is a rarity on the rustling waves. Ridgeback communities are more likely than most to have preserved the pre-verdant idea of warring higher powers and omnipotent watchers, but even these ideas become corrupt or debase over time. Bestial iconography is common, as are stories of divine punishment.

### **Questions to Consider**

When you incorporate elements of the ridgeback into your character, consider the following questions...

- ◇ Did you settle a mountaintop island post-verdancy, or did your ancestors flee to one in the chaos of the event itself?
- ◇ The ridgeback life often tough and uncompromising. What lasting scar do you have from what you thought would be a harmless task?
- ◇ What animals are tended to on your safe-stone home, and why? For milk, meat, wool or something else entirely?

### **Alternate Presentations**

To keep the 'stable ground' feeling of the ridgeback while divorcing it from the mountains, consider the hide or carapace of a slow moving leviathan as foundation for a community. On the other hand, running with the concept of life being a superstitious struggle, a ridgeback community could easily exist on a spire of rock trapped at the edge of a rift or shankfall, a great empty darkness perpetually beneath them.



# ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During Quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

## **Barrel-Chested 5-Track Trait**

You may not be built fancy, but you are built sturdy.

## **Stone Hearted 4-Track Trait**

Once per scene, increase impact on any successful action taken whilst on ancient ground.

## **Search for Omens 3-Track Trait**

Mark to ask a question and receive an omen to interpret in return (supplied by the Firefly).

## **Thick Skin 3-Track Trait**

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Blunt, Toxin, Cold, Salt, Volt.

## **Crushing Blows 4-Track Trait**

Your fists and feet are the only weapons you need. They deal CQ blunt damage.

## **Fragments Like Gods 3-Track Trait**

Whenever you gain a stone-based resource, give it the Sacred tag.

## **Archaeodermis 2-Track Trait**

Your skin (or whatever you have as an outer covering) mimics the mountain you were raised on. You're immune to keen damage, as well as bites and stings from small creatures.

## **Chipping Tools 3-Track Gear**

Treat conflicts as triumphs when altering or working with stone or bone.

## **Leviathan Furs 4-Track Gear**

You never mark mire when confronted with an unknown or terrifying beast, no matter the size.

## **Ritual Mask 3-Track Gear**

You can clearly see spirits and the spectral realm.

## **Whispering Charm 3-Track Gear**

Consume a whisper to learn a secret about a nearby individual (supplied by the Firefly).

## **Hexed Tooth 3-Track Gear**

Mark to levitate and control exposed bone.

## **Great Beast Horns 3-Track Gear**

These might have deep ceremonial meaning, or just cut an impressive silhouette - either way these horns deal CQ spike damage, and you ignore cut when defending yourself against charging opponents.

## **Shamanic Idol 4-Track Gear**

Holds a sliver of power from a not-quite-god. Deals LR salt damage.

## **Swift Hawk 2-Track Companion**

A surly, vicious bird that can deal LR keen damage. Once per scene, hijack to temporarily blind or distract an attacking opponent.

## **Mountain Snouter 3-Track Companion**

An ill-tempered boar with cruel tusks. Deals CQ spike damage, and is large enough to ride.

# QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose ridgeback as your origin, you gain the following bonuses...

## **Edge (Choose 1)**

Grace, Iron, Teeth

## **Skills & Languages (Choose 5)**

**Skills:** Brace, Break, Cook, Hunt, Tend

**Languages:** Chthonic, Brasstongue, Old Hand

## **Resources (Choose 2)**

**Salvage:** Knucklebone Dice, Sharpened Stones

**Specimens:** Giant Wolf Jaw, Gorse Root

**Whispers:** Caves Beneath

**Charts:** A Faded Almanac

## **Drive (Choose 1)**

Climb the highest peaks

Discover and claim an unknown mountain-top

## **Mire (Choose 1)**

The roll of the waves sickens you

Your mind turns to sacrifice in times of trouble



## ROOTLESS ORIGIN

*Born into the wildsailor's life, on a ship of floating colony.*

In a world where solid ground is hard-won and reliable clean water scarce, nomads are common. The rootless are those that have fully embraced the nomadic lifestyle, drifting from place to place on family-owned ships handed down from one generation to the next. For many rootless, family ties are forever... but the call of the horizon is strong.

Rootless tend to be hardy sorts, raised among the perils of the open sea - they have no illusions about the waves, understanding their danger and their beauty in equal parts.

### Fleetfamilies

Rootless families aren't decided by who shares blood, but rather who shares a ship - serve on a vessel for long enough and you become more than just crew. There are no distinctions between bloodline, no tests to pass or arduous examinations. All a fleetfamily is, at its heart, is a group of people who have sailed the same waves and come to both respect and rely on each other. Large galleys, shared sleeping spaces and communal eating areas are all entirely normal.

### A Roving Lifestyle

You go where the waves take you - it's a common adage among the rootless, but life is rarely as simple as that. Rootless ships choose their destinations based on need; perhaps for medical supplies, or a certain foodstuff, a trade opportunity or a bout of nostalgia.

### Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the rootless into your character, consider the following questions...

- ◆ Were you born on your fleetfamily's ship, destined for inclusion?
- ◆ What port have you visited that left a mark on you, for good or ill? Were you ever tempted to stay behind as your ship left?
- ◆ Have you ever offered a place in the family to an orphan, an unfortunate or a runaway? If so, do you still see them now?

### Alternate Presentations

Rather than focus on a roving lifestyle rootless colonies could take on elements of the trade-ships of old, cutting precise paths between multiple settlements repeated year after year. You could even remove the concept of movement altogether but keep the proximity to the sea, treating the rootless as wreck- or reef-dwellers.



## ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During Quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

### **Family Ties** 3-Track Trait

When you make a discovery during a journey, mark to tie it to your family in some way (such as a blood relative, fleetfamily member or family friend).

### **Hull Hearted** 3-Track Trait

Once per scene, increase impact on any successful action taken whilst aboard a ship you own or crew.

### **Wild Words** 3-Track Trait

Mark to remember a rumour or folktale pertinent to your situation (supplied by the Firefly).

### **Needs Must** 4-Track Trait

You never mark mire for consuming food or drink, no matter the source or condition.

### **Born to Sail** 4-Track Trait

You always know true North, and ignore cut on movement-related actions caused by adverse seas or damage to your ship.

### **Sundew Senses** 3-Track Trait

You can instantly identify the presence and potential dangers of nearby predatory plants, no matter how well they're camouflaged.

### **Fleetfamily Scarf** 3-Track Gear

A beautifully made sporescarf passed from traveller to seasoned traveller. You're immune to the effects of bad air and airborne spores.

### **Nomad's Phrasebook** 2-Track Gear

Whenever you take a montage you can study your phrasebook (in addition to your usual task), gaining a smattering of any one language until your next montage.

### **Mechanical Limb** 5-Track Gear

A rusting prosthetic that feels no pain.

### **Fishing Lure** 3-Track Gear

Add a positive tag to any living specimen you acquire while fishing.

### **Patterned Sash** 3-Track Gear

Treat conflicts as triumphs when using social skills to affect animals.

### **Shortspear** 4-Track Gear

Traditionally used for deckside defence. Deals CQ spike damage.

### **Slingshot** 3-Track Gear

A simple slingshot, loaded with anything from stones to scrap to seeds. Deals LR blunt or blast damage.

### **Tarscale Armour** 4-Track Gear

Resist the hazardous effects of crezzerin exposure (searing, hallucinations, mutation).

### **Springfox** 3-Track Companion

A nimble wildsea vulpine known to dance in the wake of larger ships. Once per journey you may treat the outcome of a watch roll as Peace, no matter the result.

### **Ring-Tailed Rabble-Rouser** 4-Track Companion

A pugnacious lemur companion with a natural curiosity when it comes to the running of a wildsea vessel.

## QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose rootless as your origin, you gain the following bonuses...

### **Edge (Choose 1)**

Grace, Instinct, Tides

### **Skills & Languages (Choose 5)**

**Skills:** Cook, Flourish, Hack, Sway, Rattle

**Languages:** Brasstongue, Raka Spit, Signalling

### **Resources (Choose 2)**

**Salvage:** Rusted Cogs, Sailcloth

**Specimens:** Wormapple, Firefly Bulbs

**Whispers:** A Welcoming Fleet

**Charts:** A Many-Folded Chart

### **Drive (Choose 1)**

Aid rootless ships and colonies

Solve the problems of your family members

### **Mire (Choose 1)**

The open sky is wide, oppressive

Outsiders are difficult to trust



## SHANKLING ORIGIN

*A youth spent leaping branch to branch, high above the rustling waves.*

Tallshanks are trees titanic even by the standards of the Wildsea, their trunks spearing up through the waves, their crowns rarely less than half a mile wide.

The shanklings saw potential in the lofty reaches of these crowns, a separation from the predators of the wider waves below. Their cities and airship high-ports sprawl across the branches, old ruins dredged from the depths now hanging from sturdy chains and linked by ropes and bridges. Shankling citizens tend to be elegant, decisive and entirely unfazed by heights, typically dressed in clothes styled to resemble the birds and feathered lizards of their towering homes.

### **It's a Long Way Down**

There are dangers inherent to living at such a height, and it's not uncommon to find visitors to shanking settlements clinging to guard-rails and guide-ropes for dear life. For the inhabitants it's a different story; growing up aware of the risks (and with the occasional plummeting-related death as a reminder) few are daredevils, but most move with a simple confidence around dizzying drops that a wave-level citizen never could.

### **High Fashion**

Perhaps inspired by the birds they share their homes with, shanklings have a reputation for using bright, vibrant colours for everything from shop-fronts to clothing, bridge-ropes to hull plating. Aesthetic is important in most shanking communities, and fashions grow and wither with the seasons.

### **Questions to Consider**

When you incorporate elements of the mothryn into your character, consider the following questions...

- ◇ Why fly the nest? What was it about the waves that brought you down from your perch to explore among the thrash?
- ◇ What's your personal aesthetic, and how (if at all) do your clothes call to mind the realities of your home environment?
- ◇ Did you ever fall from the boughs of your tallshank home? If so, what saved you?

### **Alternate Presentations**

While most shanklings present as colourful, elegant and bird-inspired, the aspects and general theme of the origin would work just as well with shanklings mimicking mammalian tree dwellers like raccoons or squirrels. You could also replace the theme of branch-based living with one of trunk-based living, having shanking communities burrow their way into tallshank interiors and take cultural inspiration from beetles.



## ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During Quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

### **Head for Heights** 4-Track Trait

You're immune to vertigo, nausea and mire caused by heights and precarious positions.

### **Skybridge Step** 5-Track Trait

An elegant defensive dance that keeps you out of harm's way.

### **High Ground** 3-Track Trait

Once per scene, increase impact on any successful action taken whilst you have the high ground.

### **Rising Meteor** 4-Track Trait

Mark to sprint up a surface that would usually require you to climb it, even if it's unstable.

### **From Bough to Brain** 5-Track Trait

Use a task to study a tree (of any size) and learn its secrets, age and condition (supplied by the Firefly).

### **Hawksight** 4-Track Trait

You can see much further and in greater clarity than the typical wildsailor.

### **Grappling Hook** 2-Track Gear

When the hook is thrown and anchored it allows you to swing over chasms and climb sheer surfaces. Treat conflicts as triumphs when climbing or swinging.

### **Glider's Cloak** 3-Track Gear

You can land safely after any prepared fall.

### **Balancing Staff** 4-Track Gear

Both a weapon and an acrobatic aid. Deals CQ blunt damage.

### **Raptor's Claw** 3-Track Gear

A talon-like gauntlet inspired by the hunting patterns of wingless birds. Deals CQ hewing damage, and can be used to make controlled descents down vertical surfaces.

### **Broadwood Bow** 3-Track Gear

Exquisitely crafted. Deals LR spike or toxin damage.

### **Feathered Mantle** 3-Track Gear

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Blunt, Serrated, Toxin, Frost, Salt.

### **Sentinel Skywing** 2-Track Companion

A watchful bird, often used for scouting remote areas. Mark to learn a secret of the surrounding waves.

### **Bark-Peeling Ferret** 4-Track Companion

Expert at routing hidden bugs, even from the mighty ironroots. Mark or use a task to gain an insect specimen from a nearby branch or tree trunk.

### **Feathered Raptor** 3-Track Companion

A beautifully-feathered lizard, the result of generations of careful breeding to engender a modicum of sociability (still not quite there yet). Deals CQ hewing damage, and is large enough to ride.

## QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose shanking as your origin, you gain the following bonuses...

### **Edge (Choose 1)**

Grace, Tides, Veils

### **Skills & Languages (Choose 5)**

Skills: Flourish, Hack, Tend, Vault, Wavewalk

Languages: Knock, Signalling

### **Resources (Choose 2)**

Salvage: Ancient Stone, Length of Chain

Specimens: Broadwood Branch, Crowning Leaf

Whispers: Sunset Through Branches

Charts: An Etched Branch-Map

### **Drive (Choose 1)**

Climb the highest shanks

Establish a high-port

### **Mire (Choose 1)**

Branches break and bend beneath you

The opposite of vertigo, a deck-level queasiness



## SPIT-BORN **ORIGIN**

*Born on a spit of land dragged to the surface by the ever-growing boughs of the sea.*

Your home is a spit, a port-colony built up around a ruin of the old world. You've lived a life of struggle and trade, suspicion and tenacity - strangers bringing both opportunity and danger.

Spits rarely last a lifetime, and a healthy knowledge that their entire home could be swallowed by the waves at any point encourages most spit-born to live without many possessions and to travel light.

### **Hubs of Corruption**

The cramped conditions and lack of renewable resources that typify most spits mean their residents grow up with few illusions about what a struggle life can be. Street gangs are common among the youth, and those that don't find something productive to move onto often graduate to low-level mob activity and black-marketeering. The most successful of these groups often gain a healthy level of fear from a spit's other inhabitants, but some win their respect too - a cut-throat attitude can do wonders when it comes to securing important trade deals and smuggling opportunities.

### **Time to Move On**

There are many signs that a spit might be on the verge of being reclaimed by the sea's deeper layers, ranging from changes in local animal behaviour to sudden cracks in architecture. When a spit is on the verge of collapse each of the residents has a choice to make - reinforce and prolong the fall or trade for passage on a ship to get out as fast as possible. Both have their benefits, but the first is almost always the safer option.

### **Questions to Consider**

When you incorporate elements of the spit-born into your character, consider the following questions...

- ◇ What was the main material that made up your spit? Temple-stone, ancient architecture, ship-wreckage or something else entirely?
- ◇ How was your youth on the streets of a spit? Were you part of a gang and, if so, did your inevitable rowdiness progress to genuine criminal activity?
- ◇ Does your home spit still stand above the waves? Do you even know?

### **Alternate Presentations**

'Spit' is a broad term on the wildsea, which can cover anything from a shard of stone to a raised ruin or a leviathan's skull. The spit-born presented here are assumed to have a reasonably dirty, cramped and urban life, representing the general overcrowding most spits face, but this needn't be the case - consider a more monastic or aesthetic existence as a possibility, or dive deeper into grit, gutters and gang warfare.



## ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During Quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

### **Pit-Fight Survivor** 5-Track Trait

You learnt how to take a beating and stay standing.

### **Urban Exploration** 3-Track Trait

Mark to discover a friendly lead on services or information when in a port or city.

### **Cobble Hearted** 3-Track Trait

Once per scene, increase impact on any successful action taken whilst in a port or city.

### **Every Street Tells a Story** 3-Track Trait

Mark to learn a secret of a port or city you're docked at.

### **Through the Throng** 3-Track Trait

Treat conflicts as successes when moving through crowds, herds and swarms.

### **Shrewd Marketeer** 3-Track Trait

Treat conflict as triumphs when haggling over an exchange of cargo or resources.

### **Spit & Polish** 3-Track Trait

Use a task to remove a negative tag (such as rusted or broken) from any piece of salvage.

### **Life of Scraps** 3-Track Trait

When gaining a benefit from a meal or alchemical concoction, ignore any associated negative effects.

### **Scrutineer Eyepiece** 4-Track Gear

You can tell a fake, forgery or counterfeit item at a glance.

### **Acrid Long-Stem** 4-Track Gear

A spice-filled pipe made to burn its contents with acid rather than flame. Injury tracks you become subject to are one box shorter than normal.

### **Docker Threads** 3-Track Gear

Resist the hazardous effects of crezzeerin exposure (searing, hallucinations, mutation).

### **Brass Knuckle** 4-Track Gear

A brute but reliable weapon for street fights. Deals CQ blunt damage.

### **Black-Market Pistol** 4-Track Gear

A firearm sourced from unsavoury types. Deals LR blast damage.

### **Trained Ratroach** 1-Track Companion

A gutter-scavenger by nature, now working on your behalf. Once per montage gain a small salvage or specimen resource with a negative tag (in addition to your usual task).

### **Calico Slink** 3-Track Companion

A semi-spectral cat winds its way around your legs. You have the ability to see clearly without light.

### **Pangopod** 4-Track Companion

Half pangolin, half squid. Surprisingly cute.

## QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose spit-born as your origin, you gain the following bonuses...

### **Edge (Choose 1)**

Iron, Sharps, Veils

### **Skills & Languages (Choose 5)**

**Skills:** Break, Delve, Outwit, Scavenge, Study

**Languages:** Brasstongue, Highvin

### **Resources (Choose 2)**

**Salvage:** Engine Piping, Ancient Glass

**Specimens:** Hog Bones, Chicken Feathers

**Whispers:** A Newly-Risen Spit

**Charts:** A Cryptic Map

### **Drive (Choose 1)**

Supply spit-born colonies with food and fresh water

Deal harshly with gangs and grifters

### **Mire (Choose 1)**

A keen fear of shakes and quakes

A ravenous hunger for novel and exotic foodstuffs



## CHAR POST

*For you the wildsea is an endless new frontier of excitement and discovery... in culinary terms, at least.*

Whenever you smell something delectable there's a good chance that a char is behind it. Chars are somewhere between chef and survivalist, with a dash of healer and vintner thrown in for good measure.

Many chars lack formal training, instead putting in years of trial and error until they come up with a set of flavour combinations that suit their unique tastes. A precious few do manage to study under one of the old culinary masters, spreading their unique recipes across the sea.

### **The Value of Preparation**

Some would argue that the wildsea provides enough edible material, and in enough variety, that a skilled chef would be little more than an afterthought when a ship takes on crew. Not so – apart from the obvious benefits to taste and presentation that a char brings, their most basic techniques and seasoning blends work to counteract the low levels of crezzerin found in most wildsea meat and produce. This leads to better health, better sleep, happier crews and more productive ships.

### **Food Without Flame**

Cookfires are, as you might expect, a rarity on the rustling waves... But meat needs to fry and tea needs to brew, so chars have found various ways around this limitation. Some eschew heat altogether, focusing on salts and pickling, spice-rubs and sun-drying. Others treat the engine room as an extension of the galley, using engine heat and pressure in place of actual flame. The most adventurous experiment with trained glowbugs, chemical hot-plates and distilled sunlight.

### **Questions to Consider**

When you incorporate elements of the char into your character, consider the following questions...

- ◆ Do you have a signature dish and, if so, how is it prepared?
- ◆ No galley runs smoothly 100% of the time – what happened the last time you made the wrong culinary decision?
- ◆ Have you ever had the luxury of cooking over an open fire? If so, how did it feel? Did the resulting taste outweigh the danger?

### **Alternate Presentations**

There are a lot of paths a char might walk that diverge significantly from 'ship's cook'. A char might be an obsessive gourmet, a travelling butcher or chop-station worker or even some sort of wildsea confectioner, focusing more on the taste and presentation than the utility of their creations.



## ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During Quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

### **Only the Best** 2-Track Trait

Mark when gathering a specimen to give it the 'Pure' tag.

### **Ingredient Scrounger** 3-Track Trait

When one of your crewmates acquires a potentially delicious specimen, gain a copy of that specimen for yourself (once per scene).

### **Golden Nose** 4-Track Trait

Mark to identify a rare ingredient in your vicinity by scent alone.

### **Bountiful Discovery** 3-Track Trait

Whenever you discover a new location, choose a single specimen type to be easily found there.

### **Deep in the Barrel** 3-Track Trait

Increase impact when cooking with rotten or otherwise tainted ingredients. Meals made with these ingredients won't sicken your crew.

### **Enough for Everybody** 2-Track Trait

When you create a lasting meal the entire crew can gain the benefit it offers as a one-track temporary aspect.

### **Taste Test** 4-Track Trait

You're immune to poisons, and can determine their presence and characteristics by taste alone.

### **Acid-Etched Cookpot** 5-Track Gear

A hefty pot of near-unbreakable construction, used to prepare and store food or hide under in a tense situation.

### **Mechanical Grinder** 3-Track Gear

Consume an additional specimen to create a lasting meal as an action (rather than the usual task).

### **Flavour Engineer** 3-Track Gear

You can treat salvage as specimens when creating meals. The results are still oddly edible.

### **Spice Bandoleer** 3-Track Gear

A bandoleer containing your own secret blend of spices that never seems to run dry. Mark to create a rare resource, either *Wilds Pepper*, *Hangman's Blend* or *Smouldergrit*.

### **Trademark Herbs** 4-Track Trait

The right seasoning can make anything taste good. Mark to treat conflict results as triumphs while cooking.

### **Seasoned Cleaver** 2-Track Gear

As useful on the battlefield as it is in the galley. Deals CQ hewing damage. Increase impact when acquiring dangerous or disruptive specimens.

### **Reef-Iron Pan** 4-Track Gear

A colossal implement. Deals CQ blunt damage.

### **Husk-Leather Apron** 3-Track Gear

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Toxin, Acid, Blast, Salt, Flame.

### **Sous Squirrel** 2-Track Companion

A red-furred bundle of activity. Once per montage gain a common insect specimen appropriate to the region (in addition to your usual task).

## QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose char as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

### **Edge (Choose 1)**

Instinct, Teeth, Tides

### **Skills & Languages (Choose 5)**

**Skills:** Cook, Flourish, Hunt, Sway, Tend

**Languages:** Brasstongue, Raka Spit

### **Resources (Choose 2)**

**Salvage:** Boiling Casks, Heating Element

**Specimens:** Medicinal Herbs, Distant Sea-Spices

**Whispers:** That Delicate Taste, Forbidden Food

**Charts:** An Annotated Cookbook, A Spice-Stained Map

### **Drive (Choose 1)**

Prepare a banquet for the worthy  
Harvest a truly unique ingredient

### **Mire (Choose 1)**

Fruits you collect rot and sour in their jars  
Your sense of taste becomes unworthy



## CORSAIR POST

*Fighters tasked with protecting their ships from the myriad dangers of the sea.*

Every wildsailor is expected to be able to take up arms in a crisis, but the corsair elevates combat to an art form. Tasked with protecting their ship in close combat they often focus their training on blades, hammers and axes.

Most corsairs follow the ancient wisdom that the best defence is a strong and punishing offence. It's not unusual for corsairs to switch between a mixture of esoteric fighting styles and acrobatic feats to keep their foes off balance.

### **Pragmatic Elegance**

Whether it's across thrashing branches, crumbling ruins or the rolling deck of a ship mid-combat, most corsairs are constantly on the move. While there are those that weigh themselves down with salvage-hammered armour and heavier weapons these are in the extreme minority - the constant threat of an unexpected tumble into the waves is a strong motivator for staying nimble.

### **The Tools of the Trade**

Given that corsairs tend to earn their place on a crew through the willingness and capacity to do violence, the weapons they carry are of paramount importance. Devoted, reliable weaponsmiths are uncommon across the waves, so for many corsairs their first 'rite of passage' is the creation of a tool that suits their purposes, or an array of them.

Sabres and cutlasses are the obvious choice when it comes to blades, picked for ease of use and (sometimes) a sense of carrying on the old salt-sea legacies whispered about by the oldest ektus. Hammers and axes are another good choice, useful for breaking through doors and defences. Spears are rarely used, seen more as a hunter's weapon, and daggers (though useful in a bar-brawl) have limited effect on many of the sea's wilder creatures.

### **Questions to Consider**

When you incorporate elements of the corsair into your character, consider the following questions...

- ◆ Where did your weapons come from? Trade, inheritance or long hours of toil?
- ◆ What do you do in your spare time to keep yourself sharp, or to train the rest of your crewmates to defend themselves more effectively?
- ◆ What enemies have you made in your clashes with other ships - do they remember you and, if so, for what?

### **Alternate Presentations**

Given the shifting nature of wildsea alliances and fortunes, a corsair could just as easily be a reformed pirate or marauder as they could someone trained to defend against them. For a more classic fantasy take, pairing the corsair's abilities with a dose of heavier armour could lead to an effective knight or paladin-style character.



## ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During Quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

### **Steel-Step Dance** 5-Track Trait

The key to survival is mobility. They can't hurt you if they can't hit you.

### **Stamp-Down Samba** 5-Track Trait

The key to survival is solidity. You can take whatever they throw your way and stay standing.

### **Dirty Fighter** 3-Track Trait

Treat conflicts as triumphs when attempting to trip, knock down, blind or stun opponents.

### **Surgical Strike** 3-Track Trait

You can target attacks precisely (such as when aiming for a weak point) without cutting for difficulty.

### **Prowess** 4-Track Trait

Mark to increase impact when attacking at close quarters.

### **Dangersense** 4-Track Trait

Mark to hijack focus from a trap or ambush as it triggers.

### **Chain Attack** 4-Track Trait

You can deal damage to multiple nearby opponents with a successful CQ attack.

### **Scars That Tell Stories** 4-Track Trait

Mark to gain a whisper based on damage or an injury you've just taken, supplied by the Firefly.

### **Protective Beacon** 5-Track Gear

Treat conflicts as triumphs when attempting to prevent harm being done to a member of the undercrew.

### **Berserker** 4-Track Trait

You're immune to mire while in combat, or any mire that would be caused by witnessing violence.

### **Flashpowder Pouches** 4-Track Gear

Shake gently to produce temporary torchlight, or mark to produce a blinding flash.

### **Corsair's Sabre** 4-Track Gear

A classic wildsea blade. Deals CQ keen damage.

### **Boarding Axe** 2-Track Gear

A savage weapon used to chop through foes. Deals CQ hewing damage. Increase impact when attacking ships, objects and structures.

### **Slinghammer** 3-Track Gear

A versatile weighted hammer with a fabric tether. Deals blunt damage at CQ or LR.

### **Throwing Knives** 3-Track Gear

Perfectly weighted. Deals LR keen or spike damage.

### **Dragonfly Mantle** 3-Track Gear

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Blunt, Keen, Spike, Hewing, Blast.

### **Hooded Crow** 3-Track Companion

A loyal bird trained to distract opponents in close-range combat. Mark to hijack focus from a nearby enemy as they attempt to attack, once per scene.

## QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose corsair as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

### **Edge (Choose 1)**

Grace, Iron, Teeth

### **Skills & Languages (Choose 5)**

**Skills:** Brace, Break, Flourish, Hack, Vault

**Languages:** Old Hand, Signalling

### **Resources (Choose 2)**

**Salvage:** Armour Shards, Blackpowder Pouch

**Specimens:** Suspicious Finger, Beast Bones

**Whispers:** A Sobbing Mawship

**Charts:** A Stolen Starchart

### **Drive (Choose 1)**

Protect the crew from terrifying entities

Make a name for yourself among bandits and raiders

### **Mire (Choose 1)**

You cause more pain than necessary

Your weapons dull and rust, even when maintained



## DREDGER POST

*Brave explorers with an eye for value.*

The art of dredging is a difficult and painful one to learn, but the benefits are well worth the struggle. Dredgers make their living by diving into the waves of the Wildsea in search of valuable specimens and salvage, sifting through dangerous wrecks and exploring ancient ruins.

Dredgers traditionally dress as lightly as they can, leaving as much space as possible free to carry their finds back to their ships. Most dredgers are easily distinguished by the stained, seared skin of their hands and feet - the effects of long-term crezzerin exposure are hard to hide.

### Ancient Dangers

The truth of the pre-verdant era is a mystery to vast majority, but slightly less to the dredger. Even the most inexperienced of their profession run across artefacts and oddities of those old days from time to time, snagging them for trophy-cases, bragging rights or the ministrations of a ship's rattlehand.

### What is Treasure, Anyway?

Different folks specialize in the retrieval of different things when they head below the surface. Some search exclusively for the massively valuable, the ruins of the old world and the mysteries they contain. Others, no less important, set their sights a little lower - on salvage pieces and wrecked hull-plating, a captain's old cutlass or a cupboard brimming with charts. The sea is loath to let such items go, or at least that's how it feels, but salvage - as it's often said - is the lifeblood of civilization.

### Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the dredger into your character, consider the following questions...

- ◇ What's the most valuable thing you've ever found, and what did you end up doing with it once you reached the surface?
- ◇ There are sights below the canopy that few see, and fewer talk about. How have they shaped you?
- ◇ Nobody gets through a career in such hostile territory without making a mistake now and then - what scars has your profession left on you? What great treasure did you glimpse but fail to acquire?

### Alternate Presentations

Dredgers can work well as more general looters and scavengers, but you can also twist the concept into a far stealthier direction by making them into some combination of cat-burglar and classic dungeoneer (relying on their aspects for working in dark conditions and gaining entry to places they shouldn't).



## ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During Quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

### **Seared Skin 3-Track Trait**

Resist the hazardous effects of crezzerin exposure (searing, hallucinations, mutation).

### **Master Salvager 1-Track Trait**

Add a positive tag of your choice to any salvage you acquire from wrecks, reefs and ruins.

### **Mental Catalogue 4-Track Trait**

Mark to discern the use or history of something ancient.

### **Lurid Cartography 3-Track Trait**

You can use charts to find shipwrecks and disasters as well as the usual islands and oddities.

### **Devil May Care 3-Track Trait**

Treat conflicts as triumphs when avoiding traps and environmental hazards.

### **Arborofathometer 3-Track Gear**

A complex depth-gauge for measuring your precise distance from the Darkness-Under-Eaves. Increase your ship's Tilt rating by one when you're aboard.

### **Scrounge 3-Track Trait**

Whenever your crew gains a piece of cargo, gain a resource (likely salvage, but perhaps a specimen or whisper) related to that cargo for yourself.

### **Cramped Conditioning 3-Track Trait**

Ignore cut that would be imposed for taking actions in enclosed or architecturally unstable spaces.

### **Silkwire Coil 5-Track Gear**

A near-unbreakable coil of thick wire that is somehow soft to the touch. Can be re-coiled with a simple flick after being unwound.

### **Amber Lenses 4-Track Gear**

Goggles that allow you to see perfectly through smoke, mists and sporeclouds.

### **Moth Lantern 4-Track Gear**

Uses luminous moths to illuminate a small area around you.

### **Springheel Boots 4-Track Gear**

Mark to make a prodigious leap and land safely without having to roll.

### **Tomb Hammer 2-Track Gear**

As much a tool as it is a weapon. Deals CQ blunt damage. Increase impact when smashing stonework and structures.

### **Key-Tail Scorpion 2-Track Companion**

A curious little beast with a skeleton-key stinger. Once per scene you may open any mundane lock.

### **Sanctipede 3-Track Companion**

Drawn to history and forgotten things. Consume a chart to identify and retrieve a piece of ancient and valuable salvage in your vicinity if possible.

### **Tickerclick 4-Track Companion**

A punchcard intelligence in a noisy construct body, the whirring and clanking of this mouse-like companion is useful for drawing attention away from your position.

## QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose dredger as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

### **Edge (Choose 1)**

Sharps, Tides, Veils

### **Skills & Languages (Choose 5)**

Skills: Break, Delve, Rattle, Scavenge, Study

Languages: Brasstongue, Highvin

### **Resources (Choose 2)**

Salvage: Copper Rings, Ancient Engine

Specimens: Soporific Sap, Leviathan Claw

Whispers: A Risen Wreck

Charts: An Ancient Shipping Manifest

### **Drive (Choose 1)**

Discover an untouched pre-verdant ruin

Salvage a working machine from an ancient wreck

### **Mire (Choose 1)**

Doors and seals stay stubbornly closed to you

Your movements cause wrecks to shift and creak



## HACKER POST

*The marks and scars of your profession are writ large on your skin.*

Your job is to clear the way for settlements, ships and exploration, plunging into the Wildsea to tear open paths and clearings.

The earliest hackers used fire, before quickly realizing that the ironwood boughs re-grew faster than they burned. You know, like every other survivor, that fire is more trouble than it's worth. Now sharpened metal, chemicals and honest sweat reign supreme; your worth is measured in snapped branches and rough-cut routes

### Axe-Heads and Sawteeth

A hacker's work is some of the most dangerous on the wildsea, the very nature of their job calling on them to plunge into the waves at a moment's notice. And, though the core of their work is checking for safe paths, soft-spots and the kinds of hazard that don't show up on a map, they're also called upon to defend their ships from more mobile dangers when necessary.

Luckily for a hacker, their wilds-clearing arsenal doubles as a pretty effective set of weapons. No other post can deal with plant-based threats with the same level of competence, and those skills allow them to put up a sturdy defence against insect and mammalian aggressors as well.

### Crezzerin

A danger for the average sailor, but a constant threat for a hacker. Crezzerin's searing, mutative liquidity isn't omnipresent, but it might be in any leaf or branch-tip they aim to cut. Even with their protective gear kept in peak condition, they'll suffer the effects before too long - crews with a dedicated hacker almost always find themselves in need of a dedicated surgeon as well before too long.

### Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the hacker into your character, consider the following questions...

- ◇ Where do you watch the waves from on your ship? The prow, ready to spring into action, or somewhere higher for a more commanding view?
- ◇ What's the biggest predatory plant you've ever bested, and what marks did it leave on you in return?
- ◇ Not every path can be cleared - what was your greatest failure, and how did you make up for it once the sting had faded?

### Alternate Presentations

Though a hacker's usual presentation is one of pathfinding and threat detection, a less martial approach can also work - hackers make excellent harvesters and gardeners, able to withstand the waves long enough to bring in choice specimens of plantlife to supply a surgeon, alchemist or char.



## ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During Quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

### Scars Remember 5-Track Trait

The wildsea teaches harsh, but useful, lessons.

### Trailblazer 3-Track Trait

Increase impact when finding routes and clearing paths through vegetation.

### Living Antidote 3-Track Trait

Use a task to create a rare resource, Pure Spit or Pure Sweat.

### Wild Harvest 3-Track Trait

Treat conflicts as triumphs when attacking or defending against plant-type hazards.

### Crezzercamo 3-Track Trait

Mark to become undetectable to plant-type hazards and creatures for the duration of a scene.

### Hard-Won Instincts 2-Track Trait

You can tell which branches will break and which will hold at a glance. Increase your ship's Saws rating by one when you're aboard.

### Petalcrusher 3-Track Trait

You ignore mire caused by plant-based hazards and horrors, and are resistant to acids, toxins and hallucinatory effects caused by predatory plants.

### Rusting-Leaf Ale 2-Track Gear

Becomes more flavourful the more it gets jostled and shaken. Whenever you gain a benefit from a concoction or meal, increase its track by two boxes.

### Grappling Chain 2-Track Gear

Designed to find quick purchase in bark and boughs. treat conflicts as triumphs when traversing the sea.

### Chemical Censer 3-Track Gear

Mark to create a small area of smoke that repels insects and lowers visibility.

### Wavestrider Jacket 2-Track Gear

Resist the hazardous effects of crezzerin exposure, insect bites and poisons.

### Jagserry 3-Track Gear

The archetypal hacker weapon, a sawtooth sabre that deals CQ hewing or serrated damage.

### Sawtooth Chakram 3-Track Gear

A set of sharpened circular blades made for throwing, dealing LR keen or serrated damage.

### Defoliant Grenades 3-Track Gear

Explosive packets that burst when lobbed with force. Deals LR acid or salt damage.

### Gyrewing Moths 5-Track Companion

A trained swarm of ragged insects. Burn to neutralize the effects of bad air and airborne spores for your crew for the rest of a scene.

### Prow-Nose Porcupine 2-Track Companion

Not the easiest creature to pet, but you learn to live with it. Ignore cut caused by pain or discomfort.

## QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose hacker as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

### Edge (Choose 1)

Iron, Instinct, Teeth

### Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Hack, Hunt, Sense, Vault, Wavewalk

Languages: Knock, Signalling

### Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Wreck-Iron Plating, Abandoned Scrap

Specimens: Wild Apricots, Scorpions in a Jar

Whispers: An Ironroot Fallen

Charts: An Arboreal Diagram

### Drive (Choose 1)

Lay a mawship to rest

Survive a leviathan plant encounter

### Mire (Choose 1)

Insects seek your skin

The waves call for you to travel deeper than necessary



## HUNTER POST

*Some hunt for food, others challenge. Yet others to reassure themselves that they are not the hunted.*

As a hunter your role is to provide food and materials for the crew, usually in the form of animals parts. Some hunters prefer more complex prey, styling themselves as bounty hunters and roving the waves looking to bring down bounties for payment. Either way, stealthy movement and hidden snares often pay dividends.

### Hunts and Honour

Several well-recognised groups in the wildsea base their culture and philosophies around hunting, and almost every settlement has citizens engaged in the practice. There's an undeniable thrill to the activity, the snapping-shut of a trap or the spray of blood from a piercing arrow, but despite this hunters are typically characterised as reclusive, sombre folk.

It might be that the waves demand a certain level of respect - when you're in among the branches, in a world designed to aid your quarry and stymie you at every turn you quickly learn your place in the grand scheme of things.

### Bounties and Payment

When you've got the skills to track down something that doesn't want to be found, it's natural that at some point you'll be asked to track down *someone* that doesn't want to be found. Not all hunters are willing to take the moral step required to target members of other bloodlines, partly due to the extra risk involved and partly the lax attitude toward law that pervades across the wider waves.

### Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the hunter into your character, consider the following questions...

- ◇ What's the most dangerous creature you've brought down without it ever knowing you were there?
- ◇ Have you ever had to call off a hunt and, if so, why? Injury, exhaustion, or were you simply outclassed by your prey?
- ◇ Have you ever been tempted by bounty hunting, and if so did you ever actively engage in it?

### Alternate Presentations

While certain elements of a hunter's fiction point toward the possibility of bounty hunting, these can be taken to another level by using the post's long-range weapons and skill at concealment to create an assassin. Alternatively, a more classic rogue-type character could easily fit the hunter's archetype without too much trouble.



## ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During Quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

### **Ghost of the Wilds** 3-Track Trait

Choose either wild or urban areas. You leave barely any trace, and are almost impossible to track, when moving through your chosen area.

### **From Nowhere** 3-Track Trait

Increase impact when attacking from a hidden position, or attacking an unaware target.

### **Whisper on the Wind** 3-Track Trait

Consume a whisper to gain cryptic information on a target's whereabouts and actions.

### **Bloodhound** 3-Track Trait

Your sense of smell is highly developed, allowing you to hunt and track by scent alone.

### **Running Quiet** 3-Track Trait

Your guidance allows your vessel to keep a lower profile, disturbing fewer creatures and leaving less of a tell-tale trail. Increase your ship's **Stealth** rating by one when you're aboard.

### **Rare Musk** 4-Track Gear

Collected from sleeping leviathans, apparently. Burn to drive a beast or insect of the waves into an intense instinctual behaviour (such as fear, hunger or frenzy).

### **Slacker's Line** 2-Track Gear

A fishing rod designed to be left unattended. Once per journey gain a live specimen appropriate to the area you're travelling through.

### **Butchery Kit** 3-Track Gear

You can butcher dangerous specimens without risk or cutting for difficulty, and increase impact when gathering resources from a creature you've hunted.

### **Snare Set** 3-Track Gear

Count conflicts as triumphs when readying traps, snares or ambushes.

### **Venomous Trophy** 3-Track Gear

Use a task to create a resource, Paralyzing Venom.

### **Masterwork Leathers** 2-Track Gear

When you take this trait choose either beasts, plants or insects. You're resistant to all damage from your chosen source.

### **Boot-Knife** 3-Track Trait

Deal keen damage to any creature that attacks you with their own body in close quarters (such as with tail or bite attacks).

### **Jawspear** 4-Track Gear

A long-bladed spear with cruelly curving teeth. Deals CQ serrated damage.

### **Manifold Bow** 2-Track Gear

A finely-crafted bow paired with an expansive quiver. Can deal LR damage of three types chosen from the following list: Spike, Toxin, Blast, Volt, Salt.

### **Target Dragonfly** 3-Track Companion

Every moment of its life is a hunt. Mark to identify a weak point or weakness of a creature you can see.

## QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose hunter as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

### **Edge (Choose 1)**

Grace, instinct, Teeth

### **Skills & Languages (Choose 5)**

**Skills:** Hack, Hunt, Outwit, Sense, Wavewalk

**Languages:** Raka Spit, Signalling

### **Resources (Choose 2)**

**Salvage:** Leather Cord, Rusted Mantrap

**Specimens:** Scorpion Carapace, Bait Worms

**Whispers:** Leviathan Breeding Grounds

**Charts:** A Chart of Old Hollows

### **Drive (Choose 1)**

Bring down a leviathan

Provide meat for a grand feast

### **Mire (Choose 1)**

Crezzerscar pushes you to the brink of madness

Something is hunting you -you're sure of it



## RATTLEHAND POST

*Everything breaks eventually, but most of it can be repaired.*

Hull-iron rusts. Sawteeth blunt. Engines cough and struggle. In a world of salvage and barter, nothing lasts forever... unless you have a good rattlehand on your side.

A rattlehand is somewhere between an engineer, a blacksmith and an artist, able to use the scrap of the seas to repair, reinforce and create. Many rattlehands excel in crafting new and unique gear for their crewmates, perfectly suited to the troubles they face.

### **A Second-Hand World**

The first thing almost every rattlehand learns is how to make the best of a bad situation; relying on imprecise tools, twisted salvage and broken machinery to ply their trade. The lack of wide-scale mining and ore processing makes metal shortage an unfortunate reality, so those that balk at the idea of repurposing the same wreckage for the twentieth time often turn to wood or bone as a stand-in.

### **Salvage or Specimens?**

Salvage is by far the easiest material for a rattlehand to work with, tried and true pieces of wood or metal that stood the test of time (at least for a while). As most materials on the wildsea are second-hand, using fragments of old machines and discarded pieces of ship-stuff is a natural part of the job.

But some rattlehands like a challenge, particularly those that spend a lot of time around the unusual creatures of the wider waves. These engineers combine the coldly artificial with the unpalatably organic, using plant and animal specimens alongside more traditional materials to create effective (but occasionally unsettling) products.

### **Questions to Consider**

When you incorporate elements of the rattlehand into your character, consider the following questions...

- ◇ Most rattlehands have a favoured material to work with - what's yours?
- ◇ Which experiment or repair job of yours failed spectacularly at just the wrong moment?
- ◇ What was your crowning glory, technologically speaking? The development of a new technique, the completion of a grand machine or the unlocking of a pre-verdant industrial secret?

### **Alternate Presentations**

Alternate rattlehand presentations are as diverse as rattlehands themselves; you might want to aim for a dockside engineer or ship-builder called to the waves, a blacksmith struggling in a world without forges, a technology-focused scientist or even an artist or sculptor that works in salvage.



## ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During Quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

### Mastercraft 2-Track Trait

Choose wood, metal or bone. Increase impact when crafting or repairing with your chosen material.

### Made to Last 3-Track Trait

When you craft, the resulting creation's track is three boxes longer than usual.

### Multitasker 3-Track Trait

You can use a task to work on repairing up to three pieces of gear or mechanical companions at a time.

### Surefire Smith 3-Track Trait

Count conflicts as triumphs when repairing gear and mechanical companions.

### Deckside Engineer 3-Track Trait

Tiny, incremental adjustments that you make without thinking keep your vessel's hull and superstructure in remarkable shape. Increase your ship's **Armour** rating by one when you're aboard.

### Breakdown Specialist 3-Track Gear

When a crafted benefit's track is fully marked, gain a piece of salvage related to it before removing the benefit.

### Inkstamp Mechanism 2-Track Gear

Consume a chart to quickly create a set of schematics for a machine or mechanism you can see (represented by new chart). All actions to create such a machine yourself gain increased impact while you have this new chart.

### Toolbelt 2-Track Gear

Once per scene, swiftly craft a one-track creation without needing to roll.

### Salvage Kit 3-Track Gear

Contains salvage useful for crafting. Mark to use the contents in place of a resource when crafting.

### Multi-Lens Goggles 3-Track Gear

You gain ferrosight, the ability to see electric and magnetic fields.

### Wolf-Skin Gloves 4-Track Gear

You never cut for difficulty when including specimens in your crafting, no matter how grisly or unpalatable the process is.

### Volt-Rail 2-Track Gear

An insulated grip around a crackling, rudimentary cattleprod. Deals CQ volt damage, and you're immune to volt damage yourself.

### Hazard Suit 3-Track Gear

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Spike, Acid, Blast, Volt, Flame.

### Artillery Spider 3-Track Companion

A self-made automaton designed to offer fire support. Deals LR blast damage.

### Autocrawler 2-Track Companion

A nimble little scavenging construct. Once per scene, add a positive tag of your choice onto any piece of salvage you acquire.

### Steam-Scarab 4-Track Companion

A self-made automaton, large enough to ride.

## QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose rattlehand as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

### Edge (Choose 1)

Iron, Sharps, Tides

### Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Break, Delve, Rattle, Scavenge, Study

Languages: Brasstongue, Highvin

### Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Ancient Wiring, Ceramic Battery

Specimens: Crushed Beetle, Giant Insect Mandible

Whispers: Locomotive Power

Charts: An Indecipherable Blueprint

### Drive (Choose 1)

Repurpose a Pre-Verdant machine

Craft a Weapon that can take down a leviathan

### Mire (Choose 1)

The monomania of scavenging takes you

Machines jump and backfire in your presence



## TEMPEST POST

*Your blood crackles with sparks, your heart beats with thunder.*

Internalising the wild power of a storm is no small feat, but it's not impossible - either through technological application or obscure arconautic methods, tempests have managed to embed the essence of lightning within themselves.

Holding onto such raw power is difficult even for the most disciplined, and many find themselves the subject of wild moods and sleepless nights as thunder roams their minds. Only the most dedicated tempests manage to typify that dangerous, deadly calm of thunderheads massing on the horizon.

### A Fragment of Storm

The most common road to becoming a tempest is to hunt down a living storm and capture some of its lightning for yourself, but it's far from the only way. Some tempests pierce themselves with the spines of an ironjaw ray, or cultivate colonies of voltaic moss along their arms, or befriend a potentially electric wildsea creature in order to borrow its puissance. Whatever the precise method, one fact holds true in all cases - a tempest's own body is the host of their power.

### Lightning Without Thunder

... Well, *almost* all cases. It's extremely rare, but there are tempests out on the waves whose mastery of electricity comes from purely technological means (as a result of accident, endeavour or self-experimentation). These artificial tempests are often more akin to rattlehands in their approach to the art, treating voltage as a resource for crafting and repair rather than a source of combat prowess, but they're no less powerful than their storm-blooded kin.

### Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the tempest into your character, consider the following questions...

- ❖ How did you attain the power of storms? Through theft, alchemy, injury or some other wildsea weirdness?
- ❖ To what extent are you in control of the lightning within you? In what ways, if any, have you unintentionally released it?
- ❖ Do you resonate with the world around you, and if so how does this manifest? Crawling sparks, misfiring engines, gathering striations of cloud far above?

### Alternate Presentations

The easiest non-standard interpretation of the tempest is as some kind of elemental magic user, a mage-type with power over lightning drawn from nothing but training. Alternatively, the mesmer aspects can be adapted mechanically to represent other wildsea damage types - an arconautic user of frost, for example, or even (and this is *definitely* not recommended) flame.



# ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During Quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

## **Storm-Stride** 4-Track Trait

Mark to float for a brief time, electricity crackling around you as you do so.

## **The Pulse** 3-Track Trait

You can sense nearby electrical fields, such as those produced by living organisms.

## **Bolt-Switch** 3-Track Trait

Mark to instantly switch places with a willing crewmate within sight, or burn to switch with them and hijack focus at the same time.

## **Old Accord** 3-Track Trait

Use a task and mark to quiet or banish a storm, or use a task and burn to summon one.

## **The Skies Agree** 4-Track Trait

Increase impact when dealing volt or blast damage during an electrical storm or heavy rainfall.

## **Thunder's Tone** 3-Track Trait

You can raise your voice to an ear-splitting shout, dealing CQ blast damage and being easily heard over long distances.

## **Lightning's Call** 3-Track Trait

You can direct bursts of voltaic energy through your palms or fingers, dealing LR volt damage.

## **Ground Zero Overload** 1-Track Trait

Mark to deal volt damage to all nearby foes, or burn to increase it to massive volt damage.

## **Ironjaw Seven-String** 5-Track Gear

A guitar-like instrument carved from the bones of an ironjaw ray. Produces a harsh, buzzing tone when played that seems to awaken the spirit of rebellion in some.

## **Mesh Relay** 3-Track Gear

Deal volt damage to any creature that attacks you with their own body in close quarters (such as with tail or bite attacks).

## **Voltomotive Interfacing** 2-Track Gear

You can act as an additional (or main) engine for your ship, powering its bite with your mere presence. Increase your ship's **Speed** rating by one when you're aboard.

## **Voltaic Lantern** 3-Track Gear

A simple light source that runs off of your own internal charge. Mark to deplete a nearby source of electricity, absorbing it into the lantern for a brighter glow.

## **Singed Coat** 3-Track Gear

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Frost, Flame, Salt, Blast, Volt.

## **Internal Battery** 4-Track Gear

Mark to kickstart a machine, charge a depleted power source or temporarily increase the effectiveness of an engine.

## **Squallkitten** 2-Track Companion

A small, playful feline made of roiling stormclouds. Gives your entire crew resistance to volt damage.

## **Sparking-Eel** 4-Track Companion

Winds around limbs and under clothes, always moving. Mark to identify the nearest source of potent electricity, no matter the distance.

# QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose tempest as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

## **Edge (Choose 1)**

Grace, Sharps, Teeth

## **Skills & Languages (Choose 5)**

**Skills:** Brace, Delve, Flourish, Scavenge, Vault

**Languages:** Old Hand, Signalling

## **Resources (Choose 2)**

**Salvage:** Ceramic Battery

**Specimens:** Phosphorescent Beetle

**Whispers:** The Calm Before, In the Blood

**Charts:** A Sketched Lightning-Strike

## **Drive (Choose 1)**

Communicate with a living storm on equal terms

Avert a disaster by causing another disaster

## **Mire (Choose 1)**

Sparks pinwheel from you as you move

Your voice is thunder, impossible to lower from a shout





**CHAPTER 6**  
**SHIPS & SHIPBUILDING**



**"Well, it's going to need a complete  
refit." The rattlehand stood at the  
end of the dock, checking over  
a scrap-metal clipboard. She  
could tell from the looks on their  
faces that it was exactly what  
the Moritania's crew had been  
dreading.**

**"Well, I'm not saying it won't  
sail as it is." She patted the hull  
affectionately. "You've got yourself  
a goodly frame here. But," she  
counted off on fibrous fingers,  
"the broadwood's starting to rot,  
which shouldn't even be possible.  
The firefly lanterns on the aft side  
are all cracked, as are most of the  
portholes. The steering column  
hangs left, which is fine if you don't  
mind drifting off course for the  
rest of your life. And the engine's  
clogged with... what was it, chitin?  
No idea how you managed that one.  
And that's not to mention-"**

**One of the crew, an alchemist with  
his arm in a makeshift sling, held up  
his good hand in acceptance.**

**"Gotcha. It's been... a rough week."**

## Take to the Waves!

What's a wildsailor without a ship? Stranded, most probably.

One of the core ideas behind the Wildsea is that you'll have a ship to explore the rustling waves with, but you might not start with one - depending on how your game begins you could be ashore somewhere, crewing a ship on behalf of another captain or (if you're lucky) in charge of your own vessel.

If you do have a ship of your own, or if you get the chance to commission or construct one, this chapter is for you.

### Stakes

To create your ship you'll need to spend **stakes**, a special resource used exclusively for ship-building.

#### Six to Share, Then Three Per Sailor

You get **six stakes** as standard to create your ship, plus **another three stakes** for every player with a character on the crew. That way, every player at the table has a (literal) stake in creating the vessel they'll be travelling on. These stakes are spent on making choices about the ship's design, fittings and any extra NPC crew-members sailing with you.

Having your own stakes to spend allows you to ensure that if there's an option you can't live without you can afford it on your own, or lets you contribute something toward the basic functionality of the ship and keep a little back for personalized choices that better suit your own character.

Most choices cost a single stake, but more powerful or advanced options can cost two or even three.

### Personal Touches

There's more to creating a ship than the rules could possibly encompass, a whole host of minor narrative-focused choices that may or may not impact the game, but will certainly go the distance toward making your ship feel more like a safe, reliable home. When creating a ship, you might want to consider the following non-mechanical choices...

- ◇ **Colour and style.** What kind of patterns or artwork adorn your hull, and who painted or inscribed them there?
- ◇ **Shape and construction.** There are no hard rules on what shape your ship has to be, but having everyone at the table be on board with a rough layout can help in both roleplay and combat scenarios.
- ◇ **Quarters decoration.** Do you have your own little place on the ship, or do the crew sleep in a single room? What kind of personal effects do you keep in your quarters, and what do they mean to you?
- ◇ **Quirks.** There isn't a ship on the rustling waves that hasn't developed some sort of non-threatening fault or peculiarity that refuses to go away no matter how many times the crew tries to fix it.
- ◇ **History.** Where did your ship come from, and who crewed it before you? If it's a completely new vessel, how did you scrape together the resources needed to pay a dockyard to put it together? Or perhaps you made it yourself - if so, where did you get the materials, and what was the process like?

None of the above are essential to the game, but they can all add flavour, depth and character to something that (for a typical wildsea crew) you're going to be spending a lot of time with.

# Creating Your Ship

There are three stages to ship creation: deciding the **design**, adding **fittings**, and hiring the **undercrew**. When choosing these, keep in mind that every character should have a place on the ship to call their own.

## Design

When spending your stakes, your group first needs to cover the basics of the ship's design. Every ship needs to have at least **one option** chosen from the following sections...

- ◆ **Size:** A measure of how many crew and passengers a ship can comfortably hold.
- ◆ **Frame:** A ship's basic profile and appearance.
- ◆ **Hull:** The main material used in a ship's construction.
- ◆ **Bite:** The mechanism that lets a ship cut through (or otherwise traverse) the tangled waves of the Wildsea.
- ◆ **Engine:** The motive force behind the ship's bite.

## Fittings

Once the design is covered, you can add more specialized options to your ship in the form of fittings. **Fittings choices are all optional**, and come in the form of...

- ◆ **Motifs:** General themes you can choose for the ship, giving you basic equipment and alterations useful for certain common activities.
- ◆ **Additions:** Useful parts, resource-gathering options, and other oddities.
- ◆ **Rooms:** Quarters and workrooms for the crew.
- ◆ **Armaments:** Deck weapons used for defence against the hazards of the wild.
- ◆ **Outriders:** Smaller vessels with limited range that can be launched from the main ship.

## Undercrew

The undercrew are NPC crewmembers loyal to the ship (or at least loyal to the percentage of spoils and profits they garner). Undercrew choices are entirely optional, and come in the form of...

- ◆ **Officers:** Named NPCs specializing in certain skills, languages, or aspects.
- ◆ **Gangs:** Small groups of unnamed NPCs that perform basic tasks during journeys.
- ◆ **Packs:** Creatures trained to aid, defend, or otherwise benefit the ship in some way.

## The Falcon's Flight

An example ship made for a four-person crew, giving it eighteen stakes for construction (the Falcon's Flight is pictured on the opposite page).

### Design (8 stakes)

- Standard Size (1 Stake, Armour +1)
- Sleek Frame (1 Stake, Stealth +1)
- Broadwood Hull (1 Stake, Tilt +1)
- Reef-Iron Hull (1 Stake, Armour +1)
- Sawprow Bite (1 Stake, Saws+1)
- Chemical Compressor Engine (1 Stake, Speed +1)
- Ceramic Batteries Engine (2 Stakes, Saws +1, Seals +1)

### Fittings (7 stakes)

- Signal Flares (1 Stake)
- Steam-Whistle (1 Stake)
- Workshop (1 Stake)
- Cargo Bay Extension (1 Stake)
- Galley (1 Stake)
- Luxury Quarters (1 Stake)
- Spearing Prow (1 Stakes)

### Undercrew (3 stakes)

- Cartographers (2 Stakes)
- Lemur Pack (1 Stake)

### Final Ratings

Armour 3, Seals 2, Speed 2, Saws 3, Stealth 2, Tilt 2



## Ratings

Every ship has a set of **ratings**, tracks representing the ship's condition and construction. **Each of these ratings starts as a 1-track**, but will gain more boxes as you spend your stakes on design, fittings, and undercrew choices.

We'll give the rest of this page over to a description of each of the ratings, as well as a cut-away diagram of the Falcon's Flight example on the left-hand page.

### Armour

A measure of your ship's resistance to damage. You'll likely roll your **armour** rating when a larger creature attacks your ship, when you're fired on by pirates, or when you brute-force the ship through a hazardous area of the sea.

### Seals

A measure of how well your ship keeps the wildsea out while travelling. You'll likely roll your **seals** rating when there's a sporestorm, insect swarm, or other potentially invasive presence.

### Speed

The speed of your ship when the engines are running smoothly. You'll likely roll your **speed** rating when attempting to outrun a pursuer or weather pattern, or if you somehow find yourself in a race.

### Saws

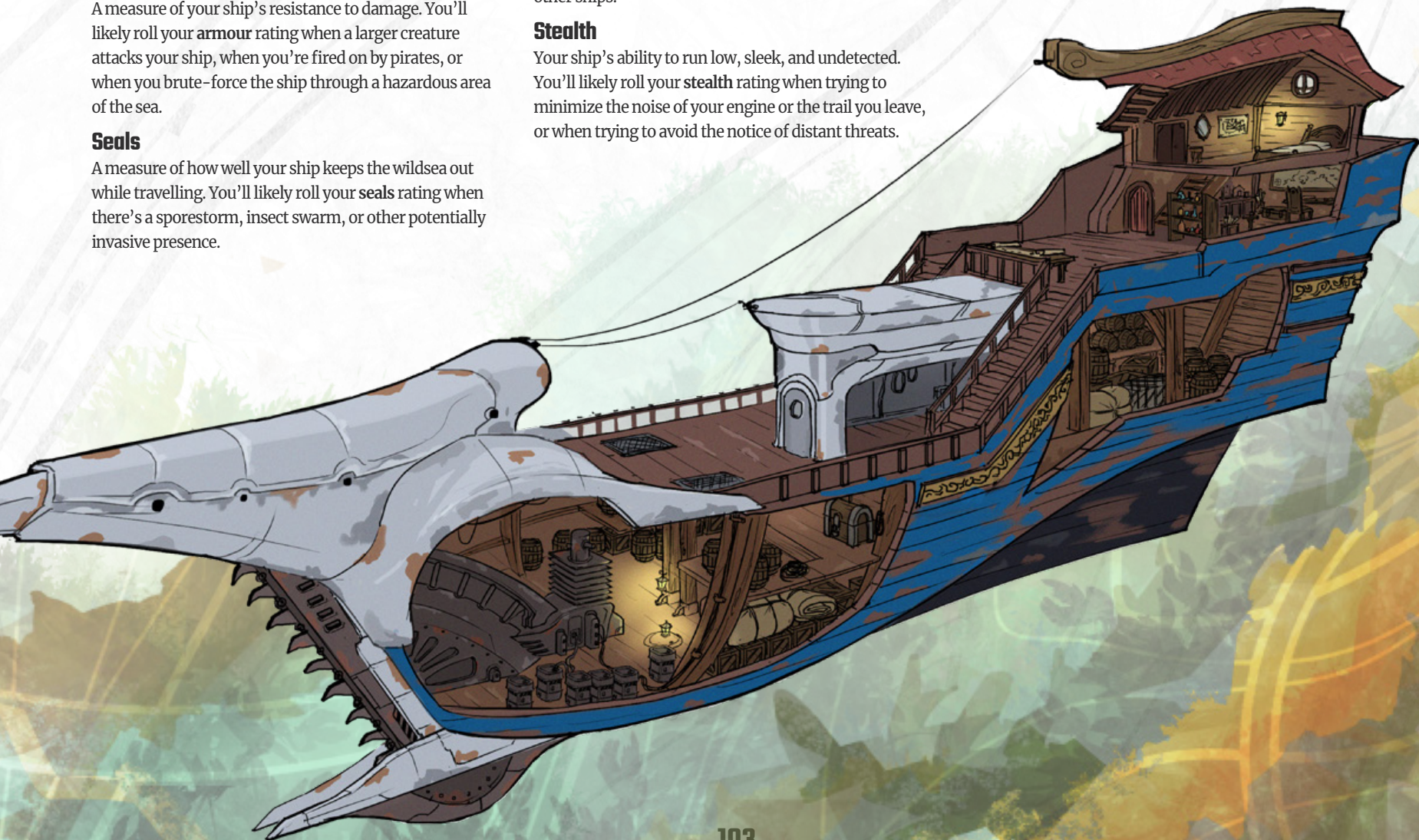
How good your ship is at cutting through the denser parts of the sea. You'll likely roll your **saws** rating when cutting through thicker areas of the sea or trying to ram other ships.

### Stealth

Your ship's ability to run low, sleek, and undetected. You'll likely roll your **stealth** rating when trying to minimize the noise of your engine or the trail you leave, or when trying to avoid the notice of distant threats.

### Tilt

A measure of manoeuvrability, and how well your ship can tackle the sharper dips and rises of the waves. You'll likely roll your **tilt** rating when tackling one of the larger treetop waves, when diving down into the tangle to evade a pursuer, or when trying to keep steady during a rootquake or storm.





**The city of Kyther (or Kynner) had many bells, each rung with their own purpose. Most warned of danger, as one might expect of a reefback settlement in the middle of a dangerous territory. Some rang to signify general meetings, or the handing-out of newly acquired foodstuffs, or funeral rites.**

**But the bell that summoned Rolgis that morning wasn't any of those. It was a bell rang so rarely that he almost didn't recognise it, which would have been particularly embarrassing as it was a bell meant purely for him.**

**Master shipwright needed urgently.**

**By the time he reached the dockyards he was starting to doubt himself - the bay was overflowing with fur and chains and viscera, chop-station workers crawling over the corpse as they worked.**

**But the crowd opened up around him, and the choppers gestured hopefully to the bones.**

**They were right. He was needed.**

## Step One - Design

Your ship's design covers most of the main components that make it... well, a ship. These are the essentials - the material that makes up the hull, the method you use to get from port to port. In many ways these are the most important choices you'll make as a crew, as the ship is your shared possession.

We recommend spending stakes by committee for this step of the shipbuilding process, talking to everyone at the table about what catches your eye and how it might benefit you. The choices you make here do have a mechanical component, in that they're the main way of raising your ship's ratings, but they have a lot of fictional weight to them as well (a crew turning up to a new port in a wheezing scrap-hulled junker may well be regarded and treated very differently to one showing up in an elegant bone-plated sailship, for example).

Make sure you pick up at least one option from each of the design sections (size, frame, hull, bite, and engine).

### Size [Required]

A ship's size determines its profile on the waves and the amount of crew and passengers that can coexist aboard it before things start getting crowded and tempers begin to fray.

When you spend stakes on a size, note it down on your ship sheet, as well as any rating ranks it gives. You can only pick one size for your ship - choose wisely.

### Issues of Space

While a larger ship may fictionally have more cargo space available, we haven't set any hard limits on the amount a ship can carry based on size.

By the same token, we haven't limited the amount of internal rooms or additional fittings you might want to kit your vessel out with later on in the shipbuilding process. Your ship should be a product of imagination and creativity rather than number-crunching, if possible.

### Weighing Your Options

There's more to successful survival on the rustling waves than simply being the owner of the biggest ship. Larger ships are inherently sturdier, true, but they often have difficulty going unnoticed or even docking at certain ports. Smaller ships are often more swift or manoeuvrable, able to play cat and mouse with pursuers or slip unnoticed beneath the waves at a tactically opportune moment.

### Available Sizes

There may well exist ships that are smaller, and there are certainly ships far more vast. *Your choice determines the amount of crew and passengers your ship can comfortably hold, as well as actual physical size.*

#### Nano 1 Stake

Suited for a single sailor and maybe a passenger or two. Perfect for the lone wildsailor, possessed of excess bravery (or a deathwish).

☛ Stealth +1

#### Small 1 Stake

Suited for 2-4 people, cramped but serviceable for double that. Ideal for a first ship.

☛ Speed +1

#### Standard 1 Stake

Comfortable for 5-10 people, but can hold double that number if necessary. The majority of ships out on the Wildsea are of standard size, hence the name.

☛ Armour +1

#### Large 1 Stake

Can house 10-20 crew with room to spare, many more if necessary, depending on the internal designs and additional fittings. Large ships are most often used to patrol trade-routes around more lawful areas, or to transport settlers and research teams for large factions.

☛ Armour +1

☛ Stealth -1





## Frame [Required]

Beneath the weapons, fittings, and hull plating of every ship is a solid frame, a superstructural skeleton built to withstand the constant jostling roughness of travel across a wavescape of chemical-coated leaves and thick wooden branches.

**When you spend stakes on a frame, note it down on your ship sheet, as well as any rating ranks it gives. You can only pick one frame for your ship - choose wisely.**

### Attitude

Your frame choice says a little about the overall shape of your ship, but not too much - it's really up to your crew to decide how you ultimately want the ship to appear.

What your frame choice does determine is a certain attitude - though hidden by hull and accoutrements, your frame will influence how other sailors think of your vessel when it first appears.

## Available Frames

The bare bones of a ship, a staging ground for every future choice. *The frame you choose may have an effect on how your vessel is perceived by others.*

### Sturdy 1 Stake

Built to last in a place of temporary things, a sturdy frame helps weather the strongest assaults.

☛ Armour +1

### Moulded 1 Stake

A single unbroken structure running through the ship - quite a feat of safety-conscious engineering.

☛ Seals +1

### Light 1 Stake

Made with the lightest possible materials in the smallest possible amounts.

☛ Speed +1

### Scything 1 Stake

Often wedge or blade-shaped, scything frames are constructed specifically to cut as efficiently as possible through the waves.

☛ Saws +1

### Sleek 1 Stake

Quiet is hard to come by on the wildsea, but a sleek frame ensures that no matter how noisy your bite and engine might be, you'll always be low to the waves.

☛ Stealth +1

### Flexible 1 Stake

Built for adjustability and responsiveness, flexible frames are often multi-segmented or jointed in some way.

☛ Tilt +1





## Hull [Required]

Though the vast majority of ships are constructed of a few common materials (wood from the ironroots, salvaged metal, and sturdy bones), they're far from the only ones on offer. With the sea such a dominating presence, there are few things that people haven't tried to turn into a ship at some point.

A hull keeps the wildsea out and the cargo and crew in. It might well be the most important part of the ship (and if it's not, it'll certainly feel that way once the shrapnel-cannons start firing).

When you spend stakes on a hull note it down on your ship sheet, as well as any rating ranks it gives. You can purchase multiple hulls if you wish, but must take at least one.

## Common Hulls

Most common hulls are distinguished not by the relative abundance of the materials used, but the ways in which those materials are shaped and hardened to withstand the constant grinding ebb of the waves. *Your hull choice is at once cosmetic and uncomplicated - choose one that suits the feel of your crew, that embodies why you're out on the waves.*

### Reef-Iron 1 Stake

Metal plating from decommissioned ships, reshaped for your frame. Durable and rust-resistant.

◇ Armour +1

### Leviathan Bone 1 Stake

A hull crafted from one or more pieces of leviathan skeleton. Solid, if a little morbid.

◇ Seals +1

### Broadwood 1 Stake

Wooden planks cut from the more reliable trees of the wildsea. Strong and flexible.

◇ Tilt +1

### Chitinous 1 Stake

Made from the collected shells of the wildsea's larger insects. Smooth, offering little in the way of friction or snags.

◇ Speed +1

### Razorscale 1 Stake

An exterior of interlocking scales sloughed or harvested from a wildsea beast, sharpened for effectiveness.

◇ Saws +1



## Bite [Required]

A ship's bite determines its motive force, how it cuts through (or otherwise traverses) the vast canopy of the rustling waves. In most cases your bite is directly connected to your ship's engine - the next choice you'll make in the shipbuilding process - and as long as the engine is running you'll have control of the speed and direction of your ship.

When you spend stakes on a bite note it down on your ship sheet, as well as any rating ranks it gives.

## Common Bites

Found on salvaging craft and trading vessels from the fractured West to the eaten East. *Each of these bites also allows your ship to deal a particular type of damage when ramming another vessel.*

### Sawprow 1 Stake

A wildsea favourite, the sawprow is a chainsaw edge that runs down the curve of the prow. Capable of cutting through most obstructions with ease.

- ◆ Saws +1
- ◆ Deals massive CQ Serrated damage

### Impellers 1 Stake

Large jet-like outboard engines that push the ship through the waves with brute force.

- ◆ Speed +1
- ◆ Deals massive CQ Blast damage

### Crawler 1 Stake

Large finger-like mechanisms spread out around the front of the ship, allowing it to move through the waves with a crawling motion.

- ◆ Tilt +1
- ◆ Deals massive CQ Blunt damage

### Underscales 1 Stake

Thousands of flexing scales that worm the ship forward with a sly, sinuous motion.

- ◆ Stealth +1
- ◆ Deals massive CQ Keen damage

### Jag-Tracks 1 Stake

Motorised grapple tracks along the keel and hull-sides; a slow, solid and reliable choice.

- ◆ Armour +1
- ◆ Deals massive CQ Hewing damage

### Sluicejets 1 Stake

Pressurised sluice systems filled with phytophobic chemicals, for coating the hull and pushing the ship.

- ◆ Seals +1
- ◆ Deals massive CQ Acid damage

### Longjaw 2 Stakes

An underslung chainsaw arrangement that extends from the front of the ship, chewing and pulling forward.

- ◆ Saws +1
- ◆ Speed +1
- ◆ Deals massive CQ Serrated damage

### Propeller-Cage 2 Stakes

A cage-like housing that holds large airboat-style propellers used to push the ship forward.

- ◆ Speed +1
- ◆ Armour +1
- ◆ Deals massive CQ Blunt damage

### Navapede Limbs 2 Stakes

Centipedal limbs lining the hull, letting a ship scuttle through the thrash. If such a vessel could truly now be called a ship, of course.

- ◆ Tilt +1
- ◆ Stealth +1
- ◆ Deals massive CQ Spike damage

### Voltaic Runners 2 Stakes

Crackling with barely contained lightning, these outboard contraptions let a ship float just above the churning branches of the sea.

- ◆ Seals +2
- ◆ Deals massive CQ Volt damage

### Mulcher 2 Stakes

Grinding teeth in a lamprey-style mouth. Terribly noisy but dreadfully effective.

- ◆ Saws +2
- ◆ Armour +1
- ◆ Stealth -1
- ◆ Deals massive CQ Serrated damage

**"And this," the friendly shout was punctuated by the slamming open of a heavy, iron-edged door, "is the engine room!"**

**Axa had seen the guts of a lot of ships in his day; some neatly organized, some on the chaotic side, some a confusion of piping and valves and interchanges that would have taken an amateur weeks to untangle.**

**But the Salavida's engine room was something else.**

**"It's... bees." A fat drop of honey trickled down his shoulder as he spoke, words almost lost in the bass drone that filled the room.**  
**"It's all bees."**

**"Well, not quite!" The Salavida's rattlehand reached out to smudge at the drop with the end of their sporescarf. "There are the flower vats, the melliferous exchange relays, the queen's den and honeycomb frames..." He caught Axa's sceptical look. "... Yeah, it's pretty much bees all the way."**

## Engine [Required]

The heart of most seafaring vessels, engines exist primarily to give power directly to a ship's bite. Different engines take different types of fuel, but whatever they require can surely be found among the waves with a little searching.

When you spend stakes on an engine note it down on your ship sheet, as well as any rating ranks it gives.

### More than Motive

In some ships, especially those with more complex equipment, the engine may well be used for a lot more than running a chainsaw prow or impeller. Clever use of an engine might...

- ◇ Power ship-wide systems, pre-verdant artefacts or technologically advanced equipment
- ◇ Turn it into a ship defence weapon (by venting steam or scalding fuel)
- ◇ Allow it to act as a defensive bastion or hiding place when the ship is under attack
- ◇ Let it provide salvage or specimens, such as engine oil (though usually at the risk of damaging the engine itself)

## Common Engines

Assembled by artisans, ripped from wrecks or plucked from the waves themselves. *Each of these engines runs smoothly under normal circumstances, but might require a particular type of fuel in a crisis.*

### Chemical Compressor 1 Stake

The most common engine on the rustling waves, reliably unreliable but extremely easy to fuel.

- ◇ Speed +1
- ◇ Fuelled with crushed fruit and insect husks

### Springwork 1 Stake

Wound exhaustively by hand, springwork engines store and release kinetic energy with surprising efficiency.

- ◇ Saws +1
- ◇ Fuelled with sweat, labour and time spent winding

### Parasite Pitcher 1 Stake

A large pitcher plant coaxed into taking root in an engine housing, vines intermingling with the ship's systems.

- ◇ Stealth +1
- ◇ Fuelled with organic material (preferably living)

### Steam Piping 1 Stake

Hellish contraptions of tangled piping, rare chemicals and scalding steam.

- ◇ Seals +1
- ◇ Fuelled with water (the cleaner the better)

### Ratwheel Exchange 1 Stake

Exactly what you might imagine, a pure transfer of kinetic energy from restless rats to wheel to bite. Ethical engineers tend to give their rats the run of the ship.

- ◇ Tilt +1
- ◇ The rats need feeding every now and then, but they're not fussy

### Pulsing Cocoon 1 Stake

An unknown insect shifts inside, glutting on dreams and spinning them into an ebb of arconautic force. Crews report intensely vivid dreams.

- ◇ Armour +1
- ◇ Fuelled with the dreams of the crew

### Jawbox 1 Stake

Noisy, wood-fuelled engines that create huge clouds of smoke and dust but with minimum chance of flame.

- ◇ Saws +1
- ◇ Speed +1
- ◇ Stealth -1
- ◇ Fuelled with wildsea wood



# Step Two - Fittings

Once your ship's design is decided, it's time to move onto the fittings. These represent the more niche aspects of your ship, the useful extras and personal touches that turn it from a simple vessel to an enduring home. Specifically the fittings section covers motifs, armaments and rooms.

While you can still pool your stakes together here, many of the fittings will suit certain choices of bloodline, post or origin more than others. Don't be afraid to make choices that benefit you directly, spending your stakes on something that catches your eye.

**No fittings are essential for a ship, but a lot of them can make life out on the waves (especially on longer journeys) substantially easier. Spending your stakes on fittings is entirely optional.**

## Motif [Optional]

A fittings choice that affects your entire vessel, choosing a motif allows you to 'theme' your ship towards a certain activity (such as salvaging or exploring).

Mechanically a motif doesn't just give you a set of useful equipment and oddities to add to your ship, it also affects how others perceive you - ships with a chosen motif will be easily recognized as a particular kind of vessel to even the most inexperienced sailors.

**When you spend stakes on a motif note down the benefits it confers. You can only pick one motif for your ship - choose wisely if you're spending stakes here.**

### Shared Headspace

Purchasing a motif for your ship can also help every player at the table get into the right kind of headsapce in terms of how the ship might appear, even without discussing lots of finer details. That said, it's still worth describing the look and feel of some of the ship as a whole - a motif gives a general theme, but few specifics.

### Rustling Up Resources

One of the most important things a motif gives you as a crew is a set of fictional permissions, the knowledge that your ship probably has certain things on it even if you haven't spelled them out exactly. This can let you search your own ship for low-quality resources while out at sea, rooting through cupboards and lockers for salvage and specimens that fit the theme of your vessel. Searching a ship with the hunting motif might turn up a rusted mantrap, old bowstrings and spearheads or the bones of past kills, for example.

## Available Motifs

There's a lot to be said for dressing for success - a motif allows you to extend that principle to your entire vessel. *A motif choice allows the kind of work your crew routinely engages in to be identified by others at a glance.*

### Transport 2 Stakes

No matter what is happening on the waves, no matter the problems or curiosities its denizens face, there will always be a space for those willing to move passengers from point A to point B. Ships themed around transport will likely have...

- ◆ A clean and professional **paint job** to attract potential passengers
- ◆ Built-in **passenger quarters** with varying levels of comfort
- ◆ A sturdily-constructed **panic room**, suitable for holding passengers unwilling to fight in the event the ship is attacked or boarded

### Hauling 2 Stakes

Just as essential as transporting passengers, the movement and trading of cargo is a reliable path to success for dependable types. These ships will likely have...

- ◆ **Gangplanks, winches and bay doors** for swift loading and unloading at port
- ◆ An **expanded cargo area** with extra security and webbing for odd-shaped packages
- ◆ A reliable **cargo crane** built into the ship's structure for holding and transporting particularly heavy crates and objects

### Hunting 2 Stakes

The oldest wildsea profession, a ship kitted out with a hunting motif will likely have...

- ◆ **Trophies** of bone, fur or chitin prominently displayed on the outer hull
- ◆ A **modified cargo area** complete with animal pens
- ◆ An array of **hunting and butchery tools**, allowing crew fighting on or below decks easy access to CQ keen or spike damage

### Salvaging 2 Stakes

Useful for scrappers, dredgers and wreck-wranglers, salvaging ships will likely have...

- ◆ A **scratched and dented appearance**, making you look almost like a wreck yourself
- ◆ A **modified cargo area** with work benches and tools for disassembly
- ◆ A **grappling crane** built into the ship's structure for attaching to large wreckage, allowing it to be hauled onto the deck or towed behind the ship

## Additions [Optional]

A broad category of fittings covering the type of things that tend to make life on the waves just a little bit easier for everyone.

### General Additions

With no more a unifying theme than 'usefulness'. *These additions grant fictional permissions in a variety of situations, usually giving you more options in terms of interacting with your own ship and the surrounding waves.*

#### Anchor System Free

Lengths of chain with heavy curved hooks, used to anchor ships to the branches of the Wildsea. *Almost every ship comes with this as standard.*

#### Rig-Ropes 1 Stake

Ropes strung up above the deck for various purposes, often climbed, used as safety lines for trips over the edge of the ship or hung with drying washing.

#### Firefly Lanterns 1 Stake

A network of lanterns, their glowing inhabitants woken or sent to sleep with a tap on the glass, ready to illuminate any part of the ship.

#### Cargo Crane 1 Stake

A sturdy crane for loading and unloading cargo, capable of carrying extremely heavy objects without overbalancing the ship.

#### Wrecker's Magnet 1 Stake

A curious electromagnetic crane, often used by salvagers. Controls on the crane can increase, decrease or cut the magnetism entirely.

#### Signal Flares 1 Stake

Colour-coded flares meant to be fired up into the heavens to communicate findings, threats and positioning. *At least a smattering of the signalling language is required to use or understand them effectively.*

#### Vox-Horn 1 Stake

A deep, blaring horn that can also be used as a voice amplifier.

## Rooms [Optional]

Subdivisions of the ship outfitted for specialist tasks. Though more niche than a motif, rooms serve the same purpose - they skew the operations and capabilities of your ship toward being useful in various situations or to various bloodlines, origins or posts. *Rooms don't make your ship any bigger, so adding a lot of rooms onto a small- or nano-sized vessel is going to leave it pretty cramped.*

### The Basic Layout

Even if you decide not to spend your stakes on any of the specific rooms available in this section, your ship will hardly be a hollow shell (unless that's what you're going for). All wildsea vessels are assumed to come with a basic layout of rooms as standard, usually consisting of...

- ◆ A Pilot's Cabin
- ◆ A Main Deck
- ◆ Crew Quarters
- ◆ An Engine Room
- ◆ A Cargo Bay

### Common Rooms

Found on many ships, but definitely not on all. *These rooms particularly suit crews who treat their vessel as a home rather than just a mode of transport.*

#### Galley 1 Stake

A space for gathering, cooking and eating, filled with pans, cookware and usually a chemical stove.

#### Medical Bay 1 Stake

A clean space with tables and soft beds for the wounded and their carers.

#### Workshop 1 Stake

A (probably cluttered) room with smithing and repair tools, as well as a mechanical workbench.

#### Navigational Suite 1 Stake

A room devoted to the storage and usage of maps, charts and navigational equipment.

#### Butchery 1 Stake

A clean space for rendering and preserving specimens.

#### Tap-Room 1 Stake

For the creation, storage and consumption of ales, mead and spirits (the alcoholic kind). Usually furnished with some kind of comfortable seating, and maybe card tables.

#### Panic Room 1 Stake

A small room stocked with salted supplies and bedrolls, able to be triple-locked from the inside and extremely hard to break into.

#### Cooling Facility 1 Stake

An insulated room where breath mists in the air, perfect for storing perishables and escaping the sun's glare.

#### Luxury Quarters 1 Stake

Individual spaces for each crew member to sleep, complete with soft furnishings and tasteful decoration.

#### Lens Room 1 Stake

A room of telescopes and ocular magnifiers offering a commanding view, a good interior alternative to an observation platform.

#### Brig 1 Stake

A hammock. A bucket. A lockable door and a set of iron bars. The cramped conditions of most ships rarely allow for much more.



## Armaments [Optional]

The final set of fitting options for your ship, but by no means the least important. Armaments are deck weapons that deal huge amounts of damage, scaled for ship-on-ship combat or combat with large predators (perhaps even leviathans, if a crew feels like pushing their luck).

When you spend stakes on an armament note it down on your ship sheet, as well as the damage type it deals.

### Massive Damage on Massive Targets

Deck weapons deal massive damage as a matter of course, the kind of damage that doesn't just mark boxes but entire tracks when fired against something person-sized. That said, firing your ship's armaments at person-sized things would feel not only cruel, but rather wasteful – especially when there are so many inviting larger targets out on the rustling waves.

When a ship or leviathan takes massive damage it treats it as a matter of course, due to its inherent size

## Deck Weapons

The Wildsea, it's often said, is a dangerous place. Having one of these weapons bolted to your decks doesn't make it any less dangerous in general, but might make it a little less dangerous for you in particular. *Deck weapons can be angled independently from the ship, allowing for easy tracking of moving targets. They're also assumed to come with a limiter, preventing you from turning them far enough that you'd catch your own ship as you fire.*

### Trebuchet 2 Stakes

Lobs stones, chunks of wood or salvage clusters.

- ◆ Deals massive LR Blunt damage

### Harpoon Turret 2 Stakes

Fires barbed spears for piercing the hulls of ships and the hides of larger creatures.

- ◆ Deals massive LR Spike damage

### Shrapnel Cannon 2 Stakes

Fires clouds of tearing metal, usually just armfuls of scrap offcuts tossed into the barrel.

- ◆ Deals massive LR Serrated damage

### Viper's Tooth 2 Stakes

An unstable weapon that fires corrosive liquid.

- ◆ Deals massive LR Acid damage

### Grand Blastbow 2 Stakes

A crossbow-like emplacement that fires explosive bolts.

- ◆ Deals massive LR Blast damage

### Storm-Rail 2 Stakes

Two huge brass rods wrapped with poorly-shielded cables, attached to a voltaic generator.

- ◆ Deals massive LR Volt damage

## Hull Weapons

These weapons are affixed to (or part of, or poking through) the hull of the ship. *Hull weapons are cheaper to purchase than deck weapons in terms of stakes, but may require more careful manoeuvring to be effective in a high-stakes situation.*

### Winch-Claws 1 Stake

A bank of short-range grappling claws on the sides of your ship, used to draw enemy vessels close for boarding.

- ◆ A tool to aid in close-range encounters rather than a weapon in its own right

### Broadside Cannons 1 Stake

A blast from the half-forgotten past, these banks of cannons can only fire at targets to either side of you.

- ◆ Deals massive LR Blunt or Blast damage

### Ramming Prow 1 Stake

Allows you to ram creatures (and ships) without danger to your own hull.

- ◆ Deals massive CQ Blunt damage

### Spearing Prow 1 Stake

A set of reinforced spikes jutting from the front of your ship, for ramming others without danger to your own hull.

- ◆ Deals massive CQ Spike damage

### Bladed Prow 1 Stake

A wedge-like cutting edge for slicing into enemy ships without danger to your own hull.

- ◆ Deals massive CQ Hewing damage

### Ripsaw Prow 1 Stake

A serrated leading edge for cutting through enemy ships without danger to your own hull.

- ◆ Deals massive CQ Serrated damage

The galley was a mess, tables piled high with the spoils of their most recent salvaging run. Rusted metal, rotten ropes, shards of glass worn smooth by the years.

A pauper's haul... to the untrained eye, at least, but she knew better than to write it off just yet.

"How's it going down here, Tamen?"

The wiry little gau surfaced, his head jerking up from the pottery he'd been investigating.

"I think you're going to like this, captain. The info was good."

Tamen waved her over to the rear of the galley where a pot was bubbling gently over one of their old chemical burners. It was hard to see through the steam, but she could just about make out a set of jars sitting beneath the surface.

"Intact?" She asked. Tamen shot her a smile, nodded enthusiastically.

"Not just intact, boss... Pre-V."

## Step Three - Undercrew

For some wildsailors, the tight bond of friendship (or at least mutual respect) between a small core of cohorts is enough to see them through on their expeditions out into the wilds. But ships can be roomy places, with a lot of moving parts to watch, to tend, to maintain; that's where the undercrew comes in.

Spending stakes on an undercrew option gives you an additional NPC based on your ship, a loyal crewmate that will work in your best interests. They're not *quite* crew - they're unlikely to head into port with you unless you specifically need them, and in narrative terms they'll likely have little impact on the overall story. But they're useful, reliable and often eager. They'll have their own opinions, their own hopes, and - most importantly - their own mechanical benefits.

Undercrew choices act just like aspects - they have names, descriptions, tracks and abilities. Many of these abilities only work during a journey or when the action of the game is focused on the ship, but some can be useful on a jaunt into port.

Adding undercrew choices your ship is entirely optional - if you'd rather every person aboard be a player character, that's entirely fine.

### Officers [Optional]

Seasoned sailors, essentially NPC crewmembers. Officers don't affect the running of the ship, but instead fill in potential gaps in the crew's skills or aspects.

When you purchase an officer give them a name and a short description, then note this (along with their track and any benefits they give) on your ship sheet.

#### Rolling for Officers

Some officers come with skills and languages that might help your crew out in a pinch. when you want to make use of these skills, simply allow an officer's skill or language ranks to supersede your own. You can also gain an additional d6 on most rolls by treating the officer as an environmental advantage.

#### Damage and Death

Officers come with a track which can get marked (or be healed) like that of any other companion-type aspect. The difference here is that when an officer's track is fully marked, they have a very real risk of dying - they may be wildsailors, but they're not as hardy as the true crew.

#### Advancing Officers

Officers have the chance to grow and develop, just like a player character. To advance an officer by giving them a new skill rank, language rank or aspect spend stakes as if they were major milestones.

### Available Officers

Single individuals hired for a particular skill, language or aspect they possess. *Remember to give officers a name when you spend stakes on them - it'll help to develop their personality through play.*

#### Skillful Officer [3-Track] 1 Stake

An eager contributor seasoned wildsailor, likely on the verge of leaving the undercrew and setting out to find a main crew position of their own. Skillful officers have access to...

- ◇ 2 ranks in any skill
- ◇ 1 rank in any other skill

#### Well-Traveller Officer [3-Track] 1 Stake

An eager contributor to discussions and font of lore, wise in the ways of the wider waves. Well-travelled officers have access to...

- ◇ 2 ranks in any languages
- ◇ 1 rank in any other language

#### Experienced Officer [X-Track] 1 Stake

A seasoned wildsailor, likely on the verge of leaving the undercrew and setting out to find a full crew position of their own. Experienced officers have access to...

- ◇ Any one aspect
- ◇ An experienced officer's track is equal to the track of the aspect they have access to



## Gangs [Optional]

Small crews of fresh wildsailors, usually amateurs out learning the ways of the rustling waves. Gangs give unique benefits but often only during journeys or ship-based scenes.

**When you choose a gang, give them a few distinguishing features - a descriptor based on their appearance, for example, or a catchy name for their little troupe.**

### Rolling for Gangs

If a gang needs to act in any capacity outside of their unique ability, a single d6 roll is usually enough. It's often far more useful to treat a gang as an environmental advantage while rolling yourself than trying to direct them into action they're unfamiliar with.

### And Then There Was One

A gang is only as strong as it's members, and the wildsea is a place of endless hunger, danger and predation. When a gang's track is marked that usually represents the death of one of the sailors within it. The only way to heal a loss like this is to hire a new gang member at port, usually at the cost of a piece of cargo bequeathed to them. *For a friendlier, brighter game assume that a marked box on a gang's track implies an injury or experience that prompts the member to take some time off, to be renewed and reinvigorated by a treat of cargo when next at port.*

## Available Gangs

Rough, ready and with a worryingly high mortality rate. Gangs rarely leave the ship, but are adept at protecting it in the absence of any other crew members.

### Spear-Fishers [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Tasked with plucking insects and small mammals from the sea as they travel.

- ◇ Automatically acquire one normal specimen when you drop anchor

### Magnet-Fishers [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Laconic scavengers that prefer the comfort of the deckside to the embrace of the waves.

- ◇ Automatically acquire one normal piece of salvage when you drop anchor

### Stargazers [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Sky-watching tale-spinners.

- ◇ Automatically acquire one normal whisper when you drop anchor

### Cartographers [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Navigator-adjuncts tasked with keeping a record of the ship's journeys and surroundings.

- ◇ Automatically acquire one normal chart when you drop anchor

### Deck Engineers [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Tasked with keeping the ship in working condition.

- ◇ Automatically clear one mark from any damaged ship's rating when you drop anchor

### Bonesaw Troupe [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Amateur surgeons eager to keep the crew in some semblance of good health.

- ◇ A single crewmember can heal a mark from any damaged trait or injury when you drop anchor

### Tinker Troupe [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Amateur metalworkers and clothiers, maintaining the crew's possessions as best they can.

- ◇ A single crewmember can heal a mark from any damaged gear when you drop anchor

### Scholars [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Research students working on unlocking the mysteries of the sea.

- ◇ You learn a secret of the surrounding waves whenever you drop anchor, supplied by the Firefly

### Marauders [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Rough sorts that take the protection of the ship (and the celebrations after a fight) extremely seriously.

- ◇ They fight in close combat to defend the ship, gaining focus every now and then to deal CQ blunt, keen or spike damage

### Picaros [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Adventurous slingers armed with crossbows, pistols and blunderbusses.

- ◇ They fight at range to defend the ship, gaining focus every now and then to deal LR blunt, keen or spike damage

## Packs [Optional]

Think of a pack as an extremely wild version of a gang, beasts or insects tamed and trained to work together for the benefit of a ship and it's crew. Packs are less capable than gangs, and more prone to unexpected behaviour.

**When you purchase a pack note their name (along with their track and any benefits they give) on your ship sheet.**

### The Illusion of Control

Having a pack on your ship isn't the same as having a companion. While they will likely feel affection to at least some of the crewmembers they're far harder to directly control, usually lacking the training to take complex orders that go outside of their usual behaviour. Packs act on instinct, for the most part - in certain situations they're as likely to be a hindrance as a help.

### A Brace of Hounds [3-Track] 1 Stake

Perhaps not best friend material, these dogs are at least fiercely protective of their ship (despite having few others uses than comfort and the ability to play a great game of fetch).

### Rig-Ferrets [3-Track] 1 Stake

Used to tie and untie knots far above deck on ships that evoke the feeling of the old salt sea.

### Whirling Bats [3-Track] 1 Stake

Lend an appreciably gothic look to your ship from a distance, but are unexpectedly friendly up close.

### Frenzy-Parrot [3-Track] 1 Stake

Possessed of a shrill and annoying squawk, but tolerated as an early warning system for dangerous predators roaming nearby.

### Medical Mosquitoes [3-Track] 2 Stakes

An annoyance for usre, but a useful one - carry a symptomless infection that increases a crew's resistance to other infections

- ◇ Infections and viruses don't naturally transfer from crewmember to crewmember





## CHAPTER 7

# THE FIREFLY'S GUIDE



**The rustling of the waves is ceaseless, but even an eternity has lulls. A drop in the wind, a quieting of beasts, a pause in the drone of mantras and mantis-wings.**

**It's at times like those that you can hear the heartbeat of the sea. A creaking, not of branches or ship-hulls, but of the ironroots themselves. Thrumming with near-silent life. Sap and crezzerin.**

**And, if you sit up late often enough, on deserted decks and empty jetties, often enough that you learn to tune out even that creaking heartbeat, there's something else beneath it. A deeper layer. Not topographical, not quite spiritual.**

**Something wild.**

**Untamed.**

**Narrative in nature.**

**It's a sea of leaves, and blood and salvage. But it's also a sea of stories.**

## The Firefly's Roles

If you've been the GM, Keeper or Storyteller for other roleplaying games you'll likely have a good idea of what's expected of you. But, just in case you're new, here's a quick list of the jobs you'll have at the table...

### Narrator

You bring focus and cohesion to the story as it progresses, spinning a tale in reaction to events and actions. What effect are the characters having on the world? What's going on around them, or might affect them in the future? Immersion is key here.

### Guide

... In the loosest sense. Your descriptions and the information you share should always offer options to the players rather than forcing them down pre-defined paths. Draw from character quirks and backgrounds where you can, relating your descriptions to aspects of a particular character's emotion, history or experiences.

### Threat

The sea is hungry. Beasts howl on the hunt. Spores take root & insects burrow. Pirates, wreckers and scavengers haunt the waves... and you're the one that has to throw these challenges in the path of the characters. But remember, threats don't always have to be immediate, or physical. Trying to reinforce a ship in the face of a looming storm can be just as tense as an all-out battle, especially if there's a time limit involved.

### Voice

Of the world in general, but also specifically of the NPCs; antagonists, allies, the general crew. Try to develop distinct voices, personalities and mannerisms to help the players tell your NPCs apart. You don't need a detailed biography for everyone who shows up, just start with one or two simple facts and build from there if the players take an interest. They might not remember 'Kasndrad', but they'll remember 'the grumpy ektus with the scarf'.

### Teacher

As the Firefly, you'll likely be introducing the game to the rest of your group. Try to do this during play, as situations come up. Start slow - don't feel the need to explain all the particularities or variations of a rule right away, just how it applies in the current circumstances. A lot of the engine's rules build off of a few simple concepts: tracks, dice pools, cut and tags. Establish these basics first and players should pick up the rest with ease.

### Judge

Whenever there's a rules dispute, or a mechanic in need of clarification, you have the final say. This means different things for different groups - always be aware of how your group is most comfortable addressing these moments; remember, it's a game rather than a contest.

### Designer

Due to the reactive nature of your role you'll often find yourself designing scenes and encounters on the fly. While this can be a challenge in terms of the fiction, it's also important mechanically. You need to be able to quickly identify the most useful or effective rules and systems to use for a particular chain of events. The key here is not to overcomplicate any given moment. While the other players are learning the system you need to make sure you clearly set out which rules are being used and, if necessary, how they work in this particular case.

# Session Zero

While not *strictly* necessary, running a quick session zero before a longer campaign can be a real boon to both the crew and to you as a Firefly.

If you have the time to run a session zero, focus on...

- ◆ **Setting Goals.** Each of the players will likely have goals for their characters, some described by their drives and some born of what kind of things they want to engage with or experience. Make a note of some of the party's goals and try to incorporate those as the story progresses.
- ◆ **Discussing Tone.** The clearer everybody is on the tone, the smoother the game will run. This discussion should include muted topics and hard limits, but also what kind of general slant the players are expecting from the narrative (dark, light, witty, serious, etc). We recommend looking over the basic **safety tools** in the next column for more information on making your table (physical or virtual) a safe and productive place for all involved.
- ◆ **Core Rules.** As long as you know what you're doing as the Firefly, the players don't need to know the intricacies of the full rules. What they should have a grasp on is the **core rules** - how to roll for an action, how tracks work, what the different parts of their character sheet mean. Run through these if you have time to ensure that everyone is on the same page.

## And, If You Have More Time...

- ◆ **Make a Ship.** Nothing ties a new crew together quite like making their first ship. The process of spending stakes is written to be a mixture of collaborative endeavour and personal expression - encourage players to pool their stakes together when necessary, but not to forget they can add some things to the ship that are just for their own personal enjoyment (or to make their character's life easier).
- ◆ **Discuss Themes.** Just as the players are likely to have some personal drives or moments, the group as a whole probably settles quite naturally onto some themes that they want to explore. These don't have to resonate with every player all the time, but finding some the crew want to generally work with can help you in directing and shaping the narrative, and the world's reaction to player-caused events.
- ◆ **Lay Some Groundwork.** Talk about some things that are true for your own version of the wildsea, maybe things that the players felt themselves particularly drawn to even if they're not immediately relevant for their character. Unsetting and Framing Questions (the details of which are found on the next page) can actually work really well here to get the crew into the same creative headspace, and to provide narrative elements and ideas that can be incorporated into the world as the crew explores. Is there anything in particular the crew wants to see, any place they want to explore?
- ◆ **Set an Initial Goal.** Something the players can think about before the first proper session, a particular task they're trying to accomplish or achievement they're chasing. For some groups, having this goal be explicitly talked about gives them a story hook with some automatic investment, a seamless road from planning to play. Other groups want to be completely surprised while playing in-character - if yours is the latter, skip this particular bit of advice.
- ◆ **Fill in the Crew's History.** In broad strokes and splotches - some events they faced together perhaps, or how they overcame a certain threat. If they're entirely new to each other, have them talk about what they're expecting, both from themselves and from their fellow crewmates.

## Safety Tools

The waves can be a dark place, and even a good discussion and group understanding of the tone you want to achieve doesn't mean you won't fall foul of the occasional slip-up or uncomfortable reference.

The Wildsea comes pre-loaded with some basic safety tools, adapted from what has thankfully become standard for the industry. Below is a list of common lines and veils that cover many of the thematic areas of conversation that may be uncomfortable, or that some players may wish to avoid in order to have the safest and most enjoyable experience at the table.

### Talk is a Tool

... So don't undervalue it as a solution to potential problems. A slip-up probably doesn't mean the end of a game, but it might require a break in the narrative and a frank conversation to address. The relationships between everyone at the table as players, and between them as a crew and you as a Firefly, are valuable ones. Real life, and real feelings, should always take precedence over fantasy, no matter how engaging the story might be.

"When you stop having fun, it stops being a game."  
- Ric Heise

### Common Lines and Veils

A line is a topic that shouldn't appear in your game, a hard line your group has decided they won't cross. A veil is something potentially unsettling that can usually be mentioned, but not focused on.

Alcoholism	Mind Control
Bullying	PC Betrayal
Childhood Abandonment	Racism
Classism	Rioting
Dental Horror	Sexual Assault
Drug Abuse	Sexual Content
Epidemics	Slavery
Eye Injuries	Spiders
Graphic Gore	Starvation
Harm to Animals	Suicide
Harm to Children	Torture
Homophobia, Transphobia	



# Unsetting Questions

An excellent session zero activity that also doubles as a reusable pre-session warm-up, asking Unsetting Questions allows the group to flex their creative muscles within the setting.

An unsetting question is a simple, open-ended question about the world of the Wildsea. Here are a few examples...

- ☞ The figurehead of the Golden Dawn is famed for its beauty. What creature is it carved to represent?
- ☞ What are the Spires, and why do wildsailors avoid sailing between them?
- ☞ Sawnanas are far more versatile than most fruit. What are some of their unexpected uses?

Make it clear before you ask the question that anybody at the table can answer - in fact, Unsetting Questions work best if multiple people address the same question with wildly different answers. You might want to choose specific players to answer in sequence, or let people jump in when they have an idea.

The answers given to an unsetting question are specifically not true. Players should think of them as junction-house stories and half-remembered legends, possibilities, or unsubstantiated rumours.

## Why Ask Unsetting Questions?

Running through a couple of these questions before you start a game helps to get all players at the table into the same creative headspace, giving a shared experience without the pressure or potential of any suggestions being rejected. Players can throw out wild theories and ridiculous ideas safely without worrying about how they might affect the upcoming game.

Once your group is comfortable with the process of unsetting questions, they might have some of their own from time to time. Encourage this - it helps to break the GM/player divide and lets even more creativity flow. Activities like this might even inspire players to try their hand at the Firefly role themselves at some point!

## Useful Unsetting Question Structures

- ☞ The \_\_\_\_\_ pirates are famed for their...?
- ☞ What do people claim...
- ☞ What do you hope is not true?
- ☞ Why does a particular world element work the way it does?
- ☞ What's the purpose behind x?
- ☞ What do you think is...?
- ☞ Someone believes X - why are they wrong?
- ☞ What's a secret about X that you've heard whispered of in portside junctions?
- ☞ What is a capability of the vessels of the \_\_\_\_\_ that you've heard tales of?
- ☞ Insert specific name - why are they famous?

## Pre-Made Unsetting Questions

- ☞ What fruit do the citizens of Distant Dirge glut themselves on every spring?
- ☞ The Black Chrysanthemum was a pleasure barge lost to the waves many years ago. Many of the cargo items were looted and distributed in the days following the wreck - what's something that was taken, and where did it end up?
- ☞ There have been reports of unnatural weather around a nearby port - what is a rumour you hope is not true about this meteorological oddity?
- ☞ What is a crime or atrocity you've heard of being committed by the Hunting Families?
- ☞ What is the name of the favourite food/drink of wildsailors at the Lazy Cat junction house?
- ☞ What invention or creation has changed the way people live on the Gatling Archipelago?
- ☞ What is a sad song that people sing anyway?

## Framing Questions

An alternative approach, Framing Questions follow the same sort of format as Unsetting Questions but differ in a single important way - the answers are true, and will likely have an almost immediate impact on the characters or narrative of the game. These are questions that, when answered, fill in important information for the story going forward. They might be about a shared bond (or even a shared dislike), a fact about a place, a creature or element of the world, or even a reaffirmation of previously discussed goals and themes. Here are a few examples...

- ☞ Why does everyone hate NPC x?
- ☞ What do you all think of (world element)?
- ☞ What is it about this port that drew you here?
- ☞ What is a story you tell of your ship?
- ☞ What is a story people tell of where you grew up?
- ☞ What is a feat that you are associated with out on the waves?
- ☞ What is a story people tell of your ship?



# The Toolbox

Think of the rules of the Wild Words Engine as a set of useful resources, a toolbox that you can dip into to produce the perfect tool for a situation. Over the next few pages you'll find an overview of how different parts of the system can be used as you play.

## Using The Conversation

The conversation exists to promote a natural flow of ideas, to give players the space they need to engage in both in-character and out-of-character creativity.

### Natural Conversation

Though the Firefly's role is to 'run the game', that doesn't mean you have to be talking all the time, or shaping every conversation and event that occurs. Often the other players speaking to each other in character is a good sign that they're engaged not only with what they've made, but with the situation they find themselves in.

This could be a discussion about what they're doing next, with players weighing up their options and trying to decide what makes the most sense for the unfolding narrative of the world. It could be a sharing of backstories, thoughts, or secrets during downtime, such as a montage or a peaceful leg of a journey. It could even be a specially requested scene, or something the game just naturally slips into - the discovery of a new element of the world prompting in-character conversation based around thoughts and differing opinions, for example.

While you can break in and join the conversation here (either by speaking through an NPC or with more general questions and prompts), it's often better to step back and let these natural conversations play out. Instead of inserting your own voice, do your best to...

- ◆ **Recognize.** These moments are precious.
- ◆ **Understand.** What led to this kind of natural communication?
- ◆ **Plan for the Future.** Listen to what these in-character moments reveal about the wants and motivations of your players. How can you reinforce or incorporate these into the narrative?

### Directed Conversation

Though in an ideal world the conversation would always flow smoothly and productively, there will inevitably be times when the other players need a bit of prompting or direction.

This is where you can use conversation as a tool rather than simply as a convention. You can shape the conversation (without railroading your players) by...

- ☞ Introducing a new element or idea to the game.
- ☞ Reminding players of something they might have forgotten or overlooked using an NPC.
- ☞ Suggesting possible actions, or forcing reactions to specific events.
- ☞ Calling for an action or reaction roll as a prompt.
- ☞ Encouraging a discussion about the crew's goals.
- ☞ Asking a player how their particular character is feeling, or what they think about a situation.
- ☞ Have an element of the scene elicit a reaction from a passenger or the undercrew.

The best times to use these techniques are when there's a lull in the story, or if the current scene feels like it's getting stale or losing a sense of narrative direction.

You can also utilize the above techniques as time-savers, pushing for resolution to a scene when you feel the players have gotten as much out of it as they can and you're eager for them to experience something else.

In these situations, though it's important to remember that while there may be a time limit on your session, there's not a clock running on enjoyment - for some groups, extended periods of in-character discussion are half the fun of being on a wildsailor crew.

### Meta-Conversation

Not everything said during a game will be in character, or even related to the characters and their present situation. It's natural for a game, especially a fiction-focused game, to draw players into discussion concerning story elements, past events, and possible future plans.

Though it might feel like this kind of conversation should be kept to a minimum (and if it ends up being a distraction for the entire table, it could be argued that it should), these kind of exchanges can be just as telling as natural conversation when considering the wants and goals of the crew as a whole.

If meta-conversation repeatedly brings the table round to a particular plot or element, consider hinting at or including it in the near future.



## Using Focus

Focus is your spotlight – shine it on what’s important, what needs highlighting, what is in the dark and needs bringing into the light.

### Directing Focus

When you begin a scene, montage, or journey, the focus will be on the environment as you describe it. From there onwards, the focus is fluid – one player might ask a question, another take an action, yet another state their opinion about something. The focus should flow from person to person, and character to character, through the natural progress of the conversation.

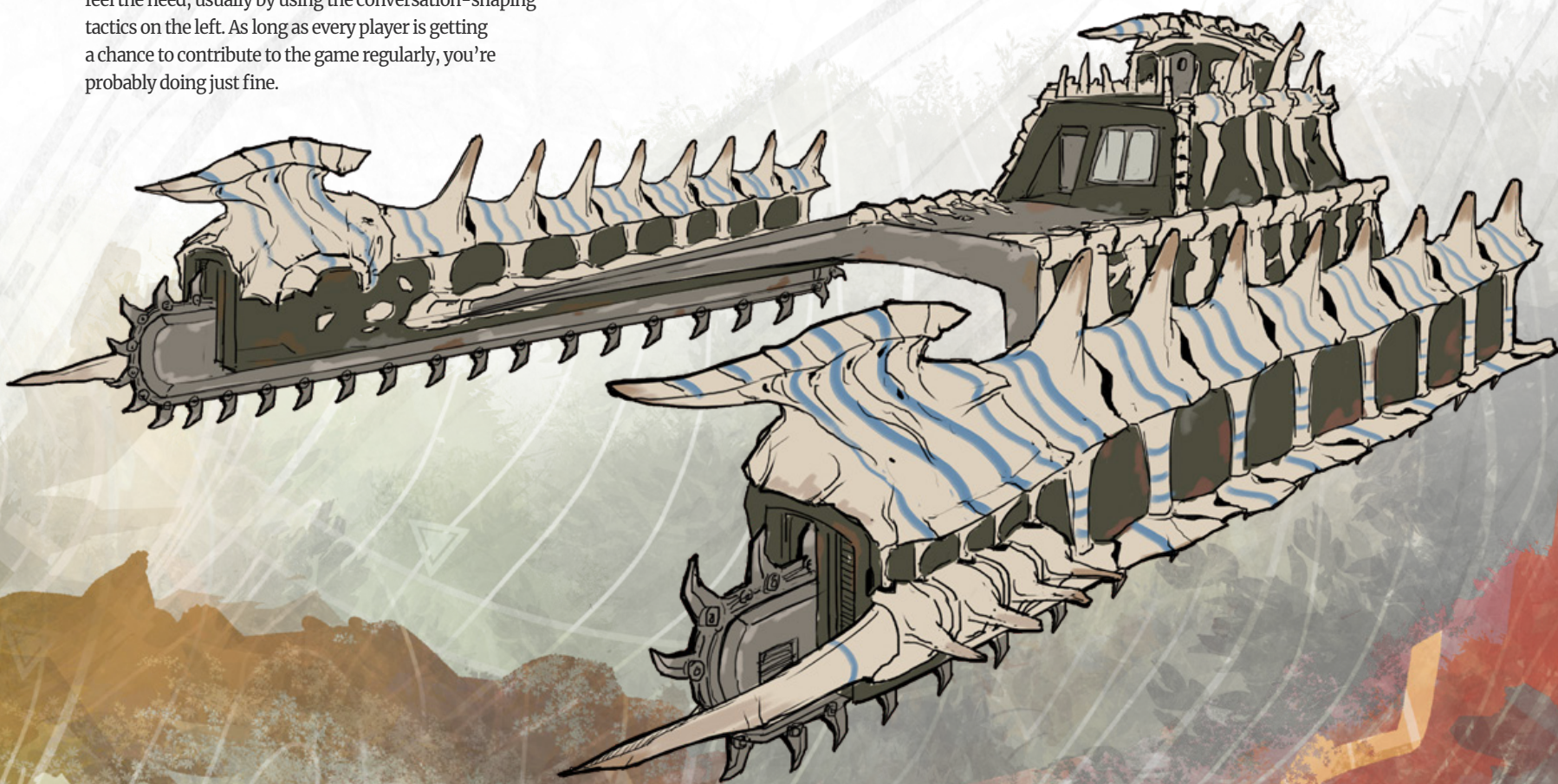
As the Firefly, you have the power to direct focus if you feel the need, usually by using the conversation-shaping tactics on the left. As long as every player is getting a chance to contribute to the game regularly, you’re probably doing just fine.

### The Focus Tracker

When the narrative turns dramatic (such as during a fight, a chase, or an escape) you need to ensure that everyone gets their time in the spotlight. To this end, it’s often useful to set a focus track, an easy way to track which characters have acted or reacted. Here’s an example of a focus track, mid-combat – ‘A’ represents an action, ‘R’ a reaction. Keeping track of when players have acted or reacted allows you to easily shift the focus to them, keeping everyone’s time in the spotlight roughly balanced even during a hectic period of action or narrative.

**Kyllian:** AR  
**Laura:** ARA  
**Todd:** A  
**Freya:** RA

From the tracker you can see that Laura’s had most of the focus, and that it should probably move to Todd to even things out (either by the Firefly specifically asking him for an action or forcing a reaction). Allowing every participating character the chance to act and react if possible should be the Firefly’s goal during a dramatic scene.





## Using Tracks

Tracks are an extremely versatile tool, and can be constructed quickly and easily in response to events. Whenever you need to measure progress of some kind, you should consider setting a track.

Set a track when...

- ◇ Counting down to a specific time or event, such as a festival or market day.
- ◇ You want to add granularity to an unfolding situation, such as an attempted ship hijacking.
- ◇ Building up to a deadly hazard, such as a rootquake or a stampede of wildsea beasts.
- ◇ Determining the staying power of enemies in combat, usually by counting damage to either their health or their morale.
- ◇ Measuring the changing attitudes of a faction or NPC towards the crew, such as a group of outsider hunters, slowly learning to trust.
- ◇ A character begins work on a project, such as the creation of a new piece of gear or training in a skill, aspect, or language.
- ◇ A character takes a lasting injury, either in combat or from an environmental hazard.

## Track Length

The length of a track dramatically changes the impact it will have on the narrative of the game. The longer the track, the more time and effort it requires to fill and the more it will be at the forefront of the narrative. This goes for tracks that the crew have to fill themselves and for tracks that fill naturally due to the passing of time or world events - an unfilled track is a near-constant reminder that *something* is afoot.

So choosing the right length for a track is important, and it's something you'll have to get used to as the Firefly, because you'll likely be doing it a lot. No doubt it'll become second nature after a while, but until then, there's a good bit of general guidance you can follow...

### If in Doubt, Choose Three

A three-box track is the easiest go-to for just about any situation. It's extremely unlikely to be filled by a single action or roll, but short enough that a couple of actions will knock it on the head. The achievable length means crews will often band together to fill it quickly, which can help bring direction and cohesion to a scene. And, for many people, it just feels right - three is a useful number after all.

### Two or Fewer Boxes - A Reminder

It might seem tempting not to make a track at all that can likely be filled with a single good roll, but they do serve a purpose. A one or two-box track is more of a reminder than a challenge, so you should use them you want the crew to focus on something that they can't immediately effect - think of them as a kind of checklist for future events, a diary entry with a checkbox next to it, a textual representation of a goal, or an extra, crew-wide drive.

### Four or More Boxes - A Challenge

Longer tracks are often a challenge to fill, and can dominate both the narrative and the creative focus of the crew's efforts. Use longer tracks when an event is going to take multiple scenes (or multiple sessions) to come to fruition, or when representing a particularly difficult obstacle or hazard that the crew will struggle to overcome in the short-term.

## Open, Hidden or Secret?

When setting a track, one of the first things you should decide is how much you want the players to know. Should they be aware of how many boxes are on the track, of when those boxes get marked, or even of its existence in the first place?

An open track is a known quantity in more ways than one. It doesn't just set a ticking clock out for the players to see; it acts as a reminder that *something is happening*. Players are much more likely to focus their efforts on filling an open track because immediate feedback on how, when, and why it's marked means that open tracks are easier to work together and fill. Because of this, open tracks are extremely useful for marking character-driven plot or world developments (events that the players have direct agency in) and looming threats (as the players will have a constant reminder of the threat itself).

Hidden tracks work well for adding a dash of flair and mystery to proceedings. The very words 'Just so you know, I'm setting a track...' can be powerful in their own right - you've clued the players in that their actions are affecting something, usually in the current scene. Their attention may not be as constantly on it as an open track, but it provides a puzzle for them to solve as they play. What actions or events mark this track, and what is it building towards? You can also vary the information you give players for a hidden track, choosing to show or hide the name, number of boxes, amount of marks, or precise conditions of marking and clearing as the situation demands.

Secret tracks are, for the most part, just for you; a tool for the Firefly to keep accurate counts of certain things behind the scenes. There is the option of revealing a secret track at the moment of completion, making it clear that you've been paying attention to the crew's actions and marking it accordingly, but this doesn't work for every group. If it makes your players feel like you're trying to catch them out or punish them without their knowledge, avoid it.



## Filling Tracks

When you set a track for something, you need to understand (and make clear to the other players at the table) whether the track is active or passively marked. You don't need to use those particular words - often context clues will be enough to put everyone on the same page.

Actively marked tracks require some kind of input or effort from the crew to advance - usually either time spent working on a related activity, a successful action or a sacrifice of resources.

*For example, Hunting the Chameleocuda would be an actively marked track. The crew might mark it by studying chameleocuda habits, talking to other hunters, catching sight of the beast, and giving chase or setting traps and lures to bring it out of hiding.*

Passively marked tracks fill in response to something outside of the crew's control, usually a world event. The crew might be able to mark or clear it themselves as well, but they won't be the primary driving force behind each mark.

*For example, Festival Preparations could be a passively marked track. It might be marked when a large ship comes to harbour laden with supplies, when a local chef debuts their new street food ahead of the festivities, or when night falls on the town the day before the festival. It might also be marked by crew's efforts, such as them supplying bunting or trophies to the organizers, but the festival will be prepared for eventually whether they help out or not.*

## Mark Conditions

So how do players actually fill a track? Though it may feel odd, the best answer might very well be 'however they want to'. Signpost options, but don't specify.

Remember, tracks are goal-oriented. Though you probably have a rough idea of how the players will be marking or clearing the boxes on a track, don't just tell them what to do unless you really have to - half the fun of tracks is often working out how to fill them. Your players will often surprise you!

## Breaks

When using longer tracks (five-nine boxes), it can be a good idea to split them into multiple shorter tracks by inserting 'breaks' - moments where filling a certain number of boxes causes a smaller effect. Here's an example...

**The Oncoming Rootquake:** ○○+○○○

*In the above track, marking the second box leads to a break - maybe the crew notice birds spiraling up, wildlife fleeing. Marking the next three boxes leads to another break, this time a warning tremble from below, perhaps a siren from a nearby spit of land. Then that final box brings the full effects of the rootquake.*

Be sure to give players the opportunity to mark longer tracks in various ways. Don't just have them repeat the same sort of actions, as it quickly becomes both mechanically and narratively boring. If the players come up with a novel way of filling a track, let them give it a go - it means they're engaging with the problems and challenges presented by the scenario, and that can't be a bad thing.

## Using Burn

Very few hazards or aspects detailed throughout this book are serious enough to burn tracks rather than simply mark them, but that doesn't mean you should avoid doling burn out from time to time, and certainly doesn't mean you shouldn't know how to deal with it as a Firefly.

## Burning Tracks

As mentioned earlier, you can burn a progress track to show that the change you're making to it is permanent. This might come in the form of a symbol of lasting friendship, an inescapable countdown or signifier of permanent damage or decay.

When a character's aspect tracks or a ship's ratings are involved, burn usually represents damage that's incredibly hard (but not impossible) to undo. You might want to use burn when a leviathan deals a serious blow to an already-damaged track, or when the incoming damage relates to a character's marked mires or backstory in some way.

## Removing Burn

Healing marks of damage is easy, relatively speaking, but healing burn should be much harder. You might let a character heal a burned box on one of their aspects (or on a ship's rating) by...

- ☞ Making a roll to heal using an appropriate piece of cargo rather than an appropriate resource
- ☞ Treating the burn as an injury or project, giving it its own track that must be healed box by box over time
- ☞ Visiting a portside surgeon and supplying not only resources for their treatment, but additional supplies for their other patients
- ☞ Undertaking a short quest or journey for a unique resource that's perfect for treating the damage that the burn represents

**"It all happened so fast..."**

**The young marauder inclined his head absent-mindedly, focused on cleaning the leaf-pulp out of his pistol. There was a calm in the air, the kind of calm that only settles once violence has been done.**

**"That's usually how a fight goes, yeah. Not usually much time for thinking, just a lot of blade and bullet and back-and-forth."**

**Pistol cleaned, the marauder set it back in its holster and busied himself with the bodies. There were pockets to go through, satchels and sacks to upturn.**

**"How do you keep up with it?"**

**The engineer was shivering. In shock, most likely, but the blood on his jacket wasn't his.**

**"How do you... enjoy something like that? How is that just a... a part of your day?"**

**There was no answer to that. Or none the poor soul would be happy with, at any rate.**

## Using Action Rolls

Calling for a roll lets players know that the action they're taking has weight to it, and that failure in this situation will have consequences. If a character is attempting something that has no consequences for failure, as a rule of thumb they shouldn't roll.

Players Roll **Edge + Skill + Advantage** When...

- ◇ They attempt an action that's difficult (convincing an NPC, climbing a wall), dangerous (engaging in combat, avoiding a trap) or dramatic (chasing down a target, sneaking to avoid detection).
- ◇ They work on a complex task or project, such as cooking or crafting.
- ◇ They want to acquire salvage or specimens.

### Calling for Reactions

Call for a reaction roll when there's a threat that needs addressing immediately, such as an enemy attack, a direct question in a heated argument or a trap being sprung.

In some situations one player might not know how to react, but another wants their character to step in and help. This is entirely acceptable if it happens occasionally, but if it happens too often it might lead to one player's character dominating the spotlight.

### Other Rolls

Dice can be used to determine more than the results of actions.

Players Roll **1d6** When...

- ◇ They take a shift on watch during a journey.
- ◇ They determine the effectiveness of a friendly NPC's action.

Players Roll a **Ship Rating** When...

- ◇ The crew try to avoid or react to a hazard during a journey.

The **Firefly** Rolls **1d6** When...

- ◇ Determining the threat level of a watch result during a journey.
- ◇ An outcome of pure luck is needed, related to the environment or an ongoing event.

## Positive and Negative Outcomes

While the actual results of a roll are split into Triumph, Conflict and Disaster, all this *really* means is that a roll can cause good things, bad things or a mixture of the two. The following lists are intended to help you as you work out the effects of a roll on the situation, giving both mechanical and narrative options to draw from once the numbers are on the table and the other players look to you for a description.

### Positive

- ◇ An action goes exactly the way it was planned
- ◇ Not quite what was hoped for, but still good
- ◇ Aid an ally in achieving something
- ◇ Make future attempts easier
- ◇ Make future attempts automatically successful
- ◇ Avoid a negative outcome
- ◇ Gain information or understanding
- ◇ Reveal a secret or gain clues to a mystery
- ◇ Mark a track (twice if acting with high impact)
- ◇ Gain a resource of some kind
- ◇ Unexpected healing or relief
- ◇ Gain a bonus on a future plot-critical roll
- ◇ Deal damage or an effect

### Negative

- ◇ An action fails to have the desired effect
- ◇ Exactly the opposite of what was hoped for
- ◇ Hinder future attempts at related activities
- ◇ A new threat or problem is introduced
- ◇ An existing problem becomes far worse
- ◇ Avoid a positive outcome
- ◇ Gain false or inaccurate information
- ◇ Clear a mark on a track (or mark a damaging track)
- ◇ Lose a resource or take damage to an aspect
- ◇ Mark mire or take an injury of some kind
- ◇ Worsen an existing injury or situation



## Using Twists

Though technically part of the action roll itself, twists are one of the most versatile narrative elements you and the other players have at your disposal.

### What Are Twists For?

For affecting the narrative in unexpected ways. These might be (and often are) beneficial in the moment, but some might be setting up an event for later and others may even be something inherently dangerous or negative but narratively fitting or compelling. Twists are a great way for players to bring in their character quirks and histories, satisfy or work towards drives or simply steer the story in a pleasing direction.

### General Guidance

Rule zero for twists is purely an order of play concern – describe the action before handing over narrative control for the twist, at least as a common rule. Oftentimes the effects and description of the action itself can inform players as they try to think of an effective twist.

The first thing to remember with twists is that you're not alone – anyone at the table can contribute an idea for a potential twist, meaning you have the creative power of several minds working on the same element of the game (usually from different directions).

The second thing to remember is that twists don't have to be mechanical in nature, they can be purely narrative. The simplest form of a twist might just be adding an extra detail to a scene, giving a player some narrative agency over what their character caused.

The final thing to remember is that twists don't have to have an immediate effect. Feel free to 'bank' a twist for a player if nothing comes to mind in the moment, especially if the lack of an idea for a twist would slow the game down. Don't let them hold onto a twist for too long – that just becomes an extra thing to remember. But often an idea for a twist will come after you or another player have described the results and knock-on effects of the roll that caused it.

## Twist Examples

Here are a few common situations that players might roll for, and some examples of what a twist on that roll might cause. Use these as a template for creating twists of your own if needed – all of the potential twists below can happen independent of the success or failure of the action described.

### Exploring a Wreck

The crew are inside a creaking wreck, close to being consumed by the waves. One of the players rolls to make their way deeper into the dangerous structure...

- ◇ And encounters a living crewmember, close to death, a survivor of whatever wrecked the ship.
- ◇ And finds a resource among the trash on the floor.
- ◇ And discovers a bulkhead door twisted open.
- ◇ And hears ghostly echoes of the long-dead crew.
- ◇ And the ship begins to list alarmingly.
- ◇ And hears the horn of an approaching salvaging vessel ready to claim their prize.

### Haggling with a Merchant

The merchant is driving a hard bargain, so one of the players rolls to make a final deal...

- ◇ And spots another item in the merchant's inventory that would be extremely useful.
- ◇ And notices a young thief about their business.
- ◇ And the merchant recognizes a family resemblance to another previous customer.
- ◇ And the merchant turns away, distracted.
- ◇ And the meeting bell begins to ring outside.
- ◇ And the merchant lets slip a secret or whisper.

### Attacking a Wild Beast

It's a desperate attack, lashing out against a charging beast. The player rolls, and...

- ◇ Shears off or shakes loose a resource.
- ◇ Notices a hidden weak-spot on the beast.
- ◇ Redirects the creature's charge, sending it headlong into a wall after it attacks.
- ◇ Sets up a perfect shot for another crewmate.
- ◇ Gets a flash of memory that helps them form a new plan to survive.
- ◇ Sees arrows pierce the creature from a newly-arrived NPC ally, eager to help.

## Using Cut

Cut is most often used to represent difficulty, but that's a pretty nebulous term. Below is a quick breakdown of how best to apply cut to an action roll, based on both the circumstances and what the player is trying to achieve.

- ◇ Unusually difficult to achieve  
..... +1 cut
- ◇ Unusual approach/method  
..... +1 cut
- ◇ Unfavourable environment  
..... +1 cut
- ◇ Impaired by an injury  
..... +1 cut
- ◇ Attacking a specific body part  
..... +1 cut
- ◇ Increasing an action's impact  
..... +1-2 cut

### Make Cut Clear

When using cut to represent difficulty, tell the player before they've rolled (unless the difficulty is completely unexpected). This gives them the chance to alter their approach or intention if they want to.

If you are going to spring cut on your players as a surprise, that can be effective... If used sparingly. Used too often, cut-out-of-nowhere tends to be more of an annoyance than a dramatic tool.

### Overcutting

If you're tempted as the Firefly to impose cuts of four or five dice, instead ask yourself: should the character really be able to do this? A cut this high can occasionally feel extremely dramatic, but more often than not will merely feel punishing.

## Rewards

An important tool used both to keep the narrative flowing and to keep player-facing mechanics fresh.

### Hooks

An explicit narrative opportunity is one of the easiest rewards to give, but can still be very fulfilling. They can be given in response to overcoming social challenges, discovering new areas, and progressing or completing long-standing story arcs. You might give hooks in the form of...

- ◇ Information on the existence of a new location (sometimes accompanied with a chart).
- ◇ An opportunity to become embroiled in unfolding events that could benefit the crew.
- ◇ Knowledge of a specific treasure or resource they could attain.
- ◇ A piece of a mystery they've been working to solve.
- ◇ Tying unfolding events to a character's family or backstory.

### Relationships

Similar to hooks, a positive relationship with an individual (or even a faction) can lead to more roleplay and story opportunities as a game progresses. Respecting cultural practices, doing favours, and speaking the right languages helps these bonds develop.

NPCs might be able to offer services, safe haven, or information, may correspond with crewmembers during long journeys and are also easily used to set up opportunities for future hooks and story opportunities.

### Milestones

Minor milestones are used to increase skill and language ranks and to improve or personalize aspects. They work well as a reward for overcoming an important challenge or surviving a tough fight.

Major milestones are better used to add new aspects entirely, or to combine existing aspects, creating a unique aspect with a much longer track. Major milestones should be given out as rewards sparingly, only after completing an important story arc or barely surviving an extremely tough encounter.

## Resources

Perhaps the type of reward most often given, resources help to reveal truths about the wildsea just as much as they offer unique opportunities when players consider their actions. Each of the four resource types is given out in different situations - here's a quick run-down.

Salvage is the typical reward for scavenging at sea, especially if there are wrecks or ruins in the vicinity. Salvage might also be given to the crew as a gift after they've performed a service or in trade for other resources while bartering. Most ports will have some sort of market, where low-quality salvage can be easily obtained.

Rarer salvage might also act as a 'treasure' to be found deep within larger ruins, or dredged up from the lower levels of the sea.

Specimens of low quality can be easily plucked from the waves during a journey, but better specimens will likely be given as a reward for taking down dangerous wildsea beasts and plants (taken from the corpses or stolen mid-fight using the Hunt or Harvest skills). Most ports and settlements will also offer basic supplies that can be used in cooking, brewing, or medicine.

Rarer specimens come from more powerful creatures, and from heading down into the more dangerous and lesser-travelled parts of the sea.

Whispers represent living information, and should be given as a reward when the crew witness or learn something of the deeper truths of the wildsea. They can also be obtained through trade, exploration, or swapping secrets about the distant waves.

Charts are perhaps the easiest resource to give, as their acquisition and usage are comparatively limited. Reward the crew with charts in situations where they've earned the favour of other wildsailors, or have had time to study the ways of the waves. They can also be a great reward for delving into shipwrecks.

## Cargo

Think of cargo as a super-resource, a large bundle of useful materials with excellent barter value. Cargo can be pulled from the holds of wrecked ships, picked up at ports as a reward for helping their denizens, or even created by the crew over time with a project.

Cargo might be swapped for extremely rare resources, but its real power is trade with portside workshops. Think of a unit of cargo as equal to a single stake when it comes to adding to a ship.

### Benefits

Miscellaneous benefits, often gained by eating meals, having a good rest, or ingesting unusual chemicals.

A benefit might do something as simple as clear a point of mire or heal a mark on a damaged track, but there are far more possibilities - one of the best way to use a benefit is by giving the character a short (1-3 box) temporary track. This can either act as an additional damage soak in combat, or have an associated aspect-like effect. Whenever the benefit is used, have the player mark its track. When the track is fully marked, the benefit is gone.



## Consequences

Just as important as rewards, the consequences of plunging into danger and failed plans can be harsh.

## Unforeseen Troubles

A great use of hidden tracks, usually in response to a failed action. Tell the crew that you've started a track, but don't tell them the name or how it's marked - let it worry them, and reveal the details once (or if) the track is ever fully marked. This is a great way to add granularity, or the feeling of increasing danger, to any of the other consequences listed here.

## Mire

Don't forget the psychological! Usually the consequence of seeing (or doing) something horrific, or perhaps just spending too long away from the comfort of civilization.

When you inflict mire, the players choose which of their mires to mark.

Don't mark mire too often for the characters to be able to recover - once or twice a session should be your maximum. The roleplay effects of marked mire can add spice to the way a character is played, but that effect is lost if the player feels constantly trapped by them.

## Effects

Nowhere near as punishing as damage, most effects either change the narrative positioning of a character (such as having them knocked down, swallowed, or held), reduce their senses (such as blinding or deafening them) or make them cut when performing certain actions.

## Injuries

Think of an injury as a lasting effect - a negative the character has to live with until it's healed.

When you deal an injury to a character, ask them to make a track for it. This track can be marked with successful healing, and when it's fully marked, the injury is healed and the track is removed.

It's up to both the Firefly and the injured player to bring the injury's effects into the narrative.

## Vendettas

Earning the enmity of an NPC once helpful or friendly, or making a recurring nemesis out of an existing enemy, can be an extremely narratively useful consequence.

Make sure to reincorporate these NPCs and nemeses into the future arcs and stories of the crew. Not every time - that's too predictable. Just enough to remind them that the threat is there, and they'll need to deal with it sometime.

## Damage

Usually taken when a character fails to avoid an attack or trap of some sort, but can also be dealt as a consequence of any failed roll in a potentially hostile environment.

When dealing damage it should usually be up to the player as to which track they mark. The exception to this is when they're using a particular aspect to add advantage to their roll - in these cases, feel free to direct damage to that aspect in particular.

There are four levels of damage a character can take, depending on the severity of the situation.

**1-2 damage** is appropriate for most environmental hazards and failed attacks. Most characters can brush this off without too much worry.

**3-4 damage** is appropriate from a serious environmental hazard, for a normal enemy's more damaging attacks, or for an elite enemy's basic attacks. This might fully mark a track for a character not suited to combat.

**5-6 damage** should be reserved for an elite creature's strongest attacks, and should only be used once or twice per combat. When applying this level of damage, make it dramatic and memorable. This will likely max out an entire track from any character unless they have resistance of some kind.

**Massive damage** is dealt by deck weapons and the attacks of leviathans. Massive damage fully marks a track, and in addition will either burn a box on that track or cause an additional injury.





# CHAPTER 8 HAZARDS



**"There's a kind of... circle thing, to it, y'know?" The old wildsailor's pipe traced shapes in the air as she tried to illustrate her point, mantle flexing around her shoulders. "Like, the worms eat the fruits, and the wolves eat the worms, and then we eat the wolves, and..."**

**"Turn them into fruit?" The navigator's tone betrayed a certain level of disbelief, and an even higher level of intoxication. His ketra companion's brow furrowed.**

**"Maybe? I mean, in the grand scheme of things? But yeah, it's a circle. Or a round thing, what are they called, an eclipse!"**

**"Ellipse," the barkeep murmured, though neither of them heard him.**

**"Anyway, any, anyway... All I'm saying is we have to be outside of that eclipse. You don't want to be a part of the food chain. And it's... Well, it's a big chain."**

# Hazards Entries

Hazards are intended to challenge the crew for the duration of a scene or journey encounter. Most will require multiple actions, or a full-scale skirmish, to bypass, but some simply need the crew to make a choice as to how they get handled.

## Basic and Complex Hazards

Basic hazards give only the barest essentials of information – a name, a quick description and a few bullet points describing the hazard's important aspects. This suits how they should be used in session, as a useful thing to throw into a game for colour or flavour.

Elite hazards have a lot more information to them, giving you as the Firefly all the information you'll need to involve them as the main focus of a scene, encounter, or perhaps even a small arc of a campaign. An elite hazard entry contains..

### Name & Keywords

The hazard's name and a few important descriptive keywords.

### Description

A brief overview of the hazard, along with guidance in italics on why you might want to use it.

### Presence

The presence section is split into various senses, allowing you describe what the crew experience as the hazard draws near or engages them.

### Resources

A small section that details the salvage, specimens, charts and whispers the crew might obtain after defeating or surviving their encounter (if the hazard is a creature these are usually gathered by butchering its corpse).

### Aspects

The standard aspects that define a hazard, the ones that knowledgeable characters would expect to have to deal with. A hazard's aspects also contain the damage type it can deal and any effects it forces on the crew as they contend with it.

### Quirks

Unusual or unique aspects that can catch even the most seasoned wildsailors by surprise. Using quirks is entirely optional – they can spice up an encounter with something the crew think they have the measure of, or be used to distinguish between several different creatures encountered at the same time. Try not to use too many at once.

# Using Hazards

Once you've decided what hazard the crew are going to encounter, you need to figure out how best to use them. In some situations you can get away with the most simple approach: 'The Lion's Mane levers itself up onto the deck out of the waves, rattling menacingly'. Boom, the crew have to deal with a Lion's Mane. But there's usually a little more to it than that...

## Focus, Actions & Reactions

Hazards should have the focus multiple times throughout an encounter, and every time they take it they should be doing something different with it. This doesn't always have to force a reaction from one of the crew - when a hazard takes the focus it could also be affecting the environment or moving to a new area within its location. *As a general rule, have a hazard do one big thing and one small thing for every volley of actions from the crew.*

## Damage & Effects

Major hazards should be dealing damage and effects regularly while they're active. As a general guide, intersperse lower levels of damage (1-2) with the occasional hit of 3-4, and once or twice during the encounter have the hazard deal a 5-6 as punishment for a poor tactical decision or a particularly unlucky roll.

Do the same kind of thing with effects where you can - some low-impact effects that are more narrative than mechanical (such as altering the environment or forcing a change of position for one of the crew) interspersed with the occasional higher-impact effect. You can also hand out lasting injuries from time to time, again usually in response to a botched attempt at evading damage.

Make these huge instances of damage, high-impact effects, and lasting injuries as memorable as they are rare. A hazard that constantly deals difficult-to-manage damage or effects quickly feels like a slog for all but the most battle-hardened crews.

## Hazard Tracks & Limits

There are two major ways to handle tracks for an encounter with a hazard, and you might find yourself using one, the other, or a mixture of the two depending on how your group approaches potentially dangerous situations. But before you choose which to use, you should set a **limit** for the encounter.

### Limits

A limit is an overall number of boxes you can split between a hazard's tracks. The higher the limit you set yourself, the longer (and likely harder) the encounter will be. As a general guide...

- ☛ A limit of 3-6 boxes will give a quick hazard (a few good hits or strategic moves will mark all the boxes).
- ☛ A limit of 7-12 boxes will give a more serious hazard (something that can weather a few blows and has more time to harry the crew).
- ☛ A limit of 13-20 boxes will give you a hazard with some serious staying power (where behaviour or abilities change as various tracks are fully marked).
- ☛ A limit of 21 boxes or more should be reserved for leviathans, extremely complex encounters, or re-occurring / multi-stage hazards.

Once you've set your limit for the encounter, choose whether you're using **Damage tracks** or **Strategy tracks**.

### Damage Tracks

Perfect for crews that love a good fight, these are tied to a hazard's aspects (and any active quirks). Attacks against the hazard mark boxes on these tracks, and when a track is fully marked, the hazard loses access to the associated aspect. When all boxes are marked, the hazard is defeated (killed, rendered harmless, or driven back, whichever is narratively appropriate). Weaker aspects should have between 1 and 3 boxes, more durable aspects 3-6.

*Example: Theo wants to surprise his crew with a pinwolf attack. He sets a limit of 12, to make it a serious hazard, then allocates those boxes to the pinwolf's aspects - Pin Limbs gets 4, Corkscrew Tongue gets 2, Staccato Movement 2 and Armoured Hide 4. When the crew attack, Theo will mark damage on these tracks.*

### Strategy Tracks

Focused on putting the strategies of the players first rather than relying on their damage, this method works better for crews that approach a hazard as a problem to be solved rather than an obstacle to be crushed.

When using strategy tracks, decide your limit at the start of an encounter like normal, but **don't pre-make any tracks**. Instead, wait for the crew to devise and try to execute a particular strategy and make a track for that - the more effective the strategy, the shorter the track. This allows crews to attempt various approaches at once, avoiding more specialized crewmembers being left out of a particular type of encounter.

*Example: Theo's crew go for a few different approaches to the pinwolf's threat, so Theo makes tracks for each of them as they're discussed. Attacking the Limbs gets 3 boxes, and can be marked by damage. Masking your Scent gets 2 boxes - it's a great idea that might give advantage throughout the rest of the combat. Cut the Tongue gets 2 boxes and their overall goal, Driving it Away, gets 5 boxes.*

Every time a track fills, represent it with a change in the hazard's behaviour or threat as normal. When a track that would naturally end the encounter (such as 'Driving it Away' from the example above) or when a number of boxes equal to the hazard's limit are filled, the encounter is over. This can end an encounter before the limit is reached, a reward for clever strategic approaches.

### Mixing Tracks

You should always feel free to mix approaches. Having a limit helps keep the game moving along at a good pace, and a mixture of strategy tracks for clever play and damage tracks for going all-in keeps an encounter dynamic.

You might also want to use timer tracks to count up to a particularly devastating attack or event, such as the arrival of a new ship full of marauders, the ultimate attack of a titanic creature, or the final rolling thunder of a rootquake. When you mark this track, narrate the build-up - this gives the crew time to consider the approaching danger.



## Creating New Hazards

You should also feel free to create new basic and elite hazards that suit your style of play – focus on a single idea that works for the tone of the world that you've set up, or maybe take a throwaway comment from one of the players in a previous session and spin it into a hazard to challenge them with in the future.

### 1. Start with a Concept

When creating a new hazard, start by focusing on the concept; everything else (the aspects, the presence, even the resources) will flow out from there. If your concept ties in to something about the crew or their ship, even better. You're making a unique hazard, so you may as well go the extra mile and make it perfectly suited to challenge your group.

*Example:* Theo wants to make a new hazard to challenge the crew of the Northern Wind. Two of them are ironbound and one's an anchored ektus, so he decides something that interacts with spirits would be good. After a few minutes of consideration, he has his concept; a predatory plant that intoxicates exposed souls.

### 2. Fill in the Aspects

The concept you come up with should inform a hazard's aspects pretty effectively. Take the most interesting parts of the concept and turn them into rules you can rely on, mechanically or narratively. Once those are done, fill in the aspects that aren't as interesting, but might still be useful (such as weaknesses and resistances, or methods of movement).

*Example:* Theo hones in on the soul-affecting effects for his first two aspects, as he knows that'll be a unique challenge for the crew; he creates the aspect Spectral Intoxicant to describe the plant's method of luring prey, and Drink the Drunken to specify the range and damage type of some soul-snaring tendrils. Once that's done, he adds Petrified Petals to give the plant an immunity to Salt damage (sensible if it feeds on ghosts) and then adds an extra line to the Drink the Drunken aspect, making it clear that the plant both moves around and eats with the same tendrils.

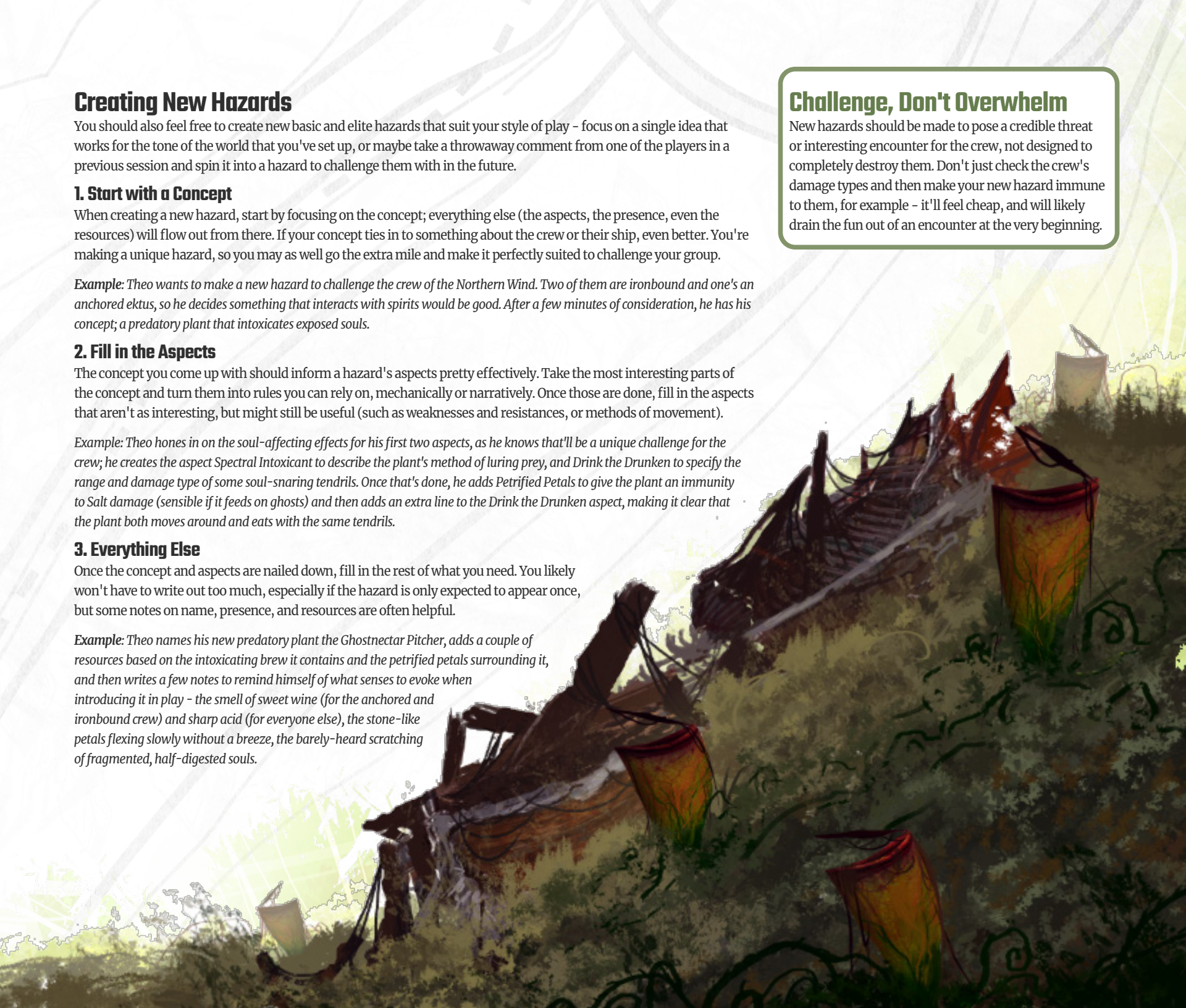
### 3. Everything Else

Once the concept and aspects are nailed down, fill in the rest of what you need. You likely won't have to write out too much, especially if the hazard is only expected to appear once, but some notes on name, presence, and resources are often helpful.

*Example:* Theo names his new predatory plant the Ghostnectar Pitcher, adds a couple of resources based on the intoxicating brew it contains and the petrified petals surrounding it, and then writes a few notes to remind himself of what senses to evoke when introducing it in play – the smell of sweet wine (for the anchored and ironbound crew) and sharp acid (for everyone else), the stone-like petals flexing slowly without a breeze, the barely-heard scratching of fragmented, half-digested souls.

## Challenge, Don't Overwhelm

New hazards should be made to pose a credible threat or interesting encounter for the crew, not designed to completely destroy them. Don't just check the crew's damage types and then make your new hazard immune to them, for example – it'll feel cheap, and will likely drain the fun out of an encounter at the very beginning.





Another pinwolf crashed down onto the deck, flank sizzling, but its packmates were still coming. They moved with unsettlingly delicate motions, tongues flickering in the spore-choked air.

“Uh, guys? They’re not retreating...”

Umbridge moved back as they advanced, keeping his eyes trained on the pack as he fumbled in his pouches for more chemicals. He could hear Ro Zan cursing under her breath behind him, see a smear of sap on the decks where she’d dragged herself back. What kind of beast took a bite out of an ektus & came back for more?

Lightning fast the pack charged as one, pointed limbs scraping & skidding over the decks as they came, jaws wide & hissing.

This kind of beast, apparently.

## Pinwolves

### [Medium] Swift Staccato Predators

Vicious pack hunters with stiletto limbs, pinwolves are a seemingly omnipresent threat across the various reaches and territories of the wildsea. Their colouring tends to match their surroundings, most often a combination of charcoal and earthy browns to blend in with the wood of the ironroots, though paler (and stranger) specimens have been reported.

Their habits and cunning, combined with their natural speed and vicious natures, make them a serious threat to even experienced sailors. Despite this they can be trained, usually at great personal cost. *Use pinwolves if you want the crew to face something swift and uncanny.*

### Drives

**Hunt Incautious Sailors:** Of all the beasts of the rustling waves, pinwolves are perhaps the most adept at understanding and exploiting the habits of wildsailors. Pinwolf packs will take up residence around shipping routes and reefs, ready to ambush passing ships. Even lone specimens can engage in this behaviour, sticking close to a new wreck and waiting for the inevitable arrival of dredgers or opportunistic salvagers.

### Presence

**Sight:** Bursts of uncanny movement. Long twitching tongues. Coarse fur and smooth skin underneath.

**Sound:** The sharp impacts of their pin-like limbs. Hissing when they’re readying themselves to attack. Scraping and skittering if they move over metal.

**Smell:** Musky - a mixture of sweat and blood.

**Taste:** Pinwolf meat is tough, and tastes bitter unless charred or fried (when it’s then surprisingly buttery).

### Resources

**Specimens:** Pin-Limb, Flexible Tongue, Beast Bones, Staccatomygdala, Pinwolf Hide

**Whispers:** Unsettling Movement, Approaching Pack

### Aspects

**Pin-Limbs:** Pinwolves can climb any surface their limbs can punch into, with the strongest able to puncture even metal. These limbs deal light to medium CQ Spike damage, and charges can deal medium Blunt damage.

**Staccato Movement:** Pinwolves move in swift, unpredictable bursts, making them difficult to evade. Add cut to actions taken to dodge or otherwise escape a pinwolf while it has full freedom of movement.

**Corkscrew Tongue:** A pinwolf’s tongue is also incredibly mobile and well-muscled, usually used to wrap around smaller prey and draw it close to the creature’s mandible-like lower jaws. These tongues are also lined with delicate scent receptors, used to taste the air and allow the beasts to accurately track prey they can’t see.

### Quirks

**Armoured Hide:** The pinwolf’s fur is matted and spiked, giving it resistance to Keen and Blunt damage.

**Mottled:** The pinwolf’s hide shifts and flickers, giving it efficient camouflage against the rustling waves and making it hard to keep track of in a combat or chase.

**Hulking:** An alpha specimen. Deals increased damage, and can bite savagely to inflict Serrated damage.

**Ravenous:** Driven to desperation by hunger and crezzerin combined, the wolf’s tongue, mouth and gullet are absurdly swollen. Will attempt to swallow prey whole.

**Trained:** The pinwolf has a collar and barding, marks of civilization and ownership, but it has returned to the wild. Such beasts might be calmed or tamed with a little effort and some appropriate food as a specimen.





## Hooks & Encounters

**Clattering Rush:** A cacophony of pin-strikes on the deck above the crew as they examine the hold of a wreck – a pinwolf pack has caught their scent. *Consider demonstrating the pack's cunning by closing off escape routes and setting ambushes from darkened hold-spaces.*

**Wolf Siren:** The crew's path is taking them directly through known pinwolf territory, but the waves are oddly quiet. Something has drawn the beasts away – but what, and to where? *An opportunity for the crew to sight pinwolves engaged in some kind of non-threatening activity without engaging them.*

**Alpha Transport:** The crew have been hired to transport a hulking pinwolf specimen away from a busy trade area, hoping the rest of the pack will follow. *The pack's pursuit is the perfect setting for a chase-based track or desperate journey.*

**Pinwolf Classic:** The engine dies, the moon hangs low in the sky. A howl in the distance that grows to a chorus. The crew know what's coming, but they have precious little time to prepare. *Throw several wolves at the crew, each using a different quirk to give them personality and distinctiveness.*



## Thrummingbirds

### [Large] Living Drilling-Rigs

A large bird, known for destroying tallshanks in their search for sap. A thrummingbird's beak is diamond-hard (or so close that it may as well be), used for stripping bark from trees and pulverising the wood beneath in search of sap. *Use thrummingbirds if you want the crew to face a swift airborne foe, something difficult to engage with.*

### Drives

**Seek Sap:** Thrummingbirds need a large amount of the sticky substance to fuel their high metabolism. Usually this comes from trees, but they may be attracted to certain cargo items too.

**Keep Moving:** Though thrummingbirds can land, they rarely do so other than to sleep or lay eggs.

### Presence

**Sight:** Tallshanks swaying with unusual force.  
Wings beating so fast they're near invisible.

**Sound:** Low reverberations. Rapid knocking.

**Smell:** Aged sap and fresh wood-pulp.

**Taste:** Rich and savoury flesh, but their beak is a prized delicacy.

### Resources

**Specimens:** Gullet Amber, Delicious Beak, Speckled Egg

**Whispers:** Silent Motion

### Aspects

**Swift-Beating Wings:** Allow the thrummingbird to fly with speed and precision. Can knock over targets with CQ Blunt damage or LR Blast damage as a defence.

**Crezzerin Sap:** The beak of the thrummingbird drips with crezzerin, allowing it to inflict hallucinations, searing pain and other, more unusual effects.

### Quirks

**Destabilisation:** The vibrations of the thrummingbird's wings shake machines and delicate objects apart.

# Arrow-Tongue Jikari

## [Large] The Hangman's Living Lash

Frog-like lizards with wide mouths and long, dextrous tongues. While not especially good at concealing themselves, their method of attack ensures most prey will be caught off guard. Use *jikari* if you want the crew to face something unexpected, but with obvious weak-spots.

### Drives

**Attack From Above:** Hungry jikari conceal themselves in the thicker areas of the high thrash, spearing down with their tongues to pull unprepared prey into the air.

**Retreat From Danger:** Jikari don't stand and fight if they can help it, especially if they lose the element of surprise.

### Presence

**Sight:** Froggish shadows passing over the deck as branches above creak and sway. Scaled skin, wide mouths, small eyes with vertical pupils. Vivid, lash-like tongues with an arrow-shaped tip.

**Sound:** Low croaking as anticipation builds. Whip-crack sounds when they strike.

**Smell:** Like old pond-scum.

**Taste:** Rubbery flesh with a hint of standing water.

### Resources

**Specimens:** Jikari Scales, Arrow-Tip Tongue, Croaker Glands

**Whispers:** Toothless Mouths, Ominous Croaking.

### Aspects

**Arrow-Tip Tongue:** Uncoiled from their toothless mouths at high speed, can either pierce lightly armoured prey with Spike damage or wrap around heavier prey. Once caught, targets are whipped around the environment for increasing Blunt damage.

**Powerful Legs:** Jikari can't climb, but can leap impressive distances and use their legs to deal high CQ Blunt damage as a last resort when cornered.

### Quirks

**Venomous:** The jikari's tongue can split open to squirt lethal venom, blinding, or dealing Toxin damage.

# Tinker-Monkeys

## [Small] Inquisitive Engineers

Clever scavengers that live on wreck-reefs and newly risen spits. Their name is actually something of a misnomer - they're as likely to be lemurs or apes as they are monkeys, as various unrelated but dextrous species seem to develop a hankering for disassembly out on the waves. Use *tinker-monkeys* when you want the crew to face the danger of theft and trickery rather than violence.

### Drives

**Just Here for a Good Time:** Tinker-monkeys are well-adapted to the waves, and need very little from the wildsailors they encounter other than entertainment.

**Natural Curiosity:** If given the chance they will steal pieces of gear, gnaw through sails, ropes and rigging, pester animal companions and members of the undercrew, and disassemble weapons and equipment.

### Presence

**Sight:** Limber bodies swinging through the trees.

**Sound:** Chattering and soft hooting.

### Resources

**Salvage:** Abandoned Cogs, Ceramic Battery Shards

**Whispers:** Original Trickster

### Aspects

**The Devil's Hands:** Tinker-monkey 'attacks' are more likely to destroy resources than deal any damage to aspects, but a particularly technologically impressive piece of gear might take heavy damage from a tinker's unwanted curiosity.

**Fingers, Thumbs and Tail:** Tinker-Monkeys brachiate at impressive speeds, often hauling stolen gear behind them as they do so.

### Quirks

**Keen Minds:** Certain tinker-monkey groups have keener minds than the average animal, using the gear they steal and equipment they disassemble to construct original machines and sculptures.

# Ratwork Clusters

## [Swarm] Rodent Replacement System

An unnatural collection of omnivorous rats, driven to eat ship-parts and replace them with their own bodies. Use a *ratwork cluster* if you want to confront the crew with some unsettling weirdness.

### Drives

**Spread Like a Virus:** Ratwork clusters don't live naturally in the sea, preferring instead to hop from ship to ship at port or during meetings on the waves.

**Eat and Replace:** A cluster will lie low until it has enough mass to replace part of the ship. Once it has, it will surge out from hiding and devour an essential part (such as part of an engine or steering column) then arrange its bodies in a way that mimics the eaten part.

### Presence

**Sight:** Flashes of brown fur. Scattered, gnawed metal or wood. Clusters of writhing bodies where ropes and engine parts should be.

**Sound:** Scratching below decks before discovery.

**Taste:** Rattish meat with a metallic tinge.

### Resources

**Specimens:** Rat Meat, Oil-Streaked Fur

**Whispers:** Enthusiastic Stowaway

### Aspects

**The Moving Mass:** The rodents making up a cluster may move as a single organism, but they're still a swarm - conventional attacks that target single individuals have reduced impact against them.

**Indispensable:** A ship-part eaten and replaced by a ratwork cluster rarely works perfectly, but removing it will often cause entire systems to fail.

### Quirks

**Slackers:** Disaffected clusters don't care enough to replace what they eat, a terror for mechanically complex ships.



# Manticrows

## [Variable] Mutative Avian Horrors

The undisputed kings of carrion, manticrows range from the size of a cat to that of a horse, with some unconfirmed accounts of much larger specimens. Known for cacophonous cawing and an unusual patience, multiple conflicting reports about their attributes and abilities continue to leave all but the most dedicated scholars at a loss as to their true nature. *Use manticrows if you want the crew to face an intelligent scavenger with a habit of swooping in and stealing fresh corpses, as well as a host of unconfirmed abilities.*

## Drives

**Swoop and Grab:** Manticrows dive-bomb living targets, and take corpses and carcasses with them when they can to consume at their leisure.

## Presence

**Sight:** Black feathers with wickedly sharp tips. Smears like oil on tree branches. Pools of fresh blood with no corpse in sight. Hunched forms on high branches.

**Sound:** The beat of wings and a seemingly endless chorus of cawing.

**Smell:** Oil and feathers, rancid meat.

**Taste:** Manticrow meat is foul, no matter how it's prepared, but their eggs are peppery and oddly delicious.

## Resources

**Specimens:** Sharp-Edged Feathers, Manticrow Oil

**Whispers:** Vigilant Patience

## Aspects

**Feather and Beak:** Manticrow feathers have edges sharp enough to deal CQ Keen damage, and their beaks and claws can deal CQ Spike damage.

**Crow Oil:** Secreted by adult manticrows, this oil is slick enough that it helps the crows escape from traps but also enhances the mutative properties of crezzerin.

**Ragged Flight:** Manticrows leave a trail of oil and feathers as they fly, making them easier to track than other avian creatures.

**Mutative:** Perhaps more than any other common creature of the waves, manticrows exhibit a huge array of area-specific mutations.

## Quirks

**Polyocular:** A network of interlinked eyes give the manticrow superior 360 degree vision, and the ability to see perfectly through smoke, sporeclouds, and darkness.

**Cruel and Curved:** The manticrow's beak is more akin to a scorpion's stinger, and can deal CQ Toxin damage.

**Needlefeather:** The tips of these manticrow feathers are even sharper than usual. Creatures making CQ attacks against them take automatic Spike damage, and the feathers can be fired to deal LR Spike damage like a porcupine's quills.

**Pride Tactics:** A group of manticrows have banded together, attacking anything that stands between them and fresh carrion, bold enough to target even ship storage areas and portside chop stations.



# Ambush Scorpions

## [Variable] Sly Arachnid Hunters

Sometimes growing as large as a trading vessel, ambush scorpions are lone predators that dwell in the thickest parts of the tangle. While hiding, they patiently wait for the nearby scuffling of beasts – or the roar of a chainsaw prow – to make their move. *Use ambush scorpions to surprise the crew at the worst moments.*

### Drives

**Take Choice Morsels:** Ambush scorpions tend to lash out at ships as they pass, then pull themselves onto the decks to pluck at the choicest prey in the ensuing confusion. When given time to hide among the branches they are extremely hard to spot, despite their size.

### Presence

**Sight:** A sudden stirring beneath the waves. A tail like a crook. A cluster of translucent young.

**Sound:** Mandibles clicking hungrily. The snap and clatter of pincers and chitin plates.

**Smell:** Sharp. Sour.

**Taste:** Scorpion chitin is (almost) inedible, but the meat within is stringy and soft.

### Resources

**Specimens:** Chitin Plating, Venom Sacs, Twin Pincers

**Whispers:** Lying in Wait

### Aspects

**Carapace:** Good camouflage against the local waves.

Weak to Spike, but resistant to Blunt and Blast.

**Curving Stinger:** Large enough to cause serious injuries, and packed with wicked venom. Deals CQ Spike or Toxin damage (larger-tailed specimens may even reach LR).

**Pincers:** Strong enough to snap through wood and crush bone. Deals CQ Keen damage.

### Quirks

**Venom Jet:** A high-pressure gland that shoots blinding, caustic liquid from the scorpion's stinger, dealing LR Toxin damage.

**Whiplash:** The usual curving tail is replaced with a lengthy tendril-like whip, able to wrap around objects and hoist them aloft. Deals LR Blunt damage.

# Tiricks

## [Small] Playful Sensory Swarm

A tirick is a confusing little mass of bark, tendrils, and sensory vines, about the size of a day-old kitten (and about as co-ordinated). Alone one wouldn't be much of a problem (though it would still be difficult to catch), but they're never found alone – tiricks move in packs of twenty to several hundred, exploring and playing and getting caught underfoot. *Use tiricks if you want the crew to face something that holds them absolutely no malice, but can be a real goddamn nuisance.*

### Drives

**Swarm & Play:** A tirick's short period of activity is full of innocent, inquisitive play.

### Presence

**Sight:** Bundles of moss and twigs. Twitching stems. Quivering moss frills.

**Sound:** Inquisitive chittering.

### Resources

**Specimens:** Bark Sheddings, Sensory Shoot

**Whispers:** The Trouble with Tiricks

### Aspects

**Underfoot:** Tiricks have a habit of getting into places they really don't belong – in front of a sailor's legs as they're carrying supplies, into a sealed larder before a festival feast, into cracks in the engine just out of reach. They make everything a little more dangerous, a little less predictable, and a lot more distracting.

**There Are Always More:** Tiricks draw more tiricks. If the crew don't find some way to deal with the small number that show up at first, more and more will join them.

### Quirks

**Medicinal Options:** Tirick secretions are a potent healing agent, but there will likely be ethical objections raised by crewmembers if an alchemist or surgeon tries to take advantage of this.

**Tirick Warning System:** When tiricks go into hiding and lose their inquisitive nature, it's a sign that something monumental is about to happen – a rootquake, or raging storm from a clear sky.

# The Lion's Mane

## [Large] Petalled Apex Predator

A burst of golden petals sitting atop four wide, spider-spread limbs, the lion's mane is a hunting plant with a taste for blood. Usually moving in pairs, they attack in tandem, one rampaging wildly through an area and the other leaping upon any prey that flees the carnage. *Use the lion's mane if you want the crew to face a pair of terrifyingly single-minded predators.*

### Drives

**Blood-Hunger:** The Lion's Mane tends to ignore creatures without hot blood in their veins until they damage it.

**Pair Tactics:** One lion's mane will usually begin an encounter in hiding, using the other as a distraction before leaping in for the attack.

### Presence

**Sight:** Toothmarks flecked with golden dust. Sun-coloured petals flexing and rippling in anticipation.

**Sound:** A rattling lion-like roar.

**Smell:** Old blood and sweet pollen.

**Taste:** Hearty, earthy flavour for the limbs. Boiling the petals gives them an appealing sugary note.

### Resources

**Specimens:** Maw Petals, Root-Like Hide

**Whispers:** Drawn to Blood, One Lies in Wait

### Aspects

**Toothed Petals:** Though the petals themselves are soft, they're studded with tooth-like spines that deal Spike, Keen, or Serrated damage at CQ.

**Impaling Limbs:** Tough like old roots, the lion's mane limbs end in wickedly sharp points. Can deal CQ Spike damage, or Blunt damage if used to sweep.

**Fibrous Skin:** Lion's Manes are weak to Flame and Hewing damage, but their fibrous hides mean that their bodies (though not their petals) are unusually resistant to Blunt, Keen and even Serrated damage.



## Quirks

**Twin-Mane:** A mutated lion's mane with multiple petal-mouths, a ship-sized solo hunter.

**Strobing Communication:** Petals ringed with phosphorescent patches used to spell out flickering words in Highvin, a means of lighting, hypnosis, and communication.

**Wild Stamen:** A lashing tongue-like stamen that curls around targets and draws them into the lion's mane's stomach. Targets swallowed in this way take Acid damage until they are freed.

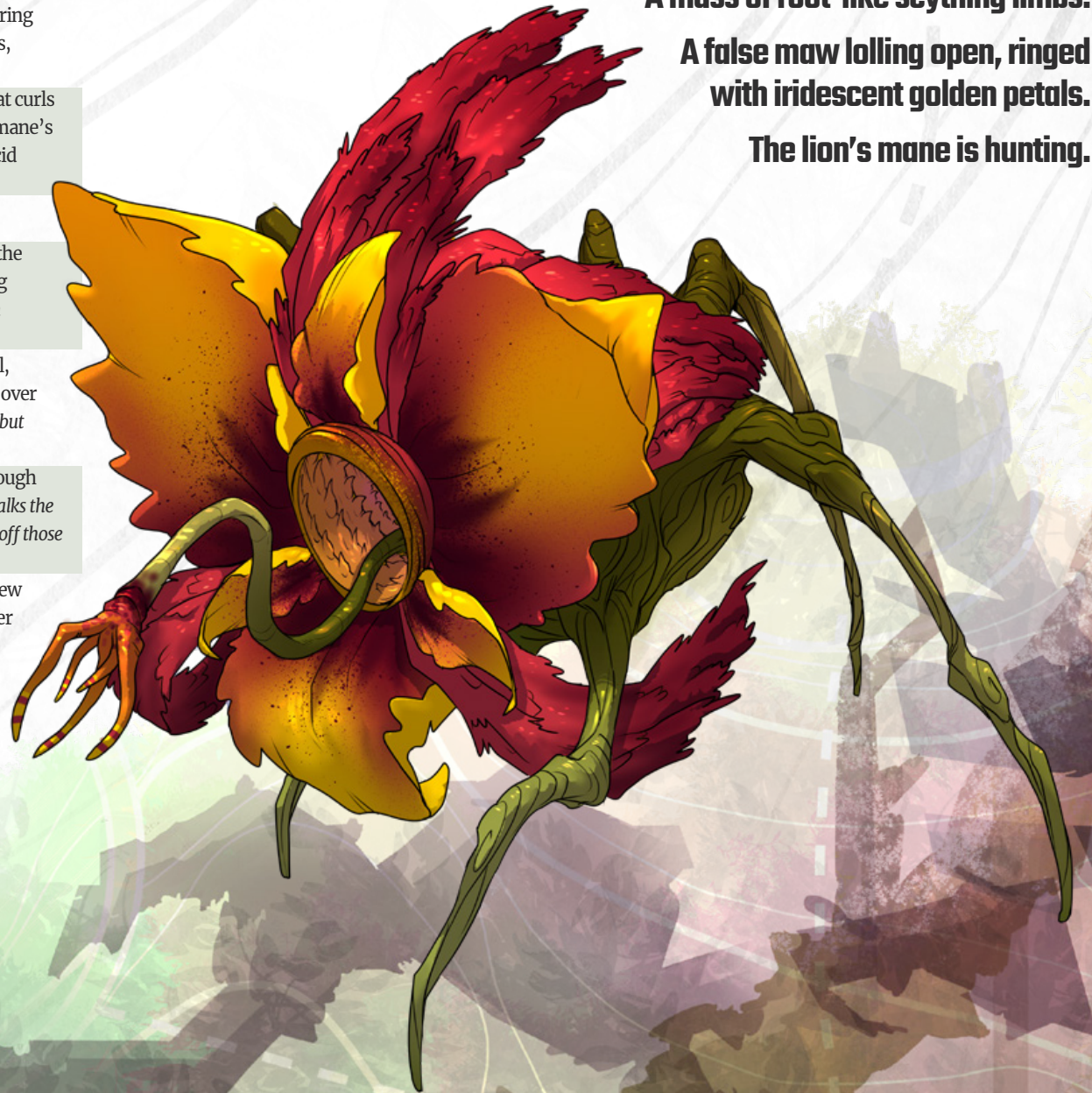
## Encounters

**From Below:** The lion's mane hauls itself onto the deck of the crew's ship with no warning, hissing and clicking and hungry. *Another can be heard in the distance.*

**Distant Lights:** The undercrew gather at the rail, pointing at the distant Highvin glyphs flashing over the waves. *None of them know what the source is, but maybe one of the characters does.*

**Binary Rattle:** Two lion's manes are hungry enough to assault a port the crew have docked at. *One stalks the streets, the other clammers over the rooftops to pick off those that flee.*

**Broken Cage:** A travelling circus shows off its new attraction – a tamed lion's mane that can answer questions the crowd throws its way. *When the curtains open, the cage is empty.*



**A deep-throated roar echoing across the open waves.**

**A mass of root-like scything limbs.**

**A false maw lolling open, ringed with iridescent golden petals.**

**The lion's mane is hunting.**



**"Seen one? I've done more than seen one, I've been on deck."**

**Pepper raised her eyebrows, looking over her drinking companion's face for any telltale sign that might expose his words as a lie. Unfortunately, most of that face was hidden by an overwhelmingly shaggy beard.**

**"Get out of here."**

**"No, really, I have! It was out of fuel, listing, could barely even work its bite. We scavenged some old charts from the nav suite before we got out. Couldn't stay, you know?"**

**"Too empty?"**

**"Too hungry. They really are wild, truly feral. Back to their roots, if you want to see it that way."**

**"I do," she replied, suppressing a shiver. "It's a damn sight better than the alternative."**

**"Which is?"**

**"That they learnt that hunger. That they learnt it from us."**

## Mawships

### [Huge] Ships Gone Feral on the Open Waves

Mawships are wildsea vessels gone truly wild; abandoned by their crews but never quite claimed by the waves, would-be wrecks that refused to sink. With nobody to replenish their fuel supplies they get hungry, and without a crew to fill their cabins and swab their decks, they get terrifyingly lonely. They're vessels of want, deep and endless, and they split and change and reform themselves into something that reflects that new and ravenous nature. *Use a mawship if you want the crew to face a dark reflection of the age of treetop sail, a tragic and near-mindless antagonist that's most probably far beyond help.*

### Drives

**An Endless Want:** Mawships hunt for whatever they most need. Some try to abduct crews and press them into service, some destroy and salvage other vessels to keep themselves going, and others simply eat what they can from the waves they sail.

### Presence

**Sight:** Timbers cracked and peeling paint. A bite become a true mouth, gaping and serrated. Salvage architecture worming its way through the waves like a living thing.

**Sound:** A bite that howls like a hungry animal. A guttering engine that growls and coughs, struggling to propel the ship.

**Smell:** Oil, mold, moss, and old food. Salt tears from a long-lost crew.

### Resources

**Specimens:** Cracked Timbers, Parasite Moss, Unfortunate Bones

**Salvage:** Mawship Teeth, Old Crew's Mementoes, Stale Fuel

**Whispers:** Eventual Fate, A Hungry Vessel

**Charts:** An Oil-Stained Map, A Chart of Places Never Reached

**Cargo:** A Living Engine

### Aspects

**The Maw:** The defining aspect of a mawship, the mutation of its bite into something that can chew. For some ships this might simply be a scissoring of chainsaw parts, for others something as dramatic as the forward hull splitting open and flexing shut, timbers like teeth. The maw deals massive damage, as you might expect, but can also easily tear holes in the hulls of other ships - **Hewing**, **Serrated**, or **Spike** are the most common types.

**Deck Weapons:** For dealing LR damage of various types, but these are usually imprecise and scattergun. Many will be low on ammunition too, without a crew to reload them.

**Ship's Senses:** Lacking sensory organs in the traditional sense, mawships nevertheless seem to be able to hunt other vessels.

**Ratings:** Instead of the usual tracks, consider giving mawships a set of ratings based on their construction. You could even build them using the ship creation rules for some accuracy, but that isn't technically required.

### Quirks

**Press-Ganged Crew:** The mawship has abducted sailors (or sometimes hapless port-dwellers) and pressed them into service, cleaning and maintaining its structure and loading its weapons. They'll be fearful and most likely starving.

**Skyship:** Not all mawships are wave-bound - aerial vessels can go wild too under the right circumstances.

**Consummate Hunter:** The mawship has mastered its hunger and want to a degree, and hunts with patience and stealth rather than howling fury. It may well wait until the crew of its target are docked and ashore before it tries to claim its prize.



# Woke-Bone Sickness

## Arconautic Infection

The result of spending too much time around the unearthed bones of Toothen Grove, sufferers become skeletal golems still clothed in the unwilling flesh of their erstwhile owners. Often found screaming out for help, or food, or water through clenched jaws no longer under their control. Use *Woke-Bone Sickness* if you want to impress upon your players the dangers associated with spending too long around the bones of fallen titans.

## Presence

**Sight:** People moving unnaturally stiffly. Researchers with ragged clothing.

**Sound:** Hoarse screaming, endless pleading.

**Smell:** Sweat and fear.

**Taste:** Though there are few taboos against cannibalism on the wildsea, it would take a truly off-kilter sort to want to eat anything with woken bones.

## Resources

**Specimens:** Animated Bones

**Whispers:** Pleas for Help, Words that Scar

## Aspects

**Cacophony:** The frenzied begging of a Woke-Bone puppet is extremely unsettling (and definitely causes others nearby to mark mire).

**Infection:** The true fear of spending too long around these unfortunates is that you'll contract the disease yourself. An injury track for Woke-Bone infection should be long but extremely difficult to clear.

## Quirks

**Grand Design:** Woke-Bone puppets spend every second of their lives enslaved to the titanic bones of Toothen Grove, acting to some unknown master plan. They will fight, poorly, if captured, usually dealing Blunt damage at CQ with whatever objects are at hand.

# Bellows-Garl

## [Medium] Punchcard Pioneers made for the Wavecutting Age

Wheezing seafaring constructs, built in the earliest days of new sailing to crew ships heading through spore-filled areas. Driven by concertina-like contraptions operating on air throughflow, they keep spores and particulates spiralling around them so as not to gum up their creaking gears. Use the *bellows-garl* if you want the crew to face a foe that's *humanesque* in appearance, but powered entirely by ancient, rough-made machinery.

## Drives

**Follow Ancient Programming:** Bellows-garl aren't rogue constructs - in fact, they're still following their original punchcard programming (as best they can) to the letter.

**Self-Repair:** When a certain threshold of damage is reached, a bellows-garl will retreat for maintenance, no matter how close it was to its objective.

## Presence

**Sight:** Puffs of dirty air. Beautifully carved wood, now scarred and augmented.

**Sound:** Wheezing bellows. Creaking joints. Broken Low Sour spoken in hollow voices.

## Resources

**Salvage:** Broken Garl Limb, Bellows Piping, Concertina Fabric

**Charts:** Punchcard Instructions, Outdated Chart

## Aspects

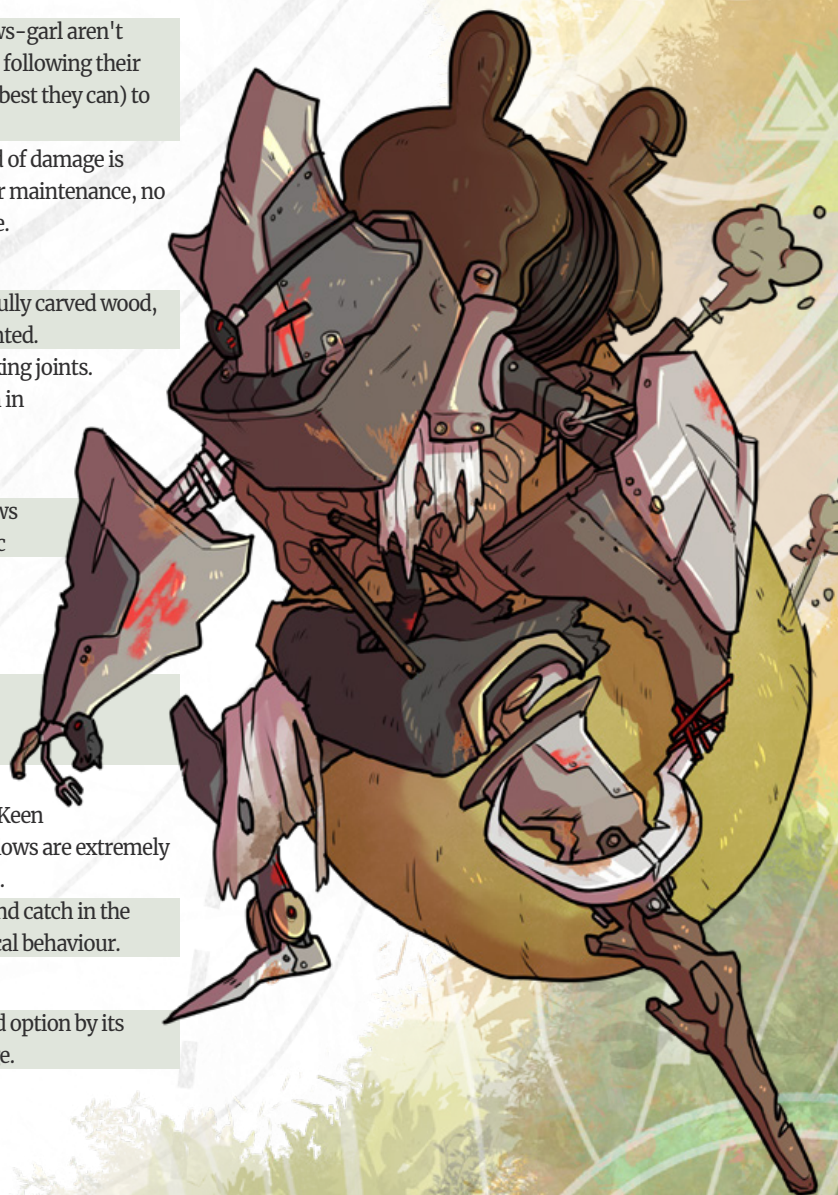
**Old-Fashioned Sabres:** Bellows-garl were kitted out liked the corsairs of old, dealing CQ Keen damage.

**Rickety Construction:** Bellows-garl are resistant to Toxin, Frost, and Keen damage, but their concertina-like bellows are extremely vulnerable to Spike and Blunt damage.

**Failing Logic:** Cards sometimes slip and catch in the mechanisms, causing erratic or illogical behaviour.

## Quirks

**Pistoleer:** This garl was given a ranged option by its creators, and can deal LR Blast damage.





## Sun Seekers

### [Medium] Mothryn Zealots

Skyship crews trailing iridescent scales, pirates swooping on ragged wings to rip and tear until they get to the heart of a ship. Sun Seekers are religious zealots, an order of mothryn fanatics obsessed with the idea that some crew out there on the rustling waves has stolen the sun, and is holding it hostage. The presence of the sun in the sky above doesn't seem to dissuade them of this notion. Use *Sun Seeker pirates* if you want the crew to face competent, intelligent foes that are nearly impossible to reason with thanks to their cultesque mania.

### Drives

**Seek the Stolen Sun:** A never-ending quest due to their inability to accept the truth of the sun's location.

### Presence

**Sight:** Gleaming hatchets and sharp-toothed saws. Frayed wings coloured black with charcoal and tar. A ship torn open.

**Sound:** Cries of theft and worship.

### Resources

**Salvage:** Mothryn Hatchet

**Whispers:** Ranting and Sun-Mad, Ignoring the Obvious, Hidden Light

### Aspects

**Ship-Breakers:** Sun Seeker weapons are designed to harm crews, yes, but more to tear into their ships. Hewing and Serrated damage at CQ or LR are both common, and Acid or Blast damage a possibility.

**Flight:** More sun seekers can fly than you might expect from the average mothryn crew, but most are still reduced to gliding thanks to the tears and piercings on their wings (and the extra weight of tar or other darkening agents on some).

### Quirks

**True Frenzy:** Woe betide any ships that run on liquid sunlight or solar sails - the Seekers won't just disable the crew, they'll attempt to slaughter them as an act of faith.

## Skin-Thieves

### [Variable] Tzelicrae Bandit-Surgeons

The lottery of skin is an ancient and respected tradition in various tzelicrae cultures, but there are those who have a certain level of... impatience. Use *skin-thieves* if you want the crew to face an opponent determined to steal their identities without damaging the merchandise.

### Drives

**Beat the Lottery:** You can't lose if you break the rules.

**Blind & Restrain:** Skin-thieves will go to great lengths to avoid harming their intended marks, using webs to restrain and poisoned needles to deliver soporific and paralyzing toxins.

### Presence

**Sight:** Spiders crawling over every exposed surface. Arachnid masses wrapped in sack-cloth and rope.

**Sound:** The rapid clicking of fast-spoken Knock.

### Resources

**Salvage:** Torn Sack-Cloth

**Specimens:** Solo Spiders

**Charts:** Web-Smeared Chart

### Aspects

**Delicate Damage:** Skin-thieves attack with LR webbing to restrain targets, then rush in with needles dealing CQ Toxin damage and causing paralyzing injuries. When backed into a corner, the knives come out (CQ Keen and Serrated damage if they can't avoid it).

**Tenuous Grasp:** When defeated, skin-thieves will fall apart and scuttle away in a swarm of tiny bodies.

**Skin-Swap:** If a crewmember is isolated and restrained or otherwise incapable of acting, the skin-thieves will steal their outer layer and replace it with their own sack-and-rope covering. Treat this as an injury that can only be healed by the character hunting down their own skin, or somehow crafting themselves a new one.

### Quirks

**Patchwork:** Some skin-thieves are more impatient than others, using edged weapons to sever and steal body parts for wholesale incorporation into their own forms.

## Marauder Ships

Most marauders are piratical types, which naturally leads to them having transport of some kind - usually a ship. You don't have to make marauder ships using the same design elements included in the ship creation chapter, but it can be useful to describe them in similar terms - not only will the players likely have a stronger mental image of the ship (having seen those options before whilst making their own), you'll also have a good idea of what the crew might be able to salvage or scavenge from them if given the chance.

## Ship-to-Ship Combat

We haven't included separate rules for marauder ships in combat, because most likely they'll be a staging area for a scene rather than anything that needs to be mechanically represented (an element in a chase, or something to fight on the deck of). If you do need decide to use an entire ship as an active hazard and engage in some ship-to-ship combat, you have a couple of options when it comes to handling damage...

### All Things Being Equal

A marauder ship has six tracks, each representing one of its ratings. When it manoeuvres in combat you can roll using these tracks (just as the crew do for their own ship), and damage the crew deal to these tracks can disable or even destroy the ship. These tracks work like leviathan damage tracks (more on those in a few pages) in that they treat massive damage as normal and ignore just about anything with less impact than that (see page 43 for details on levels of impact).

### Part of the Ship, Part of the Crew

The marauder's ship is assigned tracks just like any other hazard, depending on how the crew choose to engage with it. If this is the case then certain parts of the ship, or certain approaches taken, will mean different weaknesses and resistances (or even immunities) to incoming damage. As a general rule, lower the impact of anything affecting one of these tracks with damage if it's less powerful than a deck weapon.



# The Kjartico

## [Medium] Spirit-Obsessed Corsairs

A merciless ardent pirate band that roves across the rustling waves, looking for ships to plunder. They are pirates in the most classical sense, though their spirit-based culture and methods set them apart from common marauders. Use *Kjartico pirates* if you want the crew to face a threat on equal terms - intelligent enemies with weapons, goals, and a ship of their own.

### Drives

**Loot and Plunder:** The Kjartico will take anything they deem valuable if given the opportunity, starting with the resources and cargo that trade best in the area.

**Maintain Morale:** The pirates will retreat after losing enough of their number, but they'll definitely bear a grudge.

### Presence

**Sight:** A wooden ship belching sawdust on the horizon. Heavy-coated ardent standing grimly on deck. A flag flying from a makeshift mast, of a red blade on a white background.

**Sound:** The buzz of wood being ground down. An oppressive silence. A shouted challenge.

**Smell:** Fresh sawdust and hot sap. Tobacco smoke.

**Taste:** Pork, apparently.

### Resources

**Salvage:** Curved Cutlass, Pirate's Longcoat, Flintlock

**Specimens:** Pirate's Skull

**Charts:** Old Map of the Waves, Pirate Port Journal

**Whispers:** Deliver or Die

### Aspects

**Gang:** Kjartico pirates attack as a group, and can deal multiple different damage types depending on the arms they carry (Blunt, Keen, and Blast at CQ or LR).

**On Two Fronts:** Every Kjartico crew has a number of spirit-callers on their roster, able to swiftly throw together rituals to summon the spirits of marauders long-dead or beasts of the wild. These spirits use the caller, or in some cases the ship, as a temporary anchor to the world, and will deal Salt damage at CQ or LR depending on their form.

### Quirks

**Grim Challenge:** The Kjartico are ordered and stoically traditional in their approach to piracy. Their second-in-command will offer a challenge, a duel of blades to first blood. If they win, their pirates will swarm the ship to loot, and will kill any who resist. If that second-in-command is bested, the pirates will withdraw without another word.

**Kjartico Ships:** Their ships are armoured with thick broadwood, and driven by a jawbox powering a threshing mulcher at the prow. Broadside cannons are common, dealing massive Blunt or Blast damage at LR.

**Phantom Crew:** When a Kjartico pirate dies in combat, their crewmates will do the best to recover the body. Whether they do or don't, a spirit will rise from the corpse at nightfall.



**They were a ragged, sorry-looking group. Old wildsailors with grey beards and hair, scars criss-crossing their bodies, limbs missing or replaced with clanking prostheses, faces drawn and scowls bitter.**

**Leviathaneers.**

**The junction-house fell silent as they entered, then erupted into whispers as they took their seats.**

**“That’s the crew of the Guilty Hand,” an old ektus confirmed to her companions.**

**A beast the size of a ship, the size of a city, the size of a mountain, a tzelicrae signed.**

**“Takes a part of them every time they fail, a hundred limbs torn away,” an ardent captain mouthed, shaking his head.**

**The bartender, heedless of the change in atmosphere, hustled over to the new arrivals. She met the remaining eye of their leader with a knowing wink.**

**“Bloody squirrel, eh?”**

## Old Ormail

### Brutish Leviathan Beast

All leviathaneers know the tales of Old Ormail, the squirrel to end all squirrels. It crawls up from the depths of the drown every autumn, stomach growling as it prepares for the winter. Any sufficiently large food source is a draw - the squirrel is too big, too old to hunt enough food for itself, so it seeks out trading ships and settlements to eat its fill.

*Use Old Ormail if you want the crew to face something that might originally feel amusing... before reality sets in.*

### Presence

**Sight:** Birds, insects, and smaller animals fleeing in a single direction, panicked and howling. A furrow moving through the treescape, as something titanic claws its way through the sink. A bristling, curving, claws like a ship’s prow. Dark, swift shapes moving through flame-coloured fur. A network of scars, punctuated with the blades and hilts of broken weapons.

**Sound:** The calls and yelps of fleeing creatures. The creaking, bending, and snapping of branches and boughs. A throaty chittering that sounds like an engine turning over.

**Smell:** Musk and blood, and the sharp tang of pure crezzerin running in rivulets down the creature’s fur.

**Taste:** Like old wounds and lost sailors.

### Resources

**Specimens:** Iron-hard Bristles, Matted Fur, Leviathan Meat, Crezzer-Tinged Blood, Squirrel-Louse Chitin

**Salvage:** Old Blade Fragment, Jagserry Hilt

**Whispers:** An Ancient Foe, Ready for the Winter

**Cargo:** Titanic Squirrel Bones, Leviathan Squirrel-Tail

### Aspects

**Titantail:** The squirrel’s tail can be whipped at enemies, dealing heavy Blunt damage at an impressive range.

**Heavy Scamper:** Old Ormail can climb as well as any smaller squirrel, but causes massive damage to surfaces it grips onto. Destroy the environment piece by piece as Old Ormail clammers over it.

**Tooth and Claw:** Bite attacks from the leviathan deal massive Spike damage, and claw attacks massive Keen damage.

**True Leviathan:** Old Ormail reduces the impact of all damage types. Dealing massive damage to Old Ormail marks single boxes rather than entire tracks. Sighting Old Ormail for the first time marks at least two marks of mire.

### Quirks

**Crezzerhide:** The matted fur of Old Ormail is sticky with crezzerin - all CQ attacks made against it deal a mark of contact Toxin damage to the attacker, unless they have crezzerin resistance.

**Consumer:** With a successful bite, Old Ormail can swallow a character whole. Characters swallowed in this way take medium Acid damage every time they perform an action, until they’re free.

**Squirrel-Lice:** Lice the size of dogs crawl amongst Old Ormail’s fur, and leap off to find new targets if their host is attacked. Bites from these lice deal low Spike or Toxin damage.





## Hooks & Encounters

**Special Delivery:** A few moments of warning are all the crew gets before a massive bushy tail slams into the ship from below, tearing the hull open to expose their cargo.

*Old Ormail doesn't care much for the sailors - it's simply after the foodstuffs they have stored in their ship.*

**Hunting Party:** A group of leviathaneers have a plan to chain Ormail, a long enough leash to let it run reasonably free but also to keep it away from a nearby settlement already struggling with food shortages. *The leviathaneers need the crew's ship as a distraction - they may or may not make that particular part of their plan clear.*

**Winter Festival:** The festival is in full swing, a celebration of autumn's end... and that's when the screams begin. *The crew will have to face or flee from Old Ormail without the benefit of their ship, probably in an unfamiliar location. It won't be chasing them specifically though, probably - it'll be aiming for the food.*







# THE FOXLOFT



**Partov had always assumed that it wasn't actually the spring-foxes that brought good luck to a crew out on the wild waves, but the surge of confidence that came with their sighting. Placebo effect, perhaps. As a surgeon, she could appreciate that.**

**She watched as the undercrew redoubled their efforts, sporescarves flailing in the wind as the Redoubt Redoubling barreled along the wavetops of the thrash. It was a good ship, a strong ship, and it had never let them down yet.**

**It was also a ship accompanied, for the moment. Their fur glowing red against the dull gold of the oak-leaves, an entire brace of spring-foxes danced in their wake. The Double-R was by no means slow yet still they kept up, leaping and snapping at dragonflies and thrash-birds disturbed by the mulcher at their prow.**

**Maybe not good luck, then, not really. But still a sight to behold.**

# Main Elements

This page highlights the most important elements of the Foxloft, a reach of hybrid oaks, devoted hunters, and wildly varied fox-like beasts. The rest of this section delves into more detail.

## Leaves of Green and Gold

The trees that make up the rustling waves of the Foxloft are a hybrid species, a combination of oak and banyan. They stand on average a mile and a half high, their vibrant green and gold leaves shot through with strands of white-blossomed creeper and studded with fist-sized acorns. Crews might encounter...

- ♥ A recent wreck caught up in a thicket of corpse-vines, wood already reclaimed and blossoming
- ♥ The scents of sap, chemical fuel and leaf-pulp in the air around a busy port
- ♥ The taste of fox-flesh accompanied by a side of sun-cracked acorns

## The Vulpine Masses

The Foxloft is (perhaps unsurprisingly) home to a vast number of foxes and fox-like creatures. Many attribute this plethora of wildlife to the natural adaptability of the foxes of old, but those of a more spiritual bent have their own theories. Crews might encounter...

- ♥ Spring-foxes dancing like dolphins in the broken-branch wake of wildsea ships
- ♥ The yipping of pocket-foxes, stealing across the deck at night to hunt for bugs and crumbs of food
- ♥ A pheromone spray of alarm as bugs scatter beneath the shadow of a red-tailed glider

## Fur and Fury

The economies of the Foxloft are simple and direct, a constant scramble for pre-verdant wealth (from the Writlings) and impressive hunting trophies (from the Hunting Families). Conflict between cultures is rare, but the waves make up for that with a plethora of ever-changing prey and predator ecosystems. Crews might encounter...

- ♥ Hunters defending a Writling salvaging party from a leviathan fox
- ♥ The sounds of feasting and festival-drums from a newly risen spit
- ♥ The smell of sweat and blood in the air around a now-deserted outpost, and deep scratches on the walls

## The Seven Walls

As is common for the wildsea, the precise details of the Foxloft's past are lost to time, eaten by the roots. But the Seven Walls still stand, huge constructions of iron and stone that are sometimes revealed, in part, by rootquakes and canopy-cutting efforts. Tall enough to reach from the hidden ground to the uppermost parts of the tangle, a mysterious monument to whichever civilization once held these lands. Crews might encounter...

- ♥ A settlement of tents and shacks built atop a sturdy stone barrier
- ♥ The grinding screech of blunted saws as a ship skitters over branch-buried metal
- ♥ Carved Highvin sigils, half-covered in moss, that make the eyes itch slightly if stared at for too long

## Spits of Bone

Perhaps due to the impressive permanence of the Seven Walls, the ironroots dug particularly deep into the geological layers beneath the Foxloft. Rootquakes often dredge up the fossilized bones of strange and unknown creatures, many of which are lashed, anchored, and colonized despite their bizarre shapes. Do these mark an age before the pre-verdant, a time before the time before? Crews might encounter...

- ♥ A port under construction in the eye-socket of an ancient titan's skull
- ♥ The rising taste of memories, old even before the world-forest's arrival
- ♥ The hollow clack of old bones moving under the influence of restless spirits





## The Ribfields (Territory)

**Number of Distinct Remains:** More with each quake

**Bone Shades:** White, sallow, icteric yellows, old earth

The colours of the waves are muted here, and branches twine around house-sized teeth and bones that would dwarf battleships. These are the funerary waves, the uprooted graves, the remains of compounded ages brought to light.

### Incisor's Run (Festival)

A Hunting Family festival centred around wavewalking races, with checkpoints set up on various ossuary spits. These spits are often unstable, and the festival rarely ends without a few lost to the Under-Eaves. *Outsiders are encouraged to join.*

### Woke-Bone Sickness (Horror)

An arconautic infection alive in the very breath of these waves, known for animating skeletons still entrenched within the living. *A true, stark horror that inflicts mire as it worsens. Creatures without bones are immune.*

### The Howling Wax (Leviathan)

A serpentine collection of woken bones from a creature (or creatures) built to a scale rarely seen, which moves through the Ribfields on some unknown quest. *Hunters from neighbouring territories periodically attempt to track and scale the beast as it moves, risking Woke-Bone Sickness to claim one of its smaller parts as a prize (details found on page 259).*



## Local Rumours

- ☞ The Highvin script carved onto the Seven Walls spells out the history of the pre-Verdant world.
- ☞ Fox-pelt clothing brings unquestionably good luck... unless the fox was hunted dishonourably.
- ☞ Writling treasures actually hold far more value than most give them credit for.
- ☞ The bone spits of the Ribfields rearrange themselves each night.
- ☞ A trophy was stolen from the Gall-Drop Hunting Family many years ago, and they've been searching for it ever since.
- ☞ The foxes here can understand Raka Spit well enough to evade hunters that rely on it to communicate.
- ☞ Those afflicted with Woke-Bone Sickness often find their skeletons urging them deeper into the waves, to some unknown destination.
- ☞ Hunters that steal a bone from the Howling Wax slowly develop a new sense, a particular knowledge of its location at all times.

## Spearing Fens (Territory)

**Legendary Beast:** The Whitecollar Snare

**Mesa-Skull Species:** Unknown, but definitely fox-like

Often referred to as the 'home of the hunt', Spearing Fens is a territory bursting with life and inhabited by a large number of Hunting Families. Most live on huge island-like barges of bone and wood, moving slowly to keep up with the migrations and moods of their chosen prey. Worth is measured in blood and horn throughout the fens.

### The Spitskill Mesa (Landmark)

A single skull packed with old earth, both impossibly large and impossibly ancient, supporting its own forested ecosystem separate from the sea below. A *proving-ground for the most ambitious of the Hunting Families, beasts slain here never seem to stay dead for long.*

### Friendly Rivalries (Feature)

The local families are locked in constant competition over the rights to certain types of prey, trophy acquisition, and watchtower ownership, but these squabbles are oddly friendly. *The perpetual hunt lets them spill all the blood they need to without turning on each other.*

### Vulpine Respect (Feature)

Hundreds of years of cohabitation by hunter and springfox have done their work - both parties regard the other with a grudging respect, rarely meddling in the other's business. *Hunters are likely to ignore springfoxes when searching for prey, and the springfoxes sometimes keep smaller, lesser animals from interfering in hunts.*

## Highcross (Territory)

**Dominant Colour:** Oak-leaf gold

**Secretive Efforts to Topple the Seventh Wall:** Fruitless

Quartered by a confluence of unshakeable walls, many worked and hollowed out to provide secure vaults for Writling treasures that would never be stolen anyway.

### The Mazoro Line (Wonder)

A set of well-maintained train tracks connecting multiple Writling settlements atop the Seven Walls, wealth-encrusted carriages pulled by specially trained titanopedes. *A ticket is required to travel, but that really just means 'any kind of old-world paper'.*

### Rizen's Garden (Docks)

Multi-tiered platforms built around a joining of walls, acting both as a switchback path for docking ships and good ground for parasite strawberry-fields. *Picking the local strawberries without permission is frowned upon.*

### Belltower Crabs (Threat)

Polished brass constructs created by Writling rattlehands, the belltower crabs crawl slowly through the waves in search of potential old-world wealth. *These constructs are mobile and capable of basic decision-making, but are still quite rudimentary and easy to confuse or overload.*

### Kitlata's Threads (Market)

A clothing market and general trading post carved into the side of one of the Seven Walls, multi-tiered and gloriously eclectic in the products it offers. Packed with smiths, tailors, and thread-minded arconauts, there's nowhere else in the reach that offers clothes as fine as Kitlata's. *The good-tempered ketra that owns the place has been known to hire wildsailors for secretive errands from time to time, often to retrieve rare ingredients for a new dye.*

**It was a feeling near-impossible to shake, a normalcy so normal as to be completely abnormal.**

**The streets of Tall Mauzer were built on solid stone, none of that usual subtle shift or sway you got from even the most tangled temple-spits.**

**But they shuddered every now and then, from the tramping of a thousand feet or the rumbling passage of a cargo-train on the Mazoro Line.**

**Trains. The thought of them was a tickle of dream-clouded memories in the back of her head, but she shook that off. She knew, from long years of trying, that the amber had taken all the certainty away from that period of her past.**

**Still though, the throng of Writlings and wildsailors and traders, the sound of Low Sour in a hundred different accents.**

**The wildness of the waves seemed, for the first time, less than all-encompassing.**

## **The Spitskill Tide (Fleet)**

**Local Beverage of Choice:** Foxtail rum

**The Highest-Honoured:** 16 true leviathaneers

A Hunting Family city-fleet that sails the waves of the Spearing Fens, protecting their territory from poachers, chancers, and ossuary-thieves. Their ships are primarily made of reclaimed bone and tar-worked wood cut straight from the thrash, and most larger ships are wide, low, and barge-like in construction, allowing for tents and shacks on deck. Larger vessels are devoted to singular (and impressive) purposes.

### **The Endless Feast (Festival)**

In between celebrating hunts, births, deaths, and past achievements, it's actually harder to find a day without some kind of celebration. *Crews visiting the Spitskill Tide will likely be asked to contribute meat and alcohol in good faith, but it's not strictly required.*

### **Every Piece (Ship, Chop-Station)**

A legendary chop-station taking up an entire ship, Every Piece isn't a place hunters need to go to render their prizes, it's a place they want to go to admire the artistry. *The workers of Every Piece take only a single trophy from a rendered piece, usually a particularly impressive bone to add to their collection.*

### **Bakarato (Ship, Junction and Shadow-Spring)**

A ship with a lower hull of thick but mostly transparent amber, constantly sluiced with warm salted water. A place for hunters to drink, duel, and stare down at the majesty of the branches below. *Drinking and fighting are both expected within Bakarato, and the spirits they serve there are particularly potent.*

### **A Different Kind of Hunt (Feature)**

Though blood and trophies are the main driving force behind Hunting Family activity, growing numbers (especially younger members) have begun to hunt in order to tame and domesticate beasts rather than eat them. Local foxes are a common target of these efforts. *Elders are generally unhappy with this trend, but progress is hard to stop - the Spitskill Tide now hosts some of the finest animal training and breeding facilities of the wider waves.*

## **Tall Mauzer (Port)**

**Local Hobby:** Ostentatious bragging

**Darkest Secrets:** The contents of vault 9036J

A busy network of streets, vaults, and tenements cut painstakingly into the Fourth Wall, Tall Mauzer lives up to its name - it spreads from the canopy-level to walltop, hundreds of feet of densely decorated stone.

As a Writling settlement, the signs of pre-verdant wealth and finery are everywhere, and nothing is truly public - everything from the elevator platforms to the carved faux-cobbles are entered into somebody's ledgers.

### **The Expeditionary Council (Leader)**

A collection of venerable Writling merchant-tzars, directing the city's official dredging efforts. Between them, they own at least 51% of all structures making up Tall Mauzer. *The council members are chosen based on the finery they wear rather than any intrinsic governing merit. Yet the city continues to function...*

### **Royal Esterken Wells (Station)**

A station on the Mazoro Line, the highest point of the city. *The station-yards are heavily guarded thanks to the vault contents often moved through the area.*

### **The Tale of the Bottom Dollar (Feature)**

A local legend concerning a sunken Writling salvaging-ship, said to be carrying the very height of old-world wealth. *Eager goldsighted have combed the waves for many years in search of the Bottom Dollar, and though there have been several false claims, its location remains a mystery.*

### **The Vaults (Wonder)**

A hollowed-out area deep within the Fourth Wall (and far below the canopy-level), Tall Mauzer has far more vaults than it does inhabitants. *Belltower crabs guard passageways leading down to the vaults, but are of much sleeker design than those found out on the waves.*

### **Tanderich's Picture-House (Cartoika)**

A permanent exhibition of snapographed landscapes collected by an eccentric gau, the picture-house's exhibits are surprisingly effective maps of the distant waves. *'Donations' are demanded at the door.*



# Marrow (Port)

**Tallest Tower:** 17 ektus stone-throws

**Pyremind Population:** [REDACTED]

Completely independent of both the Writlings and the Hunting Families, Marrow is a thriving industrial city built into the alarmingly massive beak of a long-dead leviathan cove. Marrow is renowned across the Foxloft for its gunsmiths, metalwork, and semi-egalitarian societal structure, as well as for the port's distasteful origins.

Long a stronghold of pirates, a bloody rebellion ousted them to meaner dwellings in the nearby waves and secured the city's place as a friendly trade-hub for locals and far-ranging visitors alike.

## The Architect King (Leader)

An amberclad ardent, rescued from her dreams and used as a slave-engineer by Marrow's old pirate gangs. She earned her freedom, remade herself, and claimed its post-revolution crown, and is well-regarded by the majority of her citizens (many of whom wear amber affectations in recognition of her reign). *The King's dwellings are actually empty, the ruler herself away from the port on business so secret even her closest advisors don't know her location. This fact is kept from the general population.*

## Forge Factories (Feature)

The thick bone of Marrow is appreciably fireproof, allowing for the construction of forge-factories and traditional smithies without fear of spreading fire. *Good relationships with a forge-worker will allow salvaged metals to be reshaped and purified without much cost.*

## 031 (Workshop)

Owned by an ironbound engineer of considerable skill, specializes in the refurbishment of unusual ships and machinery. Zero-Three, the ironbound in charge of the workshop, has spread pieces of herself around the entire building. *Each acts semi-autonomously, allowing her to work on a variety of projects at once.*

## The Colquista (Threat)

The band of pirates ejected from Marrow during the revolution, jealous of its success as a new industrial powerhouse and still furious over the loss of a good staging ground for their raids. Colquista agents often try (and almost as often fail) to slither into positions of power within Marrow. *The general populace are wise to their ways.*





## The Hunting Families (Faction)

**Home Turf:** Spearing Fens

**Motivation:** Conquer the most dangerous beasts

A powerful presence across the rustling waves of the Foxloft, the Hunting Families are a collection of semi-nomadic groups united in their love of the hunt. Kin from the Families are often found trading pelts, bone and meat at ports, or encountered sailing the canopy in pursuit of whatever quarry has caught their attention. They're regarded by others as a rough but straightforward lot, honest about their intentions and driven to succeed.

### The Hunter's Throne (Wonder)

A ragged affair of skins and bones atop the Spitskill Mesa. Each hunter sets a trophy into the throne at some point, but in the absence of recognized leaders, it remains empty by tradition. *The throne is a symbol of what has been conquered, not of who conquered it.*

### The First Feast (Festival)

Anyone can become a member of one of the Families if they're driven enough, and those born directly into the Families do not attain the title of kin merely through circumstance. *To become a recognized member you need to provide the meat for your own induction feast, enough for everyone present – a prodigious task.*

### Sun-Dives (Festival)

When a member becomes too old or frail to hunt, they often take the sun-dive – a raucous celebration of skill and passion that ends with a fatal leap into the nearest rift. *It's tradition to leap holding something bright – a firefly bulb, for example – as a representation of hunting, and besting, the darkness beneath.*

### The Bravest Few (Punishment)

A disgraced hunter can often redeem themselves by walking the path of the Bravest Few – dressing themselves in pelts and horns, then slipping away into the waves to live as a quarry for the other hunters. *Surviving a stint out in the wild wipes the offender's slate clean, and gives a few new scars to show off.*

## Principles

The precise laws and customs of the hunting families change from settlement to settlement, but these principles hold true for most.

- ☞ Taking a trophy is an act of respect, but only from a fair fight.
- ☞ Scars are proof that you're pushing yourself to excel, and should be worn with pride.
- ☞ Never intervene in another's hunt.

## Quick NPCs

- ☞ **Cressa Thorn (Ardent):** Tasked with watching over a game preserve for training children in their earliest years. Elderly, good-humoured, and a terror with a long-range carbine.
- ☞ **Tantaluska Ormenholme (Ektus):** An ex-pirate with a jagged scar running from brow to knee, pursuing the leviathan squirrel that marked them.
- ☞ **Bel & Hortio (Ardent):** A brother and sister duo who hunt together, Bel with blades and Hortio with a bow. More brave than they are skilled.

## Story Hooks

- ☞ After defending themselves against a crazed beast, the crew find that they've unwittingly spoiled a hunt.
- ☞ The crew come across an injured long-nose mount, pining for its lost rider.
- ☞ Arriving at a hunting outpost the crew find that a feast is already underway, welcoming a new initiate.
- ☞ An elderly hunter wants transport as a passenger, to see a little of the wider waves before they take the sun-dive.
- ☞ A bone-hulled ship sits in a lonely port, with signs of a struggle evident on deck and the crew nowhere to be seen.
- ☞ The crew, their ship chased by a titanic beast, are saved by a group of leviathaneers... But the beast is still out there.





# The Writlings (Faction)

**Home Turf:** Highcross

**Motivation:** Accrue and display pre-verdant wealth

The Writlings are a cult devoted to the unearthing and repurposing of ancient wealth, with a particular focus on coins, paper money, contracts and books. Precious metals don't typically interest them as much unless they're finely worked, but are often incorporated into their ships and settlements for decoration.

Though some regard them as pirates, Writlings are rarely violent to outsiders unless provoked. In truth, they rarely come into conflict with other cultures, as the resources they devote themselves to collecting are all but useless to most wildsea groups.

## A Cult of Silk & Paper (Feature)

Writling clothing is made to look as elegant as possible, but this elegance is in service to the cult's own sensibilities. *Lower-order members are draped in gold-trimmed silks, yet still envious of the coin necklaces and haphazard banknote-sashes of their betters.*

## The Goldsighted (Feature)

A colloquial term for experienced Writling scavengers, so named due to their habit of replacing their eyes (if they have them) with coins. *Writlings belonging to 'eyesless' bloodlines, such as the ektus, often embed coins into their arms and faces instead.*

## Promenossuaries (Horror)

As a successful Writling reaches the end of their life their thoughts turn, naturally, to the protection of their treasures. A promenossuary allows them to hoard their wealth, even in death - a semi-sentient coffin that lurches proudly along the streets and walkways of their homes. *These walking tombs are often glass-fronted, displaying an alchemically preserved corpse and their most valuable finds.*

## The Exchange (Festival)

A monthly trading festival for the acquisition of old-world wealth. *Writlings often cultivate vast gardens of heirloom produce, bartering their ship-grown strawberries and slaughtermelons for pre-V gewgaws.*

## Principles

There is a written code sitting snug in a Writling vault somewhere that fully categorizes their goals and ambitions. Now, if only someone could remember which vault...

- ☞ Valuable acquisitions should be paraded.
- ☞ The ideas of the past are worth more than those of the future.
- ☞ Theft from another Writling is punishable by death (a cut-throat business manoeuvre is fine).

## Quick NPCs

- ☞ **Tamen Hold (Gau):** A young Writling coin collector, eager to show off his accumulated 'wealth'.
- ☞ **Big Fja (Ardent):** A high-ranking member of the Writling cult with a cape made of sealing-wax and multi-coloured banknotes. Respected for her ability to sniff out a bargain on relics.
- ☞ **Patakara Kezar (Tzelicrae):** A goldsighted scavenger whose internal spiders carry numerous coins from various lost currencies. Claims to have visited the Under-Eaves.

## Story Hooks

- ☞ A high-ranking Writling is holding an auction of to make room for new acquisitions.
- ☞ Something owned by one of the crew catches the eye of a gold-sighted scavenger.
- ☞ After a distant explosion, faded banknotes rain down from the sky for miles around.
- ☞ The crew discover a damaged promenossuary.
- ☞ Writling cultists are on the trail of a cunning thief.
- ☞ A nearby titanopede has gone wild, pulling the city built into its back on a terrifying ride.



# FIREFLY RESOURCES

## Watch Results (Peace)

- 6: A bone-spit daubed with a rudimentary map of the surrounding waves.
- 5: A distant pack of spring-foxes playing in the thrash.
- 4: An arconautic swell from somewhere below, allowing the crew to hear perfectly for a short time.
- 3: Two companions play-fighting on deck.
- 2: One of the undercrew shares a tale of the salvagers sent out to find the Bottom Dollar, and what they found instead.
- 1: An excellent view of one of the Seven Walls from a peak of the wavetops.

## Watch Results (Order)

- 6: A Hunting Family vessel pulling up alongside you, with fresh meat and strong drink to share and nothing to ask for in return.
- 5: A tallshank marked with Raka Spit script, a hunter's poem for prey long-lost.
- 4: A bone-spit archipelago settled by refugees from a distant reach.
- 3: A brace of trained foxes pulling a Writling pleasure-barge.
- 2: An encounter with one of the Bravest Few, atoning for the crime of trophy-theft.
- 1: A heavily damaged Hunting Family ship fleeing a leviathan.

## Watch Results (Nature)

- 6: A coterie of spring-foxes dancing in the wake of your ship, a decidedly good omen.
- 5: A vengeful storm, its lightning striking an insulated Writling dredging-vessel again and again.
- 4: A swarm of tiny pocket-foxes spilling up and over the railings, looking to nab any small items they can.
- 3: A rain of teeth.
- 2: The split banyam-branches and scarred trunks that point to a recently surfaced leviathan.
- 1: A Woke-Bone puppet pulling themselves onto the deck, screaming for help as they are forced to attack.

## Trade Goods & Cargo

- ☛ **Dredging Equipment (export):** While some, like the tzelicrae and ketra, are naturally suited for trips down into the sink and drown to dredge up old salvage, most have to invest in serious protective gear to stay safe.
- ☛ **Beast Meat (export):** With their seemingly never-sated drive to hunt, the families usually end up with more meat than they could ever eat or store. Often salted or dried for travel.
- ☛ **Finely-Crafted Guns (export):** Straight from the forges of Marrow. Blackpowder can be used, but it's a rarity - most Marrow-made guns rely on alchemical charges, compressed air or ratchetwork.
- ☛ **Coins and Banknotes (import):** Pre-verdant, of course. Writling traders will usually be thrilled to exchange any kind of specimen for such salvage.
- ☛ **Untested Beasts (import):** The Hunting Families are always looking for a new challenge, and bringing a dangerous beast from a far-off reach is a great way to pique their interest.
- ☛ **Ore (import):** The curse of Marrow, a city of smelters with no local mines. Luckily, folks will travel for weeks to bring them material for their forges, and they pay handsomely too.

## Passengers

- ☛ A young member of the Hunting Families, a fox-trainer on their way back from a successful and bloodless hunt with a new furred friend.
- ☛ A goldsighted dredger with very specific directions as to where she wants to be dropped off.
- ☛ An old Marrow revolutionary with a huge spiny beard, full of tales of the bad times before the Architect King took her throne.
- ☛ A wordless promenossuary that will leave exactly when it wants to.
- ☛ A group of new Writlings, their clothing drab and speckled with only a few coins and book-scraps.
- ☛ A train-driver from the Mazoro line, exiled from their post due to the death of a titanopede on their watch.

## Endemic Hazards

- ☛ A huge and varied amount of foxes (see the next page for details), though they're rarely a direct threat to wildsailing crews.
- ☛ Arrow-tongue jikari crawling down from the Spitskill Mesa in search of gourmet prey.
- ☛ Red-tailed gliders snapping insects out of the air, but occasionally driven to take on larger prey.
- ☛ Sailing stones, parts of the Seven Walls that have gained sentience and drifted free in the long years since the Verdancy.
- ☛ Titanopedes, usually well-trained to follow trading channels and Seven Wall rail-lines.
- ☛ The Whitecollar Snare, a leviathan fox so starkly beautiful that it mazes the mind and turns friend to foe.



## A Vulpine Variety

The Foxloft didn't gain its name by chance - though filled with all manner of beasts, oddities, and insects, an unusual concentration of foxes and fox-like things call the reach their home. The most notable of these are...

### Snow-Collars

One of the most distinctive vulpine beasts of the Foxloft, the pure white fur of their heads and necks standing out amid the green and gold foliage. Snow-collars tend to make their dens by burrowing into the stonework of the Seven Walls, and some fear that their accidental efforts may one day bring the entire edifice crashing down.

### Pocketfoxes

Unique to the Foxloft, these miniature vulpine scavengers are no bigger than the average locket. Though treated by some as vermin they're actually incredibly useful, especially when trained - a pocketfox is a natural filcher, able to steal small but valuable items from unattended places. Wild pocketfoxes use these things to decorate their dens, but a trained specimen will bring such spoils straight to their owner.

### Red-Tailed Gliders

The main aerial predator of the reach, despite being unable to truly fly; red-tailed gliders rely on updraughts and tallshank launching-points to hunt, soaring through the skies on billowing flaps of aerodynamic fur. Much like the snow-collars, these gliders are named for their unusual colouration, their tails lacking the black or white 'tip' common to most of the region's foxes.

### Springfoxes

Found all over the wildsea but rarely in such concentration, springfoxes are to ships of the wilds what dolphins were to ships of the old salt. They travel in packs, leaping through the thrash in a ship's wake or alongside its hull to snap at insects disturbed by its passage. Some sailors even feed them, throwing food over the side as a gesture of affection or good luck.

### Djagva

Named after the Low Sour word for 'blade', djagva foxes are aggressively territorial denizens of the deeper sink. Though resembling ordinary foxes in every way, every part of their fur is razor sharp. For some hunters, djagva are the only foxes it can be honourable to choose as a quarry - they move in packs of several hundred, leaving swathes of torn leaves and bark-stripped branches behind them.

Luckily for sailors and settlers, djagva rarely make their way up to the surface, though their movements sometimes drive other creatures from the sink upwards (which can be a problem in itself).

### Robichek's Follies

Not foxes at all, though they do a passable job of imitating them when luring prey - a good enough job that they fooled the infamous Robichek, a Writling dissident that ran off to join the Hunting Families. His story has become something of a myth in the Foxloft, so the truth of it is questionable, but the tale goes that he set his sights on a 'modest' creature for his inaugural feast. The creature he ended up hunting (which he mistook for a snow-collar) gave little reaction as he crept closer, and he only realized his mistake when the white and russet fur split apart to reveal acid-dripping mandibles, the folly discarding its disguise and revealing itself as a ship-length centipede with an especially effective method of camouflage.

Robichek would probably be less than enthused to know that the creature was named after him.



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