

The Complete
Guide to

VELOCIRAPTORS



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Dedicated to Mom and Dad. Thanks for helping make this possible.



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If you like this book, you might also be interested in these other books from Goodman Games:

Dinosaur Planet: Broncosaurus Rex Core Rulebook (GMG1000)
Cretasus Adventure Guide (GMG1001) Complete
Guide to Tyrannosaurus Rex (GMG1003)

Introduction

Velociraptors are not the largest dinosaurs, nor the strongest, nor the scariest. A tyrannosaur can eat a tribe of velociraptors for dinner, a brachiosaur shakes the earth with every footstep, and a kronosaur can swallow a boat whole. Yet velociraptors are the most feared of all dinosaurs, for a single reason: they are smarter than humans. *Homo sapiens'* tool-using opposable thumb is its only advantage over *velocimptor mongoliensis*. But in game worlds where raptors can observe humans and their tools, the raptors learn quickly, and the advantages of a thumb diminish with every passing day.

This book offers a complete guide to velociraptors. It covers everything you need to role play them in your campaign: social structure, cultural habits, combat strategies, and guidelines for creating individuals and tribes. Although the majority of the book is world-neutral, some sections are written using the backdrop of Cretasus, the setting for *Dinosaur Planet: Broncosaurus Rex*. You should find it easy to alter the setting to suit whatever campaign world you use. One particular topic that you may wish to expand on is velociraptor magic. It doesn't fit Cretasus or our conception of velociraptors, but there is definitely potential for giving magical abilities to velociraptor shamans. You can download free supplemental material on velociraptor magic from www.broncosaurusrex.com.

Certain terms used in this work (such as Tech Level), as well as some classes, feats, and skills, are described in the *Dinosaur Planet: Broncosaurus Rex* Core Rulebook.

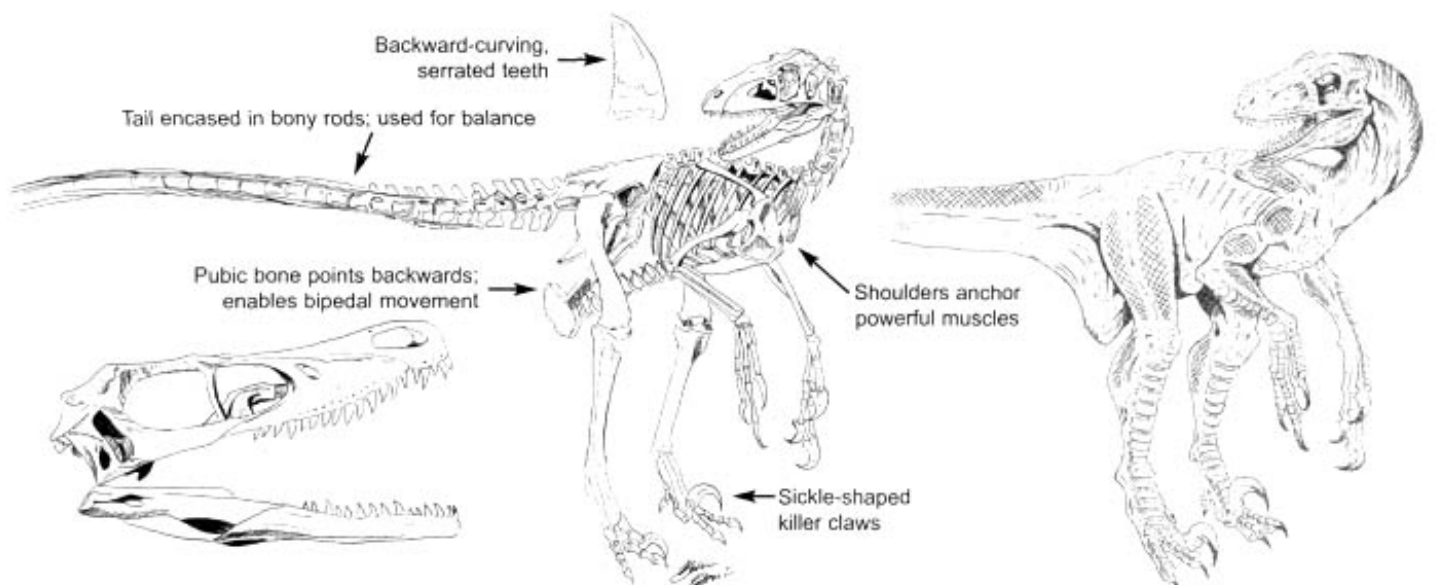
For reference, here is the standard velociraptor stat block. Note that velociraptors are considered animals, not beasts (a change that should apply to all dinosaurs based on the definitions of those categories).

Velociraptor Large Animal

Hit Dice:	4d10+12 (34hp)
Initiative:	+2 (Dex)
Speed:	60ft.
AC:	16 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +5 natural)
Attacks:	Rake +6 melee, 2 claws +1 melee. bite +1 melee
Damage:	Rake 2d6+4, claw 1d3+2, bite 2d4+2
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks:	None
Special Qualities:	Scent
Saves:	Fort+7, Ref+6, Will+2
Abilities:	Str 19, Dex 15, Con 17. Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10
Skills:	Hide +7, Jump +13, Listen +11, Spot +11, Wilderness Lore +9
Climate/Terrain:	Warm forest, hill, plains and marsh
Organization:	Solitary or tribe (6-21 adults)
Challenge Rating:	3
Treasure:	Standard
Alignment:	Lawful neutral
Advancement:	5-8 HD (Large)

Physiology

A discussion of velociraptor anatomy must begin with a certain confession. The velociraptor described in this book isn't actually the one that paleontologists call velociraptor! It's deinonychus, a closely related but different dromaeosaurid. A certain hit dinosaur movie popularized velociraptors that look like deinonychus, and the public perception now conforms to that image. Thus.



this book actually describes deinonychus, which in this work we call velociraptor.

Velociraptors stand about six feet tall. Their total length is ten feet, half of which is tail. They are "bird-boned" dinosaurs and weigh a mere 100 to 150 pounds. Their light weight, combined with a hunched posture and piston-like rear legs, enable them to make incredible leaps.

Raptors have fourteen claws, three on each hand and four on each foot. The most important are the two scythe-shaped killer claws, one per foot. Each killer claw is seven inches long and viciously curved. The killer claws have a separate musculature that allows them to operate independently of the other toes; while running full-speed alongside prey, the raptors are perfectly capable of swiping with their killer claw whenever their foot passes their prey's belly. The muscles on the toe bearing the killer claw are powerful enough to match a human's arm strength!

Raptor skin tone varies widely, from brown to black to green to gray, with some regional variants. Raptors decorate themselves with a variety of natural totems, ranging from the skins, teeth, claws, scalps, and skulls of their kills, to beads and other trinkets acquired through trade.

The natural lifespan of a velociraptor is unknown, since their violent carnivorous lifestyle means almost all are eaten or die from combat-induced injuries before reaching old age. Even the long-lived shamans usually die violent deaths by the age of 30 or 40.

Social Structure

Velociraptors live in well-organized tribes. They are social by nature and extremely loyal to the tribe. This loyalty is moderated by the constant politicking and bickering for caste rank, as well as the leadership battles that occasionally result in male raptors being forced to seek a new tribe. The best way to understand a raptor tribe is to imagine a tight-knit human family with intense sibling rivalry: even though the siblings may compete constantly, and perhaps even stop speaking to each other, they still come together in the event of a crisis, and they always respect their elders. In the same way, bickering raptors stand up for each other and the tribe when facing a common threat, and the many tribes themselves - which always compete for hunting grounds - are often part of larger nations.

These velociraptor nations are practically invisible to outsiders. While tribes are easily distinguished (certain groups of raptors obviously spend most of their time together), there are rarely gatherings of an entire nation. There are no national councils or other meetings; outsiders who wish to identify which tribes belong to a given nation will be hard-pressed to do so. The nations are not centrally organized, and really exist as "nations" per se only when there is great tribulation. It takes a vast, common threat to drive a group of tribes to stand together as a nation.

Tribes

A velociraptor tribe consists of 6 to 21 adults, with as many as one child for every two adults. A few tribes have been known to number as many as 50 adults, but this happens only in times of great prosperity - it takes a huge prey population to sustain such a large tribe.

Although small tribes are simply family groups, larger tribes have more complex structures. Tribes of 10 or more adults demonstrate a caste system with three main ranks. The leader (called a chieftain) and his mates have the highest caste rank. The shaman, usually an elderly female with no children, holds the next caste rank, along with her apprentices (if any). The rest of the tribe falls into the lowest caste. Within this lowest caste, an ongoing competition (both physical and political) determines where each raptor ranks on the totem pole.

Velociraptor tribes operate on a very basic Darwinian model. Their social system, which evolved over millions of years, encourages survival of the fittest. (They are unaware of this, of course.) Males compete constantly for leadership positions, with the losers leaving to find a new tribe. Females remain with the tribe they were born into. Thus, the females compose the core of any tribe, mating with a slowly changing cadre of the fittest males.

Leadership Challenges: Males within each tribe compete for rank within the lowest caste, until they feel ready to challenge for the leadership position. Leadership challenges are rare: most raptors will never make one. They'll spend their lives forever subservient, though they'll probably have a few lower-ranking raptors to boss around.

Those raptors strong enough or smart enough to make their way to the top of the heap may challenge the leader. These challenges are usually decided with a quick exchange of test blows which do not result in serious injury. However, aggressive or powerful challengers may force the combat to reach deadly levels.

The loser of a leadership challenge usually leaves the tribe. Even if he doesn't want to, the leader may consider him a threat and force him out. (Weaker raptors that are foolhardy enough to make stupid challenges may be allowed to stay in the tribe.) An exiled raptor wanders until he finds another tribe that will take him in. Most raptors *hate* being alone - they are social animals by nature - so they dread this period of solitude. This is a natural incentive not to make a leadership challenge unless confident of victory.

Why would another raptor tribe accept one of these wandering exiles? Because the tribes themselves compete for hunting grounds. Thus, a leader has a reason to boost the strength of his tribe, even if a new entrant is a potential threat.

Raptors bickering within the lowest caste rank usually don't get so violent that a loser has to leave the tribe. They just put up with the bossing around which is commonplace at that level.

The natural risks of being a raptor - such as injury or death during the hunt - also affect caste rank. If a leader is killed, the remaining males may battle furiously to fill his spot. Raptors from





other tribes may even appear on the scene, determined to carve out a role now that the spot is open. Raptors may advance in rank because their superiors were eaten by a T-rex.

An incumbent leader does his best to protect his position. This may include installing "bodyguards" by favoring raptors strong enough to protect him but weak enough never to be a threat. It can also include murdering or banishing adolescents who might become a serious challenge, and in some cases can even include murdering prospective challengers from other tribes.

Social Politics: The preceding section may make you think raptors are nothing more than bickering bullies. Not quite. There is one more level of intrigue within the tribe: politics.

Raptors are smart. Very smart. They make deals. They promise favors. They blackmail each other. Politics are a basic part of velociraptor existence. Brains have bested brawn in many a raptor tribe.

The best example of a political leader is a raptor leader named Two Heads, given his name because he is reputed to have the brainpower of two normal raptors. Two Heads made his way to the leadership position of a Lettoko tribe wracked by constant infighting. Thanks to a particularly brawny crop of raptors, the existing leader was spending far too much time defending himself

from challenges. And the challengers were tough - the leader stayed on top, but only barely, and he was being worn down by so much fighting.

Two Heads, not considered a threat because of his relatively lean frame, tracked down the exiled losers of these leadership battles and offered them a proposition. They could defeat the tribal leader only if they joined together. But their natural stubbornness kept them from working with each other. Enter Two Heads. He offered them "co-chieftain" positions - higher rank than they would ever achieve on their own - if they agreed to back him as the tribal leader.

Now Two Heads rules a Lettoko tribe with a coterie of bodyguard "co-chieftains" who protect him from challenges. He is a master politician. By playing favorites, he keeps his bodyguards in constant competition, preventing them from organizing against him. He routinely accepts powerful exiles into the tribe, especially those strong enough to defeat any of his bodyguards individually; these third-caste males force his bodyguards to remain united lest they be defeated individually. Through these and other techniques, Two Heads has remained tribal leader for nearly seven years - a very long time for raptors.

You can see that there are two kinds of velociraptor leaders: those who lead through brawn, and those who lead through brains. Respectively, these are known as velociraptor warriors and velociraptor tacticians. They are character classes available to raptors, and are described in more detail later.

Shamans

Velociraptor shamans are the healers, alchemists, and diplomats of their tribes. Most tribes have only one shaman, who is usually the tribe's eldest female: she in turn may have one or two younger apprentices. Raptor tribes with experienced shamans have a significant advantage over other raptor tribes, as they can mix poisons and healing potions to use in battle.

Shamans study the properties of their native environment. They know which roots are poisonous, which can disinfect a wound, and which can make a raptor drunk and happy. They study the movements of the distant stars and local animals, and can predict when the triceratops herd will return from its migration, and how many baby T-rexes will be born this year.

The shamans' understanding of ecologies is nothing short of astounding: they seem to possess an innate sense of predator-prey ratios (perhaps due to their status as highly intelligent carnivores), and they have a strong feeling for natural balance. When a raptor tribe seeks new hunting grounds, it usually does so based on its shaman's predictions, *before* food becomes scarce.

Shamans are often seen alone with their apprentices, away from the tribe, observing the region's other inhabitants from afar, especially the other carnivores. In one sense they are "scouting the competition." but they are also noting the tiny details that tell them about the local ecosystem: Is the old T-rex's limp getting worse? (Yes; good; he won't be able to hunt for much longer.)



How many new hadrososaurs were born this year? (Too many - the abundance will attract other predators. We should kill more than we can eat to keep them away.) Did the rains flood the lowlands? (Yes; the triceratops will enter the highlands soon, and there they will be easy to ambush.) And so on.

Shamans are fascinated by natural elements, and are constantly experimenting with local ingredients. They test the properties of any new root or herb they come across. They jump at the chance to trade with other raptor tribes, and sometimes make long solitary journeys to gather raw materials for a particular potion or salve.

Shamans are also "the keepers of the fire." Raptors have little use for cooking, but they value fire for its light and use as a weapon. But wild raptors don't know how to make fire. Each shaman keeps a skull or hollowed stone with a flame that is never allowed to burn out. (An apprentice shaman's first task is feeding slow-burning dried triceratops dung to the fire.) If, for whatever reason, the flame dies, the shaman harvests new fire the next time lightning strikes.

Shamans do not enter combat; aside from their age and the fact that they spend their time on things other than combat practice, their healing skills make them too valuable for the tribe to lose. Their role is that of counselor, advisor, sage, and diplomat. Negotiations between competing tribes usually go through the shamans, as do negotiations with humans and other non-raptors.

Nations

Raptor tribes occupy the same general region for hundreds of years, sometimes even thousands. This deep history colors all interactions between nearby tribes. Past feuds, jealousies, double-crosses, loyalties, and matings are remembered for generations, and it is by these actions that raptor nations are born.

Raptor nations are little more than tribes that are on good terms with each other. ("Good terms" by raptor standards, that is - they may not like each other but at least they're not actively killing each other.) Many nations go so far as to identify themselves by a common name; in fact, the multiple tribes within the nation often share the same tribal name. The Lettoko, for example, number six tribes, each of which calls itself the Lettoko. But each tribe is independently led, and each raptor within each Lettoko tribe still thinks of *its* tribe as the true Lettoko tribe. Everyday raptor life does not require social units greater than the tribe, so most raptors rarely think in such grand terms.

The existing raptor nations are longstanding affiliations that stretch back hundreds or thousands of years. New nations are born when an outside force is strong enough to provoke unity amongst separate raptor tribes. This outside force must be a great threat. The last time it happened naturally was when one of the near-mythical tyrant kings (ancient tyrannosaurs of immense power) emerged from its slumber. It immediately uprooted several raptor tribes, claiming their hunting grounds for its own. It takes more than one raptor tribe to stop a tyrant king, and since the mighty T-

rex threatened to expand its territory into neighboring tribes' areas, they all came together to destroy it. The tyrant king mustered the forces of its tyrannosaur descendants, and soon there was a full-fledged war between the two species. The fighting ended when the tyrant king was killed, but that was after several months of bloody deaths on both sides. Nonetheless, the tribes of the Cree were united in battle, and have remained a loose-knit nation ever since.

In some cases, a nation formed from a simple fact of raptor society; male mobility between tribes in a geographically limited area invariably means the same few tribes have hosted the same few males and their descendants. Over hundreds of years, relations between those tribes end up either very strong or extremely hostile!

Raptors have a natural competitive streak that emerges as a bullying instinct towards weaker raptors. For this reason, no raptor leader has ever been strong enough to unite two tribes. His physical presence is required to maintain any allegiance - as soon as he leaves, the remaining raptors bicker for dominance, and the new king of the hill follows his own agenda until someone makes him change. Thus, the constituent tribes of a raptor nation retain a great degree of autonomy. It would take a very smart, highly sociable raptor with a talent for organizational thinking to build a loyalty structure that could keep two geographically separated tribes united under one leader.

Trade Routes

Tribes remain in contact through ancient trade routes that have existed for thousands of years. These trade routes follow the natural distribution patterns of valuable goods. A tribe rich in one good (such as sea shells) will travel inland just far enough to trade with a tribe rich in another good (such as swamp herbs). The next tribe, in turn, will travel further inland and trade for something else (such as desert crystals, or the sumptuous meat of a desert-dwelling creature). The process continues until the goods are spread far and wide. The most commonly traded items are herbs, roots, spices and salt, sea shells, animal byproducts, preserved meats, crystals, gems, metal ingots, unusual stones - and, where raptors have met humans, weapons, tools, and manufactured goods. Raptor tribes with human contacts instantly become highly valued trading partners.

These trade routes have existed for so long that they now provide a remarkably efficient mechanism for the distribution of goods. Thanks to the shamans and their meticulous cataloguing of the natural world, a raptor tribe can acquire whatever it wants from thousands of miles around, provided it is on good terms with the tribes that form the intermediary trade links.

The trade routes are traveled by shamans, or, more often, their apprentices. Sometimes raptor hunting packs accompany a shaman on an important trading mission. The rare raptor exiles (described below) also wander the trade routes. Traders are important sources of news and gossip, and they function as diplomats



between far-flung tribes that otherwise might have no contact.

Shamans (and even apprentice shamans) from powerful, well-known tribes can travel unharassed, and may even be able to negotiate extremely favorable trade terms. But tribal vendettas hold true even on the trails, and traders from weaker or hated tribes may suffer ambushes at every junction. Nonetheless, raptors have been known to make allowances for the sake of trade. Even tribes at war let trading shamans pass unmolested if the mutual need for trade is strong.

Tribal Marks

Velociraptor tribes set themselves apart from each other in a variety of ways. Most tribes have a single common motif with which all members decorate themselves. In addition, individuals may have their own insignias. Tattoos, body paint, natural dyes, animal skins, animal byproducts (horns, claws, skulls, teeth, etc.), scarification, branding, and piercing are all common modes of distinction.

Tribal motifs are usually sacred images (e.g., a swirl), revered attributes (e.g., ferocity, represented by a mouth full of sharp teeth), or natural totems (e.g., a snake). The motif will be repeated throughout the tribe in a number of ways - besides appearing on the raptors themselves, it may be displayed in cave paintings, sacred locations (e.g., a pond filled with the bones of ceremonially slaughtered snakes), and tribe-specific myths and legends.

Some tribes have unusual motifs. The Green Heads admire stealth and secrecy; they use natural dyes to paint their bodies green and remain in a constant state of camouflage. The Snake Tails have a snake motif and practice what one paleoanthropologist dubbed "velociraptor circumcision": they make a lengthwise incision on the tip of newborn raptors' tails, so they fork as they grow.

In addition to its tribal mark... each tribe takes a name in its native dialect. This name has a literal translation which describes some aspect of the tribe's behavior.

On the next page is a selection of raptor tribes and their distinguishing marks. Some of these - the Cree, Kerosaw, Lettoko, and Inaka - are nations with several constituent tribes. The rest are individual tribes.



Exiles

Velociraptor exiles are those raptors who have no place in any tribe. Although many male raptors will at some point find themselves temporarily without a tribe, exiles are forever alone. Normal raptors leave their tribe only after losing a caste battle or leadership challenge, and they try desperately to find a new tribe. Exiles, on the other hand, leave tribal life for good.

Unlike other raptors, exiles are chaotic in alignment. Some are born that way, somehow different in nature from the rest of their tribe. Others are made chaotic through life's trials: a proud raptor who repeatedly loses leadership challenges may finally admit failure and resign himself to solitude. Or a failed shaman, whose advocacy of improved human-raptor relations was rejected by every tribe in his area, may leave the tribe forever.

Exiles live on the fringe of raptor society. Because they have no tribal loyalties, they are outside the political disputes that echo throughout raptor nations. This grants them some degree of immunity from much raptor warfare. Territorial tribes may chase away exiles, as they do with all raptors, but less territorial tribes may ignore them where they would harass non-exiles.

Raptors look upon exiles much the way humans look upon wild ones. They are freaks of nature. The inherently lawful raptor mentality does not comprehend the urge to become an exile.

Exiles' outsider status permits them liberties unknown to most raptors. They travel freely; while most raptors live their

whole lives in the confines of their ancestral hunting grounds, exiles may travel the world. They know the ways of many tribes, and even the ways of man. They know the affairs of the world. Their low standing in raptor society precludes any sort of diplomatic or advisory role, but many a wise shaman has established civil relations with the exiles in his domain, for they often have much to teach from their travels.

Exiles are the innovators in raptor society. They are unaware of this role, but by spreading news, beliefs, and practices between neighboring tribes, they widen the scope of raptor interactions. Freed of the restraints of tradition, exiles experiment with things most raptors ignore. Tools are the best example of this. While normal raptors are reared from birth to use their killer claws with pride, exiles have recognized that some weapons - particularly ranged weapons - are more powerful than any claw. It is thus that exiles have become the fastest adopters of human technology. Most exiles now use weapons of some sort, ranging from spears to slings to rifles.

Since the arrival of humans, exiles have found a new place in the world. Many have discovered they can exist comfortably at the edge of human society, employed by the military or ranchers. They are still on the fringe of society - it's just a different society. Their exile status makes them more conducive to human-raptor relations. Just as human wild ones join raptor tribes, raptor exiles join human settlements. It is only a matter of time before disgruntled raptors begin to view human company as natural.

Tribe/Nation	Translation	Basis of Name	Native Terrain	Tribal Motif
Cree	They Choose Death	The Cree raptors never retreat; they always fight to the death	Swamp (the Bayou)	Skull, bones
Lettoko	Tall Rocks	Native terrain	Rocky hills (south of Fort Tecumseh)	Stones; the Lettoko use stones to build cairns, dolmens, and cromlechs
Grapt	White Branch	A tribal legend which claims the first raptor was born beneath a white tree	Plains (around New Savannah)	A white tree
Whimbit	He Trades	A wide-ranging, itinerant tribe that inhabits a central region	Plains and forests (in the east of Main Valley)	A blue raptor footprint
Kerosaw	Blood Eaters	Prefer the taste of blood to that of meat; when times are good, they eat only the heart and blood of their kills, leaving the rest to scavengers	Swamp (the Bayou)	A red claw
Flage	Green Heads	Extensive use of camouflage	Forest (east Main Valley)	Stealth and secrecy
Crado	Dark Heart	Unknown; a furtive tribe that is rarely seen	Dense jungle (near the Black Jungle)	Various black insignias
Inaka	Fairness	High-minded raptors which are extremely honorable	Swamp (the Bayou)	A pair of wings, a winged raptor, or a pterosaur
Listh	Snake Tails	Worship of snakes; practice of forking their tails	Jungle (near Garsville)	Snakes



Cultural Habits

Language

Raptors speak a common language known simply as Raptor. It has many different dialects that vary by region and, to a smaller degree, by tribe. Human scholars have attempted to trace raptor ancestry by analyzing linguistic genealogies. They've had limited success because male raptors routinely switch tribes. This inter-tribal exchange muddles many attempts to isolate the origin of specific dialects. It has been documented, for example, that tribes with significant male mobility actually experience changes in dialect, sometimes over time spans as short as two generations. Raptors, of course, dismiss this whole exercise as a "stupid mammal question" - their creation myth answers any questions they may have.

Raptors do not have a written language. Some tribes carve or paint pictures on cave walls, and others paint themselves with images or sacred symbols. But no tribe has a pictorial vocabulary capable of anything but representational imagery; abstract concepts are lacking, and these pictograms hardly constitute a written language.

The Hunt

The central event of everyday raptor life is the hunt. When raptors get hungry, they go prowling for prey. If the weather, nearby prey populations, and terrain are favorable, they may find a suitable target within a few hours; in adverse conditions, it may take days.

Any creature that the raptor tribe can take down without too much risk is a potential prey target. Raptors avoid triceratops and other herbivores with natural defenses; they concentrate on the nearly defenseless hadrosaurs and other such "wimpy" prey. But even a large hadrosaur can be a threat - sheer mass can mean a powerful tail wallop - so raptors target the old, the young, and the sick.

Once a suitable target is found, the hunt begins. The raptors stalk their target until they find an opening. Then they charge. Here is where prey selection becomes important. If the raptors picked a bad target, they'll come away not just hungry (still) but injured as well. A wise leader knows when to skip one target and look for another, even though the tribe is hungry.

The tribal leader has the final say on prey selection, though he depends heavily on the agreement of the tribe's older, more experienced raptors. If they demur, the leader may find himself leading a charge with no followers!

Migratory conditions have a huge effect on the hunt. Once a year, tens of thousands of triceratops pass by on their annual migration. This is the one time of year when raptors hunt them, since they can find the tight spots along the migration route and

simply slice at the vast herds as they thunder past. Raptors near rivers follow fish migrations (the prehistoric equivalent of salmon runs); when they find a good spot, they'll stand at the river's edge slapping fish out of the water. These are the times of plenty, when smart raptors dry a portion of their kill and store it for lean times.

The frequency of the hunt depends on the tribe's size and local food conditions. A large tribe may always have at least one warband out hunting. Smaller tribes may hunt only once every few days, once they've digested the food from their previous kill.

Tribes hunt in different ways. Some tribes - usually those led by warriors - travel as a large pack, ready to mob whatever they come across. Others - those led by tacticians - may travel widely separated, or in single file, or as a pack but with scouts posted ahead and behind. Some tribes hunt in relays: one raptor initiates a charge, then a second raptor takes his place as he tires, and so on. In this way, a hunting pack can run its prey to exhaustion.

Agriculture and livestock are unheard of among raptors. Although they have the brainpower to domesticate their prey easily, they have no desire whatsoever. They *enjoy* the hunt, and are not interested in slaughtering docile, tame creatures raised in captivity.

The Den

A tribe's dwelling place is known as its den. Most tribes keep several dens throughout their hunting grounds, with one or two serving as their primary residences and the rest being secondary retreats. The main function of a den is protection from the elements and predators. (Yes, there are larger carnososaurs that eat raptors, given the chance!) It is a safe place to pass the time between hunts.

Raptors are highly intelligent, so their dens take many forms. The prevailing terrain is a big consideration.

- The Lettoko raptors, native to rocky hills, keep dens in nearly vertical cliffside caves. They can be reached only via treacherous natural stepping stones.
- The Cree, native to swampy areas, build their dens of thatched tree limbs over small, naturally-occurring islands. The tree limbs are *alive* when they are thatched; Cree shamans have spent generations cultivating the few trees that grow in the swamp, guiding their growing limbs into interlocking patterns, and maintaining them once they are mature. They even build simple boats of skins stretched over dinosaur rib bones to travel quickly between islands.
- The Dark Heart raptors build their dens amidst the gigantic above-ground roots of enormous trees native to their jungle havens.
- The Whimbit, who travel far and wide, dig burrows whenever they stay in one place for more than a few days.

Wherever the den is located, the tribe will have extensively explored the surrounding area. They often have a planned escape route. When in the den, they always post a lookout. The den will be located in a position that is difficult to attack; even if some-



thing so simple as a burrow, it will be on high ground in an area with good visibility. If a tactician leads the tribe, there will be a number of traps in the area; even if a tactician isn't involved, most shamans will build natural alarms (such as tripwires that cause piles of bones to fall in loud, clattering heaps). When raptors leave the den for a hunt, they set out stones, leaves, or other objects in seemingly random arrangements along the trail; any creature that passes by will inadvertently disturb the objects. (Noticing the objects requires a Spot check (DC 18), or a Wilderness Lore check (DC 16). Any creature that passes such objects without noticing them has a 50% chance of disturbing them.)

In between hunts, raptors retreat to their dens to relax, digest, and while away the time. Some raptors spend their time playing one of several traditional games: others train, play-fight, tend to the young, sleep, or socialize. Raptors rarely bring kills to the den; that attracts scavengers. They do bring trophies, however, and visitors should not be surprised to find a long-occupied den filled with the skulls of the adult T-rexes that the tribe has killed over the past several generations. More forward-thinking tribes also dry meat in the sun and preserve it in their dens for lean times.

Raptor dens are utterly revolting to any civilized creature; humans usually vomit the first time they go inside. The dens *stink* from years of occupation. They are always filthy. Even though raptors eat their kills away from the den, individuals often bring back small chunks of meat for later eating, and these remains litter the area. Only a raptor could love another raptor's den. ("Say, I really like what you've done with the edmontosaur skull! And is that mammoth trunk real ivory? My, my!")

Raptors place value only on things they can use. This is usually natural objects and manufactured goods. Round metal chips and long strips of paper are worthless to them - until they encounter humans or other intelligent creatures who accept them as payment for manufactured goods. Wild raptors don't keep monetary treasure in their dens, as they don't understand its use. Raptors accustomed to human trade, on the other hand, hoard any money they come across. Regardless, adventurers almost always find non-monetary treasure in the leader's and shaman's quarters.

A typical raptor den includes a common room, the leader's quarters, the shaman's quarters, an egg chamber, and a supply chamber. For a fully detailed den, see page 29.

Trophies

Combat prowess is very important to a raptor's survival, and warriors like to collect trophies proving their ability. Aside from the obvious ego value, they can also be displayed prominently as an intimidation tactic when facing future enemies. Warbands that defeat a T-rex or other large carnosaur will divvy up its largest teeth, one to each raptor that participated, based on each raptor's contribution. They string the teeth on leather cords and wear them around their neck or waist. Raptors who kill other raptors recover the killer claws as trophies. Triceratops horns are another common trophy; some raptors even use them as primitive clubs or spears.

Humans are among the most dangerous creatures raptors know, yet they lack any natural weapon suitable as a trophy - so raptors scalp them. Ferocious indeed is the raptor whose trophy belt includes several T-rex teeth and just as many human scalps.

There is one other trophy that raptors claim: children. Raptor tribes have been known to abduct the children of their enemies. In fact, it's often a badge of honor: if a raptor tribe kills a particularly brave and worthy foe, then the raptor tribe will adopt the warrior's child, whether son or daughter. This only happens if the child is small (five years old at most); otherwise, the raptors treat the child as a small warrior and kill it. Usually raptors only kidnap the children of other raptors, but some have been known to kidnap human children as well.

War

Violence is a part of daily life for velociraptors. Their language does not include a word for peace. At the same time, it has no word for war. As far as raptors are concerned, there is always violence. Some days are just more violent than others.

That said, raptors do distinguish between different kinds of violence. The hunt is a mundane, everyday kind of violence that requires little specific preparation. Conflicts with other carnivores are much more dangerous, and conflicts with humans or other raptors are most dangerous of all. Conflicts among raptor tribes change the daily mode of existence of every raptor in every tribe involved, and really do constitute a war even if the raptors lack such a word.

Raptors with a grievance against other raptors prepare extensively. They store preserved meat for provisions, gather knives and sharpening stones for their claws, and, most importantly, have their shamans create sufficient supplies of deadly chemicals and healing draughts.

Shamans are considered too important to go to war, but they perform the Rites of Separation upon the warband. The Rites of Separation are performed near a body of water under total darkness. Those raptors about to go to war emerge from an underground area, cast off their tribal insignias, bathe in the water, and have mystic symbols painted on their chests. They then go out to hunt their enemies.

Since encountering humans, raptors have grown more adept at destroying buildings. They've been known to tunnel under forts with their claws. Some tribes, understanding explosives, try to mine structures. Other strategies include infiltrating bases under the cover of night or in the cargo bay of large vehicles, or rushing through open gates when a caravan or large group of vehicles passes.

Against enemies who face them on even terms, raptors can be persuaded into a battle of honor - both sides approach each other in an open field, with no ambushes or surprises planned, and fight until one side is utterly defeated, after which that side admits its loss and returns home. Such battles need to be negotiated beforehand, and raptors will only undertake them against other raptor





tribes or against humans who have proven to be honorable and trustworthy in the past. Those who violate a battle of honor will nevermore be trusted by raptors.

Death

Just as violence is a part of everyday raptor life, so too is death. But death always comes from an enemy. Natural deaths are virtually unheard of among raptors, so they have no burial customs. They invariably die at the hands (claws?) of tribal enemies or rivals (who leave them to rot), predators (who eat them), or misjudged prey (who eat them, or leave the body for scavengers). This lack of burial doesn't bother raptors; they accept it as part of the natural process.

Creation Myth

Velociraptor shamans tell this story to their tribes:

In the beginning there was only one kind of carnivorous dinosaur. This was the uberraptor, the ancestor of all the warrior

dinosaurs. The uberraptors wandered the world, easily catching whatever they wished, and killing their prey swiftly with a single click of their crescent-shaped killer claws. There were no other carnivores, and the uberraptors lived prosperously.

The uberraptors were created by the great god Scravis. Scravis is an immortal and the most powerful of the dinosaur gods. He created the world and the many defenseless (and tasty) dinosaurs for the use of the uberraptors.

Scravis has other worlds to create, so our world must propagate itself without his attention. Thus, he granted the uberraptors free rule of the world, provided that they obey one rule: the uberraptors must never eat the eggs of their prey. The eggs must always hatch, so the world can continue itself.

The earliest uberraptors remembered their creator and obeyed the words of Scravis. But over time, their memories faded. Without competition, many uberraptors became greedy and lazy. They realized that eggs were easy to find and did not fight back. They defied Scravis and ate the eggs of their prey.

Scravis did not immediately return to punish the offenders. They continued to eat eggs. Some of their neighbors, observing that there no consequences, became skeptical of Scravis and soon joined the egg-eaters.

The ecosystem suffered from their jolly. The uberraptors' prey were not reproducing fast enough. Within a generation, the young uberraptors were hungry from lack of food. The egg-eaters ended their habit and returned to hunting normal prey. But it was too late. All the uberraptors became hungry.

Scravis is all knowing. After the egg-eaters realized their folly, he did return. He came down from the sky in a great flash of fire and thunder and smoke. The egg-eaters feared that they would be destroyed. They came to Scravis to beg for mercy, now understanding the folly of their actions. So Scravis was merciful. He spared their lives, but sentenced them to forever bear the shame of their decision. He created a place for them in the world. The numbers of the herbivores were replenished, the sizes of their litters were doubled, and the egg-eaters lost their killer claws.

Thus were born the other carnivorous dinosaurs. The oviraptors are the direct descendants of the egg-eaters, living testament to the importance of keeping nature balanced. Their relatives, the other dinosaurs without killer claws, remind us of the superior efficiency of our way of combat. The megaraptors are like the original uberraptors, large and strong but not so intelligent. Only the velociraptors, the blessed descendants of the uberraptors, realize the true balance of things.

This is the velociraptor take on the world. Different tribes have variations on this story, but the basic outline seems common to all raptors. In the center are the velociraptors, the intelligent warriors who act as the fulcrum for the rest of the ecosystem, which lies carefully balanced upon their decisions. All other dinosaurs are inferior, lacking either the intelligence or killer claw of the raptors, but most inferior of all are the oviraptors, who remind the velociraptors of their duty to keep nature balanced. (Other dinosaurs have a different take on the matter, of course!)

Paleoanthropologists claim that the velociraptor creation



myth gives great insight into several key tenets of raptor psychology. It seems that raptors realize they are intelligent enough to overwhelm the natural environment. At the same time, they understand they must limit their hunting, since an ecosystem has a natural balance that must be maintained.

This creation myth forms the basis for the velociraptor religion. The central beliefs are straightforward: the deity Scravis is generally responsible for everything that happens; the natural balance and laws of nature are the proper way of things: at the same time, the raptors themselves are above the laws of nature. Raptor shamans tell their tribes (through the creation myth and other stories) that, in principle, raptors should be cautious that they don't step outside the natural way of things. In practice, raptors usually feel justified in doing whatever they want, and don't see the use of manufactured weapons as outside the natural order of things at all.

Raptors integrate their self-identity and understanding of the world with their religion so thoroughly that they simply cannot detach the "religion" from their sense of self. Changing a velociraptor's religion is practically impossible; the only option is to raise its descendants away from the tribe, completely insulated from their customs. The original raptor would never change his beliefs, but maybe you could persuade its children.

Rites and Rituals

Velociraptor shamans are responsible for practicing the tribe's sacred rites and rituals. Some of these rites tie back to the tribe's creation myths and other beliefs; others are ceremonies specific to a single tribe. The rites do not have magical properties, but don't try to tell a raptor that; they are deeply attached to them and attribute all sorts of disasters to improper application of sacred rites. (Go to www.broncosaurusrex.com for more on raptor magic.)

Here are the three most common rituals and rites.

Rites of Separation: The Rites of Separation are performed in preparation for war. Originally they were meant to separate the tribe from the laws of nature, as raptor wars can change the face of the local ecosystem for miles around.

Tribal Inauguration: When a new leader takes over the tribe, the shaman performs an inauguration ceremony. By this ceremony, the tribe formally acknowledges its new leader. The exact ceremony depends on the particular tribe's beliefs, but always ends in a ceremonial hunt led by the new leader.

Raptor Moon: The raptor moon is a ferocious bloodbath where raptors all across the planet dispense unbridled mayhem. Paleanthropologists speculate that it is a natural mechanism for controlling herbivore populations; the raptors themselves explain it as a time to prove their worth to their tribe. The raptor moon happens roughly once every three generations, when the twin moons of Cretasus rise on the same arc. For one lunar cycle, they are nearly adjacent, and when the moons are full, the night is like the day. The brightest night is known as the raptor moon - the

night on which velociraptors drink potions they call "purge" (see page 17) and prove their worthiness to their tribes. The dinosaurs of Cretasus know that this is a night to hide, as the velociraptors' idea of proving their worthiness basically consists of endless slaughter.

Combat Strategies

Velociraptors are crafty warriors who win as many battles with tactics as they do with fighting. Their standard hunting tactics include concealing their numbers, engineering false retreats, setting traps, laying sieges, and disguising themselves. Strategically gifted raptors may lead bands that use even more sophisticated strategies, including political or social ploys and psychological warfare.

The personality of the tribal leader determines how a raptor tribe behaves. Warrior leaders like to get their claws wet, and although they use strategy to set up a combat situation in their favor, they cannot resist the temptation to dive headlong into the fray. Tactician raptors, on the other hand, may resolve a situation without ever entering combat, often through traps, deception, or diplomacy.

Here are some common velociraptor strategies.

Numbers Games

Velociraptors disguise or inflate the size of the tribe to deceive their enemies. When they are in a position of strength, they disguise their numbers so their enemies will attack. When they are in a position of weakness, they do the opposite.

Hill Numbers: A common technique for inflating the apparent size of a tribe is "hill numbers," as the raptors call it. A small tribe that expects conflict from an enemy will seek out that enemy in a hilly area with dense underbrush. A forested riverbank or swampy channel will work just as well. The raptors find a break in the underbrush (or create one, if necessary) and wait for the enemy to pass.

When the enemy passes, a raptor will climb to the crest of the hill, make itself visible in the clear spot, then quickly duck into the cover of the underbrush. A second raptor will follow, visibly cresting the hill and quickly ducking into cover. Then will come a fourth and fifth, then two more, then still more, until twenty or even thirty raptors have been sighted climbing over the hill and entering the underbrush beyond.

What actually happens is that the first raptor, after ducking into the underbrush, retreats back down the hill (on the side opposite its enemies) and then climbs back up and shows itself *again* cresting the hill and ducking under cover. The whole raptor tribe will cycle up and down the hill this way, making themselves visible on the way up and hiding on the way down. A band of five raptors that makes four loops up and down appears to be twenty rap-





tors to unsuspecting enemies. Opponents who expected five raptors, not twenty, may rethink their plans and decide not to attack, without ever knowing they were fooled.

Raptors often use variations on this technique, such as two sets of hill numbers on different sides of an enemy, to make the enemy feel surrounded; or a hill numbers at the same time that two or three raptors dart in for a quick attack then retreat to the hill where their "many" brothers are hiding. Raptor tacticians fighting enemies who are familiar with hill numbers may even go so far as to *fake* it - for example, while ten raptors wait at the base of the hill (hidden from enemies), three raptors perform deliberately clumsy hill numbers such that their enemies *realize* they are disguising their numbers. Then when the enemy charges, the ten hidden raptors counter-charge, surprising enemies who thought there were only three.

In game terms, hill numbers is executed with opposed Hide vs. Spot skill checks. If the velociraptors are circling back down the hill behind a solid obstruction (such as a boulder pile) and there is simply no way that an observer could spot them, they automatically succeed in disguising their numbers. Otherwise, make a Hide vs. Spot check for each raptor as it cycles up and down the hill.

Characters who are familiar enough with raptors to tell them apart may see through a game of hill numbers. The only characters who fit this category are wild ones, or anyone with 5 or more ranks in Wilderness Lore. In that case, the character can make a Spot check against DC 14 to see if he notices that the same raptors seem to be passing by multiple times.

Two Files: A raptor tribe that wants to bait its enemies into combat will conceal its size. Most large carnosaurs (as well as humans) know better than to attack an entire raptor tribe, but may gladly try to pick off a solitary raptor or two. Knowing this, the raptors may send them an "invitation" that is too good to resist.

Raptors who want to appear less numerous than they really are travel in two or three single file lines - what they call "two files." They leave 60 to 120 feet between each raptor in a line, and the lines will be from 120 to 240 feet apart. In dense terrain, enemies will be able to spot only a few of the raptors, making them look like easy pickings. But the others are only a round or two away from closing for combat.

Raptors approaching a known enemy use two files to approach from two sides with the enemy in between. Then, when they are spotted and attacked, they are in position to flank.

A variation on two files is used to encircle enemies. A tribe will disperse into a single wide line facing its enemy, with raptors every 60 to 120 feet along the line. When one point in the line encounters an enemy, the two ends swing around to form a circle. Then the circle rapidly constricts as the raptors charge.

Traps and Ambushes

Both tactician and warrior raptors like to set traps and ambushes. Tacticians use traps that dispose of enemies with no risk to the raptors, while warriors prefer ambushes that give them the chance to fight.

Common Traps: The traps available to velociraptors are limited only by their imagination and lack of an opposable thumb. Pits and snares are used regularly, often augmented with natural terrors such as piles of sharp horns or poisonous vermin. One favorite ploy developed recently by the brilliant raptor shaman Snake Grabber is to collect poisonous snakes in sacks, then let them loose in human camps after dark. The cold-blooded snakes are attracted to the warm human bodies. When the humans awaken, they are bitten by the startled snakes lying snug beside them.

Raptors make good use of their prey's instinct to flee. Herbivores that choose to graze near cliffs won't make that mistake ever again: raptors exploit such terrain dangers by inciting a stampede and trying to herd it over the cliff. Most of the herd survives, but a few individuals inevitably slip off the cliff edge and fall to their death, becoming meals for the raptors. Raptors make use of any natural hazard in this way; they have been known to herd their prey into mud flats, brambles, tar pits, and even over pit traps designed by the raptors themselves.

When facing predators or human attackers, raptors fighting in familiar terrain reverse the herding principle: they flee in the



direction of a hazard, luring their pursuers after them. If they have a pit trap nearby, they jump over it and let their enemies chase them right over the pit. If there are cliffs obscured by underbrush, the raptors charge headlong into the vegetation, turning to avoid the cliff at the last minute, hoping their pursuers will barrel right over the edge.

Ambushes: False retreats are common in raptor warfare, and anyone who fights raptors long enough will learn to look out for them. Two Heads led a small group of eight raptors who slaughtered more than twice as many humans using a false retreat that has now become a classic strategy. Pursued by human hunters. Two Heads ordered four of his braves to retreat at top speed, while the remainder followed behind in a fighting withdrawal. The four retreating braves hid along both sides of the path as soon as they were out of sight. The slower-moving braves led their enemies down the same path, with two of them dropping to the side and feigning death. Sensing victory, the hunters followed - and suddenly the four hidden raptors burst out of the underbrush at point blank range on each side. As they lunged, Two Heads and the two other retreating raptors wheeled about, reversed direction, and charged the hunters' front rank, and the two who had feigned death charged from the rear. The hunters were completely encircled with attackers at close range on every side. Suffice it to say, the story of that ambush was spread by raptors, not humans.

When they have time to anticipate their enemies, raptors are enthusiastic ambushers. Although they aren't great climbers, they are excellent jumpers, and they put this to use by leaping into trees and dropping onto enemies from above. A typical raptor stands six feet tall, giving it a maximum running high jump of 9 ft. Since their speed is 60 ft., raptors double the distance they cover with a Jump check. Given their Jump modifier of +13, they can reach their maximum running high jump distance of 9 ft. by rolling only a 9 on their check. Thus, they can easily situate themselves above their enemies, ready to ambush them from above. When attacking large creatures, they will jump down and attack their enemy's back. But when fighting humans or other smaller creatures, the raptors will try to place themselves on boulders or low-lying tree limbs that let them attack without leaving their position. This gives them the advantage of higher ground - which in game terms translates to a +1 attack bonus.

With a +7 modifier in their Hide skill, raptors are able to conceal themselves fairly well. Whether in trees or on the ground, raptors executing an ambush will try to hide, then attack when their enemies enter range. (Don't forget about their 10 ft. reach!) They are often quite creative about what they hide behind. Two Heads once launched an assault on a human ranch from behind a herd of stampeding triceratops - the raptors spooked the triceratops, then ran behind them all the way to the ranch.

Raptors in dense terrain sometimes hide behind tree trunks, bushes, boulders, and other objects that provide cover even once they are detected. They do this when facing opponents of equal or greater reach. They can usually find obstructions large enough to give them 1/2 cover, and thus the ensuing +4 AC bonus and +2 Reflex save bonus.

Wolf in Sheep's Clothing: A classic raptor ambush, which has proven particularly effective against humans, is the old "wolf in sheep's clothing" trick, known to raptors as "sharp teeth in soft skin." A band of raptors will kill and skin a pack of otherwise innocuous herbivores roughly their size (often edaphosaurus, stegoceras, or camptosaurus), then don the skins and imitate that creature. They will go so far as to walk on all fours, if need be. Because most of their prey doesn't pay attention to other herbivores to begin with, and the fresh-killed skin covers their scent, the draped raptors are able to get quite close before their enemies notice anything amiss.

In game terms, resolve this situation with two steps. The first step is to determine whether the prey (or PCs) even pay attention to the "herbivores" in the first place. Resolve this with an opposed Hide vs. Spot check. If the raptors win, they have successfully impersonated the motions and behavior of the herbivore such that their prey pays them no notice. This check *doesn't* mean they actually look like what they're impersonating - even a casual glance could still reveal that they're walking funny and their "legs" are floppy pieces of skin. What this first check means is that the raptors have done a good job of "acting casual" such that the other herbivores have no reason to look at them in the first place.

If the raptors lose, immediately make a second check of untrained Disguise vs. Spot. The raptors have a -2 competence penalty to the Disguise check (the disguise isn't exactly great!). This check determines if the raptors are able to pass themselves off as the prey animal. If they fail, nearby animals realize they are raptors.

Regardless of the results of the first check, if the prey (or PCs) for any reason pay attention to the raptors, or if the raptors come within the prey's speed distance (e.g., 30 ft. for humans or 80 ft. for a brachiosaur), they are assumed to be noticed, so immediately proceed to the Disguise check.

Sieges

Tactician raptors are known to lay sieges. Warrior raptors do not often pursue this strategy, as it means little action and possibly no bloodshed. But more patient tacticians have used sieges to best much larger opponents.

Sieges against Dinosaurs: Raptors use sieges primarily against predators competing within their hunting grounds. Herbivores usually don't have fixed lairs, making sieges less useful against them. Predators, on the other hand, often retreat to a lair to digest their meals, making them the perfect target for a siege.

Because most large carnivores know the full might of a raptor tribe, they avoid direct confrontations. Only the strongest competitors (such as adult tyrannosaurs) take on raptors toe-to-toe. Thus, the siege. But sieges are also useful against the tyrannosaurs and other carnivores willing to fight the raptors. In this case, a siege is used as a precursor to a direct assault - although a fight may be inevitable, a siege might weaken the opponent and tilt the scales in the raptors' favor.

Raptors using siege tactics wait until their enemy is comfort-





ably resting after a large meal. Then they move into position around its lair. They announce their presence only when the besieged creature awakens and tries to leave. The victim then has three possible options.

The first option is that the enemy retreats to its lair and falls victim to siege mentality. It chooses to wait, hoping that an outside event (such as a wandering predator or chance mishap) will scatter the raptors. This rarely happens, however, as raptors are intelligent enough to plan their sieges well. The besieged creature slowly starves in its lair until it faces death by combat or death by starvation. At that point, it tries to make a break for it, whereupon the raptors easily take down the weakened creature.

More intelligent enemies realize that they have to leave their lair sooner or later. If they're lucky, they have preserved food stores. (As a rough guide, assume a 50% chance that a carnosaur with an Int of 6 or better will have dried meat stored in its lair.) Even then, they *still* have to leave eventually. Knowing that it's better to fight at full strength than half-starved, intelligent carnosaur make the hard choice and charge the raptors immediately. They might lose the battle, but they'll take a lot more raptors with them than if they had waited.

The third choice is only available to humans, T-rexes, and other species with long-range communication abilities. They call for help. If help arrives soon enough, they may be able to break the siege. Otherwise, they are forced into the above options.

It may be helpful to review the starvation and dehydration rules before running a siege situation. Most creatures locate their

lair near running water, so starvation is usually more of a problem than dehydration. A creature can go without food for 3 days. Thereafter, the creature must make a Con check each day (starting at DC 10, +1 for each prior check) or suffer 1d6 points of subdual damage. As soon as the creature suffers subdual damage, it counts as being fatigued.

Raptors have even been known to besiege predators without lairs (including human wagon trains) by encircling them and chasing away any prey that approaches. This technique starves the enemy just as well as if it were holed up in a lair. One particularly inventive raptor shaman "besieged" a ceratosaurus with cowbells acquired from human farmers. The shaman fixed some bells to short sticks and others to loops of dinosaur leather. Then he led his tribe in a hit-and-run attack that left the ceratosaurus covered in bells - some looped around his neck or tail where he couldn't reach them; others embedded in his flanks on short, sharp sticks. From then on, the ceratosaurus - which hunted by ambush, as all ceratosaur do - jingled like a Christmas song. Unable to surprise prey, it slowly starved to death, eventually becoming a meal for the raptors.

Sieges against Humans: Raptors frequently use sieges against humans with long-range weapons or armored vehicles. Even if the humans are mobile, raptors will track them in "running sieges" where one pack chases away any small game the humans could hunt while another pack blocks escape by constructing roadblocks. Raptors understand roads and trails, and will block them off to contain vehicles. Often their roadblocks consist of freshly killed herbivores; they chase their prey onto the road and kill it where it blocks traffic best. Aside from attracting scavengers (which, when interrupted from their meals, make for easily angered "roadblocks"), dinosaur carcasses are larger than most human vehicles, and their skeletal remains can be fashioned into spiked barricades. Ribcages work particularly well for this. Raptors also block retreat by felling trees, piling up underbrush, and digging pits. Military expeditions in raptor territory have to deal with the disconcerting possibility that soldiers in armored vehicles with high-powered rifles might still starve to death!

In recent years, raptors have developed several specialized techniques for besieging human settlements. Fire is a particular favorite. When besieging enemies whom they have no desire to eat, raptors smoke them out. Human buildings, often constructed of wood, are easy prey for this strategy. If the humans suffocate or burn to death, so be it; if they attempt escape, the raptors cut them down as they emerge from the flames.

The shaman Snake Grabber led the massacre of the town of Green Peak by poisoning their water supply. Located in the hills southeast of New Savannah. Green Peak was a small farming community at the base of a lush mountain. There was no shortage of food - but the town's water supply came from a single creek. Snake Grabber and his raptors didn't have enough poison to affect an entire creek, but they did understand decay. They went on a killing spree, wiping out every herbivore they could find near the creek bed. then dragged the carcasses into the upstream waters. The sheer number of decaying bodies poisoned the creek. Once everyone in Green Peak was feverish and ill from drinking polluted water, the tribe attacked.



Political Ploys

Velociraptors are masters of political intrigue. Their brains are well developed in the areas governing social interaction. They aren't constrained by moral notions of honesty or duplicity; tribal loyalty is their only ethical restraint. In social interactions with velociraptors, only the most devious humans have any chance of gaining an advantage.

Life within the velociraptor tribe is a constant political game, as discussed elsewhere. In this section, we will discuss raptor politics as they relate to combat, war, and interactions with humans.

Alliances: Raptors from the same tribe always join together for the greater good of the tribe (perhaps putting aside personal disputes to do so). Tribes from the same nation consider themselves distant family and aid each other without any formal agreement. Tribes or individual raptors with longstanding good relationships may go easy on each other.

Beyond that, raptors don't enter into alliances without careful consideration of the benefits to themselves. Raptors are not sentimental, and it shows in their alliance negotiations. Most prospective allies also qualify as prospective meals, so there has to be a compelling reason to choose alliance over dinner!

Velociraptors choose alliances for three reasons:

1. They need protection or assistance from their allies.
2. They can acquire material goods via an alliance.
3. They can neutralize, disarm, or deceive rivals with an alliance.

The first reason for alliance - protection or assistance - is the most natural. It existed long before humans arrived on Cretasus; raptors have always allied in order to capture ever-larger herds or defend against competing predators. In areas with longstanding competition, tribes may ally not for immediate protection, but because of an ever-escalating balance-of-power situation.

The second reason for alliance has appeared since the arrival of humans, and often involves protoceratops intermediaries. Raptors negotiate trade agreements with humans in order to acquire weapons and food. These aren't "alliances" in the traditional sense; the raptors won't fight for the humans, or vice versa. But they do end hostilities and align interests, effectively acting as economic alliances.

The third reason for alliance occurs only with highly intelligent leaders or shamans. Allies generally don't kill each other. With this fact in mind, the raptors seek alliances to neutralize stronger opponents. A weaker tribe may seek an alliance with a stronger tribe, often on seemingly disadvantageous terms, because it's better to be a weaker *ally* than to be weaker *prey*. Furthermore, once the stronger tribe is an ally, they may let down their guard and give the weaker tribe an opportunity. Of course, the stronger tribe may be thinking the same thing!

This brings up the issue of loyalty. Just how well do raptors respect their alliances? It depends on the particular raptors involved. Just as with humans, some raptors are honorable and

some are not. In general, however, all raptors have a much stronger animal instinct than humans, despite their intelligence. Their lawful alignment is a reflection of their tribal loyalty and respect for the laws they acknowledge - which are tribal laws and the laws of nature. Dealings with non-raptors are another matter entirely. Raptors working with non-raptors are much more likely to break an alliance if it benefits them, or use false alliances to deceive an enemy - *except* if it involves disloyalty to the tribe or nation, which is the one ethical restraint that virtually all raptors honor.

Raptors sizing up a potential combat situation may offer an alliance instead of a battle. They do so if they have something to gain from their opponents (reasons one or two above), or if they think they can win an advantage with an alliance which they later betray (reason three above).

Battles of Honor: One facet of the raptors' natural loyalty to the tribe or nation is a form of battle honor. When facing enemies they respect, particularly those within the same tribe or nation, raptors can be persuaded into a battle of honor. Battles of honor are often used to decide leadership challenges.

A battle of honor always takes place in an open area, with no surprises or ambushes. Unlike most raptor combats, there is no killing blow - as soon as one side concedes, the battle ends and both sides retreat. The results of the match are always honored, since to not honor them might result in open conflict within the tribe.

Arranging a battle of honor between humans and raptors is practically impossible. Unless the raptors are familiar enough to trust the humans, they will never agree to it. Even if they do agree to it, the humans should be on their guard. The only reason raptors obey the outcome of a battle of honor is because doing so maintains order within the tribe. When dealing with outsiders, tribal loyalty ceases to be an issue. Raptors are not above double-crossing humans who have arranged battles of honor!

Psychological Warfare: Most raptors prefer to fight a direct fight. But when a direct attack is not possible, raptors wear down an enemy with psychological warfare. Whether in a siege or in open terrain, raptors do everything possible to disrupt enemy concentration, erode morale, and cause physical discomfort. If the enemy is afraid of raptors, the raptors make themselves constantly visible; if the enemy is strong, the raptors hide and leave them guessing. They make noise by beating stones against each other. When facing herbivores, they show their strength by slaughtering a few innocent creatures and leaving the corpses where they can be seen. If they pick off a stray defender, they leave the body in the open where the other defenders can see it. (This tactic works especially well at demoralizing humans.) They harry and harass, launching false charges at all hours of day and night to keep the defenders on edge. When facing strong parties, they stalk them at a distance, often for days or weeks at a time. This unnerves the party and gives the raptors plenty of time to wait for the perfect opportunity to strike. They disrupt food and water supplies. There is no limit to what they won't do if it will give them an edge.



Strategies for Ranged Weapons

Poisons

Velociraptors do not take naturally to long-ranged weapons. Although velociraptors are familiar with the basic principles of thrown weapons (since they and some other dinosaurs are known to throw stones or primitive spears), there are no natural equivalents to a gun or bow. Raptors don't understand them and have little experience facing them.

Wild-born raptors unaccustomed to contact with humans are not scared of ranged weapons. After all, firearms and bows are just funny-looking sticks. As soon as a raptor is injured by one of the funny-looking sticks, however, the entire tribe is liable to make a rapid retreat, as they are unsure of what they're dealing with.

Raptors with more exposure to guns and bows do not fear them. They view them as just another natural danger to be dealt with. Just as T-rex jaws are formidable weapons that require special strategies to avoid, so too are the human fire-sticks. Raptors have a few strategies they use in such situations.

Stalk and Lunge: In dense terrain, raptors approach in hiding and then charge. Raptors have a 60 ft. move, so they can charge 120 ft. and still attack. Even after reductions for obstructions (per the standard hampered movement rules), a raptor's charging distance exceeds the average spotting distance in jungle and dense forest. In other words, they can close for melee before enemies with ranged weapons even see them, regardless of whether they're hiding or not!

The table below summarizes raptor running and charging speeds in various terrain, relative to the average spotting distance for that terrain. As you can see, the raptor's most advantageous terrain is dense forest.

In scrub, brush, and grassland, raptors can use their Hide +7 skill to get within charge range. Remember that they can move 30 ft. (half speed) without suffering a penalty to their Hide check, so even while hiding they can keep up with a human party. If they're spotted early, they can close rapidly with their huge running speed.

Ambush: In most cases, a stalk-and-lunge strategy will counter ranged weapons. In the few situations where it doesn't, however, raptors fighting enemies with ranged weapons will trail them until a suitable ambush position presents itself.

Terrain	Base Speed	Base Run	Terrain Modifier	Net Run	Net Charge	Spotting Distance (Average)
Jungle, dense forest	60ft.	240ft.	x 1/2	120ft.	60ft.	50ft.
Light forest, swamp	60 ft.	240 ft.	x 3/4	180 ft	90 ft	105 ft
Scrub or brush	60ft.	240ft.	x 3/4	180 ft	90 ft.	210 ft.
Grassland	60 ft.	240 ft.	x 1	240ft.	120ft.	420ft.

In times of war, raptor tribes with shamans coat their claws with poison. Raptors do not use poison for mundane hunts, since the poison enters the bloodstream of their prey. They only use poisoned weapons when fighting creatures they will not eat - especially humans or other raptors. To avoid ingesting any trace of the poison, they won't use their bite attack when fighting with poisoned claws.

Raptor shamans can mix a variety of natural poisons. A typical raptor poison is Injury, DC 13, 1d4 Str/1d4 Str. Higher level shamans can mix more potent poisons; see the shaman class entry for more details.

Raptor shamans can also harvest poisons from the glands of poisonous prey, and they have been known to mix specialized poisons with all sorts of specific effects.

One raptor tribe developed "scorpion tails" - poison-tipped spike attachments which they wore on their tails - and fought with poisoned tail lashes and normal claw attacks. A scorpion tail can be manufactured by any shaman. It requires a Wilderness Lore check against DC 16 to find all necessary components, and takes five full days to build (it is an intricate mechanism). Learning to fight with a scorpion tail is another matter completely; raptors normally use their tails for balance and aren't comfortable fighting with tail lashes. It takes a full year of practice to learn the proper technique. Once proficient with a scorpion tail, a raptor may trade its bite attack for a tail lash. The lash is +6 melee. It only does 1 point of damage, but also causes poison damage with any injury.

Raptors Under the Influence

Natural chemicals are an important part of velociraptor culture. They mix herbs, roots, fungi, animal byproducts, and other ingredients into a variety of powders and potions. While some of these are mere stimulants or hallucinogens, others have powerful combat applications.

A tribe's potions and powders are under the control of its shaman. They are always available to the shaman for her own use, and she distributes them to the rest of the tribe as needed. Here are

a few of the potions and powders that characters might encounter. All are designed for the tough raptor anatomy; non-raptors who drink them must make a fort save against DC 15 or suffer ill effects, as described below. In theory, the potions could be mixed in lower concentrations for non-raptors.

Furon: Furon is a complex potion whose primary ingredients



fool raptors exhibiting this behavior - removing shoes and tossing them into the underbrush can keep a raptor busy for several rounds as it shreds the shoes...

- 3-4 The raptor sees double, or perhaps even triple. Each round, roll 1d6. On 1-3, the raptor attacks a target as usual. On 4-6, the raptor *behaves* exactly as if it were attacking the character - ducking to avoid high blows, parrying shots, lunging at the right times, and so on - but targets the hallucinatory double that's a few feet to the left of where the character really is! All attacks aimed at the double automatically miss the character.
- 5 The raptor swats at the bright lights dancing around the enemy. These attacks may still cause incidental damage, but only by accident. Roll to attack as usual; if an attack hits, it has only a 50% chance of actually causing damage. Otherwise, the raptor sliced thin air as it swatted the dancing lights.
- 6 The raptor completely loses it. In a frenzied, frothing fit of slashing at empty air, it desperately tries to kill something that isn't there. It doesn't engage the "real" enemy at all. Cautious characters can withdraw without the raptor ever noticing they're gone.

A raptor that is wounded may snap out of its sparkle root fit. For each wound sustained by the raptor, make a Fort save. The DC is the raptor's current hit points. If the check is passed, the raptor returns to its normal state.

Non-raptors who fail to save after chewing sparkle root double their DC to snap out of the fit.



Silverclaws

Silverclaws are raptors who have had their natural claws replaced with steel claws. The steel claws are stronger, sharper, and more durable. Replacing them isn't painless but raptors are used to pain; few raptors make it past adolescence without at least one hunt-related injury. From the raptor's perspective, pain that results in improved hunting ability is a good thing.

In the world of *Dinosaur Planet: Broncosaurus Rex*, silverclaws are created by surgical procedures. Raptors allied with Confederate forces were the first to undergo the process. Now the surgery is quite popular, and raptor exiles gladly trade their services to be transformed into silverclaws. The surgery takes two hours. It's hard to attach a price because raptors rarely pay in cash, but the Confederate military usually offers the surgery to any raptor who agrees to serve for five years.

Some raptors have steel teeth implanted, as well. This process is a bit more painful. The procedure was pioneered by the dental surgeon Dr. Kindred. The good doctor ended up with only one hand after his third patient awoke in the middle of the surgery and clamped down hard; since then, only a few surgeons are willing to do the procedure, and then only if the raptor is heavily sedated.

In recent years, a new breed of silverclaw has emerged: the longclaw. These are raptors whose steel claws aren't just replicas of the originals, but instead are miniature swords designed especially for their limbs. Longclaws are a little clumsier than normal silverclaws, but they have a longer reach and do more damage.

In a fantasy campaign, you can easily incorporate silverclaws as magical oddities. Certain magical claw rings might graft themselves to produce silverclaws...

Velociraptor Characters

Velociraptors are intelligent enough to make very interesting NPCs. And, should you permit it in your campaign, they can also make great PCs. This section covers raptor characters.

Raptors as a Character Race

Velociraptors as a character race have these specifications.

Personality: Velociraptors are highly social creatures. They hate solitude and like to be in the company of their fellows. Although they prefer other Velociraptors, they have been known to get along well with humans and other creatures of the right disposition.

Raptors are highly competitive and always strive for dominance over other creatures, even their friends and allies. Among raptors, this social competition is not considered a sign of disloyalty; wanting to be boss is a natural trait. Despite their competitive streak, they are intensely loyal, especially to larger collectives such as tribes or nations.



Velociraptors are not known for their sense of humor. By human standards, they tend to be somber and violent, and the few things that do amuse them (such as combat) are often gruesome and brutal.

Physical Description: Described under Physiology on page 2.

Relations: Velociraptors are predators by nature. They only have good relations with creatures they don't eat. For the few creatures in that camp, relations with raptors range from casual to cordial. It really depends on the individuals involved. Raptors are not predisposed towards or against most kinds of creatures: the situation, terrain, and personalities involved determine the outcome of relations.

Alignment: Velociraptors are overwhelmingly lawful. A very small number are chaotic, often through a natural quirk of genetic disposition. Raptors are wild creatures who accept the rules of the wild; thus, they are generally neither good nor evil, but neutral.

Keep in mind that everyday raptor life involves mobbing herbivores, ripping them to shreds, then eating them, often before they're quite dead. Violence is an inherent aspect of raptor existence. Raptors simply have no natural sense of mercy or compassion. They will give an enemy a quick death out of a sense of honor, or companionship, or loyalty, but never out of mercy. Raptors who defeat bitter enemies won't think twice about eating them alive, or leaving their crippled bodies for the scavengers to finish off, or scalping them. To them, it's not cruel; it's what they do every day to stay alive. Of course, there *are* raptors with cruel streaks. But to a human, *every* raptor seems cruel!

Raptor Lands: Raptors can easily leave their mark on any land and its inhabitants, but they lack the opposable thumb that would give them the ability to reshape the environment itself. Each tribe has its own hunting grounds, which it defends vigorously from other raptors and any creature capable of competing for its prey.

Religion: Persuading a raptor to switch religions would be an enormous undertaking; essentially, their language lacks the concept of "religion" to begin with. Raptors have a naturalistic belief system that explains the world around them. They don't think of it as religion; it's an explanation for the way the world is. Just as the rising sun explains daylight.

Language: Raptors have their own language. Raptor, with varying dialects by region. The language, which is full of hisses and growls, sounds thoroughly reptilian and is very hard for non-raptors (especially mammals) to master.

Names: Raptors do not name their children. Over time, each individual raptor acquires a nickname based on its personality and behavior within the tribe. Raptors that switch tribes may earn new nicknames.

Adventurers: Raptors live a very adventurous lifestyle to begin with. Few leave their tribes to become adventurers. Those that do are usually exiles or shamans.

VELOCIRAPTOR RACIAL TRAITS

- **Natural cunning:** Racial bonuses to the following skills: Hide +5, Listen +10, Spot +10. Wilderness Lore +8.
- **Natural jumpers:** +9 racial bonus to Jump skill.
- **Physical build:** Velociraptors are naturally strong, tough, and fast. They receive a +7 bonus to Str, +6 to Con, and +4 to Dex.
- **Mental attributes:** Velociraptors are not just smart; they're also natural-born creatures in tune with the world around them. They receive a +1 bonus to Int and Wis.
- **Large:** As Large creatures, Velociraptors receive a -1 size penalty to armor class and attack rolls.
- **No opposable thumb:** Velociraptors lack opposable thumbs. They are able to grasp objects, but they can't manipulate them with fine motor skills. They can use weapons, but only simple manual weapons. (Try eating or writing using only your middle three fingers - that's what it's like. If you can operate it with only your three middle fingers, they can use it.) They suffer a -2 competence penalty when using any weapon that requires grasping. If the weapon was not specifically designed for or by them, the penalty is increased to -6.
- **Hit points:** Raptors with class levels receive their initial allocation of hit points per their velociraptor racial profile (4d10 plus Con bonus). Additional hit points are accrued according to class levels.
- **Velociraptor base speed** is 60 ft.
- **Automatic languages:** Raptor.
- **Favored class:** None. Most raptors have no class. Those with exceptional physical or mental attributes may become warriors, tacticians, or shamans.

Remember that raptors are CR 3, so first-level raptor PCs are considered 4th level characters.

Character Classes

Most raptors are naturally scrappy but lack character class levels. A few of the stronger and smarter raptors end up with class levels in one of the three raptor-specific classes. (These classes can easily be adapted for other races, but are described here specifically for raptors.)

Raptors raised in their natural environment can *only* have class levels in these raptor-specific classes. In theory, raptors raised in non-raptor society could train in other classes.

Raptors in their natural state live short, brutal lives. The hunt is their livelihood, and the hunt is dangerous. Injuries accumulate over time, and sooner or later every raptor ends up gored by a triceratops, eaten by a T-rex, or flattened by a diplodocus. Few raptors reach class levels higher than fifth.

Warrior: Also called Braves or Redclaws, velociraptor warriors are the quintessential Velociraptors. They are lean, mean, green killing machines. Their natural abilities, coupled with endless practice and frequent hunts, combine to produce a ferocious combatant. Note that the Velociraptor Warrior class is different



from the standard d20 Warrior NPC class.

Tactician: Velociraptor tacticians are the velociraptor generals. They are exceptionally intelligent. Their natural weapons alone are formidable (even a weak velociraptor is more than a match for any human), but it is their intelligence that makes them dangerous.

Shaman: Velociraptor shamans can mix poisons, healing potions, and other powerful items. They are the natural diplomats of their tribes.

Class Notes

Skills: The five raptor racial skills (Hide, Jump, Listen, Spot and Wilderness Lore) are considered class skills for all raptors. Raptor characters gain feats at first, third, sixth and subsequent levels, as with normal characters.

Hit Dice: The hit dice listed below should be used for raptors who take the appropriate class, despite the fact that "monster" raptors always use d10 for hit dice.

Velociraptor Warrior

Velociraptor warriors train in martial combat. Although all raptors focus on physical skills, the warriors are distinguished by their combination of above-average speed and strength, which give them the ability to perform special combat feats.

Characteristics: Velociraptor warriors are gifted with natural combat acumen. All raptors live violent lives full of battle. They naturally become better in battle through long years of practice as carnivores. A very few possess the natural strength and agility to surpass even the most skilled normal raptor; these are the velociraptor warriors. Part of their talent is purely physical; part of it is a mental attitude that allows them to study and perfect their techniques; and part of it is pure luck - reaching adulthood and maintaining a predator's lifestyle without suffering debilitating injuries.

Alignment: Like all velociraptors, warriors are overwhelmingly lawful neutral, although a very few are other alignments.

Background: Warriors inevitably aspire to leadership posi-



tions within velociraptor tribes. Some achieve this; others simply become the "top dogs" within the lowest-ranking caste.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Velociraptor warriors have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Velociraptor warriors survive based on their physical prowess. Strength and Dexterity are key to this.

If you are designing NPC velociraptor warriors, assume their Str and Dex are 1d4 points higher than the average raptor.

Alignment: Usually lawful neutral, but any is acceptable.

Hit Die: d12.

Class Skills

The velociraptor warrior's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at 1st Level: (2 + Int modifier) x 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the velociraptor warrior.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Warriors gain one manual weapon proficiency at first level, and another at each feat level

Table 1-1: Velociraptor Warrior

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Combat Feat
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Combat Feat
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	
6	+6/+1	+5	+2	+2	Combat Feat
7	+7/+2	+5	+2	+2	
8	+8/+3	+6	+2	+2	Combat Feat
9	+9/+4	+6	+3	+3	
10	+10/+5	+7	+3	+3	Combat Feat



(third, sixth, etc.)- The weapon must be of tech level 1, must be usable by the raptor, and must be a weapon that the raptor has encountered and had the ability to learn.

Warriors cannot gain armor proficiencies. Mobility and agility are extremely important to them and they feel impeded by a "second skin." The few raptors to have encountered energy field armor do approve of it, as it provides protection without constraining movement. But they lack the tech level capabilities to use energy field armor without assistance.

Natural Attacks: A raptor warrior gains natural feats as his combat prowess develops. He learns a new combat feat every two levels. He can choose his combat feat from the options of Spring Attack, Anchorclaw Attack, Jumpclaw Attack, Disembowel, and Tumbleclaw. He still must fulfill the prerequisites of each feat.

Velociraptor Tactician

Velociraptor tacticians win battles with strategies and tactics. Like all raptors, they are vicious killers who can hold their own in a fight. But tacticians prefer to win without ever bloodying a claw. They are masters of traps, bluffs, and stratagems. Their influence is rarely felt in ordinary times, but they lead the tribe's combat strategy when it comes time to fight intelligent opponents. When raptors hunt each other, it is the skills of the tacticians that decide the outcome.

Characteristics: Tactician raptors are average in physique, sometimes even weaker than average, but significantly above-average in sly, crafty intelligence. They train in stealth, strategy and tactics. They are master scouts, and skilled with traps and ambushes.

Alignment: Like all velociraptors, tacticians are usually lawful neutral.

Background: Most raptors feel at home in the hunt, but not tacticians. Simple violence does not interest them; they shine in the light of complex plans. Tacticians delight in devising schemes. Most of these schemes are military, but many are social. Tacticians are the manipulators within a tribe, trying to use their wits to maneuver into leadership positions.



Velociraptor tacticians, assume their Int and Cha are 1d4 points higher than the average raptor.

Alignment: Usually lawful neutral, but any is acceptable.

Hit Die: d8.

Class Skills

The Velociraptor tactician's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (strategy & tactics, Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at 1st Level: (4 + Int modifier) x 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

**Table 1-2:
Velociraptor Tactician**

Velociraptor tacticians have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Velociraptor tacticians survive based on their mental prowess. Intelligence is extremely important for devising strategies; just as important, however, is the charisma to persuade the tribe to execute those strategies. Intelligence and Charisma are key abilities for tacticians.

If you are designing NPC

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+2	+0	Combat Placement, Combat Tactician
2	+1	+0	+3	+0	Sense of Vulnerability
3	+2	+1	+3	+1	Stealth Feat
4	+3	+1	+4	+1	
5	+3	+1	+4	+1	Stealth Feat
6	+4	+2	+5	+2	
7	+5	+2	+5	+2	Stealth Feat
8	+6/+1	+2	+6	+2	
9	+6/+1	+3	+6	+3	Stealth Feat
10	+7/+2	+3	+7	+3	



Class Features

All of the following are class features of the velociraptor tacticians.

Strategic Ability: A tactician gains feats related to strategies and tactics as he advances in level. He gains the feats Combat Placement and Combat Tactician at first level. At second level, he gains Sense of Vulnerability. (All of these feats are described on www.broncosaurusrex.com, as well as in the *Dinosaur Planet: Broncosaurus Rex* Core Rulebook, pages 41-42.)

Stealth: Tacticians like to assess situations from a distance, preferably in hiding. They are constantly reconnoitering nearby threats; the more knowledge they have, the better they can craft their strategies. At fourth, sixth, and eighth level, a raptor tactician gains a stealth feat. Each time he gains such a feat, he may choose from Alertness, Invisible Stride, Jungle Stride, Sneaky Git, or Track.

Velociraptor Shaman

Velociraptor shamans are wizened, ancient raptors who give strength to their tribes by mixing potions, powders, and poisons; making prognostications; guiding interactions with the wild; and performing rites and rituals.

Characteristics: Shamans are always female. They tend to be solemn and reticent, even more so than the usual raptor. They come across as very wise, but a little unsettling; humans get nervous around them. (Most humans get nervous around *any* velociraptor, of course, but even those who are comfortable with raptors get nervous around shamans.)

Apprentices often train for many years before they reach even first level. Only the eldest shamans achieve level five or higher.

Alignment: Like all velociraptors, shamans are usually lawful neutral. Their tendency toward solitary research and absence from the hunt (which is the primary bonding activity for most raptors) makes them more likely to become exiles than other raptors.

Background: Shamans begin training as apprentices when they are very young. Their importance to the tribe is felt in the fact that they rarely enter battle directly. As such, they live to ripe old ages (at least by raptor standards).

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Velociraptor shamans have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Shamans must have a strong connection to the world around them. They must also be smart enough to interpret that connection, understand it, and experiment with it. Wisdom and Intelligence are important abilities for shamans.

If you are designing NPC velociraptor shamans, assume their Wis and Int are 1d4 points higher than the average raptor.

Alignment: Usually lawful neutral, but any is acceptable.

Hit Die: d8.

Class Skills

The velociraptor shaman's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Alchemy/Chemistry (Int), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intuit Direction (Wis), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Skill Points at 1st Level: $(8 + \text{Int modifier}) \times 4$.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: $8 + \text{Int modifier}$.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the velociraptor shamans.

Alchemy: A shaman adds her class level as a competence bonus to alchemy skill checks. Depending on her knowledge of the local ecosystem, she can mix ingredients as follows.

A first level shaman can mix poisons and healing potions. Higher level shamans can mix more potent versions. A healing potion restores hit points equal to $1d8 + \text{the shaman's level}$. Raptor shaman poisons are Injury. DC $12 + \text{shaman's level}$, 1d4 Str/1d4 Str.



Table 1-3: Velociraptor Shaman

	Base	Fort	Ref	Will	
Level	Attack Bonus	Save	Save	Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Mix poison and healing potions
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Mix acids
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	Poison Resistance, custom poisons
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	Mix explosives
5	+2	+1	+1	+4	Natural premonition
6	+3	+2	+2	+5	
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	Natural premonition +2
8	+4	+2	+2	+6	
9	+4	+3	+3	+6	Natural premonition +3
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	

Shamans can also harvest naturally occurring poisons from the glands of poisonous prey. This requires a Wilderness Lore check against DC 6. On a failed check there is a 5% chance that the raptor poisons herself by accident.

At second level, a shaman may mix acids from natural ingredients. (Even if she has the Alchemy skill, this ability does not materialize until she learns where to find the appropriate ingredients - hence the second level requirement.) The acid causes damage of 1d6 plus the shaman's level with a direct hit, or one point plus the shaman's level in splash damage.

At third level, a shaman can mix custom poisons. (Even with the Alchemy skill, she doesn't know where to find the proper ingredients until third level.) Work with your GM to determine the specifics of mixing the poison; locating the proper ingredients requires a Wilderness Lore check, and mixing it requires an Alchemy check.

At fourth level, a shaman can mix simple explosives. The explosives can take the form of grenades, sticks, or powders. Raptors like to get their claws bloody, so they rarely use explosives in the hunt, but they do use them in traps, against other raptors, and when nothing else will work. In grenade concentrations, the explosives cause 2d6 damage plus 1d6 for each level of the shaman above fourth, with an area effect of 5 ft. plus 5 ft. per level above fourth.

Poison Resistance: At third level, a shaman's constant exposure to low-level poison dosages causes her to develop a natural resistance. She gains the feat Poison Resistance.

Natural Premonition: Shamans are inveterate observers. They notice the tiniest details about the world around them, and use those details to portend what path nature will take. At the most basic level, this is simple meteorology; at higher levels, it encompasses herd movements, climate changes, drought predictions, and an innate sense of predator-prey ratios. In day-to-day terms, the shamans are so attuned to the behavior of local animals that they can predict their behavior based on brief observations.

At fifth level, a shaman starts to have natural premonitions. These are sudden bursts of instinct that tell the shaman what a creature will do. Natural premonition may be used once per day per level.

When observing wild creatures in their natural habitat, the shaman can make a Wilderness Lore check to attempt to predict

their actions. Depending on level, a bonus is applied to this check. This only works with creatures native to the shaman's home territory, which she has had the opportunity to observe for many years.

Against DC 20, the shaman correctly predicts the creature's next immediate action. For example, when the raptor tribe is stalking prey, the shaman could correctly predict whether it will turn right or left when they charge.

Against DC 25, the shaman correctly predicts the creature's feelings and general inclinations, and knows what it will do over the next hour or so. For example, when the raptor tribe has to break off the hunt to avoid encountering a T-rex, the shaman could correctly predict that the prey is thirsty and will be found at the watering hole in about an hour.

Against DC 30, the shaman correctly predicts the creature's overarching motives, and knows what it will do over the next several days. This doesn't mean the shaman can pinpoint its exact position at every minute for the next three days, but it does mean the shaman can know, more or less, where it will be grazing, whether it will be on its guard or not, where it is headed, whether it has a lair somewhere (and if so, where it might be), and so on. For a variant of the shaman class with magical abilities, go to www.broncosaurusrex.com.

Feats

Velociraptors are ferocious opponents. Their natural predator instincts are only a small part of why they are feared; it is their intelligence and capacity to learn that make them really dangerous. They use the same combat techniques as many other races, and in addition, they have developed several deadly feats unique to their own anatomical abilities.

Here is a list of the most common raptor feats. Feats listed in bold are new feats described in this section.

Alertness
Anchorclaw Attack
Claw Rider
 Combat Reflexes
Disembowel
 Dodge
 Expertise
Green Head
 Improved Initiative
Invisible Stride
Jumpclaw Attack
Jungle Stride
 Lightning Reflexes
 Mobility



Poison Resistance

Run

Spring Attack

Track

Tumbleclaw

Whirlwind Attack

ANCHORCLAW ATTACK (General)

You can anchor yourself on an enemy using your mouth and arms, then use your scythe-like killer claw to eviscerate them.

Prerequisites: Velociraptors only.

Benefits: To use Anchorclaw Attack, you must make a successful rake or claw attack. Thereafter, you are anchored to the enemy until you make a move action. While anchored, you can only make anchored rake attacks, which have an extra +6 circumstance-based attack modifier and deal 3d6+6 damage.

CLAW RIDER (General)

You can ride a creature by hooking your claws into its back.

Prerequisites: Velociraptors only.

Benefits: To use Claw Rider, you must make a successful rake or claw attack against a creature size Huge or larger. If successful, you can leave your claws embedded in the creature and attempt to ride it. Staying atop the mount requires a Ride check. If you are on the creature's back, the DC is 5; if on its flank or legs, the DC is 7.

If you release your grip for any reason - including to attack - you must make another Ride check. Claw riding does no additional damage to the mount unless you lift your claws to attack again.

If you have this feat, you can learn Ride as a class skill.

Raptors without Claw Rider can still attempt to ride their enemies, but their grip causes claw damage every round. They must make a new Ride check each round, and they cannot take Ride as a class skill.

DISEMBOWEL (General)

You are highly coordinated with your killer claw. You can attempt to disembowel opponents with a single swipe.

Prerequisites: Anchorclaw Attack. Velociraptors only.

Benefits: Your threat range with claw and rake attacks is increased by 1 (bringing it to 19-20 for normal raptors, and 18-20 for longclaws). Critical hits do extra damage, as usual, but your prowess with your killer claw also causes gruesome damage to internal organs. On any critical hit, the opponent must make a Fort save against DC 12 or suffer 1d4 points of Con damage. This heals at the rate of 1 point per week; the rate is doubled if the victim gets medical attention.

GREEN HEAD (General)

Named for the famous Green Head raptors, this feat allows you to make use of natural materials as camouflage. By painting your skin and weaving plants around your body, you camouflage yourself in natural surroundings.

Prerequisites: Hide skill. Wilderness Lore skill.

Benefits: This feat requires preparation. It takes twenty minutes to gather the necessary materials. About half of the ingredients can be gathered ahead of time, but half will go bad within a day (e.g., green stalks must be recently harvested or they turn brown), so at least ten minutes of gathering is necessary for each day this feat is used. It takes another ten minutes to apply the materials. Once the materials are applied, you gain a +4 circumstance bonus to Hide checks for the rest of the day or until the materials are removed. The bonus is terrain-specific and does not apply if you move into any other kind of terrain. (Tying swamp plants to your head won't help you hide in the forest!)

INVISIBLE STRIDE (General)

Through amazing timing and great reflexes, you can hide effectively even while moving. You do this by moving in short sprints, always eyeing your prey, timing your movement with the prey's arc of vision, and darting quickly whenever the prey looks down or away.

Prerequisites: Dex 13+, Green Head, Hide skill.

Benefits: Through a combination of intense focus, nimble feet, and uncanny timing, you manage to hide normally even while in motion. You can move up to your normal speed and suffer no penalty to Hide checks. You can charge while hiding and suffer only a -5 penalty to your Hide check. When running, you suffer only a -10 penalty to your check.

JUMPCRAW ATTACK (General)

You can jump past an enemy and rake him as you go by.

Prerequisites: Velociraptors only.

Benefit: You can take a move action (including a jump) and another partial action at any point during the move. You cannot make a second move action during a round when you make a jumpraw attack. When using jumpraw from hiding, you receive a +2 bonus to attacks.

JUNGLE STRIDE (General)

You can move with unusual speed through dense terrain.

Prerequisites: Dex 13+, native to jungle or forest terrain.

Benefits: You suffer no movement penalties for underbrush, jungles, forest, or other dense terrain. (This feat can be renamed "Swamp Walker" or such for application to other environments.)

POISON RESISTANCE (General)

Raptor shamans spend their lives experimenting with nature's byproducts, including poisons. Many develop a resistance to poison due to constant low-level exposure over many years.

Prerequisites: Con 13+.

Benefits: You receive a +6 bonus to all Fort saves against poisons of any kind. There is no bonus to other Fort saves.

TUMBLECLAW (General)

You can slice at enemies with your claws as you tumble past them.

Prerequisites: Dex 15+, Tumble skill, Velociraptors only.



Raptor Motivations

Benefits: You can use your Tumble skill and your natural weapons to transform into a frenzied, whirling, rolling ball of claws. By putting the momentum of your tumbling into your claws, you can make multiple attacks along your path of movement. You may attempt the following tasks as a use of your Tumble skill:

- | DC | Task |
|----|--|
| 10 | Tumble up to 30 feet (as part of normal movement) and make one claw attack on all creatures that are within reach as you pass. Failure means you are only able to make your normal allotment of claw attacks (usually two). |
| 15 | Tumble up to 30 feet (as part of normal movement) and make one claw attack on all creatures that are within reach as you pass, suffering no attacks of opportunity while doing so. Failure means you tumble 30 feet and make multiple attacks but are exposed to attacks of opportunity as normal. |
| 20 | Tumble up to 30 feet (as part of normal movement) and make one claw attack on all creatures that are within reach as you pass, suffering no attacks of opportunity while doing so and moving through areas occupied by enemies (over, under, or around them). Failure means you tumble 30 feet, make multiple attacks, and move through occupied areas, but are exposed to attacks of opportunity as normal. |

Campaigns

Settings

So far in this book, we've described raptors as elements of a prehistoric setting, specifically the *Dinosaur Planet: Broncosaurus Rex* world. However, you can place them into any campaign in any period. In a traditional fantasy campaign, they can come from a "lost world" or "Jurassic island," or they can be simply general-purpose monsters who battle with ores and giants for control of their hunting grounds. Or they can be more. A simple twist can transform velociraptors into a whole new kind of opponent. Imagine the potential for any of these options:

- Velociraptor fanatics invade neighboring humanoid lands to fulfill the prophecies of their reptilian deities
- Dungeon explorers encounter albino velociraptors that have lived underground since the fall of the dinosaurs
- Wood elves engage in an ancient rivalry with their jungle enemies, the velociraptors
- A twisted mage experimenting with ancient magic summons a dinosaur army led by velociraptors

In the rest of this section, we continue to treat raptors as denizens of a prehistoric world. But feel free to expand upon them as you wish!

Your adventurers will encounter raptors through their own actions, or those of the raptors. Adventurers can have all sorts of reasons to provoke encounters: they're hunting the "lost race of lizard men;" they want to acquire a rare natural extract that only raptor shamans know how to mix; they're defending settlers brazen enough to hunt in raptor territory.

In the same way, the velociraptors can instigate an encounter based on their own motivations. Like most creatures, raptors are motivated by their basic physical needs. Hunger is foremost among these. Raptors will always fight for food. When prey is plentiful they can be selective. But woe betide those adventurers who encounter hungry raptors. Threatening a raptor tribe's hunting grounds in any way is an equally dangerous act: adventurers can expect trouble if they chase away prey, close off access, hunt in the tribe's territory, or even pass through en route to somewhere else. Any intelligent creature that settles in raptor territory is likely to be viewed as either prey or a threat; both options mean trouble.

Politics within the tribe, and the raptors' native competitive streak, give them a natural motivation to acquire power. Raptors may use adventurers as pawns in their schemes. They can hire them to kill their rivals, form alliances with them to gain an edge over competing tribes, or chase them out of their own territory and into their neighbors'.

For some raptor chieftains, their competitive nature translates into expansionist behavior. They may try to increase the size of their tribe and the scope of its hunting grounds. Humans who settle on the border of raptor territory may find themselves becoming targets if an aggressive leader comes to power. Likewise, during times of drought or famine, the tribe may expand its hunting grounds in order to find more food; in times of plenty, the tribe may be reproducing so fast that it *has* to expand its hunting grounds in order to feed everyone.

Finally, humans can sometimes be unwittingly dragged into raptor affairs. Deteriorating relations between warring raptor factions may force neighboring intelligent creatures to take sides. Raptors are highly political and fully understand the use of allies; although few creatures actually fight side-by-side with the raptors, some open up their territory to their friends or close it off to their enemies. Raptors see nothing wrong with threatening to eat potential allies if they don't cooperate. Of course, most humans would rather not get involved at all. In these situations, the adage "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" holds true: if you make a point of harassing one tribe, its enemies will leave you alone... but if you don't harass either tribe, they both may attack you. Being in the middle of a raptor war is never an easy situation.

Adventure Hooks

While the motivations above can give raptors many entry points into your campaign, there are other options, as well. Here are some unique adventure hooks for raptors in your game. We



have divided the hooks into two sections: those for general fantasy campaigns, and those for *Dinosaur Planet: Broncosaurus Rex* campaigns.

General Fantasy Campaigns

- An orc invasion has uprooted a raptor tribe, which is now forced to hunt in human lands.
- Dwarven tunnelers uncover an underground world filled with prehistoric life.
- A raptor tribe has moved into the hunting grounds formerly occupied by the dragon that the adventurers just eliminated.
- A traveler from a far-off land brings back tales of an exotic race of lizard men who mix powerful potions.
- As the scourge of necromancy spreads across the lands, more and more creatures are being killed and reanimated as undead. Velociraptors having trouble finding food resort to raiding humanoid villages.
- Somehow, a raptor shaman has learned magic. Now it is slashing through the land as its tribe expands its domain.
- For generations, velociraptors have existed in a natural balance with a dwarven clan. The cave-dwelling dwarves trade gems and metals in exchange for meat from the surface-dwelling raptors. But now the raptors can't find food on the surface. The dwarves are warned to be on their guard at the next trading session lest *they* become the food...
- A relic of prehistoric magic transforms all birds and reptiles within 100' into their dinosaur descendants.
- An ancient god has re-emerged to send its velociraptor minions into the world.
- Through some immense, unknown magic, the process of evolution has reversed itself. The first major indication is the race of velociraptors that is emerging from the jungles.

Dinosaur Planet: Broncosaurus Rex Campaigns

- Raptors from the Whimbit tribe have been trading alien artifacts for human weapons at Fort Apache. They won't reveal where they're getting the artifacts.
- A previously unknown raptor tribe savagely attacks anyone who ventures near a particular mountain deep in the jungle.
- Conflict between the White Branch and Lettoko raptors disrupts travel between Fort Tecumseh and New Savannah. Some suspect Union instigators.
- Explorers discover that a raptor shaman's healing potions incorporate plants not native to Cretasus. The raptor won't reveal where she's getting them, but some suspect a crashed alien vessel with still-functioning hydroponics.
- A frantic raptor shaman comes into town telling everyone they must leave or the natural balance will be disrupted. Soon after, a massive herd of previously unknown dinosaurs is spotted on a 100-year migration that will pass right through the center of town.

- A dissident raptor tribe claims the raptor creation myth is wrong. They profess a "chosen one" philosophy and embark on a crusade against other tribes.
- Ruins of an ancient city, filled with relief sculptures of upright raptors with fingers, cast doubt upon theories of how raptors evolved on Cretasus.
- A large reward is offered for a renegade bank robber - and a tribe of raptors joins the hunt.
- A "domesticated" raptor kills the rancher who employed him. A posse is organized to track him down and bring him to justice.
- Even though human settlers have practically wiped out the Big Tooth tribe, the last surviving Big Tooth raptor continues his lonely war. He ambushed yet another settler this past week.

Designing Raptor Tribes

The following guidelines let you randomly generate raptor tribes. You can actually roll the dice if you'd like, or you can use these as guidelines for creating your own tribes. There are four steps to designing a tribe: Social Structure, Motif, NPCs, and The Den.

Step One: Social Structure

Adults: Raptor tribes can be as small as six adults and as large as fifty, though most are no larger than twenty. Roll 3d6+3 to determine how many adult raptors are in the tribe. For each 6 that you roll, roll a separate 1d10, adding the roll to the total if it is 2-10, but adding nothing if it is a 1.

Rivalries: Just to make things interesting, you can throw in some intratribal rivalries. Roll 1d4+1 to determine the number of factions in the tribe. One faction is always the "nonpolitical" elements - that is, the children and females that make up the core of the tribe, as well as the shaman and any unambitious males. Another faction is the leader, his bodyguards, and his children. Each of the remaining factions is led by an ambitious male vying for the chieftain's spot.

You can flesh out these rivalries if you'd like. Although simple ambition is the root of most rivalries, in some cases there are deeper causes that add a twist to the story. You can develop an NPC to lead each faction by rolling 1d6 below. In a hack-and-slash adventure the rivalries won't come into play, but any role playing interaction with the tribe may bring out the rivalries.

Raptor Rivalry Table

d6 Motivation for Rivalry

- 1 Vendetta. The raptor has a vendetta against a far-away enemy who is too powerful for him to face alone. The enemy could be another raptor tribe, a human who once injured him with powerful weapons, or a T-rex that ate his first tribe. Regardless, the raptor is out for blood. He wants a tribe of his own simply so that he can hunt down his enemy and take revenge.



- 2 Inferiority complex. The raptor is shorter and smaller than most other raptors. Even though he is just as strong as the others, he feels the need to prove himself.
- 3 Hawk vs. dove. The raptor thinks the current leader is too passive. He believes more aggressive action must be taken against the tribe's enemies. (Or vice versa.)
- 4 Lost love. Long ago, the raptor lost a bitter fight for a mate. His opponent was the current leader of the tribe.
- 5 Unerasable mistake. When he was young, the raptor was part of another tribe that had a foolish leader. The leader repeatedly picked poor prey targets. In one disastrous hunt, a bull triceratops gored three raptors. Among those killed was the raptor's mother. He vowed to someday lead a tribe of his own in order to prevent those sorts of mistakes.
- 6 Simple ambition. The raptor wants nothing more than to be at the top of the pecking order.

National Affiliation: There is a base 50% chance that the tribe is part of a larger nation; otherwise, it is an independent tribe of its own.

Step Two: Motif

Motif: All raptor tribes have some sort of motif that identifies them as a tribe. Common motifs include sacred images, revered attributes, or a natural totem of some sort. The totem is usually related to the local environment in some way, though not always. The Snake Tail raptors, for example, come from an area infested with snakes. They fork their tails, an act that identifies them with the forked tongues of snakes, and they prefer ambush strategies, much like the snake.

The following table lets you randomly determine a motif. Or you can design one appropriate to your campaign.

Raptor Motif Table

d8 Motif

- 1 Sacred image. The image doesn't have any particular meaning and is derived from the tribe's myths and legends. It can be any abstract symbol: a swirl, line, squiggle, shape, circle, claw mark, or simple design.
- 2 Local animal. The raptor tribe models itself after a local animal. The animal might represent some greater virtue (e.g., a bird, for agility).
- 3 Local plant. The raptors identify with a local plant, usually one that is unique to the area, has special properties (poisonous, hallucinogenic, etc.), or is carnivorous.
- 4 Sacred deity. The tribe has its own sacred deity or religion. Its imagery consists of pictures of the deity and his characteristics.
- 5 Revered attribute. Like the Green Head raptors who revere stealth, the raptor tribe has some sacred attribute. It could be courage, agility, strength, ferocity, cunning, speed, or something else.
- 6 Mythical creature. At some point in the tribe's history, many

generations ago, it encountered a mythical creature. The tribe was so impressed that it modeled itself after the creature. In fantasy games, the creature could be anything that no longer inhabits the area: a long-dead dragon, a fantastic race now extinct, or an otherplanar creature. On Cretasus, the creature could be some sort of alien: Scray, Shamburu Neonates, or something else.

- 7 Local terrain. The tribe identifies with the swamp, jungle, hills, or plains in which it originated.
- 8 Other. Make up something appropriate to your campaign. Maybe the raptors have learned to use firearms, so their motif is a rifle. Maybe their shaman wields a magic wand which has been passed down for generations, so their motif is a wand. Maybe they have a long-running feud with a nearby T-rex clan, so their motif is a T-rex skull.

Special Abilities: A tribe's combat tactics are modeled after its beliefs as reflected by its motif. In some cases, the tribe may develop special combat tactics to emulate their motif. The Green Heads, for example, are excellent at camouflaging themselves and striking from hidden ambush.

You can reflect this special ability by granting a single feat to every raptor in the tribe. This is something of an exception to the usual rules, and requires some leeway on the game master's part; raptor PCs should not be getting free feats at first level. Moreover, depending on the power of the feat, you may have to re-evaluate the tribe's CR. But granting a feat does personalize the tribe in a unique way, and we recommend it as a way to make raptor encounters more engaging.

The list of common raptor feats on pages 23-24 can serve as a starting point. You can also create additional feats if they are appropriate to your tribe. Examples: A tribe that identifies with a local animal may have a feat that reflects how that animal fights. A tribe with the local terrain as its motif may have Jungle Stride (or its equivalent). Or a tribe that uses a local poisonous plant extensively may be immune to its poison.

Silverclaws: It is highly unlikely that silverclaw raptors will be encountered outside of human areas, unless they are exiles. However, a very small tribe with close human ties could be entirely silverclaws. If you are randomly generating the tribe, assume a 1% chance that half the tribe will be silverclaws, and then only if they are in close proximity to human settlements.

Step Three: NPCs

Leader: The tribe's leader has class levels as a velociraptor warrior or tactician. Roll d% to determine which class: 01-80 means warrior; 81-100 means tactician. The leader's class level will be 1d3 for every 10 raptors in the tribe. NPC raptors with class levels generally have some ability scores that are higher than average, as indicated by the class descriptions.

Not all leaders have bodyguards, but some do. The leader may have up to 2 bodyguards for every 10 raptors in the tribe.



These raptors have 1d2 class levels as velociraptor warriors. The bodyguards aren't necessarily the leader's best friends; they too may be his rivals, but he has arranged a political situation where their best interest is to protect him. Depending on the balance of power, characters may be able to change the loyalties of the bodyguards.

Shamans: For every raptor in the tribe, there is a 5% chance that the tribe will have a shaman. The shaman will have 1d4 levels for every 10 raptors in the tribe. For every full four class levels, the shaman will have one apprentice. If there is one apprentice, it will be first level; if there are two, one will be first level and the other second level; and so on.

For example, a tribe of 12 raptors has a 60% chance of having a shaman. The shaman will be level 1d4. If the shaman is level 1, 2, or 3, she has no apprentices. If she is level 4, she has one first-level apprentice.

Exiles: Exiles aren't part of a tribe. However, there is a 10% chance that there is an exile in the area who occasionally works with the tribe's shaman.

Step Four: The Den

The den design depends most importantly on the terrain. Next most important is the size of the tribe, then the personalities of the leader and shaman. Design the den as you would any dungeon or city, using the example that follows as guidelines for room definitions.

Sample Tribe: The Lettoko

The Lettoko ("Tall Rocks") nation inhabits the hills south of Fort Tecumseh. There are six individual tribes numbering more than 100 raptors in all. The hills were once large enough for the entire nation to coexist without conflict, but the arrival of human settlers changed the predator-prey ratios. Rather than fight each other over the slowly diminishing prey supply, the Lettoko were smart enough to realize the source of the problem: humans. The Lettoko have initiated low-profile raids, picking off settlers when the odds are favorable. Authorities at Fort Tecumseh recently realized that the "isolated" raptor incidents are not at all isolated, and have since launched their own offensive. The human assault has been hampered by the rocky hill terrain, which the Lettoko exploit masterfully. Nonetheless, tensions continues to escalate. A full-fledged war is likely sometime in the near future.

Lettoko raptors use little personal ornamentation. They are identified primarily by the structures they construct from their rocky terrain. Some Lettoko carve slabs of rock, which they use to build cromlechs and dolmens for ceremonial purposes. All Lettoko mark their territory with piles of rocks, or cairns; significant terrain features at a tribe's perimeter may have ten-foot-tall cairns, while smaller markers beside hills, riverbanks, and large trees will be two or four feet tall. The tribes can tell each other apart by the shape and kind of rocks they put in their cairns, but

they all look the same to outsiders.

The Lettoko do not use weapons except for thrown stones. They often place cairns along the tops of ravines and other high points. When enemies pass below, the Lettoko pelt them with rocks from the cairns. They only use such stone attacks when it is not possible to close for melee. The stone attacks are +1 ranged, range increment 10 ft. if thrown or 50 ft. if dropped (no maximum range if dropped from above). A thrown stone's base damage is 1d2, which yields 1d2+4 with a normal raptor's Str of 19.

The Lettoko Brownstones

The Lettoko Brownstone tribe uses brown river stones to build their cromlechs. They also use brown river mud to decorate themselves before a hunt. There are 17 adults in the Brownstone tribe, as follows:

Two Heads, velociraptor chieftain, Tac4: CR 7; Large animal (6 ft. tall, 10 ft. long); HD 4d10+4d8+16; hp 64; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 60 ft.; AC 16 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +5 natural); Atk +8 melee (2d6+3, rake), +3 melee (1d3+1, 2 claws), +3 melee (2d4+1, bite), or +4 ranged (1d2+3, thrown stone); AL LN; SV Fort +7, Ref +10, Will +3; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 17, Wis 13, Cha 15.

Skills: Balance +6 (4), Bluff +9 (7), Gather Information +9 (7), Hide +18* (7), Knowledge (strategy & tactics) +10 (7), Jump +13 (0), Listen +20** (5), Move Silently +9 (7), Sense Motive +5** (0), Spot +18** (3), Wilderness Lore +10 (1). **Feats:** Combat Placement, Combat Tactician, Dodge, Green Head, Invisible Stride, Sense of Vulnerability.

* Includes bonus for Green Head feat.

** Includes bonus for Sense of Vulnerability feat.

Crooked Claw, Big Nostril, and Muddy Butt, Two Heads' body guards, Vwr2: CR 5; Large animal (6 ft. tall, 10 ft. long); HD 4d10+2d12+15; hp 45, 49, 58; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 60 ft.; AC 18 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +5 natural); Atk +11 melee (2d6+6/19-20, rake), +6 melee (1d3+3/19-20, 2 claws), +6 melee (2d4+3, bite), or +9 ranged (1d2+5, thrown stone); AL LN; SV Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +1; Str 21, Dex 18, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Balance +9 (5), Climb +10 (5), Hide +9 (0), Jump +19 (5), Listen +10 (0), Spot +10 (0), Tumble +7 (3), Wilderness Lore +8 (0). **Feats:** Anchorclaw Attack, Disembowel. These raptors are proficient with thrown stones.

Rising Moon, velociraptor shaman, Sha5: CR 8, Large animal (6 ft. tall, 10 ft. long); HD 4d10+5d8+27; hp 61; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 60 ft.; AC 16 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +5 natural); Atk +7 melee (2d6 + poison, rake), +2 melee (1d3 + poison, 2 claws), +2 melee (2d4, bite), or +3 ranged (1d2+3, thrown stone); SA Natural Premonition, Poison; AL LN; SV Fort +8 (+12 vs. poison), Ref+7, Will +8; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 10.

Skills: Alchemy/Chemistry +11 (8), Craft +11 (8), Diplomacy +8 (8), Handle Animal +8 (8), Heal +11 (8), Hide



+15 (8), Intuit Direction +11 (8), Jump +18 (6), Knowledge (nature) +11 (8), Listen +13 (0), Sense Motive +11 (8), Speak Language (tyrannosaurus, triceratops), Spot +13 (0). Wilderness Lore +19 (8). *Feats*: Jungle Stride, Poison Resistance, Track.

SA - Poison: Rising Moon keeps a ready supply of poison (Injury, DC 17, 1d4 Str/1d4 Str). If attacked or alerted to danger, her first action will be to coat her claws with poison.

Possessions: Rising Moon always carries on her person an animal bladder filled with three draughts of healing potion. Each draught cures 1d8+5 hit points.

Young Moon, Rising Moon's apprentice, Sha1: CR4; Large animal (6 ft. tall, 10 ft. long); HD 4d10+1d8+15; hp 38; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 60 ft.; AC 16 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +5 natural); Atk +6 melee (2d6+4 + poison, rake), +1 melee (1d3+2 + poison, 2 claws), +1 melee (2d4+2, bite), or +1 ranged (1d2+4, thrown stone); SA Poison; AL LN; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 19, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills: Alchemy/Chemistry +6 (4), Craft +6 (4), Diplomacy +4 (4), Handle Animal +4 (4), Heal +6 (4), Hide +11 (4), Intuit Direction +6 (4), Jump +17 (4), Listen +12 (0), Sense Motive +6 (4), Spot +12 (0), Wilderness Lore +14 (4). Fear: Track.

SA - Poison: Young Moon will prepare her claws with Rising Moon's poison prior to combat.

11 adult raptors: CR 3; Large animal (6 ft. tall, 10 ft. long); HD 4d10+12; hp 22, 26, 29, 33, 34, 34, 35, 35, 39, 42, 50; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 60 ft.; AC 16 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +5 natural); Atk +6 melee (2d6+4, rake), +1 melee (1d3+2, 2 claws), +1 melee (2d4+2, bite), or +1 ranged (1d2+4, thrown stone); AL LN; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 19, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +7 (0), Jump +13 (0), Listen +11 (0), Spot +11 (0).

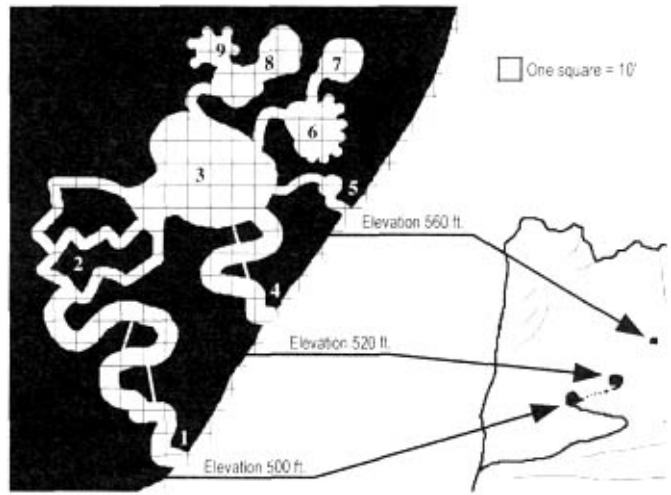
The Lettoko Den

The Lettoko tribes live in cave complexes throughout their hilly territories. The caves were once natural formations, but through many years of occupation the Lettoko have shaped them to their own designs.

Approach. The map shows the Brownstone tribe's den. Built into a steep cliff face, it is accessible via a narrow 5 ft. wide ledge that winds its way up the cliff face. No point on the ledge is out of sight from the den's entrance. Characters who are spotted will be pelted with stones.

Entrances. The first entrance to the den is at an elevation of 500 feet. The ledge widens in front of the entrance, and there is room there for up to six raptors to sit and enjoy the sun (which they frequently do). Regardless of weather, there is always at least one raptor at the ledge on lookout duty.

The second entrance is at a slightly higher elevation. The ledge leading to it has slowly eroded over the years and is no



longer passable by normal means. The eroded ledge can be passed with a Balance check (DC 25), or the surface can be climbed (DC 25). There is room for a running jump, though the distance between the two ledges is 45 ft.

The last opening - which was never intended to be an entrance, since it is primarily a window with which to torture prisoners (more on that below) - is at an elevation of 560 feet.

Light. The Lettoko cave complex is quite dark, and velociraptors lack darkvision. The numbered areas 3, 6, and 8 are lit by dim fires (fed with dried triceratops dung - the den doesn't smell great, that's for sure). The other areas are dark unless a raptor has a reason to illuminate them. Raptors rarely have any need for full illumination in the den. It's not like they read or write. They don't need to carry torches to navigate the entrance tunnels, as they know them by heart.

Treasure: Treasure values are given in dollars for *Broncosaurus Rex* campaigns. For fantasy campaigns, convert these values at the rate of \$1 = 1 gp.

The numbered areas of the map are as follows:

1. Main Entrance. There is always at least one raptor look out on the ledge leading to these tunnels. In good weather, as many as six may be relaxing on the ledge.

The main entrance tunnel slopes steadily upward until it reaches area 2. The narrow lines connecting the curves of the main entrance are observation ports. The raptors use them to time their attacks from around the corners. The aperture at each end is about three inches across and at a height of five feet from the ground. Passing characters will casually notice an aperture with a Spot check against DC 14; those who search the area will notice one with a Search check against DC 10.

2. Three Forks. Normally, each of these three 6 ft. high passages is unobstructed. If the raptors leave the den for any length of time, or fear an invasion, they will booby-trap one or more of the tunnels.



One favored trap is a pile of rocks that fills the passage almost to the top. It's easy enough to pull aside the rocks, but hidden within are small, sharp shards of bone coated in a sticky, long-lasting poison. Remember that the shards cut the victim's *hands* - the character doesn't get an armor bonus to AC unless they're wearing gloves! When leaving the den, the raptors may plug up all three corridors with rock piles, only one of which is untrapped.

Poisoned Bone Shard Trap: CR 1; +4 melee (1, plus poison - see page 16); Search (DC 15); Disable Device (DC 12).

3. Common Room. This is where most of the tribe sleeps and rests. It stinks. Upon entering, characters must make a Fort save against DC 7 or be nauseated for 1d4 rounds. Characters from uncivilized backgrounds - including barbarians, wild ones, half-ores, and monstrous characters - are unaffected by the stench.

The floor is covered with a six-inch-deep layer of skins, feathers, mosses, leaves, and other bedding materials which has built up over years and years of occupation. In the center of the room is a firepit with a dim fire. The ventilation isn't good, and the 14 ft. tall ceiling is covered in a layer of smoke which slowly floats out through the passages to areas 4 and 5.

A large boulder sits by the passage to room 5. Piles of smaller rocks (used for dropping on invaders) are scattered throughout the room.

In normal circumstances, 10 of the tribe's raptors will be lounging around this area. If it's sunny, 6 of the adults may leave and sun themselves on the ledge at the main entrance. If you want to startle your characters, have 4 of the raptors out on a hunt; they return only after the characters have finished exploring the den.

Treasure:

- Search (DC 13): Ten of the scattered rocks have faintly visible veins of gold running through them. Each 3 lb. rock contains total 1/2 lb. of gold and is worth \$250.
- Search (DC 16): If characters specify that they are digging through the old layers of bedding, they may find four suits of human-sized leather armor. Three are torn, tattered, and coated in mildew; they crack if worn. The fourth suit is in perfect condition and is, in fact, a suit of masterwork leather armor.

4. Secondary Entrance. This entrance has not been used since the ledge below it started to erode. The narrow observation ports serve the same function as the ones in area 1.

5. Prisoner's Chamber. The tribe uses this area for prisoners. Two Heads also has a predilection for punishing enemies within the tribe by corking them up in here for a while. The narrow passage leading to area 5 slopes upward at a very steep angle, rising nearly 50 ft. over the 20 ft. of horizontal distance it covers. A heavy boulder is used to block off the base of the passage. When rolled into place under the passage, it is wedged in such a way that there is practically no leverage from above. Moving the boulder requires a Str check (DC 15 from within area 3; 25 from within the passage to area 5). (See illustration.)

Area 5 has a very low ceiling (5 ft. high) and is very cramped.

The cliff below is perfectly vertical with no handholds or footholds. Prisoners are kept company by the incomplete skeletons of two raptors and one human who starved to death here (incomplete because idle prisoners chucked bones over the ledge for amusement). **Treasure:**

- Search (DC 10): A few bits of jewelry adorn the human skeleton. There are two delicately filigreed gold bracelets and a gold anklet (worth \$30 each).

6. Chieftain's Room. Two Heads, his three bodyguards, and his two mates reside here. The alcoves in the wall are filled with trophies. A smoldering fire burns in the center of the room.

Treasure: The trophies are as follows.

- T-rex skull, large male, shattered occiput and missing teeth (worth \$400 to a collector; 45 lb.)
- T-rex skull, smaller female, intact but missing several teeth (\$300; 40 lb.)
- Enormous bull triceratops skull (\$40; 95 lb.)
- Pile of 32 human scalps (worthless)
- Pair of 6' long ivory mammoth tusks (\$360 each; 120 lbs.)
- Skull of a Huge raptor (worth \$20 to a collector; 10 lb.)
- Mummified corpse of famous enemy raptor chieftain (worthless in itself). A ring is on its finger, practically buried in the folds of the mummy. The ring is noticed with a Spot (DC 18) or Search (DC 14) check. In fantasy campaigns, it is a ring of jumping; in *Broncosaurus Rex*, it is a generator for +1 kinetic field armor (save +3 vs. physical, +0 vs. energy), though it is nonfunctional until it is recharged.

7. Storage Room. 300 pounds of sun-dried "dino jerky" is stacked haphazardly here in 5 to 15 lb. chunks. About 100 lbs. of meat is suitable for human consumption; about 100 pounds is quite stale but still edible by raptor standards; and about 100 pounds is evidence that nobody has cleaned the room in many years.

Treasure: Scattered throughout the stacks of meat are six potions stockpiled by the shaman. Four are so old that they no longer have any effect. The other two are brackish-tasting healing potions (cure 1d8-2 points of damage each; worth \$50).

8. Shaman's Quarters. The shaman and her apprentice live and work in this room and the next. A dim fire burns in the middle of the first room. Both rooms are scattered with natural artifacts and work materials.

The room is filled with vials, potions, sacks, vials, powders, pouches, herbs, roots, spices, shells, crystals, gems, unusual stones, skins, bones, horns, teeth, animal parts, and other esoteric objects. There is a workspace with simple grinding stones, knives (made of claws), bladders, and stirring sticks. Two mummified sauropod feet are used as work tables.

Those items in the room that are worth noticing are:

- 4 unpolished rose quartz gems (\$50 each)



- T-rex hide in moderate condition (puncture wounds and scratches from combat; worth \$3,000 to an armorsmith or collector; weight 500 lbs.)
- 8 unmarked small glass vials:
 - 2 filled with gray-green solution (healing potions; cure 1d8+4 wounds; \$50)
 - 2 filled with black inky substance (each has 50 doses of poison (Injury, DC 17, 1d4 Str/1d4 Str))
 - 3 empty
 - 1 filled with muddy water
- 3 thunderstones
- Foot-long sprig of sparkle root
- 1 pouch filled with sprastit powder (four doses)
- 6 animal bladders; 4 alcoholic; 2 filled with furon potion
- 2 small, uncut crystals (\$5 each)

9. Egg Chamber. Each of the five alcoves can hold three eggs. Right now the room is empty except for a few eggshell fragments.

Appendix I: Templates

RAPTOR EXILE (Template)

Exiles are velociraptors who have left their tribes to wander. While most raptors die within a few miles of where they were born, exiles travel the world. They may make contact with other intelligent creatures (whether humans, aliens, or other dinosaurs); some even go so far as to join non-raptor society. This greater exposure makes them more worldly than their brethren.

In game terms, exiles are wiser and have greater exposure to non-raptor technology - including weapons. This template is intended as a model for NPC raptor exiles, not as a mechanism for giving PCs additional weapon proficiencies!

CREATING AN EXILE

"Exile" is a template that can be added to any velociraptor. An exile uses the velociraptor's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Special Abilities: Exiles are comfortable with manufactured weapons. They may have even trained in their use with human compatriots.

Exiles may use weapons of up to tech level 3. Their weapon proficiencies are open to any weapon which they have had the chance to learn. (What they've had a chance to learn depends on what non-raptors they have encountered, obviously.) Starting out, they receive one free weapon proficiency.

Velociraptor exiles suffer the usual -2 competence penalty for using weapons that require grasping, but only a -3 competence penalty for using weapons not designed specifically for raptors.

Abilities: Exiles have seen the world. Although they may lack the localized ecology knowledge of many raptors, they have



encountered more personalities, seen more environments, and spoken with more intelligent creatures. Their Wisdom score is 1d4 points higher than the typical raptor's.

Exiles are shunned in raptor society. They suffer a -1d4 circumstance penalty to effective Charisma score when dealing with other raptors.

Alignment: Exiles are always chaotic.

RAPTOR SILVERCLAW (Template)

Silverclaws are velociraptors who have had their claws surgically replaced with steel prosthetics. Steel claws are far deadlier than normal claws.

Silverclaw raptors are found only in tribes with close ties to humans, as human surgeons are needed to make the steel implants. The cost and process to make this replacement is described elsewhere in this volume.

CREATING A SILVERCLAW

"Silverclaw" is a template that can be added to any velociraptor. A silverclaw uses the velociraptor's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.



Attacks: Silverclaw raptors can have silverbites or silverclaws. Silverbites and silverclaws are steel replacements for natural teeth or claws. Those raptors with silverclaws may in turn have longclaws. Longclaws are steel claw replacements that are double or even triple the length of the raptor's natural claws - essentially swords that the raptor can wield with its normal agility and strength.

Attack bonuses for silverbites and silverclaws are normal.

Longclaws cannot rake, but have 2 claws at +6 melee.

Damage: Silverbites cause 2d4+4 damage. Silverclaws cause 2d6+8 damage with a rake and 1d3+4 with just the claws.

Longclaw raptors cannot make a rake attack. However, each of their claw attacks causes 1d8+4 damage with a 19-20 threat range. Longclaw raptors do retain their killer claws.

Face/Reach: Longclaw raptors have a 15 ft. reach.

