

This booklet is designed to help Gamesmasters and players run and play Wraith Raiders in the world of Progress. It should be used to develop Wraith Raider culture, to explore the various aspects of Wraith Raiders, to help them come alive.

It is not definitive and not meant to be an ultimate rules bible. Chop and change it as you want, adapt it to fit your own universe.

Where there is stuff that clashes with the rules (or official supplements) it is your call, what you keep and what you throw out.

The physical look and layout of the booklet has been determined by one overriding factor; no artwork.

Although we steal with gay abandon for The Big Picture, we felt it would not be right for this supplement, as well as making it too thick for us to produce by our current high-tech production methods (PC and Photocopier).

Wraith Raiders tend to get a raw deal in most SLA campaigns being played as 'spock' like assassins that skulk and run the shadows, keeping out of contact with the 'real' messy stuff of BPN's. Their loyalty is constantly questioned and they seem to be looked on with suspicion by the other Operatives, who are never sure of the Wraith Raider's motives or true loyalties.

Hopefully this supplement will help you put some things straight, and let you bring an element of consistency to your Wraith Raider Operatives.

Any of your comments, additions or suggestions for change would be gratefully received, maybe we could put some of them in The Big Picture.

This product has been play tested and generally pulled apart by Carnage: Role Playing Society. There are bound to be things we have over looked, mixed up or otherwise got wrong. Again, please feel free to write to us and tell us.

Feedback can only be a positive thing in an area as small as role playing.

Projects on the horizon include a Frother supplement, as well as a book of BPN's and Dept. details (employers) and inter SLA rivalries. We would also like to expand The Thresher and DarkNight, though this may turn out to be fragile ground for exploration.

We would welcome any material you think should be shared with other players of SLA Industries, though we must stress the amateur, non-profit making nature of our booklets. We do not pay anything for whatever we use, and the cover price is to pay for production only.

Max and Sarah would like to thank all those involved in Carnage for their help, namely; Jules, Stuart, Graeme, Mark (Thadius), Mark (Dogs), Mark (Noddy), Robin, Craig. We would also like to thank everyone who has played one of our convention demo games as well as all of you who have contributed to the success of The Big Picture.

"We all choose what we want to be. The hunted or the hunter."

WRAITH RAIDERS IN THE WORLD OF PROGRESS

This brief extract is taken from the 'Ebony Horse Lectures', delivered by Doctor Sarah Long from Meny's department of Anthropology, on Mort 901 SD. All material © 901 SD. Third Eye News.

"The World of Progress spans the galaxies, uniting all cultures, all planets, all peoples, covering them all, sheltering them all. SLA Industries creates Progress, owns all aspects of it, supplies everything anyone could ever need to live in the thriving environment that is their Progress. Progress is not an umbrella. It is a net, or more accurately a web, with SLA Industries at it's centre. Sensitive to the upkeep of Progress, SLA are ready to respond to any break in the continuity, ready to strike out at invaders, to devour potential opponents before their struggling within the web can cause too much damage to the fabric of Progress. Peoples and societies that struggle to free themselves from the web, most often tear themselves apart on the razor sharp strands that bind them. They seem blind to this self destructive act, as if they have an ability to slip the net, fall through the holes. But fall into what? The web is multi layered, the holes simply lead to other aspects of the same, all embracing web. There can be no escape, we are all bound by the web of Progress. Our seeming conflict must be one of survival, not of escape.

Perhaps the worst kept secret in the World of Progress is that the whole universe is one of conflict. That SLA Industries is forced to engage in the tactics of conflict every day, and that Operatives are their chief means of taking the fight to the enemy.

Conflict in the World of Progress is brutal in it's simplicity, tortuous in it's complexity. The black and white struggles between SLA and DarkNight, between SLA and the Thresher, between SLA and all 'soft companies', is often obscured by the fudging into grey of the conflicts within Progress itself. Do SLA protect and govern or do they merely control? Are the motivations of SLA Industries above question or beyond understanding? Citizens of the World of Progress are faced with the daunting prospect of living within a society they have no control over, in which they have no real responsibility, no real power to change. Most citizens of Progress can see no further than one obligation, one duty, most have only one driving instinct. Survival.

To a Wraith Raider all of what I have just said is a nonsense. It means nothing.

Wraith Raiders are born with the survival instinct as the only driving force for their very existence. They see their survival in very clear terms, there are no complications, there is no need to look further than the drive to survive. SLA Industries offers the best chance for survival in the World of Progress.

Working for SLA is the only way forward. The only way to be a part of the future. Wraith Raiders shape the world around them simply by surviving in it.

The incredible dexterity of the Wraith Raiders, as well as their extraordinary capacity for diagnostic thinking, means they are ideal candidates to learn the skills needed to help SLA Industries flourish. Their adaptability is legendary. They are willing to embrace new ideas, practices and technologies without question, as long as they can see a way to utilise them in the struggle to survive. Wraith Raiders move from their Homeworlds in to the World of Progress with consummate ease, they are simply replacing one hunting environment with another, substituting prey and changing their reward for a successful hunt. In the World of Progress you must have money to survive, so they hunt for money, completing BPN's to gain the means to carry on living. The pragmatic nature of the Wraith Raider race is quite often mistaken for a crude simplicity in the social structure of their people. As long as everything they do is seen in the light of their overwhelming instinct to survive (and hunt), we can begin to appreciate the intricacies of their social interaction, not only with one and other, but with all other races and peoples.

Wraith Raiders are alien to us, their way of thinking is outside of our 'band' of reasoning. It is all too easy to think of them as bestial, as simply animalistic. Making this mistake not only puts us at a disadvantage in our dealings with them, but it also blinds us to the full range of possibilities in our association with them."

WHYTE RAIDERS

Wraith Raiders are hunters. Predators of unequalled skill on their Homeworlds. They are driven by two forces; Their will to survive and their need to hunt. All Wraith Raiders are dominated by the instinct to survive, to adapt to their environment, make the most of it, use it, become part of it. The better a Wraith Raider understands his environment, the better he can choose and hunt his prey. Wraith Raiders hunt to survive. They have been introduced to the environment of the World of progress by SLA Industries and they are a thriving species.

Early in the development of their race, Wraith Raiders hunted for food and little else. SLA Industries introduced the World of Progress as a new environment, in which they could stalk a different prey, and for greater reward. The pragmatic nature of the Wraith Raiders meant that they accepted SLA Industries with little trouble, they saw no conflict with their existing ways of life, and if SLA wanted them to hunt, to carry on doing what they were born to do, all the more reason to accept them.

SLA Industries began to build training centres on Polo, not only to introduce the many new

technologies they had to offer, but also to allow the spread of Progress through the medium they used best; the media. The spread of the word of Progress was slow, Polo is a vast, hostile environment, and it is simply too big to cover with one network overnight. Induction began, with Wraith Raiders being given basic training in social skills while on Polo, then completing their Operative training at Meny or Orange. They seemed willing enough, those that came forward, and SLA found that they adapted to the World of Progress remarkably quickly.

But the message of Progress does not reach all over Polo with the same speed, there are still some Wraith Raiders that come to SLA Industries late in their lives, having lived in the outer reaches of Polo, on the polar caps or the ice flows. These are known as Whyte Raiders.

Whyte Raiders are beyond the social training of SLA Industries, they have instincts developed to the point where they cannot be changed. Their behaviour would be described as 'bestial' by most 'civilised' people.

These Wraith Raiders do not have the benefit of training from their Pride, as they are loners. Their parents usually abandon them, as they are nothing but a liability, so they learn to hunt using natural weapons and techniques, never being shown the advantages of range weapons until they meet with SLA Industries.

Whyte Raiders are useful to SLA Industries, for their skills are already honed, and their skill in the hunt is superior to that of many existing, experienced, Operatives.

The culture shock of coming into contact with SLA Industries is too much for many Whyte Raiders, who are simply unable to throw off their natural born instincts. They are incapable of adapting to the social face of Progress, they do not function well as part of a team and they do not respond well to discipline. These candidates are either rejected or trained as solo's, usually in the Kick Murder package.

Training Whyte Raiders poses some interesting problems. They have the same reasoning facility as other trainee Wraith Raiders, but they seem to use it to view the world with their own, very unique, perspective. Every aspect of the World of Progress is related to the hunt, to their personal survival. Some Whyte Raiders have been known to abandon their squad to take to the hunt, especially when there is 'bestial' opposition in the form of Carrien or Pigs. Most Whyte Raiders view humans as 'long pigs' and as such, think of them as viable prey. Wraith Raiders view their kin with some suspicion, they know only too well how brutal and animalistic they really are. Once Wraith Raiders have been trained and accepted by SLA, they are part of the great machine behind the march of progress. Wraith Raiders resent the fact that Whyte Raiders seem to be outside the machine, operating with a much freer

hand than them, sometimes being (apparently) accountable to no one. In truth, like all Operatives, the Whyte Raiders are used by SLA Industries for their own purpose.

The base nature of the Whyte Raiders comes to the surface at every opportunity. They will hunt with range weapons, the Fen Tri being a favourite, but they will also close for the kill, using their claws and teeth. The need for the surge of adrenaline produced by the hunt, especially the kill, is sometimes enhanced by the use of Rush, though some do progress onto UV and Blaze UV, most seem content with Rush to aid in the feeling of exhilaration they have left behind in the hunts on their Homeworlds.

A lot of Whyte Raiders have trouble mastering Kilan, and so are limited with their communication with both the outside world and other Operatives. The solution to this is found in working with other Wraith Raiders. It will often turn out that a squad has a Whyte Raider as a member and didn't even know it, as the Operative works through the Wraith Raider in the squad. Many Wraith Raiders see their relationships with Whyte Raiders as beneficial, as the Whyte Raider is far more combat oriented than they, and can act as an extra pair of eyes and ears, going places they themselves would not want to go.

Whyte Raiders wear coolant suits as their cousins do, though their fur remains long and pure white, and they have eyes of the most piercing blue. In general, Whyte Raiders will tend to live in Downtown, or even in the Cannibal Sectors, feeling most at home in these 'hostile' environments, where they will be challenged to survive almost constantly. In a survey recently conducted among all of the Whyte Raiders on Mort, it was discovered that 63% considered themselves homeless, and 09% did not understand the question, claiming they lived 'on Mort'.

Whyte Raiders are generated the same as other Wraith Raider characters, with the following exceptions;

Characteristics range; STR 5-12, DEX 7-15, DIA 5-12, CONC 4-10, CHA 5-10, COOL 5-12.

Base 'racial' skills;

Survival (Know) 2, Tracking (Dia) 2, Detect (Conc) 1, Unarmed Combat (Str) 2, Running (Phys) 1, Climb (Phys) 1.

Skill 'package', attained through pre-SLA experience;

Sneaking (Dex) 2, Hide (Dex) 2, Acrobatics (Phys) 2, Running (Phys) 2.

Once recruited by SLA Industries, the Whyte Raiders tend to opt for the Kick Murder or the Scouting package, though it is not unheard of for one to take the Death Squad package.

Natural weapons; DMG PEN AD

Claws	2	1	1
Teeth	3	0	0

Whyte Raiders are naturally ambidextrous, they may also attack with two claws and a bite each phase.

Whyte Raiders have Sociopathy (minimum Rank 5) and Psychopath (minimum Rank 5). They must also take six Ranks of Phobia, these may be spread between one, two or three different phobias.

WRAITH RAIDER SOCIETY

The basic social unit of Wraith Raider society is the Pride. Each Pride is lead by one or two Wraith Raiders of proven experience. Usually a pride will have one male and one female leader, both of whom will have considerable diplomatic and social skills. It is the Pride leaders function to act as a go between for the members of his Pride and SLA Industries. Pride Leaders are those Wraith Raiders that can prove they have the support of at least half the families of the Pride, they then challenge the present Pride Leader, usually in the Hunt.

The leaders of the Pride may well be Wraith Raiders who have demonstrated an ability and talent for use of their mental faculties rather than their prowess on the physical Hunt, for this reason many Wraith Raiders pay only lip service to their Pride Leaders. Physically weak Pride leaders will often appoint a proxy, who deals with any physical challenges for the leadership, as well as representing the Pride in contests with other Prides. Pride leaders do not have to compete for a mate in the same way as other Wraith Raiders (in the Chase), but may choose one mate from those available. Pride leaders pair for life and their off spring are treated as any other Wraith Raider cubs, being given no special treatment and no guarantees for survival or selection to SLA Industries. The Pride leader may not pass on his title to any of his cubs, when he dies or loses the leadership, a new pride Leader is chosen.

Each Wraith Raider community is made up of one or more Prides, sometimes as many as six may band together. The community is ruled by a Pride Council, made up of the Pride leaders from each of the Prides. To illustrate the social organisation on Polo we will examine the community of Rahjel.

Rahjel is situated on the Southern slopes of the Kranin Mountains on the central continent of Hurr. Rahjel is made up of one hundred and seventy families, split in to six Prides, each pride only has one leader so the Pride Council of Rahjel has six members. Rahjel is a domed community which comprises of some two hundred buildings, each sheltered by the plastic and steel dome. The majority of the dwellings of Rahjel are traditional, half spherical houses, built from frozen soil and ice. The pre-fabricated buildings are all two storey, each being roughly the size of six normal houses. The Pride Council occupies one of the pre-fab buildings, the others are used for training and education or food storage. Like all communities, Rahjel has a sedate, contemplative feel to it. Wraith Raiders gather here to train their cubs and sit out the worst of the winter weather. Rahjel has hunting, breeding

and training grounds within it's territory, these cover one hundred and twenty six thousand square kilometres, roughly three quarters of the communities total area.

Females who choose to breed during the summer are allocated dwellings within the breeding grounds, here they will wait for suitable males to approach them and indulge them in the Chase. Once they have chosen, the pair will gather food from the hunting grounds and await the birth of the cubs. The Pride Council will not interfere with any aspects of the Chase, or the subsequent upbringing of the cubs. This is seen as essential, as it guarantees that the litter will be whittled down to allow only the strong and fit to survive. Once the cubs are born one of the parents will leave, usually it is the male, though the female is free to choose who must stay to raise the cubs. Wraith Raider cubs are taught the basics of the hunt by their remaining parent, they are not given any aid in learning to walk and to run, nor are they kept artificially warm. Once the cub has learned to run, after about a year, they may be taken to the hunting grounds by both of their parents. Here they are shown the basics of the hunt and are left to fend for themselves, under the watchful eyes of their parents. At this stage the cubs are helped to understand the need to hunt and shown the necessity of being able to use different tools to help them. They will undoubtedly construct crude missile weapons and learn to set traps, as well as develop their techniques for the stalking and chasing down of prey. The parents will inform the Pride Council of any outstanding developments in any of their cubs, such as advanced reasoning ability, or particularly fast or nimble cubs. Wraith Raiders spend three years in the hunting grounds in the company of their parents, after this the family moves in to the heart of the community to finish off the training. It is now that the Pride Council will assign the cubs to tutor groups to be given instruction in social habits as well as introducing them to higher technologies such as firearms. The training grounds are used extensively by the cubs, sometimes with their parents, sometimes with their tutors, and occasionally on their own. SLA Industries take an interest in any exceptional cubs at this stage, watching their development closely. As the parents of cubs are often too busy bringing up their young to hunt for themselves, the community will supply food and shelter.

After a further four years of training, the cubs are nearly matured. At this stage of their lives, they are expelled from the community and must go out in to the wilder realms of Polo to prove themselves, many start their induction hunt at this point. Cubs are forbidden to re-enter the community for a year. During this time they must acquire the pelts necessary to join SLA Industries or re-join the community.

Polo is governed by a loose collective of Pride leaders known as the Pride Set Council. The Pride Set Council holds shares in all the major companies on Polo, as well as receiving direct funding from SLA Industries for the upkeep of the ports. The Three P's contract with Polo is monitored by the Pride Set Council, who are responsible for ensuring the training of all Wraith Raiders that are put forward for induction into SLA Industries, is up to scratch. Pride Set Council members are chosen from among the millions of Pride leaders every three years, the Council comprises of two thousand Wraith Raiders. All matters of Homeworld trade and exploitation are dealt with by the Pride Set Council. Although Wraith Raider society is based around the drive for survival, they have developed some social traditions based around the Pride and the concept of passing on stronger genes. The two main rituals are the chase and the hunt.

The Chase

The Chase is the Wraith Raiders' mating ritual, where the female who has decided it is time to mate, invites males to show their worth by indulging her in the Chase.

Each female may attract up to six males, depending on her reputation and her lineage. The stronger, more well bred females will attract the strongest males from the Pride, and sometimes males from other Prides. Males from outside the Pride are welcomed in the Chase, as the new bloodline can only strengthen the Prides breeding stock.

Females will often have chosen their mate before the Chase has begun, they will try to make it easier for their favourite to complete the Chase, catching them at a suitable moment, after they have proved their stamina and ingenuity.

The etiquette of the Chase is very important. The males must give the female a two hour lead before they set out in pursuit. The rules are simple, the first male to catch the female, has won the right to mate with her. Sometimes the Chase is a mere formality, with one or two males going after a willing female, but on other occasions the female will drive the males as hard as she can, hoping that none will prove themselves worthy. If a female manages to make it back to her den, without one of the males catching her, she may choose none of her suitors, waiting for another year before she is ready to start again.

Female Wraith Raiders will set a course, or 'run', through as hostile terrain as possible, leading their prospective partners through the territories of as many beasts as possible. Especially devious females will always try to lead the males in to the lairs of Pran Groar, or sometimes right in to the cave of a Purn Bear. Such Chases are seen as the ultimate test of the males, and females who set such hard tasks do

so to confirm a mate, never simply to place the males in danger.

Male Wraith Raiders must engage in the Chase with nothing but their natural weapons and their ingenuity. Those that are seriously wounded while on the Chase usually die, all casualties of the Chase are not mourned for they have shown themselves to be weak, their bloodline dies out before it could weaken the Wraith Raider race.

The Chase will usually take place over the community's hunting and training grounds, though the female is free to go where she will. It has been known for a Chase to last for fifteen days, leading through swampland and ice flow, covering over a thousand kilometres. Such epic chases are rare, usually the Chase is over in a few days, covering no more than a hundred kilometres.

Once the Chase is resolved mating may take place. Many outsiders believe there is little feeling between the mates and the mating is purely an instinct driven action, not requiring any degree of either affection or love. This is not the case. Female Wraith Raiders simply will not mate with a partner they are not attracted to. Of course, what makes a male Wraith Raider attractive to a female are often those rugged, bestial qualities we see as typical animal behaviour, thus seeming to confirm our theories about their mating. You must remember that the females are usually stronger than the males, with much more stamina and (in matters of the Chase) with more resolve. If they do not want a male to catch them, they can normally succeed in evading them.

Female Wraith Raiders carry their cubs for roughly two hundred and ninety days before birth, a typical litter is of two to five cubs. A recent theory suggests that the sex of the cubs is actually consciously determined by the female during mating, though this cannot be proved.

All aspects of the Chase tend to confirm the theory that Wraith Raiders are extremely conscious of their racial purity and bloodlines, all efforts are made to strengthen the race at every opportunity.

The Hunt

Hunting is at the centre of Wraith Raider culture and philosophy. The Hunt is a great tradition, used to push Wraith Raider cubs into the harsh realm of adulthood. Although there is a great history to the Hunt, with well established traditions, there is no ritual or ceremony associated with it. Wraith Raiders hunt because it is what they do, each in their own way, each with their own strategies and objectives, but each with the same reason; survival.

Once the Wraith raider has been taught by his parents and then joined the community, to learn from the Prides elders and tutors, they are ready for the Hunt. The Hunt is the method by which Wraith Raiders prove themselves worthy to rejoin the Pride

or to be put forward for induction by SLA Industries. Cubs may put themselves forward for the Hunt, but usually it is their parents who nominate them. Wraith Raider parents will not needlessly endanger their cubs by putting them forward too soon, though they will sometimes use the Hunt as a way of determining if a particular cub has 'got what it takes', or if they should merely be abandoned to the wilds. The youngest recorded age of a Hunt participant is seven years old, the oldest is twelve.

"Faeran, you have been put forward for the Hunt. You will bring us three Purn Bear and one Rram Beetle hide. Upon your return you will be taken by SLA Industries. Go and return."

"I will also bring you Pran Groar, Sliian and the Slichion. I will return."

Exchange of words at the start of the Hunt, Polo 898 SD. Faeran is now an SCL 5 Operative on Mort.

The goals of the Hunt are set by the pride leaders, taking into consideration the talents and weakness' of the candidate. Usually the hunt will be set to push the Wraith Raider to the limits of their capabilities, often requiring them to overcome their weakness through persistent use. So a Wraith Raider who is lacking in skills of reasoning and puzzle solving, will be set tasks as part of his hunt that force him to improve these skills.

The Wraith Raider himself will also name at least three of the beasts he intends to hunt. From his choice the Pride will judge his worth. The Hunt technically lasts for the whole of the year that the Wraith Raider is away from the Pride, though they may catch their set prey long before the year is over. Most Wraith Raiders will try to exceed their quota, to show they are fully matured hunters.

Hunting Wraith Raiders may use any and all tools at their disposal, this may include weapons such as rifles and pistols, blades and bows. The reputation of the Wraith Raider on the Hunt will be greatly increased if they use natural weapons as well as tools, they should also try to exercise the skills they have been taught, such as tracking, as well as their 'native' skills.

All Wraith Raiders take to the Hunt with solemnity and vigour. There is no time for other pursuits and their lives will be completely taken over by the Hunt.

The Hunt is a solitary affair and it may happen that two or more Wraith Raiders find themselves in the same territory, seeking the same prey. When this situation arises it is seen as a natural extension of the laws of competition, and each Wraith Raider is expected to show the other no consideration and to offer no help. Wraith Raiders will stop short of attacking each other, though skirmishes have been reported, especially towards the end of a Hunt, when one of the participants needs the prey more than the other.

Without doubt the two most favoured targets on the Hunt are the Pran Groar and the Purn Bear, though recently Slichion have become more popular.

Any cubs that do not return within the year forfeit all rights gained from the Hunt. They must return to the Pride to try again in a years time, although it has been known for an extremely successful hunter to be allowed a period of grace after the year has ended, especially if his prey is to be found only in areas further away from the Prides territory.

Once they have successfully completed the Hunt, they are eligible for induction in to SLA Industries. Some Wraith Raiders are chosen to stay and train cubs as well as act as breeding stock, there is no distinction made between those that stay and those that leave, both are expected to survive using their skills and instincts.

The Hunt is an important part of the Wraith Raiders life, but once it has passed it is not remembered, the Wraith Raider has moved on to carry the Hunt in to their lives, to make every day a part of the great Hunt that is to be their life in the World of Progress. Upon selection by SLA Industries, Wraith Raiders turn their backs on their past, and on their Homeworld, they concentrate on adapting to their new environment, on being as successful as they can at surviving wherever they find themselves.

WRAITH RAIDERS AS OPERATIVES

Once the Wraith Raider has joined SLA Industries they attend one of the training colleges the same as any other Operative. Their training is geared to their own peculiar racial talents, and they usually complete basic training within eight months. SLA Industries is not blind to the fact that Wraith Raiders make excellent technicians and 'fixers' as well as good 'field' Operatives and recently there has been a dramatic increase in the number of Wraith Raiders taking the Mechanics and Medical Package (this is being looked in to by the department for Racial Employment).

By far the most popular training package among Wraith Raiders is Scouting, closely followed by Kick Murder.

The Scouting Package allows the Wraith Raider to develop their natural skills, such as Tracking, Detect and Running, as well as to develop associated skills. The hardest aspect of the Scouting Package for the Wraith Raider to master is Streetwise. The 'street' culture and background of the worlds of the SLA universe is alien to the Wraith Raider in the most literal sense, the Wraith Raider has to put aside all natural feelings and instincts in order to assimilate knowledge from the 'street'. The most common frustration among trainee's is the tendency to view those who live in the shadier realms of Mort as merely prey, or at best, irrelevant bystander's who pose no threat. Each of these two attitudes leads to either conflict or apathy, both capable of cutting

short a promising career. The other side of the coin is the populations inability and unwillingness to accept Wraith Raiders as part of their natural social scene, and thus to interact with them in a way that would make the Wraith Raider 'street aware' or Streetwise. For the Streetwise training Wraith Raiders are always paired with human Operatives, and it is in this environment that many Wraith Raiders make what they consider 'friends' with a human, for while they see the need (and respond to it with ruthless efficiency) to work within the human community, they are always placed outside of it by their attitude, by their dedication to the hunt, their determination to be the victor and not the victim.

The Kick Murder package is straight forward and allows the Wraith Raider the best chance of a successful career in a small squad, maybe even solo, the lack of any firearms training is compensated by the fact that most Wraith Raiders are already good shots before they join SLA Industries.

On the very rare occasions that a Wraith Raider takes the Death Squad Package, the result is a whirlwind of destruction that visits havoc and destruction upon its enemies with a speed and precision that shocks even its allies. Wraith Raiders trained in Death Squad tactics tend to join Shaktar and Stormer squads, adding strength to strength.

Wraith Raiders are forward looking, they learn from their past but do not dwell on either achievement or failing. Once they are committed to becoming an Operative, their family and Homeworld are forgotten as they dedicate themselves to survival in their new roles, whatever form they take.

Recently a Wraith Raider Operative, Cherone, has come to the media's attention. Her exploits both in the Cannibal Sectors and in the Stone Rim colonies have ensured her sponsorship (from FEN and Karma), and Third Eye are set to run a 'special' on her in their 'From Past to Present' series. We have included some of the Third Eye research and background to give you an idea of how a Wraith Raider Operative can develop, including a section from the interview with Cherone herself (that was never shown).

Cherone was born on Polo in 885 SD., we can find little further information from her Homeworld and Jurrans (the community where she was raised) have no record or memory of her. She undertook the Hunt when she was ten (as she recollects) and returned from it with Purn Bear, Rwor, White Fox, Blizzard Hawk and Grachon hides, as well as six Storm Whale teeth and a large haul of well developed Ice Coral.

Shortly before Cherone left for Meny, she was eligible for the Chase, but declined, choosing to concentrate on her induction to SLA Industries.

Once at Meny she was put through the usual basic training, where she neither impressed or disappointed. The only tutor we could find from basic who actually remembered her, had this to say;

"Cherone seemed to be making a conscious effort to just do enough. She passed all grades with minimal results, never really pushing herself. We had no cause to either commend or reprimand her. I only remember her because of something she once said to me. It was after a particularly strenuous bout on the Wall, she had done what was asked of her, as usual, and seemed to be puzzled at some of the other students efforts to better her times and routes. She said, "there will be many walls, and there is no gain in besting me, I am not their prey." I got the impression that she was simply waiting for something, like she would only push herself when she saw it was needed. I hear she is doing very well now, I am pleased for her, she is a good advertisement for our programme."

Once through basic, Cherone opted for the Kick Murder package, against the advice of her Senior Tutor, who recommended she should train in the Scouting Package, apparently based on her excellent skill with the rifle and her keen eye for detail. The only reason (on record) she gave for going against the advice of her tutors was; "I am comfortable in those environments where Kick Murder would help me most. It would be stupid to place myself in situations where I would not be at my best. I want to go forward through the Kick Murder package. Thank you."

During training Cherone maintained her growing expertise in the rifle in her own time, spending up to an hour each day on the range on top of her other duties and studies. She gained special commendations from her Martial Arts and her Blade tutors, though her Physical Conditioning tutor did have cause to reprimand her on her apparent lack of concern over her poor Acrobatics grading. It is worth noting, that to this day, Cherone displays little flair in her use of Acrobatics, though her knowledge of this skill has saved her life on more than one occasion.

Out of training and into the market place, Cherone took her talents to the Crib where she joined Soft Touch, a relatively inexperienced squad with five members. Soft Touch undertook over a dozen BPN's but made no impact within SLA Industries, indeed their most notable achievement seems to have been their demise while on a routine Blue BPN. Cherone, wiser and more wary of Mort, moved on her agents advice, to Core, an established squad specialising in Downtown Yellows and Whites. Her career blossomed and she quickly established herself within the squad, grabbing media attention with Third Eye's WallTalk slot. Core went on to complete thirty BPN's in the frantic summer of 900 SD. The squad fell apart in the spring of 901 SD, with each member agreeing on an amicable split, the name died with the squad as each went on to pursue "other interests", namely the contract market and employment within Cloak. Cherone, now SCL 5, concentrated her efforts on operating within

Downtown, almost exclusively in Sector 201, with numerous excursions into Cannibal Sector Two. Another 'blank' period appears on Cherone's record shortly after the split, she appears to have gone off world, though no department can confirm this and there are reports of her working in the Stone Rim colonies.

Frank Weiss caught up with her during a visit to the Department of Psychology and Psychoses, where she was due to undergo a routine screening as part of her yearly medical.

FW: "I'm here at the Department of Psychology and Psychoses talking to Cherone, ex Soft Touch, ex Core, now better known on the contract circuit as Frosty. Cherone, how did you come to be working the circuit?"

C: "After the split of Core, there seemed little point in joining another squad, that would have been a sideways move. You must keep moving forward."

FW: "I understand the break up of Core was by mutual consent, what prompted the move?"

C: "We all seemed to be heading in different directions, the squad was in danger of no longer being a team. A squad must be a unit, a single thinking body, acting as one with it's component parts. Zippy went off to join another squad, but I believe all the others are now either contract or with Cloak."

FW: "Have you found any differences in the way the public respond to you now you are solo?"

C: "The 'public' just want to see Operatives who can get the job done without killing innocent bystanders. I can do this. So, I think I am more popular now than I have ever been."

FW: "Especially since you seem to be specialising in 'Sector BPN's'."

C: "Yes. I like the Cannibal Sectors. There is something honest in their brutality, they seem to bring out the best in me."

FW: "Is there any truth in the rumours that you have been to the Stone Rim colonies working undercover?"

C: (laughs) "Undercover? Well not any more (laughs)."

FW: "So you have undertaken BPN's off world?"

C: "That is no secret. I have worked the colonies, mainly on Whites and Yellows. I am thinking of teaming up with Enigma to undertake a Jade."

FW: "You heard it here first folks. A Jade? Different."

C: "I will learn much from working with Enigma, she is a good operative with a solid understanding of the business we are in. I like the thought of working with an Ebon, I think they have the deepest understanding. Maybe it's time I understood a little bit more."

FW: "Dangerous. So you would be leaving the circuit?"

C: "No one can work the circuit for the rest of their lives, not if they want to live longer than a week."

FW: "Word has also reached my ears that you are about to close a sponsorship deal with Karma. Over their FreezAware™ suits."

C: "Yes. I will be signing this week."

FW: "This wont affect your other deals?"

C: "Apparently not."

FW: "Where do you see yourself this time next year?"

C: "I really have no idea. Let's just get through today shall we?"

FW: "Thank you for your time and for being so frank with us."

C: "Thank you. Frank." (laughs)

FW: "This interview was brought to you by FEN, Alien Sex Wear, Blue Meanie, Phase Inc. and ShadoWear. Stay tuned for an exclusive with White Fire, coming up after the break."

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WRAITH RAIDER INTERACTION

We have gathered together some extracts from various interviews conducted on Mort during 900 SD., for the Channel Three series 'Among Us', they illustrate a cross thinking both among other species and among Wraith Raiders themselves, illustrating the complex nature of the relationship between the races of the World of Progress.

"Humans? Theirs is the world of Progress. We simply live in their world. Of course, we are better at surviving it than they are, but that is not our fault is it?"

Churan, Wraith Raider Technician, KoolAid Inc.

"Well I just don't trust 'em. Too quiet, know what I mean? Like they're always looking for a way to do you. Just too sneaky, it aint natural. I mean they are aliens right? What am I supposed to say?"

"They have no honour. They think of themselves first. They are only team players because it suits their goals of survival, strength in numbers. I do not trust them. I do not dislike them, but I will never trust them. Have you not heard their saying; 'forget family, forget honour and forget trust.' Doesn't sound too trustworthy does it?"

Kr'Nthr, Shaktar Operative with Blue Blood, Mort 900 SD.

"Oh yeah. Me and the chilly get along just fine. He stays outa my face and I stay outa his. I think deep down we share some kinda understanding, or something like that. Yeah. He stays out the way but I know he is watching. Slippery suckers them chillys."

Stump, BrainWaster, HeadStrong, Mort 899 SD.

"When I first started working on Mort I did not like the thought of a Wraith Raider on the team. All that skulking about and shooting out of the darkness. But we all grow up don't we. I know there is good back up when I need it, and you just can't be everywhere can you? If I was to be honest I think I would admit I still don't trust them, or like them, not really. But that don't seem to bother them, and it sure as hell don't bother me, so it works real well."

'Mad' Sam McLuskie, Frother with GoodHead, Mort 899 SD.

"It's not all sniping and hiding. I seen Herun mix it with the worst of them. He gets in quick, hits hard, and then gets the frag out. You ever seen a Wraith Raider using Martial Arts? Fast? Yeah, I think so."

"Do the best you can all the time. Never forget where you are. This is not Polo, it is Mort. A hunting ground is a hunting ground, whether it be here, the Colonies or another Homeworld. Hunting is hunting. Keep it simple."

Moorai, Wraith Raider Operative with Dust, Mort 900 SD.

"Wraith Raiders make good Operatives. You can be sure they know what's going on around you. And if you need to, you can bust 'em up pretty easy. That's if you can catch 'em."

Butt, Chagrin Operative, Mort 901 SD.

"I switched to the FEN 93 GAG, fitted a FEN vacuum silencer together with a Blackout flash suppresser from BLA. Recoil baffling comes from a MAL StaticFire, the grips have been customised by FEN and additional work has been done by Phase, the trigger is now incorporated in the palm section. IR/UV Nightsight added to the Telesight comes with a Laser Painting device. FEN RD have come up with a link direct into my Silverback helmet, lets me collate and sort all information direct onto the HedsUp. Rush Ammo customised the clip, making it slimmer and longer, 20 shot with audio alert for empty. Once I am familiar with the weapon it should prove adequate, at least until FEN can get their act together with the Tri, those motors in the tripod just have to go. What? Oh sorry, yes, two coffees please, extra sugar no milk."

"Never let a Wraith Raider out of your sight, and never let him get you in his."

DarkNight attributed street saying.

"The World of Progress could have been made for them. The perfect environment for the perfect hunter."

Shade, Ebon freelance, Mort, 900 SD.

POLO

"Polo is huge. It dwarfs the other planets in the system, two of which permanently lye in it's shadow. It is shrouded with a pale blue swirling cloud that never breaks, the surface remains hidden from off world. Entering the atmosphere is like diving in to a whirlpool, the shuttle is tossed and thrown like a child's toy in a maelstrom. I use more Flip™ just getting onto Polo than I do the rest of the year."

Ben Fisher, Third Eye News, excerpt from briefing for Third Eye crews, Mort 900 SD.

The Wraith Raider Homeworld of Polo lies in the Cha'lan Sector, it is the sixth planet in the Hurn System. Polo is the largest of the Wraith Raider Homeworlds, being nearly twice the size of the next largest, Ricer. Polo has two moons, though both of these are usually invisible from the planets surface. Both moons keep one face towards Polo, and one in darkness, Yulon is the largest, and Garan the smaller. Neither of the two moons is used by either SLA Industries or the Wraith Raiders though there is talk of SLA developing Yulon as a Resource World, mining it for it's supply of iron ore, which is exceptionally pure and relatively easy to get at. Survey teams from the Department of Mineralogy have been coming and going for the past year, each team has been accompanied by a team from the Department of Archaeology and this has caused rumours to fly about what is to be found beneath the surface of Yulon.

Polo is used as a Resource World as well as a Homeworld, it's two main exports being water and Wraith Raiders. No corporate development is permitted without express permission from Head Office, this permission is rarely granted. The water is extracted and exported by Pure Science, a wholly owned subsidiary of SLA Industries. It is they who negotiate with the Wraith Raiders for the water, and they who supply all of the equipment and ships to get the water off world.

Polo has an autonomous ruling body made up of Wraith Raider Pride Leaders, this body is consulted in all matters dealing with the development of Polo. This governing body is loosely referred to as the Wraith Raider 'government', though they have no real control over large numbers of the Wraith Raider population, most of whom live in small, scattered communities. Polo is simply too vast and inhospitable for there to be a truly effective racial governing body.

The Hurn System is patrolled by SLA Industry ships, which are based on Ganon, there have been no DarkNight or Thresher incursions in to Cha'lan space for seventy years. The last major attack from DarkNight came in 829 SD., when they launched an all out offensive to gain control of the shuttle port on Ganon. The attack was repelled though casualties were high. SLA reprisals were swift and brutal, as they always are, and since then there has been no

significant DarkNight activity in the Hurn system, though there have been numerous small scale 'terrorist' incidents on Polo itself. These attacks have revolved around the SLA Industry facilities at the polar regions, causing much collateral damage and inconvenience but no significant loss of life.

Thresher have taken no interest in Polo, perhaps the sheer size of the place defeats them and their specialist tactics, also it may be that the weather is so foul that even their power suits cannot function properly.

Astronomers info

Time taken to orbit the Sun of Polo (in Mort years): 1.8

Average orbital velocity in miles / kilometres per second: 15 / 24.1

Time taken to rotate on axis (in Mort time): 9hrs 55mins

Tilt of axis perpendicular to orbital plane: 98 degrees

Average distance from the Sun in Astronomical Units: 5.2

Average surface temperature in C: -65 degrees

Density relative to water: 7.8

Escape velocity in miles / kilometres per second: 13.3 / 21.41

Number of known moons: 2

Polo is the sixth planet in the twelve planet system of Hurn, it's two moons are larger than the eleventh and twelfth planets, Kul and Fireon. The fifth and seventh planets, Icher and Ganon, have one of their faces permanently in the shadow of Polo. Ganon is used as a foldship base by SLA Industries, they have a permanent fleet of thirty ships on stand-by, ready for any DarkNight or Thresher incursions in to the system.

"I hate the Hurn posting. It's just so damn dull. I mean you ever been to Polo? Let me tell you, it's not the sort of place you want to spend any R&R time, know what I mean? Just snow, ice, wind and freezing bloody cold. I mean what you gonna do, make ice sculptures for two weeks?"

Carlton Price, human Pilot Operative, SCL 7, Flying Gators squad, Hurn, 900 SD.

Polo measures 3,326,000 miles (5,321,600 kilometres) from pole to pole and 3,325,890 miles (5,321,424 kilometres) around the equator.

The planets surface is covered with water and ice, with only 09% of the planets surface being classed as 'solid rock'. The seas of Polo form 86% of the surface, the poles claim the remaining 05% as mixed ice and 'dirt'.

The two poles of Polo are wind blasted barren wastes of ice and driven sleet and snow. The wind speeds reach 200kmh, there are almost continual blizzards and it is always dark due to the

atmospheric conditions, ice tornadoes form regularly, reaching up in to the dark storm wracked clouds, throwing tonnes of ice in to the air as they go. A phenomenon found only at the polar regions is what has become known as 'dry lightning'. When there is no sleet or snow and the wind speed drops to almost nothing, the clouds are usually low to the ground, pressures from the upper atmosphere drive them in to form brooding storm fronts. Thunder rumbles in the distant higher reaches of the cloud structures, which are moving at a faster speed than the lower levels, this produces the lightning, which strikes without warning and blasts huge areas. Lightning has been seen to arc from over a thousand metres to strike an ice cap over five hundred metres high, splitting it in two and sending thousands of tonnes of debris scattering over a three kilometre area. Craters three hundred metres across have been created by dry lightning strikes, the ice is evaporated, sending rolling clouds of steam out over the ground, scorching as they go.

The polar regions are filled with mountainous peaks of ice, separated by vast flat plains of snow, much of it resting on glacial ice. In the central polar regions, there are numerous ice plateaux within the mountains, these are the most inhospitable places on Polo. Constantly at temperatures of -100⁰C or lower, they have raging blizzards tearing across them all year round, with storms of such ferocity coming from the rolling banks of grey clouds, that nothing lives here or even dares move through these regions.

"From off world you can see almost nothing. Just huge masses of swirling cloud, it looks calm, almost sleepy. The middle atmosphere is in turmoil, churning up the air, hurling clouds into each other, causing the frightening storms that hammer down sleet and snow onto the surface. I have often wondered if this is an analogy for the character of Wraith Raiders themselves."

Christopher Faran, Third Eye researcher, Polo 901 SD.

Another unique aspect of the polar regions are the long troughs, or trenches, that criss cross both regions. These crevasses have sheer sides and vary in depth from one to five thousand metres deep, the largest measure six hundred metres across. The trenches appear with alarming speed, opening up sometimes overnight, though it is more usual for them to 'grow' over a period of up to four days. These huge splits lead directly down to the oceans that remain liquid beneath the icy surface of the poles. The 'warm' air that rises up through the trenches, from the oceans surface, causes huge rents in the cloud cover over the poles, which in turn sets off massive thunder storms upon the clouds reforming.

The edge of each of the polar regions is defined by the beginning of the ice flows and the end of the

huge glacial plains that reach down from out of the depths of the polar wastes. The ice shelf of the northern pole is constantly being torn apart by the raging seas of the northern flows, ripping off truly vast chunks of ice which are set adrift as icebergs, the likes of which are not seen anywhere else in the World of Progress.

"Tell you about the 'bergs? What can I say? We were heading north to plant some deep sea beacons, to guide the satellites to reference points, for the big survey of '93. Our ship was a class 3 'breaker', a quarter of a million tonnes of steel, reinforced and equipped for the biggest flows. The navigator puts a call out, target to starboard, so we all get on the scanners. Nothing. Then one of the lookouts radios in, says the whole ice shelf is moving. The navigator says that's what he's been trying to tell us for the past half our, says the target is moving at three knots, heading south west, right in our direction. We scrambled the choppers, must have dropped eighty tonnes of thermals. Didn't even dent it. I swear I thought the land was moving, I mean I seen some big 'bergs, but this! This was like being chased by a city! It was all we could do to change course and stay in front of it. Took us a whole week to get back on course. I know it all sounds far fetched, sitting here nice and cosy on Mort, but when you're out there, surrounded by it, it just seems natural, like the whole planet is one great big living thing, and it just don't want you messing around on it's skin. Hey, you asked."

Earl Ferris, Human Engineer on the 993 SD Survey Team, Mort 901 SD.

The storms that play across both of the polar seas rage for up to six weeks at a time. The winds drive waves up to a hundred metres high, with a wind chill factor of minus eighty degrees, which is still warmer than the depths of the polar regions. Ships caught in these storms are usually destroyed, even deep sea submarines dare not brave the oceans in such weather, the sea bottom becomes unsettled with huge 'bergs acting like grinding stones in the shallow waters. Copters and other air transports are grounded, it is suicide to take to the air during a storm. It is interesting to note that some Ebons have commented on the interruption in the flow of the Ebb during the fiercest of storms, as if 'islands' had been briefly created, forcing the Ebb to change course, creating little pockets where it could not flow, which disappear with the storm.

The larger storms can cover areas of over six thousand square kilometres, they move with frightening speed, some have been recorded covering three hundred kilometres in a day.

The Northern polar region is roughly circular, measuring 15,000 kilometres from edge to cap. The edge of the polar shelf is where the ice flows begin. Ice bergs and sheets, some as large as 50 kilometres

across, roam the seas, crushing smaller flows, smashing into each other with tremendous force. Violent currents and eddies are created by the clashing of flows, with whirlpools and tidal waves being the result. The ice flows are continually bombarded with snow and sleet storms, which seem to come out of nowhere, lashing down for days at a time before disappearing into thin air. The cloud cover is constant, making the days a kind of twilight zone and the nights utterly black.

The Southern region is more turbulent than the Northern, with the same basic weather conditions being made worse by the colder temperatures. The coldest temperature ever recorded on Polo was at the Southern pole, where rain once fell as almost pure liquid nitrogen, driven down from the upper atmosphere by freak storms.

Neither of the polar regions has any colonies of Wraith Raiders living on them, there simply isn't enough food to support them. There are a few research stations and production plants situated at either pole, with SLA Industries having a strong presence in both regions. The last DarkNight terrorist attack to occur, in 987 SD, was at the Frost research Station on the Southern cap. The station's power plant was blown up by a suicide bomber causing massive damage and a shut down of all research for seven weeks. A team of investigators from Cloak Division established the identity of the bomber, and found he had been planted on Polo some eight weeks before the attack, how he came to make his way, alone, across the ice cap remains a mystery.

The seas of the polar region ice flows are home to the micro organisms known as Mureel, tiny creatures related to plankton and krill. The Mureel rise from the depths of the ocean, trying to absorb tiny amounts of light, which they store and convert in to energy. The Mureel are the staple diet of Gharin, a large fish that can be found in schools of up to four million. The largest Gharin reported was 1.2 metres long and weighed 56 kilos. Gharin feed only on Mureel, having baleen sieves as teeth, they are incapable of eating anything else. The Gharin is an asexual fish, having the means to both produce and fertilise the eggs within it's body. Eggs are laid in the millions by each fish, the eggs sink down until they reach the still dark waters of the lower ice shelves, just above the sea bottom. Here they lie for up to three months before hatching, during this time they are eaten by the Purine, a crab like creature capable of swimming using a small 'bag' on it's underbelly. Purine feed only on Gharin eggs and have been known to reach twelve kilos in weight, having a leg span of two metres. Purine can deliver a nasty blow to divers using their larger left hand pincer.

The only animal that actually lives on the ice flows, rather than underneath them, is the huge Purn Bear. The Purn feed on Gharin, and the recently (three

hundred years ago) introduced Furi Seal. The Furi Seals eat Gharin, and in lean times, may sift for Mureel.

Purn Bears live in makeshift caves, or holes dug deep in to the ice. They sleep for up to four months of the year, their young hibernate for up to six months at a time while the adults gather food and store it in their dens. The Purn Bears are capable of withstanding temperatures of -130°C , which allows them free access to the sea as well as giving them enough time to gather food long in to the cold spells before the winter sets in.

The huge shoals of Gharin are fished by Wraith Raiders using both ships and submarines, though the task is not an easy one, with many ships and subs being lost each year. The Gharin forms an important part of the Wraith Raider diet, though found mainly in the polar waters, it is frozen and exported all over Polo.

During the famous 'calm' of a '85, when the polar storms died down for a whole month, some of the ships dropped deep nets and dredged for Purine, catches were huge, with many ships reporting they had to dump many tonnes back as their holds were full. This fuels speculation that the Purine crabs have life spans of many years, and that they must have other food sources and breeding grounds, maybe with other habitat as yet undiscovered.

Exceptionally brave or sturdy Wraith Raiders have been known to hunt Purn Bears on the ice flows as part of their quota of hides for induction to SLA Industries.

Here is an extract from the broadcast of Hanah Dahn during the expedition of 985 SD.;

"We are heading North, I am with the sixth fleet, some fifty ships and seven subs. The weather has held for the past three days, with nothing worse than the occasional sleet and snow fall, the sea is suspiciously calm, with the 'bergs and sheet flows seemingly suspended in the water, not moving, some of the smaller ones just gently bobbing up and down with the currents. We have seen Purn Bears hunting on the open ice, a rare sight indeed, with one of the beasts being measured at six metres toe to eye. We have had signs of Gharin, but the captain is waiting for his moment, he is confident of a big school out there, big enough for all the ships to fill their holds in one days fishing. The deep sea dredging has been going on all day, with several tonnes of Purine crab being caught in three hours. Most of the crew are busy cleaning and preparing the Purine meat for storage. The clouds turn white to grey, sometimes with pale blue tints, their presence never forgotten. The threat of a storm seems to be on everyone's mind, the one sobering thought on this otherwise seemingly leisurely trip. This has been a rare opportunity to film the flows at rest. The sight of lumbering Purn Bears diving from stationary 'bergs has not been seen for many a year.

As I speak, the red monitoring light has come on, a shoal has been detected, let's go take a look...."

Extract © 985 SD. Third Eye News.

The ice flows stretch for over a hundred thousand kilometres from each pole, with the southern flows having the seas frozen for many hundreds of kilometres from the pole during the winter.

Both the Northern and Southern ice flows have many small colonies of Wraith Raiders, they are the hardest of their race, they hunt all of the animals of the flows, including the Purn Bear, though their staple diet is fish and seal meat. Wraith Raiders from the ice flow regions tend to be very solitary, quiet creatures. If they choose to enter SLA Industries, they tend to be withdrawn, developing sociopathy and usually paranoia. They rely heavily upon their coolant suits, being totally disorientated without them.

The ice flows gradually give way to open sea, with the temperature rising a few degrees as they near the equatorial region. The central area of Polo known as the 'equatorial region' stretches for three hundred thousand kilometres either side of the equator, it has summers lasting up to four months, when the temperature can go as high as -30°C .

It should be noted that the ice flows and the ice bergs are not swept in to the central seas due to the strong currents that swirl around Polo, hemming in both poles with a grand circular pattern.

The central seas are swept by rains, snow storms, sleet and hail, with winds churning the seas constantly. The atmospheric pressures of the equatorial region drives the swirling upper clouds down towards the surface of the planet, creating many tornadoes, whirlwinds and other vortices. It is one of the most terrifying sights on Polo to see a solid column of water two hundred metres wide, rising a thousand metres in to the air, being driven towards you at a speed of one hundred knots, ripping through driving sleet as it goes.

The central seas are home to a wider variety of fish and marine life, they are also the only place on Polo where the gigantic Storm Whales are to be found.

The Storm Whales seem to follow the roughest weather around the central seas, feeding on the smallest of animal life churned up by the raging seas. Storm Whales, like all whales, are not fish but mammals, they can stay submerged for up to two hours, though they must eventually come up for air, often crashing through ice flows to do so.. They live a wandering life, migrating from Southern to Northern region as part of their life cycle. Storm Whales grow to monstrous sizes, the largest species, the White Whales, have been reported to grow up to seven hundred metres long. The Storm Whales are thought of by Wraith Raiders as more of an elemental force than an animal. They are hunted only in dire emergency, when other food sources dry

up, and then they are killed using thermal bomb harpoons.

The central seas surround the thousands of smaller 'continents' that make up the bulk of the land mass of Polo. These islands vary in size from a few hundred kilometres across to the largest, Hurr, which is thirty thousand kilometres wide by twenty three thousand kilometres long, being roughly crescent shaped. All of the land masses are covered with snow, with the soil being permanently frozen in most places for most of the year. Only in the most central of the land masses do the changes of the seasons have any real effect.

All of the 'continents' are still moving around the surface of Polo, creating shifting sea floors and treacherous channels between the islands. Much of the time, the sea between the islands, which varies in width from a few metres to hundreds of kilometres, is filled with chunks of ice and debris from the break up of the continents. The major land masses lie around the equatorial region which has distinctive weather patterns all it's own.

The general air pressure around the equator is less than on the rest of Polo, this thinner atmosphere makes for freezing temperatures and chill winds, though the sky may be clear from the low lying cloud that is found in all other regions. The clouds that do form in the upper atmosphere of the central region are huge, both in depth and width. Thunder storms rage within them, lightning flashes illuminate them from below. Recently, it has been discovered that jets of gas shoot upwards from the tops of the storm clouds, spraying out through the upper atmosphere, reaching up to a thousand kilometres in to space. Further study of the gas is needed to discover it's exact composition, though it is probably a methane / hydrogen solution. It is nearly always snowing or blowing a blizzard over the central region, even when it is quite 'warm'.

All of the larger land masses of the central region have various terrain features, ranging from mountains to swamp like areas, where the volcanic activity beneath Polo's surface makes the surface temperature almost 'warm'.

We have picked out two continents to highlight the different terrain features found.

Hurr, the largest of the three land masses known as the Frozen Triangle, has a vast mountainous region at it's centre, roughly nine thousand kilometres across by six thousand kilometres wide.. The shores of Hurr are ice covered and sheer, having cliffs towering up to five hundred metres from the sea. Many of the smaller glacial flows break up on these cliffs, sending small ice bergs into the sea and inlets around the coast. The cliffs are home to many of the birds found on Hurr, including the tenacious Rark, which grows no bigger than a mans hand and is found in the millions around the Northern cliffs of Hurr. The bare rock of the shore gives way to frozen, snow covered permafrost, with almost

nothing growing here except the hardy Urin Moss. The moss is home to the Fritchins, tiny insects that swarm over the thick green furry moss, their bite is annoying as it produces the most irritating rashes and boils. Rark sweep the Moss, feeding on the Fritchins when the fishing is poor. During a particularly fierce storm, a Wraith Raider has been known to take shelter in the Urin Moss, digging out a shallow trench to fend off the worst of the wind and driving sleet. Needless to say, such refugees pay the price in Fritchins bites.

After some thousand kilometres, as the land rises up towards the central mountain region, the snow covered ground becomes more hilly, allowing for sheltered spots and some free running water in the form of streams to reach the surface. These streams have short, hectic lives, in which they break through to the surface, gush along their course, then freeze to add to the layers of ice. It is in the hilly regions that we find the greatest abundance of life on Polo. Here, the smallest of Polo's mammals lives, the Kranhuk. The Kranhuk lives underground and grows no larger than a man's thumb. They feed on the tiny worms that infest the soil around underground streams and rivers. They can also live off the Ghuna Fungus, which grows in sheltered, 'damp' spots, where the wind and the snow are not too cruel. The worms feed off the Ghuna as well as the roots of any moss or grass that manages to spring out from the blanket of snow, rooted in the semi frozen soil. It is worth mentioning that the few hours of 'daylight' that the equatorial region gets each day, is nothing more than a twilight, with the sun never reaching through to warm the soil. But this little amount of light is enough for the plants that have evolved on Polo, many of which have roots that delve deep in to the earth, drawing on nutrients found in underground wells of water and mulch. Some of the mosses have root systems that reach down over thirty metres, extending out into nets that stretch out over a fifty metre area. The interior volcanic activity of Polo means that the soil gets warmer the deeper you go, a fact exploited by all vegetable life forms, and some animals (such as the Rram Beetle).

Snow Hares and White Fox are also to be found in the hills of the central region. Both hibernate for large parts of the year, emerging at the height of the 'summer' to hunt and breed for a few brief months before disappearing again.

An all year round inhabitant of the hills is the Prarn Groar, a feline predator of great speed and cunning. Prarn Groars eat anything, being both hunter and scavenger, they will steal a meal from a Fox (or make a meal of one) as well as hunting down a Mowk, taking food wherever they find it. They are solitary animals that roam the hills from end to end, they have no territory and will freely move from one land mass to another, always going where the food is.

One of the most common vegetables on Polo is to be found growing deep in the hills of the equatorial regions. The Skata. The leaves of the Skata grow long and slender, looking like pale green javelins sticking from the snow. The bulbous root of the Skata is spherical, it grows deep beneath the surface, being found anywhere between two and six metres below the frozen topsoil, it can grow as large as a metre in diameter. The flesh of the Skata has a very thick skin, which is poisonous to many of the smaller mammals and worms, the toxins it contains are being looked at by SLA Industries as sources for possible pesticides. Ingestion of the skin of the Skata induces stomach cramps and vomiting. The flesh of the Skata tastes much like any other root vegetable, it is best cooked for a long time and heavily seasoned before eating.

Eventually, the frozen tundra landscape changes to a more mountainous terrain, slate black rock breaks the surface, forming huge 'towers' that stand out like sculptures against the white sky. These are the remains of volcanic columns, their surfaces twisted in to frozen liquid shapes, they shelter all manner of moss, fungus and lichen, with many species of shrub finding the small amounts of soil and nutrients they need within these natural tenement blocks. Colonies of birds and mammals can be found here, both fighting a constant war with each other as well as battling to survive the harsh weather. The volcanic towers range in height from a few metres to over three hundred metres, their surfaces pocked and scarred like huge tree trunks. When the heavy snows cover the towers, the caves and hollows of their surface become the last refuge for many hibernating animals and dormant plants.

Further in land, past the slopes of the hills and the volcanic towers, lies the central mountainous region. Here we find the grey slopes of the mountains covered with a fine shale, making them almost impossible to climb. On the lower slopes of the mountains can be found the only real 'trees' on Polo, the Frewen.

These trees grow up from the shale and shingle, having their roots planted many hundreds of metres below the surface, drawing nourishment from the soil deep beneath the mountains in collapsed caves and water hollowed caverns. Frewen may grow up to a hundred metres in height, with trunks of ten metres in diameter. Most Frewen grow only a few metres tall and have slender trunks, their needle like leaves grown in thick clusters along their supple branches. Forests of Frewen stretch for up to one thousand kilometres, carpeting the lower slopes of the central mountains.

Within the borders of these snow floored forests, can be found the largest browsing animals on Polo, the Mowk. The Mowk can be found roaming the hills of the tundra during the brief summer, retreating to the relative shelter of the forests for the winter. Mowk grow to three metres to the shoulder,

though heights of two metres toe to ear are more common. They have small horns on the side of their heads and look much like a giant hairy pig. Herds vary in size from a few dozen to a few thousand. Mowk are deceptively quick on their feet and incredibly nimble, they will give any Wraith Raider a run for their money.

Numerous other small mammals live in the forests, most burrowing deep in to the soil during the winter, to emerge only for the brief summer. Various insects live both in the soil and the tree bark, the common Schew Worm being the most prolific. The Schew worm lava can lay dormant for up to seven months, waiting for the right time to emerge from it's crystalline cocoon. Batches of Schew lava can be seen hanging in groups from many Frewen trees, looking like jewelled leaves in the crisp frosty mountain air. The lava are quite nutritious and can sustain a Wraith Raider for many days while on the hunt.

"I had chased the Pran Groar into the lower forests of the Chkar mountain, I knew he was wounded. The arrow had hit him in the shoulder, he was slower, but still dangerous. I knew he would be seeking a place to turn the tables, to become the hunter instead of the hunted. It is what I would have done. I tracked him for two days, he was two to three hours ahead of me. As long as I kept going I would catch him, he was getting slower by the hour, losing blood, the arrow must have worked inwards. The second day I found myself deep in the forest, crisp snow under foot, sheltered from the worst of the wind. I saw the Frewen I had stopped under was heavy with Schew lava, their cocoons glistened and swayed in the breeze, making a faint sound like ice in water. I climbed to the lower branches, planning to pick a few dozen for my supplies bag. Then the beast hit me, from out of nowhere. Claws, teeth and tusks, all at once. I was knocked from the tree, sent rolling through the snowy moss, just trying to keep those fangs from my throat. I felt the claws rip through my fur, tearing my skin, the weight of the Pran Groar crushing my ribs as we tumbled, it's hot breath bathing my face. I hit and clawed, twisted and kicked, all my strength fading fast in desperation. We were locked in a mad tumbling fall, skidding head over heels in the snow, sliding through the ice and shingle, blood staining the ground around us. I know we must have wrestled only for a brief second but it seemed like an hour. I freed my right arm, claws raked my shoulder but I managed to grab the knife from my belt. Biting the beast in the face distracted it long enough for me to break free, as it threw itself back on to it's feet, twisting in the air, I knew I was only going to get one chance. When it pounced I let myself fall, I sensed I was going to get caught with the front paw, maybe the back a well, but it was all I could think of. As I fell I felt my left arm break, the pain nearly

stopped me, but I had no real choice, I drove the knife up, hitting the beast in the throat. I remember the warm feeling of the blood soaking me, seeping through my fur. Then I felt the full weight of the beast and I passed out. When I came round the beast was gone and I was alone, beaten and broken, left licking my wounds and trying to find a shelter for the night as the blizzard closed in. What happened to the Pran Groar? I don't know. I can only assume it was either dragged off by another beast, or that it crawled away and died. How I survived I do not know. I was young and maybe my thick skin and supple bones made up for my stupidity. If I hadn't been distracted by the Schew lava I would have seen the beast, would have detected its presence. I have learned from it, taking the lesson with me, along with the scars, wherever I go. Never lose concentration on the hunt."

Murrin, Wraith Raider Operative, Feast of Fear squad, Mort 900 SD.

Another inhabitant of the forests is the Blizzard Hawk, a small white bird that lives only in the highest Frewen and the most inaccessible mountain peaks. Blizzard Hawks hunt in all weather and have been known to fly in conditions which a Wraith Raider would find impossible to hunt in.

Along the slopes of the mountains, near the forests of Frewen, can be found the largest number of Wraith Raider settlements. The domed enclosures that house the bulk of the Wraith Raider community are low to the ground, their plastic panels held together by thin steel supports which allow the wind to blow freely through, they look like panelled spiders webs, designed to keep the worst out, but to let enough of the weather in to keep the temperature down.

Communities are gathered together in a number of 'prides', the most basic Wraith Raider social unit. Each dome is ruled by a Pride Council, made up of the heads of the various prides gathered beneath the dome. Domes vary in size, as do the number of Wraith Raiders that live in them. There seems to be no universal governing factor other than the numbers the land can support in terms of food supply. None of the communities import large quantities of food, and none has a jump port or shuttle strip.

The community of Wraith Raiders situated on the southern slopes of the Kranin Mountains of Hurr are used as an example, to highlight the differing aspects of a Wraith Raider community. The community is known as Rahjel.

The actual dome itself is roughly two kilometres across, being six hundred metres high at its centre. The dome is supported on hundreds of steel lattice work supports, each of which is buried deep into the soil. The dome ends six metres from the ground, allowing free access to all as well as letting the weather in. The many buildings are varied in both

shape and size, the traditional half spherical houses sit next to two storey pre fabricated constructions. There are no roads, only tracks where metal mesh has been laid down to assist in the defining of the throughways. The Pride Council chambers are next to the food storage buildings under the centre of the dome. The training camps are on the outskirts, as are the family homes for instructors and SLA personnel. The SLA Induction Centre is at the centre of the dome, it has its own vehicle park and underground food storage facility.

There are one hundred and seventy family groups gathered together in Rahjel, this being one of the middle sized communities. The area surrounding the dome is split in to three areas; the breeding grounds, the hunting grounds and the training grounds.

The breeding grounds are set in the downward slopes, close to the edge of the territory claimed by Rahjel. Here the females indulge in The Chase, to choose a mate, and here they give birth. Only those Wraith Raiders seeking a mate and those sent by the Pride Council may enter the breeding grounds, apart from females 'in season'. Vehicles are forbidden as is the carrying of weapons. It is in the breeding grounds that the most primitive aspects of the Wraith Raider reign supreme.

Next to the breeding grounds are the hunting grounds, used by females to gather food while they are with young, and by the cubs themselves once they have learnt to run. The females must share the hunting grounds with the other members of the community, and sometimes this leads to conflict as the mother's drive to hunt is usually greater than those she comes up against. Most Wraith Raiders will back down when faced by a hunting female.

Training grounds tend to be towards the mountain area, here they can be marked out and monitored. The Pride Council elect instructors from a corp of mature Wraith Raiders, sometimes Operatives return to help in the training, though this is very rare. The training grounds may well include 'introduced' animals, placed there for the young Wraith Raiders to hunt, for this reason some areas of the training ground may be fenced off or sealed with ditches.

The terms used, such as 'hunting ground', may be misleading, giving the impression of a small area set aside for a purpose. But you must remember the vast scale of Polo. The breeding ground attached to Rahjel for instance, covers an area of some forty thousand square kilometres, the hunting grounds fifty six thousand square kilometres and the training grounds thirty thousand square kilometres.

Terrain and weather in all areas claimed by a community are left to nature, mainly because the force of nature is so powerful on Polo that it would be futile to attempt to change it.

Yuran, the second largest of the three land masses known as the Frozen Triangle, has all of the other major terrain features found on Polo.

The basic layout of Yuran is similar to Hurr in shape, although it is somewhat smaller, being only twenty thousand kilometres across and eighteen thousand kilometres long. Yuran is firmly based on semi active volcanic plates that shift and crack with the continents movement. The seasonal variation in temperature on Yuran is more significant, with greater range and longer summers. The milder weather during the summer is thought to be caused by shifts in the crust of Polo which divert warm streams of water from deep beneath the land mass, these combine with the volcanic activity to warm the soil, and in turn the air above.

The central region of Yuran is given over to the area known as the Myran Wastes, a vast expanse of swampland that covers an area of roughly fifteen thousand square kilometres. The swamp is covered with ice and snow for most of the year, but thaws substantially in the summer, producing many plants and habitats found nowhere else on Polo.

During the eight 'winter' months, the weather over Yuran is bleak, with driving winds and snow storms sweeping the land, allowing little or nothing to grow, and giving no shelter for Wraith Raider or beast. Yuran is slightly lower than Hurr, having a less dramatic central region with shallow peaks and hills rising no more than a thousand metres above sea level.

Wraith Raider communities on Yuran live in underground houses, with internal power sources. There are no domes on Yuran. Communities are linked by a series of underground tunnels, with the Wraith Raiders going outside only to hunt and mate. Many Wraith Raiders living on the coast do not take to the sea for their hunting, but are content to harvest the huge herds of Black Walrus that live on the hidden stony beaches of Yuran. The walrus visit the beaches once a year, for a period of about a week, in which time they mate and rest from their journey to the Southern regions.

As the coastal region climbs inland, the short stubby grasses begin to take hold, clinging to the thin layer of frozen soil, covering all sheltered places with their rough brown carpet. Hundreds of kilometres of flat, snow covered grasslands are home to many mammals, such as the Rhol and the Whyum. The Rhol is a small snake like creature, that feeds on smaller animals such as the Whyum.

The Whyum looks like a flattened mole, with a broad, disc shaped back and paddled feet. It lives in very deep burrows beneath the sea of snow and grass. There are also Snow Rabbits and White Foxes, though these are scarce and tend to be found only in mating pairs.

The grass and rock slopes of the lower reaches of Yuran are also home to Polo's largest land dwelling lizard, the Rwor. Rwor have slender, slightly oval bodies, long thin tails and huge feet. They feed on anything they can get into their mouths, which

usually means Whyum or Rhol, though they will also forage for grubs, roots and worms.

As the land rises, and the ground temperature goes up, the soil begins to become more fertile, supporting many more forms of plant life, though the area is still covered with snow for most of the year.

The area labelled as the swamplands contain hundreds of frozen lakes, all connected by thin walkways of land, each of which is covered with snow and ice. The waters melt for short periods at a time, creating boggy areas of mud and ice, treacherous to all that enter.

"I took my trike out onto the swamps, chasing a large Rwor, just for the practice. The thaw was well under way, and the challenge of watching for the sink holes among the ice and snow, while trying to keep up with a frightened Rwor was an exercise I shall not forget. The walkways become flooded, icing over to blend with the lakes. Ice cracks under you, you know that if you slow down, you will be engulfed by freezing water, maybe trapped under ice. The incentive to concentrate is awesome."

Kiana, Wraith Raider 'cub', training for acceptance to SLA Industries.

The Wraith Raiders that live on the borders of the swamplands dwell in semi permanent structures, many made from pre fabricated material brought from SLA, though most keep to the traditional mud and ice brick circular homes. The settlement of Lsian, which borders the swamplands, is a good example of a Wraith Raider settlement on these flatter, slightly warmer continents.

Lsian is home to almost a thousand Wraith Raiders, it has two Pride Leaders and is a relatively wealthy community, having its own communal power supply and underground food stores. The buildings are arranged in a roughly circular fashion, with the central buildings being reserved for the heads of the community and the training centre. The outskirts of the gathering are occupied by the mating females and their cubs, they have easy access to the swamplands and the training grounds, while still lying well inside the protected territory of Lsian.

"We came across from the West, over the frozen channel and on to the mainland of Yuran, our guide Farien would not ride on the sleds but ran along side. With the wind in our faces driving the snow into our eyes, we pressed on, stopping only to sleep in four hour rest periods. The ground has been slowly rising, giving way to patches of barren earth not covered with snow. I was beginning to wonder if there really was any land on this planet, or if it was just one big ball of ice. Eventually we came close to the settlement, Farien went ahead to identify us, said he didn't want us getting shot. I think they would have too. The snows eased up, letting us see where

we were for the first time. Ahead was the settlement, a cluster of maybe two hundred buildings, stretched out over a huge area, not really a community as we think of them at all, just a rambling mass of huts, shell like buildings and pre-fabs. Ground as hard as iron, with a crisp covering of snow and ice, everything looks new, clean. We can see that the settlement lies on the border of the swamplands, there are clear signs of frozen lakes, their surfaces shimmering in the watery light. A myriad of snow covered walkways connect them, interwoven with muddy patches of stained grass and wispy reeds. Farien indicates that we are to be guests of the Pride Leader, he seems reluctant to speak to us, probably be the same if I was in his shoes."

Kal Bonner, Human Technician, SCL 8, Dept. of Agriculture survey team, Polo, 890 SD.

"I run the swamplands, hunting for the Pran Groar that roam there. I know how treacherous they can be, ground disappears from under your feet, walkways shift and change, make you go in circles. Always there is the danger of the snows whipping in, cutting you off, making you lose yourself in the maze of the swamps. Pran Groar knows this, that is why they run there when we hunt them."
Churr, Wraith Raider cub, Polo, 900 SD.

The Wraith Raiders of Lsian are very territorial, in contrast to many other communities, they realise they need to keep their community small in order to gain maximum benefit from their location. On the outskirts of each of the grounds (hunting, mating, training) there are small markers, noticeable only to Wraith Raiders, that clearly warn of the dangers of encroaching on Lsian grounds. It is part of the trainees duty to patrol the perimeter's of the grounds, looking for signs of intruders.

Land formations such as Yuran are also home to one of the more fascinating features of Polo, the Ice Coral.

Ice Coral grows near swamplands, usually within one hundred kilometres of the swamps edge, they appear unable to grow in the 'warmer' regions and neither have they (so far) been recorded in the coldest (the polar regions). The actual make up of Ice Coral is similar to sea coral, that is millions of micro-organisms living and dying on top of each other, their bodies and shells forming the spectacular structures of the coral. The base for the Ice Coral is an organism known as the Rief, it is a remarkable animal which has the ability to produce a small amount of heat internally, they need only the smallest amounts of light to feed and grow, using the light to photo synthesise nutrients to feed on.

Ice Corals grow at the astonishing rate of eighteen centimetres per year, they start off growing in tight, semi circular formations, then after they reach eight metres in height, they begin to grow vertically, intertwining like tree trunks to gain strength. Ice

Coral is nearly always pale blue or whiter in colour, it is quite brittle and strong, being able to withstand the high winds and driving sleet of the Polo winters. The Coral seems to have an ability to 'repel' snow, they somehow create surfaces that the snow is unable to stick to, through a mixture of internal heat and molecular density, the glass like smoothness of the Coral towers also deters other creatures from using them as nesting places. The highest towers so far discovered have been over a hundred metres tall. Ice Coral is prized by both Wraith Raiders and off worlders alike, not only for it's beauty as a sculpted material, but also for it's properties as a lens material when sliced. The Department of Mineralogy control the export of Ice Coral from Polo, through a company called WhiteFire, the company is co-owned by the ruling Wraith Raider Pride Council.

The Homeworld of Polo has seven shuttle landing ports, each is constructed and designed to the same layout, each is run by SLA Industries and manned by their own personnel, though they all employ a number of Wraith Raider technicians. The port at Zuuch on the continent of Krawin in the Southern hemisphere, serves the communities of Jarlec, Hunsar and Friest, as well as being accessible for the communities further South on the islands of the Yullion Chain.

Zuuch can handle up to eighty shuttle flights a day, with both processing and quarantine facilities for up to a quarter of a million people. It has six of it's own power plants, each underground and each capable of sustaining the port on emergency levels for thirty six hours on it's own. The port covers an area of ten square kilometres and houses three thousand SLA Industries employees. The outer boundaries of the port also have housing for up to two thousand Wraith Raiders, each in a single bedroom pre-fab dug in to the ground.

Like all of the ports, Zuuch has to shut down in the severest of weather, though it keeps open for over 85% of the year, often presenting landing conditions that would be thought of as suicide on Mort, as normal.

Outside the port is the community of Zuuch itself, they have adapted to the presence of the port, working in the hundreds of holding bays and warehouses, as well as supplying the port with food and acting as security.

All of the Wraith Raiders taken by SLA Industries leave through one of the main ports and no ships are permitted to land outside one of the ports jurisdiction. SLA keep the shuttle companies on a tight leash, with close monitoring and inspection of ships and cargoes. Nothing gets on or off Polo without SLA knowing about it.

The census on Polo is conducted every ten years, with figures being compiled throughout the decade preceding the census. The Department of Racial Employment are responsible for the census, they are

constantly on the look out for Operatives to undertake census related BPN's, and this is often a good way for Operatives to be introduced to the strange Homeworld of Polo.

"The distribution of the Wraith Raider population over the surface of Polo has been the subject of an on going study by the Department for some time now. We know that there are in excess of sixty million Wraith Raider communities, each varying in size from twenty to ten thousand. We can only estimate at the true numbers of Wraith Raiders present on Polo, as the vast size of the planet and the nature of the weather conditions make it almost impossible for us to gather any accurate figures."

Adam Giorovsky, Department of Racial Employment, extract from Departmental report, issued on Mort 901 SD.

POLO : ANIMALS AND PLANTS

These entries and extracts are a mixture of files, some drawn from the SLA Industries library files, where the information has been gathered by survey and census teams, and some taken from the Exploration Chronicles, Third Eye's excellent natural history series screened on Mort in 901 SD. The particular films used to make up the Polo episodes were filmed by Luther Torq, his solo expedition to Polo is still the subject of much study at Third Eye, where students are shown the tapes as part of their basic training on filming in hostile environments. Luther's use of the Third Eye Sterling Vidi-Cam™ has also passed in to media folk lore. The Sterling used by Luther did not malfunction once during the whole eight month assignment, a record for durability not equalled since, on Mort or anywhere else. Luther is currently working on Cross, as part of a planned series on Warworlds, working title; Agenda of Apocalypse.

The SLA library files may be accessed by anyone with an SCL of 10 or higher, the information is available in hard copy at a cost of 1c per file. The Exploration Chronicles are available from any retail outlet at a price of 30c (per episode), each disk is four hours long, some of the other Chronicles featured are Kn'nth, Stone Rim Colonies and Station Darus 7.

ANIMALS

The environment of Polo is so harsh that SLA Industries has had very little success in introducing species in to the eco-system. All of the animals mentioned here are indigenous, except for the Furri seal, which is the one success story of introduced species. The Furri Seal was produced by the Department of the Environment, in conjunction with Phantom Pregnancy.

The eco-system of Polo is such a simplistic and all embracing structure, that popular opinion is torn between it being extremely fragile and near indestructible. The governing factor, the weather, is an immovable constant that drives the whole ecology, producing hardy species of incredible adaptability.

This is not a definitive listing of animals, though it does indicate the nature of life forms found on Polo.

"The lack of diversity among the species of Polo will come as a surprise to no one. Any eco-system as narrow and as harsh as that of Polo is bound to produce animals in a very narrow 'band'. What is to be wondered at, is that species such as mammals can be found in such advanced states of evolution. Bearing in mind mammals range from the Wraith Raider to the Storm Whale, we can see that the ecology of Polo may well be more complicated than it seems at first glance. We have had no real success in introducing species on Polo, apart from the Furri Seal, and we are resigned to the fact that we should perhaps stop trying. The planet is so firmly established in patterns of development, so finely balanced, that it seems foolish to interfere. I believe there is an old saying that goes; 'if it aint broken, attempt no modification'."

Friedric Haarlsson, Karma technical advisor, interviewed on the 'Everything There Is' slot, during Third Eye's 'Go Native' season, material © 900 SD. Third Eye News.

Sliaan : Amphibian humanoid / vegetarian, shows equivalent intelligence to primate.

Exploration Chronicles: "There is some controversy surrounding the Sliaan, many Wraith Raiders do not acknowledge their existence, and those that do think of them simply as 'fish'. The Sliaan can grow to lengths of two metres, they have humanoid upper torso's with the lower body of a seal. Their faces are elongated, like a catfish, and they have the most piercing blue eyes. The Sliaan live beneath the thinner ice sheets of the equatorial region, they never come to the surface except when hunting, and they are incapable of surviving on land. I find them fascinating, though somewhat disturbing. It is a strange thing, but their behaviour betrays only a minimal intelligence, while their faces, and especially their eyes, look like they may well speak to you at any moment. Wraith Raiders treat Sliaan the same as they would any other animal, as a resource."

SLA Files: The Sliaan are to be watched closely. Their bodies are capable of withstanding the freezing waters of the Polo seas, though they appear to be essentially humanoid, being warm blooded and having relatively large brains. BPN's concerning the Sliaan are issued through the Department of Biogenetics.

Characteristics: STR 2-7, DEX 4-10, DIA 1-2, CONC 0-2, COOL 1-6, PHYS 3-9, HITS 5-16.
Length; 1m to 2m. Weight; 80kg to 200kg.
Movement; (Swim) 3, (Burst of speed) 5, Land movement; 1
Skills; Swim 10, Detect 6, Unarmed (wrestle) 4,
Advantage; Good sense of smell 8.
Weapons; Teeth; PEN 0, DMG 1, AD 0.

Prarun: Jellyfish, microscopic sift feeder, also feeds of fish.

Exploration Chronicles: "The Prarun is a fascinating creature. It looks like any other large Jellyfish, except that it has three bunches of trailers that may be woven together to form a kind of tentacle. While at sea the trailers flow out from behind the Prarun, their poisonous sting bringing instant paralysis to any fish they touch. The catch is then reeled in to the central mouth, under the main 'bell'. I have seen Prarun stun Gharin as large as a dog with just one stinger. Once they have completed their breeding cycle, the details of which are still a mystery, they crawl up on to the ice flow to lay their eggs. Once on the ice, they use their trailers as three great drills, twisting them deep in to the ice to anchor their bodies. The bell of the jellyfish becomes stiff, like leather, and is blown up with gases from the body. This inflated dome is where the eggs are laid. Once the eggs are laid, the adult Prarun dies. The young take seven to nine weeks to hatch, they devour the dead parent and are then carried by the wind back in to the sea, or blown, to their deaths, further on to the ice flows. The colours of the Prarun change as it grows older, beginning as transparent, it progresses from green to yellow to blue, and finally to white. The bloated body of the Prarun becomes highly toxic upon it's death, as all of the poisons are pumped from the trailers into it. Just brushing against the body of the Prarun while it is guarding eggs brings about numbness then swelling in the affected area, if the poison is not drawn out, death will follow in four to six minutes. Prarun are the epitome of fatal beauty."

SLA Files: Operatives are advised to stay away from Prarun, if they do get stung, a dose of Flush™ mixed with Pain Away™ is the only sure way to prevent death.

Characteristics: STR 4-8, DEX 2-6, DIA 0, CONC 0, COOL 3, PHYS 3-7, HITS 7-15.

Width; (Bell) 0.5m to 4m. Length; (Trailers) 2.5m to 20m. Weight; 10kg to 1000kg.

Movement; (Swim) 2, (Burst of speed) 3.

Skills; Swim 4, Detect 1, Unarmed (grab) 5,

Weapons; Tentacle / Trailers; (Poison) Level 9, Protective Bell; (Poison) Level 15.

Victims of poison must make a PHYS roll as a skill, using the level of the poison as a negative modifier, failure means paralysis within one or two minutes, followed by death in three to six minutes. A second PHYS roll may be made to avoid death, using the

level of the poison as a modifier both from the victims PHYS and to the dice roll (roll made as skill).

Mureel: Micro-Plankton / krill, found in very large quantities in all oceans.

SLA Files: It is certain that the Mureel balance on Polo is important to all life forms. Mureel is the base from which the food chain builds, without Mureel it is difficult to propose how the other life forms would exist. Any persons (Operatives or otherwise) found to be indulging in acts which substantially threaten the Mureel balance, are liable to prosecution by the Department of the Environment.

SLA Files, Locked Entry: It is almost impossible to see how either DarkNight or Thresher could affect the Mureel balance, Polo is simply too big, with the Mureel population being spread over too large an area. It is calculated that the detonation of six hundred large scale nuclear weapons would have no serious, long term effect on the Mureel. Last years attack by DarkNight, in which the recorded amount of psyo-toxin was eighteen tonnes, can be put in perspective by the nuclear device theory.

Gharin: Large fish found mostly in the ice flow regions.

Exploration Chronicles: "The Gharin are large, silvery blue fish, they have a large tail fin and two dorsal, their diet consists solely of Mureel and they have no teeth, only baleen sieves. The size of the Gharin shoals, or schools as they are sometimes called, is amazing. Fish are counted by the million, then once the shoal is too big, by the tonne. During the calm of 985 SD, the fishing fleet from Hurrin sighted a shoal they believed to be over four hundred thousand tonnes. Gharin are taken by all sea going predators, including the Purn Bear and the Furri Seals. Gharin form a large part of the Wraith Raider diet, and although most Wraith Raiders prefer to hunt than fish, when they are hungry, they will turn to the sea without giving it a second thought"

SLA Files: Gharin are reliant on Mureel, of which there is no shortage. They are a remarkably hardy species of fish, which have taken well to new environments. The most noticeable success is on Kn'nth, where the Department managed to introduce the species eight years ago. The Gharin seem to be able to adapt to 'warmer' waters, though they still prefer water cold enough to kill most other fish.

Other fish species: Found in regional waters, with slightly varying temperatures.

SLA Files: Grell, Klaron, Pune: Each of these fish is related to the Gharin, though different in some basic way. The Grell for instance, has only one dorsal fin and a smaller tail, it thrives in shallow, churning water, and is renowned for it's leaping. The Klaron is longer and sleeker, it is found in smaller numbers

and is harder to catch. The meat of the Klaron is higher in protein than the Gharin and it's flesh is poisonous if eaten raw. Pune are to be found all over Polo, they are as large as Gharin, though they have one dorsal fin and almost no tail. They are flatter and have both eyes on one side of their head, they are bottom feeders and dwellers. Pune drift up with the currents from the bottom, feeding as they move, only to nose dive, spiralling back to the bottom once they get within a few metres of the surface. Rising columns of Pune over a million strong have been recorded.

Purine Crab: Bottom feeding crab.

Exploration Chronicles: "As our dredge nets began to come aboard, I saw my first Purine. The seas were heavy, wind speeds of over 100kmh, waves the size of buildings, snow and sleet blowing in our faces. Through the white haze I saw the nets, at first I thought they were empty, but then I noticed thousands of legs, claws and bits of shell sticking out, all nearly transparent, just pulsing slightly with a pale blue liquid. Some of the crabs still had their bags extended on their bellies, pale blue bags with dark blue veins running through them. The crabs were small, the largest being about a metre across the back, but the crew told me stories of Purine measuring three metres across the shell. Judging by the size of the claw on these 'small' specimens, I would certainly advise caution when dealing with their larger cousins."

SLA Files: Purine Crabs are believed to have access to breeding grounds beneath the sea bed. No Purine eggs or hatchlings have ever been caught. Purine meat is poisonous if not properly cooked. The crab has a strong right claw, often disproportionately larger than it's body, with which it can deliver a serious wound to the unwary.

Characteristics: STR 2-4, DEX 2-7, DIA 0-1, CONC 0-1, COOL 1-6, PHYS 2-6, HITS 4-10.

Width (across shell); 0.2m to 2m. **Weight;** 0.5kg to 12kg.

Movement; (Swim) 2, (Burst of speed) 3, Sea Bottom 2, Land movement; 2

Skills; Swim 5, Detect 3, Unarmed (pincer) 6,

Weapons; Pincer; PEN 0, DMG 1, AD 0.

Slichion: Reptilian / amphibian quadruped, scavenging omnivore.

Exploration Chronicles: "The Slichion is known as the Ice Lizard, I have only seen two, one from each end of the size range. The small Slichion looks much like a chameleon, with bulging eyes and spiny back. I caught one while visiting the Kilos island chain at the equator, it ran straight into me, skidded onto it's back, then in an explosion of snow, it buried itself. We dug it up and it played dead. The skin was rough and white in colour, it had very small teeth, but needle sharp. It's tail was completely smooth. The largest Slichion I saw looked much like

a Cannibal Sector Gator, jaws, teeth and all. It was completely white, even the eyes (though I later found out this is a 'trick' and that all Slichions have blue eyes). The monster was running across the ice flows with incredible speed, it dived as my guide took his shot. We found the trail of blood, but in the blizzard it was impossible to locate the body, or to find out if it was actually dead."

SLA Files: Slichion are currently under investigation by the Department of Pharmacology, contact them for relevant BPN details. It should also be noted that Slichion have the ability to 'die', that is reduce all bodily functions to almost zero. This is used to get them through the worst weather, it is not the same as hibernating as the Slichion has full access to all of it's sensory devices, and may 'wake up' in a split second. Operatives are advised that the smuggling of Slichion has been recorded recently, contact the Department of the Environment for BPN details.

Characteristics: STR 3-15, DEX 3-10, DIA 0-1, CONC 0, COOL 2-10, PHYS 3-13, HITS 3-14.

Length; 0.1m to 3m. **Weight;** 1kg to 2000kg.

Movement; (Swim) 3, Land movement; 1 / 2 / 3

Skills; Swim 8, Detect 4, Unarmed (Bite) 7,

Advantage; Good hearing 6.

Weapons; Teeth; PEN 0 / 2, DMG 1 / 5, AD 0 / 2.

Blizzard Hawk: Small bird of prey.

Exploration Chronicles: "The Blizzard Hawk can fly in conditions that render all other airborne animals helpless. Their speed and grace are staggering, they are capable of holding almost level flight in a gale, I have seen them dive through a storm front, to snatch an unsuspecting Kranhuk as it ran for cover. Blizzard Hawks have speckled white, pale brown feathers and white hoods, their small talons are razor sharp, as are their beaks. They can lift prey heavier than themselves and still manage to look graceful. I have heard Wraith Raiders tell of Blizzard Hawks reaching wingspans of two metres, though the largest I have ever seen has been fifty centimetres. Wraith Raiders use the Blizzard Hawk as a gauge for the weather, if there are no hawks airborne, most Wraith Raiders stay at home."

Characteristics: STR 1-2, DEX 5-15, DIA 0-1, CONC 0-1, COOL 5-10, PHYS 3-9, HITS 4-11.

Wingspan; 30cm to 2m. **Weight;** 0.3kg to 100kg.

Movement; (Flight) 10, Land movement; 1

Skills; Fly 13, Detect 9, Unarmed (Bite / claw) 9,

Advantage; Good Eyesight 10.

Weapons; Claws; PEN 0, DMG 1, AD 0.

Rark: Small bird, gathers in huge flocks, fish and insect diet

Exploration Chronicles: "Rark are mainly to be found in coastal areas, where their cliff side colonies can house anything upwards of a million birds. They seem to spend all of their time fighting among themselves, or huddling together to avoid the worst

of the weather. Their eggs may be gathered as a nutritious food source, but this is reserved for emergencies as the scramble down the cliff face, while being 'buzzed' by thousands of angry birds, is something to be avoided. Rarks rarely grow larger than fifteen centimetres in wingspan, they are pale grey in colour, with flashes of red and blue on their beaks. Their eggs may lay dormant for up to two months, provided they are spared the worst of the weather."

SLA Files: Rarks pose a real threat in some areas, their large numbers mean that a flock's movements may sometimes throw off scanner or tracker readings.

Grachon: Reptilian flyer, carnivore, found only in central regions.

Exploration Chronicles: "The Grachon is a large reptile with wings, it looks more like a flying lizard than a bird, though I believe it is related to the Rark. Specimens range from one to eight metres in wingspan. Grachon have elongated snouts that contain hundreds of small, sharp 'teeth'. Grachon feed only on meat, hunting for anything, including Furri seals, that falls within their territory. There are numerous tales of Grachon taking a wounded Wraith Raider. Grachon usually hunt in mated pairs, their screeches of communication can be heard among the sleet as they wheel inside the clouds, locating their prey using their primitive radar. I find the Grachon quite loathsome, they seem to take delight in playing with their prey, rarely killing it with the first strike, they have even been known to fly off with a living meal, only to drop it, then come back for the broken carcass. Grachon have thick black hide's, they make their nests in lava towers or among the Ice Coral, they care little for camouflage or stealth, they are a brutal animal, with little grace or finesse."

SLA Files: The Grachon is a dangerous animal, it seems to have a limited capacity for regeneration. Due to their method of locating prey, the Grachon are the only flyers to hunt at night as well as during the day. They can go for very long periods without eating, seemingly without affecting their performance. Rumour that these reptiles are being smuggled on to Mort remain (so far) unconfirmed. Operatives are advised to kill Grachon on sight and to steer clear of their hunting grounds.

Characteristics: STR 2-8, DEX 5-12, DIA 0-1, CONC 0, COOL 3-19, PHYS 4-10, HITS 6-18.

Wingspan; 1m to 8m. Weight; 10kg to 200kg.

Movement; (Flight) 6, Land movement; 1

Skills; Fly 10, Detect 6, Unarmed (Bite / claw) 7,

Advantage; Good Hearing 8.

Weapons; Teeth; PEN 1, DMG 3, AD 1, Claws; PEN 1, DMG 2, AD 0.

The Grachon regenerates one hit every round, and one wound every third round.

Darp: Flightless bird, 'swarms' in huge numbers, migratory fish eaters.

Exploration Chronicles: "The Darp are large, flightless birds with flippers for wings and webbed feet. They live most of the time in the oceans, like some strange sea otter, coming on to the land of the central regions only to mate and to die. They can reach heights of one and a half metres, weighing in at a staggering one hundred and fifty kilograms. Most Darp have stunted, almost semi circular beaks and dashes of blue around the eyes, they are grey on the back with white stomachs. The Deep Ice Darps are completely white with long, hooked beaks. Darps are skillful fisherman and amazingly fast in the water, they suffer most losses when they come onto land. Swarms of darps five million strong have been reported, invading a small land mass and making it their own for the summer mating period. Darp meat tastes almost exactly the same as Furri Seal meat, fatty and chewy. The sight of Darps throwing themselves from the turbulent waters during a blizzard is the closest thing to comic relief on Polo."

Characteristics: STR 1-3, DEX 4-9, DIA 0-1, CONC 0-1, COOL 3-8, PHYS 3-6, HITS 4-9.

Height (Length); 0.5m to 1.5m. Weight; 10kg to 150kg.

Movement; (swim) 7, Land movement; 1

Skills; Swim 10, Detect 4, Unarmed (Bite) 5,

Weapons; Beak; PEN 0, DMG 1, AD 0.

Storm Whales: Huge ocean dwelling mammals.

Exploration Chronicles: "Storm Whales roam the central seas, they are truly gigantic creatures of incredible grace and beauty. The whales seem to follow the active storm fronts around the region, and can most often be sighted in the roughest of storm racked seas. Storm Whales seem to be categorised by their coloration, with three main 'groups' being immediately recognisable. The White Whales are the largest and it is common to see them reach six hundred metres in length, the best guess at the weight of these monsters is between one thousand and six thousand tonnes. The smaller Red Whales have a red patch over their eyes, they reach lengths of up to four hundred metres. The Black Whales have the widest variation in size (and coloration), though most have black underbellies and range between one and two hundred metres long. Wraith Raiders rarely hunt Storm Whales and I think they think of them more as an element than an animal. Storm Whales mate only once every two or three years, their gestation period of thirty two months means that young whales are born only every four or five years, they seem to have a lifespan of over a hundred years, though exact measurements have not yet been obtained. Storm Whales have no natural predators."

SLA Files: The Storm Whales communicate through singing, their songs can carry through the oceans for

over a hundred thousand kilometres. They appear to display the basics of intelligence. Their dependence on Mureel for food, and their sheer size as adults, makes them unsuitable for introduction to other worlds.

Black Walrus: Sea dwelling mammal, fish feeders.

Exploration Chronicles: "The Black Walrus are found all over Polo, their thick layers of fat enable them to survive the polar regions, and they need to travel to their mating grounds which are usually on the edges of the ice flows. They gather in numbers upwards of a thousand, the largest herd numbered over a million. Their distinctive faces have an almost human appearance, only much more bloated, their eyes have no white, being completely brown. The tusks of the Walrus are in fact teeth, they can grow up to a two metres long, usually they are exactly a quarter of the animals body length. Black Walrus are extremely territorial, they will fight all comers to protect their mating grounds, even taking on Pran Groar. This behaviour tend to support the theory that they are very, very stupid. Like the Furri Seals, the Walrus live on a diet of fish, mainly the Gharin."

SLA Files: The Black Walrus are hunted for their meat and their ivory, which can be used both as decorative material, for sculpting, etc., and for the making of arrow and spear heads. Black Walrus are deceptively quick, Operatives are warned to be aware of the dangers of entering a Walrus colony, not only from tusk gashes, but from crushing.

Characteristics: STR 4-10, DEX 3-8, DIA 0, CONC 0, COOL 5-13, PHYS 4-9, HITS 8-19.

Height (Length); 3m to 8m. **Weight;** 3000kg to 9000kg.

Movement; (swim) 5, Land movement; 1 / 2

Skills; Swim 6, Detect 3, Unarmed (Bite) 3, Unarmed (wrestle / crush) 7

Weapons; Tusks; PEN 1 , DMG 3 , AD 1 . Body crush; PEN 0, DMG 3+*, AD 0.

*The Body crush of the Walrus causes 3 points basic damage, plus another 1 point for each 100kg the Walrus weighs.

Furri Seal: Introduced species, common seal, fish feeder.

Exploration Chronicles: "Furri Seals look like Black Walrus without the tusks. It is hard to believe they are an 'introduced' species, they look so natural, and they are found in the staggeringly large numbers that characterise all Polo's marine life. Furri Seals gather in 'flocks', these hunt and mate together, not mixing with other seal flocks, each has it's own hunting and breeding grounds, varying in size depending on the size of the flock. The larger flocks, three million upwards, have territories covering over ninety thousand square kilometres. The staple diet of the Furri is fish, they will eat all species with equal relish. Furri seals have also been seen

cracking open Purine crabs. The seals have a real future on Polo, their introduction has enriched the eco-system, they are a rare success story."

SLA Files: Furri Seals were introduced to Polo three hundred years ago, after extensive research by the Department of Zoology revealed that the native species of Polo 'seal', was driven to extinction by a viral infection some three hundred years earlier. Furri Seals have been successfully transplanted onto three Wraith Raider Homeworlds, as well as numerous resource worlds.

Pran Groar: Feline mammalian hunter / scavenger, carnivore

Exploration Chronicles: "Pran Groar are the only thing I have seen a Wraith Raider show any respect or fear. They are large predatory beasts that can be found all over Polo, though they are most common in the central regions, it is in the central regions that the largest specimens are to be found. In appearance, they are like a cross between a huge bear and cat, they have long tails, spiked ears and elongated snouts. Pran Groar can go onto two legs for short periods of time, they are nimble climbers and excellent swimmers. Their two canine incisors are extended, all of their teeth are kept razor sharp, as are their retractable claws. Pran Groar have white furr, though some of the central region species have grey or pale blue coats. I have seen a large Pran Groar take down and kill a moderately large Purn Bear. If they must, these beasts will eat fish, seals, birds or even each other. Pran Groar are relentless hunters, once you are tracked by one you must either kill it or be able to outrun it."

SLA Files: Operatives are advised to stay away from Pran Groar and to show them the respect they deserve. Wraith Raiders hunt Pran Groar with a passion, and once the hunt is engaged, they may 'forget' other duties. The importing of Pran Groar on to Mort has been the subject of a recent Cloak Division investigation, the results of which are available from them. All Pran Groar removed from Polo have died within six weeks.

Characteristics: STR 5-15, DEX 5-12, DIA 0-1, CONC 0-2, COOL 5-12, PHYS 5-14, HITS 10-29.

Height; 1.5m to 3m (toe to eye). **Length;** 2m to 3.5m (eye to hind quarter). **Weight;** 500kg to 3000kg.

Movement; 2 / 5 / 8

Skills; Detect 6, Climb 4, Swim 6, Dodge 5, Tracking 7, Sneaking 6, Hide 5, Unarmed (Bite) 6, Unarmed (claw) 8.

Advantages: Good Hearing 7, Good Sight 7, Good sense of smell 9.

Weapons; Teeth; PEN 2 , DMG 5 , AD 1 . *Claws; PEN 1, DMG 4, AD 0.

*Special: pran groar may attack twice each phase with their claws

If the Pran Groar knocks their opponent to the ground, they may choose to 'hug' with their next attack. Treat the attack as a claw strike, if a

successful hit is scored, the Pran Groar has managed to hug target. In the next attack phase (and each subsequent one that the beast hugs in), the beast will inflict damage equal to double their STR Bonus. The attack has a PEN of 0 and AD 0.

Kranhuk: Quadruped mammal, very small size, omnivores.

Exploration Chronicles: "Kranhuk live in the snow covered hill regions of the central continents. They are tiny, growing no larger than a man's thumb. They inhabit intricate tunnel systems, usually built near the banks of underground or frozen streams. They feed on the tiny worms that infest the soil here. Kranhuks do not appear to hibernate. Whether or not this confirms the existence of underground caverns and rivers, where the temperature is warmer, is the subject of some debate on Polo."

SLA Files: Recently, there has been some talk of the 'hollow earth' theory concerning Polo. The official investigations have revealed nothing to confirm these theories. It is known that Polo has an active volcanic core, and that the temperature does rise as you descend into the planet. But, this is no confirmation of any life forms living underground for their whole life cycles, even the worms come to the surface occasionally, though why they do is another, so far, unanswered question.

Rram Beetle: Underground dwelling insect, deep burrow tunneler, omnivore.

Exploration Chronicles: "Rram Beetles are very rarely seen on the surface, they delve deep underground living in simple burrows, usually near a source of vegetation such as the Ghuna Fungus, Urin Moss or some root vegetable such as the Skata. The Rram have silver shells, looking like they have had a chrome job, their eyes are white and the two ocular clusters are situated in-between the jaws, just over the mouth. Ferian tells me Rram Beetles are good to eat though you have to be careful as they sometimes 'explode' if you overcook them. The largest Rram I have seen was as big as a cat, and could, I am told, quite easily have broken my leg with it's jaws. They eat anything, but prefer roots and moss stalks, taking small animals only if they are close to starving."

SLA Files: Recently, classified reports have been collated, detailing the nature of the Rram Beetles physical makeup. Apply to relevant departments for information.

SLA Files; Additional: Department of Agriculture, Classified SCL 5: We have recently acquired a live Rram Beetle which measures 1.5m across the back shell and stands 0.8m tall, the beetle weighs 200kg. Current investigation suggests that the beetles have an internal supply of crystalline protein, which they are capable on converting into energy. They also appear to be able to 'dissolve' their shells to supply

fuel and nutrients, though they only do this in preference to death.

Characteristics: STR 5-10, DEX 3-9, DIA 0, CONC 0, COOL 5-10, PHYS 4-10, HITS 9-20.

Height; 0.3m to 1m. **Width;** 0.4m to 2m (across back shell). **Weight;** 20kg to 300kg.

Movement; 1 / 2 / 3

Skills; Detect 7, Climb 3, Unarmed (Jaws) 5.

Advantages: Good sense of smell 6.

Weapons; Jaws; PEN 0 / 2 , DMG 1 / 4 , AD 0 / 1

Schew Worm: Underground / tree dwelling worm, lays crystal type lava exclusively on the branches of the Frewen tree.

Exploration Chronicles: "The Schew Worm is an unremarkable worm, which would pass without note were it not for it's lava. The worm grows to lengths of up to a metre, slender and pale in appearance, they form the diet of many tiny mammals and birds. Their lava, however, are quite interesting. The worms climb onto the branches of the Frewen to lay their eggs, which promptly hatch and form a crystalline cocoon around themselves, they then revert back to a dormant stage for up to a year, until the worst of the weather has passed and they are free to hatch, fall to the ground and burrow in. Why go to all this trouble? No one knows. The fact that the young worms develop in the Frewen does keep them out of the way of a lot of predators, and their crystalline cocoons mean they are safe from the birds, but why not just stay underground in their cocoons? It is known that the lava somehow feed from the Frewen, drawing out nutrients from the bark, but surely attachment to a root would do the same thing? The cocoons are sometimes known as Schew Crystals, they have a glass like surface that is water-proof, their colouring is varied, ranging from spectrums of blue, through yellow to red. Wraith Raiders can survive on Schew lava for a surprisingly long time, once 'picked' the lava may be stored for up to three months before being cracked open and eaten."

Purn Bear: Mammalian bear, polar region dweller, omnivore.

Exploration Chronicles: "Purn Bears grow to a size that dwarfs any bears I have previously encountered. The Purn feed on Gharin and Furri Seals, both of which they seem to have no difficulty in catching. Purn Bears live in makeshift ice caves, or in huge holes dug up to twenty metres down in the ice. They are a hibernating species that spends at least four months of the year asleep. They have pure white furr, black claws and blue eyes. They hunt in an almost playful way, as if they cannot be bothered, giving the impression they have something better to do. Purn Bear are capable of astonishing bursts of speed, considering their size and bulk. They are excellent swimmers and can climb the steepest ice caps with ease. Their loud, moaning mating cries

can be heard echoing across the ice flows during the summer months, warning off all but the most foolish from their territory.

SLA Files: Operatives are advised that the hunting of Purn Bears needs a license, and that the Wraith Raider Pride leaders take a dim view of off worlders slaughtering these animals. The export of all Purn Bear related products from Polo requires a license.

Characteristics: STR 6-24, DEX 5-12, DIA 0-1, CONC 0-1, COOL 7-15, PHYS 6-18, HITS 12-42.

Height (Length); 2.5m to 7m. Weight; 800kg to 8000kg.

Movement; 2 / 4 / 6 (sprint for short bursts only)

Skills; Detect 5, Climb 5, Swim 8, Unarmed (claws) 9, Unarmed (jaws) 7.

Advantages: Good sense of hearing 8.

Weapons; Claws; PEN 2, DMG 6, AD 1. Jaws; PEN 3, DMG 6, AD 2. Hug; PEN 0, DMG *, AD 0.

* Purn Bears may 'hug' as an attack. If they successfully hit with claws, they may, instead of doing damage, elect to grab hold and hug. In this case they do damage in their next action phase, the damage is double their STR Bonus. Purn Bears can of course still bite while they are hugging.

Mowk: Forest dwelling mammal, herd animal, vegetarian.

Exploration Chronicles: "Mowk look like huge, hairy pigs with horses heads. They have small horns that sprout like twigs from behind their ears, their small black eyes always seem half shut, as if they are just about to fall asleep. They roam the forests of Frewen in the central regions, moving out onto the hilly plains in the summer. They will graze on anything, grass, root or twig. They never move unnecessarily, conserving energy at all costs. I have seen a Pran Groar take an old specimen from the middle of a herd, while not one of the others moved. The mating call of the Mowk is a low, haunting, horn like sound. During the mating season, which corresponds with the summer, the greatest danger from the Mowk comes from their stampedes."

SLA Files: The hides of the Mowk are used to make everything from clothes to shelters. It would appear that the body of a Mowk (hide, bones, meat, etc.,) could provide a Wraith Raider with all he needed to survive, this explains their ability to go on extended surveying trips with (seemingly) not enough provisions. Mowk have successfully been transplanted to the Stone Rim Colonies.

Fritch: Flying insect of the central region. Poisonous bite, lives exclusively in Urin Moss.

Exploration Chronicles: "The fritch is a small fly that swarms over the Urin Moss. It is capable of life all year round, even in the most treacherous of conditions. Their bite causes the most irritating skin rash I have ever seen. The skin turns purple and requires so much scratching to relieve the itching that blood is quickly drawn. Many of the animals

native to Polo are immune to the bite of the Fritch, and those that aren't, stay away from them."

SLA Files: The Fritch have very short life spans, it is estimated they live for six to eight days. They lay eggs in such profusion that it is easy to imagine the flies are active all year round. The eggs hatch in two to three days and the new Fritch are capable of producing eggs within two to three days. Fritch appear to have a crystalline structure to their body cells which enables them to internally manufacture heat, and therefore energy, with only the most minimal of 'input' in the form of light and oxygen. Operatives are advised that the bite of the Fritch can create an infectious wound within a single day, if bitten the Operative must clean the wound and apply a dressing within the hour.

SLA Files, additional. Classified SCL 5: The Fritch is not native to Polo, it is a genetically engineered organism planted by DarkNight. It was hoped that the fly would spread all over Polo, carrying disease wherever it went.

The Fritch successfully wiped out the native flies in many areas of Polo, but they proved no match for the weather, they are currently contained in the central regions, where they have apparently 'bonded' with the Urin Moss.

For BPN details contact the Department of Pharmacology.

Firich: Poisonous insect, burrower, omnivore.

Exploration Chronicles: "I leapt back, pointing at Ferian's feet; "scorpion!" I shouted. He stepped back, then tossed his head in his imitation of a laugh. "Firich" he said. Ferian dug up the insect with his knife, it seemed to be playing dead, curled up tight into a ball. It looked just like a very big white scorpion, with a small black patch over the back stinger. Ferian chopped off the stinger and ate the Firich."

SLA Files: The Firich is the most poisonous of the indigenous life forms on Polo, Operatives are advised to seek medical attention immediately upon contact with the Firich. The insect is found only in (relatively) small numbers in the central continents, mainly near the swamplands.

SLA Files, additional, classified SCL 5: The Firich has the same basic cell structure as the Fritch fly, it is believed DarkNight used the Firich as the base model.

Characteristics: STR 1-2, DEX 6-12, DIA 0, CONC 0, COOL 7, PHYS 4-7, HITS 5-9.

Height; 3cm to 8cm. Length; 8cm to 30m.

Movement; 1 / 2

Skills; Detect 4, Climb 6, Unarmed (Sting) 12.

Weapons; Sting; PEN 0 / 1, DMG 1*, AD 0.

*The Sting is poisonous. The Firich poison is deadly, though the beast will only use it as a last resort, choosing to attack smaller prey with it's claws. The poison is an ultra powerful myotoxin,

causing the heart to fail within twenty to sixty seconds after injection. The victim must make a PHYS roll, with a -6 modifier. Success means they are immune to that particular Firich's sting, failure means they die.

Snow Hares: Rabbit like mammal, vegetarian.

Exploration Chronicles: "Snow Hares can be found in all areas of Polo, though they are most common in the central region. They have pure white coats and black eyes. They have a thin, milky white film, which they can slide down over their eye to make them completely invisible in the snow. Snow Hares are incredibly fast and nimble, they run at a slow pace, saving their bursts for critical moments in the hunt. They can turn on the head of a pin and the only real danger to them is the White Fox, other predators have to catch them by surprise, which is almost impossible, or injured."

Characteristics: STR 1-2, DEX 8-15, DIA 0, CONC 0-1, COOL 4, PHYS 5-9, HITS 6-11.

Height (toe to eye); 20cm to 30cm, Length; 40cm to 60cm, Weight; 4kg to 10kg.

Movement; 1 / 4 / 8 (sprint for short bursts only)

Skills; Detect 8, Dodge 12.

Advantage: Good sense of hearing 8, Good sense of smell 7, Good eyesight 8.

White Fox: Mammalian predator, omnivore.

Exploration Chronicles: "The White Fox is to be found wherever there are Snow Hares, though they do live in other areas, they are only found in any number where there are Hares. They are sleek, feline like creatures, with pure white coats and bushy tails, their eyes are the deepest blue. If cornered these little animals fight with the ferocity of a Pran Groar, they show no fear when trapped and will fight to the death in defence of their young. White Fox live in shallow dens scraped from the frozen topsoil, they mark their territories and constantly patrol the boundaries. Of all the animals on Polo I admire the White Fox most. They are tenacious, cunning and perfectly adapted to the environment."

Characteristics: STR 2-5, DEX 8-12, DIA 0-2, CONC 0-2, COOL 7, PHYS 5-9, HITS 7-14.

Height (toe to eye); 30cm to 60cm, Length; 0.7m to 1.2m, Weight; 10kg to 60kg.

Movement; 1 / 4 / 6

Skills; Detect 8, Dodge 12, Tracking 7, Sneaking 8, Hide 8, Unarmed (Bite) 6.

Advantage: Good sense of hearing 6, Good sense of smell 10, Good eyesight 6.

Weapons; Bite; PEN 0, DMG 2, AD 0.

PLANTS

The plant life on Polo is entirely indigenous, with no introduced species having any significant impact on the eco-system. The research stations in the polar

regions have been testing strains of native Polo vegetation, measuring their suitability for transplant to other Homeworlds and Resource Worlds, files are available to Department of Agriculture personnel SCL 6.

The extracts given here have been selected from a variety of sources; survey teams, Operatives on BPN's, Exploration Chronicles, Wraith Raider guides and training squad reports.

The selection of plants listed is not exhaustive, though they do represent the major species found on Polo.

Urin Moss

"The moss is found in all the continents of the central region, in coastal areas mostly, though sometimes in the Frewen forests. It grows up to thirty centimetres thick, like some dense curly head of hair stuck to the ground. It is always dark green and brown in colour, with thick black stalks and roots. The tiny spike leaves of the Urin knit together to form an almost impenetrable outer layer, beneath which the growth is less dense. The Urin Moss is home to the Fritch fly, one of the nastiest creatures ever to curse the World of Progress. I have heard of a Wraith Raider wounded on the hunt, hiding from a Pran Groar in the moss. When she came out she was worse than when she went in, covered with hundreds of bites. She said she didn't know what was worse, being eaten by the Pran Groar or the Fritch. I also heard you can eat the moss, if you are desperate. Needs a lot of cooking and still tastes like shit, but I suppose it's better than starving to death."

SLA Files: It is a commonly held belief that the Urin Moss is edible. It is not. Ingestion brings on stomach cramps, vomiting and fever. Wraith Raiders appear to be more resilient to the poison in the moss, though they too are affected to a lesser degree.

Ghuna Fungus: "Ghuna Fungus seems to find it's way into most of the central regions continents, though I have never heard of it growing in the harsher climates of the poles. The fungus clings to the sides of hills under the carpet of snow, sticking out small, mushroom shaped plates. These plates can be as large as fifty centimetres across and they are always circular, they are attached to the body of the fungus via thin grey stalks. Apparently, the fungus feeds off micro-bacteria that fall on to the plates, they are sucked in and sent down to the body of the plant where they are digested. Ghuna Fungus springs up almost overnight, especially on the site of a kill or around the mouth of an animals den, though most often the animals eat the plates. The Kranhuk feed off the fungus and also help to sustain it with their waste. Ghuna can lay dormant in the most

vicious weather, retracting it's plates or letting them die off."

SLA Files: Ghuna Fungus is poisonous if ingested, it can cause fever, fits and sometimes death through heart attack. Contact Department of Pharmacology for BPN details.

Shrubbery

"There are numerous species of small shrub on Polo, each of which has it's own particular habitat and skill at surviving. Nearly all are found in the central regions, the greatest variety being around the Swamplands. All plants on Polo have to be very sturdy and adaptable, they have to grab what little light and heat they can from the feeble summers rays, while being able to either withstand, or lay dormant through, the incredibly harsh winters. I have listed three varieties, each of which displays the necessary tenacity I have mentioned;

Thail: The Thail grows as a moss like, dense carpet of tangled twigs and spiked leaves. The shrubs grow no taller than thirty centimetres and tend to stretch out in a linear fashion, like a low hedge. Their root systems trail out for many metres from the central 'spine', digging deep down into the soil. In the winter months the Thail dries up and loses it's leaves, the branches drop close to the ground and are usually hidden beneath the snow. To all intents and purposes, the Thail 'dies' for the colder months. Thail root may be chewed raw to provide some nourishment, though how long you could survive on Thail alone, I would not like to say.

Katurn: Katurn are a tall shrub, that may reach heights of a metre, they have fern like leaves and branches, looking more like a small tree than a shrub. Katurn have up to six 'trunks' each of which supports it's own, independent growth of leaves, though the plant has a single root system. Katurn remain leafed the whole year round, their leaves turn from green to brown from summer to winter. The berries of the Katurn are bright red and extremely tasty, they grow like droplets of blood, direct from the stem of the plant, usually under cover of the leaves. Katurn are usually associated with Urin Moss and the berries are normally taken by the Rark, and occasionally Blizzard Hawks who may fly many hundreds of kilometres to feed on them.

Ghroo: The Ghroo is the largest shrub on Polo, reaching heights of up to four metres, with a spread of over eight metres. The Ghroo bush grows thick and tangled, with thorny branches sprouting millions of tiny yellow spikes (leaves). The Ghroo appears to be able to produce it's own small amount of heat, with the temperature at the centre of the bush being many degrees warmer than the outside. The sap of the Ghroo runs through 'veins' at the centre of the bush, close to the surface & almost on the outside of the bark), these veins give off the feint heat, which

is enough to nurture many insect colonies in the bush. These insects (usually the Gunl or the Arriw) keep the bush free from debris and distribute the millions of spoor from the buds at the Ghroo's centre. It has been known for a Wraith Raider to take refuge in a large Ghroo, the longest recorded period has been six days, during which time the Wraith Raider suffered the attentions of a colony of Arriw to such an extent that he was unconscious when found."

Frewen: "The Frewen is the only real tree on Polo, though there are hundreds of variations within the species. The most common type is the central Frewen, which is typical of Frewen found on every one of the central continents. Frewen are firns that grow from one to thirty metres in height, depending on their location and the harshness of the weather. Huge forests of tiny Frewen no larger than a metre, and no thicker than a twig, may be found on mountain slopes everywhere. The roots of the Frewen may stretch down up to three hundred metres, even the smaller specimens have root systems up to ten times their height. Frewen produce cone seed pods that drop once a year, the seeds are food for all the animals that shelter under the trees, though the actual pod is eaten, distributing the seeds through the waste. The Schew Worm plants it's crystalline lava on the branches of the larger Frewen, sometimes in numbers upwards of a thousand lava on one tree. The wood of the Frewen is fibrous and dry, being almost useless for anything other than burning or shredding for bedding and floor covering."

SLA Files: Frewen have been introduced onto a number of resource and home worlds with great success. Transplanting back variants onto Polo is to be undertaken by the Department of the Environment who should be contacted for BPN details.

Kap Grass: "I did not even realise there was such a thing as grass on Polo! It has been seven months since my arrival and I have only just encountered the Kap Grass. Ferian told me how it is only lightly attached to it's roots and how it is food for the grazers of the central continent. I realise I may have seen it before but mistaken it for a moss."

SLA Files: Kap grass is to be found all over the central regions of Polo. The grass grows very quickly, needing only minimal light, when dried up or drowned by snow, it breaks from it's roots (which remain dormant) to be swept away in storms or high winds. Kap Grass is eaten by many of the smaller mammals of Polo, and by the Mowk. The grass is not harmful to humans, though it provides no worthwhile nutrition.

Skata: "Skata grow deep underground, very deep, they have to be dug from depths of up to six metres.

Skata are detected by their long, slender bright green leaves, looking like javelins sticking from the earth. Rows of farmed Skata produce fields that look like some elaborate maze of sharpened spikes. The Skata itself is spherical, reaching up to a metre in diameter. The vegetable seems to take a lot of cooking, being boiled or baked for up to an hour. Eating the Skata raw induces vomiting and stomach cramps. The skin of the Skata can be used to produce a form of insect repellent, it is boiled, reduced and mixed with urine, the resulting paste smells fowl and deters even the unstoppable Frithcin Fly. Skata is eaten by Wraith Raiders all over Polo, cooked in a hundred different ways and universally despised by the young and the old. The vegetable may be stored for up to four months before it is consumed, but, surprisingly perhaps, once dug up the Skata is strangely susceptible to the frost, going rotten if frozen.

SLA Files: The skin of the Skata contains a poison much akin to a neuro toxin, which is currently under investigation by the Department of Pharmacology, who have details of relevant BPN's.

Ice Coral: "Is the Ice Coral a plant? Well, not strictly speaking. It should really be classed as an animal, but as it performs the same function as a plant, we have included it here. The Coral needs a finely balanced climate to grow in, usually found on the edge of the swamplands of the central regions. The Coral is formed from millions of micro-organisms living and dying on top of one and other, the dead and decaying organisms attract spoor from various species of plant, mainly mosses, which then proceed to grow and die on the Coral, adding to it's size and complexity. The basic organism that forms the coral is called the Reif, it is a strange animal, which has a crystalline structure to it's body cells, and appears to be capable of producing a certain amount of heat internally by 'rubbing' cells in it's body together. The Reif use a form of photo synthesis that enables them to grow to sizes of up to one millimetre, their bodies taking on a blue green sheen that is lost when they die, when they become completely transparent. The Ice Coral grows at the astonishing rate of up to eight centimetres a year, beginning their lives in tight, semi circular formations like bubbled up brains, then exploding upwards in tower like structures that can reach thirty metres in height. The Coral towers are like frozen intertwining trunks of great trees, their surfaces smooth like glass. Many small creatures live in the recesses and holes in the Ice towers, which seem to repel the snow with their smooth surface. Ice Coral is a prized material among Wraith Raiders, used for carving and construction of small dwellings. The giving of an Ice Coral ornament is a sign of friendship among the central Wraith Raiders."

SLA Files: The export of ice Coral from Polo is undertaken by WhiteFire, all other export is

forbidden. The Department of the Environment currently have two BPN's requiring Operatives, both White, to investigate ice Coral smuggling.

NEW ABILITIES AND SKILLS

CHE'ERRN (Know / Find Direction, Depth, Distance or Altitude)

"I cannot be lost. I do not 'get' lost. I use common sense, senses common to my people. I know where my enemy is, where I am, the distance and height between us. You cannot do this. I am taught to survive using my skills, I must fully utilise all tools at my disposal, my teeth, claws, FEN 30-30 and all of my senses."

Chhela Riahn, SCL 8 Operative with Ice Dancers, Mort 899 SD.

"All I know is Feran talked me in, using her IR / UV goggles, giving me the most accurate directions. She must have known where I was to the nearest foot, and more to the point, where the mines were. I found it easier when I closed my eyes and trusted to hers. Her sense of distance amazed me, and still does. It must be an instinct thing, sure beats the heck out of me."

Karlos Ghiahz, Operative with No Sweat, Mort 900 SD., speaking after he had been rescued by Feran, a Wraith Raider Operative with the squad.

Che'errn may be bought as a skill during character generation.

This is an ability that all Wraithraiders have taught from birth, their parents develop it in them before they can run. Many have it conditioned out of them during their years in Meny, though many retain it as an invaluable part of their make up.

A Wraith Raider may, through intense concentration, be able to read the various signs (usually atmospheric pressure and temperature) that will tell them their place above sea level or under ground, and their relationship to the planets pole (North), as well as their distance from any object or animal (or person).

Game System Stuff

This ability requires a Concentration roll as a skill, with modifiers for difficulty of concentration, such as temperature, distractions such as being fired at, spoken to, etc..

Success means that the Wraith Raider can find any point on the compass, and will automatically know his height / depth above / below sea level to the nearest ten metres. The Wraith Raider will also be able to judge distance to any object (including people and animals) in line of sight to within one metre.

The sensing lasts for a number of rounds equal to Concentration.

After Che'errn is used, the Wraith Raider suffers a -2 to DEX for (PHYS -20) rounds, as it's body

twitches and burns up energy stored while focusing the concentration.

PRAN GROAR

"And I'm telling you the damn Carrien had me dead to rights! I was out of ammo, left arm ripped up bad, legs battered and sore from the running, I was finished. Then out of nowhere comes the most frightening sound I ever heard, hey, I almost managed to run away! Anyway, the Carrien looks at me, must have thought 'nah, maybe next time', and turns tail and runs! From out of the shadows up in the pipes on the ceiling drops Jharan, I think he was grinning, though it is kind of hard to tell with all those teeth, and he says, "had you fooled didn't I?". Jeez. A Wraith Raider with a sense of humour. Just what I need."

Erlin Kilax, Human Operative, Blue Oyster squad, sewer clean up BPN, Mort 900 SD.

Pronounced 'Pran Grow' by humans, this is a skill unique to Wraith Raiders, as a skill it must be bought during character generation the same as any other.

Pran Groar is taught to Wraith Raiders by their mothers, many choose not to learn it, or are not offered the knowledge.

The skill originates from the Wraith Raiders dim and distant past, only vaguely remembered, when they were more bestial than they are now. Pran Groar was first used when the Wraith Raiders hunted with their natural weapons, their teeth and claws.

It has been adapted and refined so that it may now be used against humans.

"You think you are more developed than us? More civilised? How come I can freeze your blood with a simple sound. Because I know what you're afraid of."

Rhean, Operative with White Fire, Mort 900 SD.

Pran Groar involves the use of sounds and pheromones unique to the Wraith Raider race.

Originally Pran Groar was used to frighten or soothe animals encountered on the hunt. As it is primarily a vocal skill, the range depended upon the animal being affected and the acuteness of the targets hearing.

The Wraith Raider using the skill could either trick the animal into remaining still or cause it to flee in terror.

Game System Stuff

Wraith Raiders have refined Pran Groar so that they may now use it on humans.

1Pran Groar is controlled by Dexterity.

To use the skill, a normal skill roll is made. The Wraith Raider may either make the target stand still or flee.

If the target is made to freeze, the Wraith Raider makes his skill roll as usual, the target must then make a Diagnose roll as a skill, using the Wraith Raiders Pran Groar skill as a negative modifier. If the target is successful in their roll, they are 'frozen' for only a single phase. If they fail, they are stopped in their tracks for a number of phases equal to the Wraith Raiders Pran Groar skill divided by two (round down).

If the Wraith Raider is trying to induce the instinct to run, a skill roll is made, if successful the target must make a Cool roll vs a Fear Rating of 3+ Pran Groar skill level.

No target may be affected by Pran Groar more than once per day as the hearing becomes tuned to the Wraith Raiders vocal frequency.

SSRAN RAR (Alter Metabolism)

"During training at Orange Crush they said, 'go prone and stay there'. They did not know of Ssran Rar. The instructor stood over me, watching for me to move. Ten minutes later he called the medics. Then I got seven days in the 'desert box'. But now he knows, he does not ask us to do this exercise."

Thailer, SCL 5 Operative, Contract, Mort 899 SD.

This is an ability possessed by all Wraith Raiders, though some have trouble mastering it due to their low Concentrations. It is bought as a skill during character generation.

The Wraith Raider is capable of slowing all of their metabolic functions to a bare minimum. They appear to have died to all but the medically trained.

Their heart rate is slowed to one beat per minute, their breathing is reduced to almost nothing, all of their bodily functions effectively shut down.

Wraith Raiders which bring on this state are still conscious and aware of their surroundings, though they need time to bring themselves 'back up to speed' after the breakdown of their metabolic rate.

To use this ability a Wraith Raider must remain completely still, usually in the prone position.

Game System Stuff

This ability is governed by the Wraith Raiders Concentration, as it takes great effort to effect the change.

A roll is made as if their Concentration were a skill level, the higher their success by (the higher the roll is above 11), the longer they can sustain the minimising of their metabolic rate. The time is equal to the skill level plus the success in minutes (if skill is 2, Concentration is 6 and 13 is rolled, a duration of 2+8 = 10 minutes).

To bring themselves out of the slowed state, a Wraith Raider must roll again as if his

Concentration were a skill, using the number of minutes in Ssran Rar as a negative modifier, success means they are back up to speed, failure means they cannot break out of the bodily slumber. They may attempt to rouse themselves (make a roll) on each of the active phases.

Their sensory perceptions during the calming are not greatly affected, though they will obviously be limited to what they can see as they cannot move during the bodily shutdown.

CHJARR REEOW

This is an ability that all Wraith Raiders develop from the time they first go out on the hunt. It is bought as a skill during character generation.

The skill is governed by Dexterity and Diagnose (added together and divided by two to find maximum rank).

Chjarr Rreow translates roughly into 'speak their tongue', it is the ability to mimic any animal or bestial noise.

Used to draw prey into traps or to channel it on the hunt, it revolves around the Wraithraiders natural skill as an animal mimic.

Any animal or beast the Wraithraider hears may be mimicked almost immediately, with uncanny accuracy.

In the hunting ground of mort, the Wraithraider has found they can also copy the sounds of 'bestial' types such as Carrien and Carnivorous Pigs.

"I heard the Pig coming, it was snorting and grunting with excitement. I shrieked Chjarr Reeow, becoming a Carrien. The Pig fled. Iggy turned and pumped three rounds of 10mm into me. Stormers are not very bright."

Liaan, Wraith Raider Operative with Blood and Chocolate squad.

"First I heard a Shadow Monkey, then a Cannibal Gator, then a goddamn Pig, then he wakes up. I gotta get Rhion to stop eating so much chocolate before he goes to sleep, he's driving me nuts. I mean the neighbours are starting to complain, know what I mean?"

Excerpt from 'Friends On The Line' advice service, © ArcCon Communications 900 SD.

Game System Stuff

To use this ability, the Wraith Raider need only have heard the sound he intends to mimic before. At least two practice runs are needed, at full volume, after which the Wraith Raider will have the sound fixed in his mind (and throat).

Animals imitated will be fooled by the mimic 90% of the time, bestial types 75% of the time.

Intelligent beings (humans, Stormers, etc.) need to make a successful Diagnose roll as a skill, with the

Wraith Raiders Chjarr Rreow skill as a negative modifier, success means they have an 80% chance of knowing the sound is mimicked, failure means they are totally fooled. The Gamesmaster may wish to alter the % chance of recognition for intelligent types due to circumstances, i.e.. if you are in a sewer and you are expecting to hear Carnivorous Pigs, you will be more likely to believe the mimic, maybe a -20% modifier to the chance of knowing the sound is fake.

WRAITH RAIDER EQUIPMENT

There are not many companies that focus on the development of equipment for Wraith Raiders, as Wraith Raiders tend to use what ever seems best to them, regardless of make or reputation. Wraith Raiders have notoriously pragmatic natures that preclude such things as 'brand loyalty'. If something better comes along, they will use it.

The obvious exceptions to this rule are; FEN and Karma, both of whom supply Coolant Suits for Wraith Raiders.

FEN 88C COOLING SUIT

"It is too warm here for me to be comfortable, so I wear my FEN cooling suit. If it is cold enough, I do not wear it. If it breaks I get it fixed, if it gets trashed I buy a new one. It serves a purpose, as do I. It enhances my performance on non Ice Worlds. It is nothing like a Deathsuit. I do not like the implication that I am dependant on it."

Chaal, Wraith Raider Contract Killer, interviewed before 'Call The Shot', Third Eye's interactive slot on Gore Zone, © Third Eye News, 901 SD.

"I like the FEN 88C. It's reliable, cheap and it is not alive."

Ferant, Wraith Raider Third Eye Technician, SCL 7, Mort 900 SD.

The FEN 88C keeps the Wraith Raiders skin temperature at a very cold -88⁰C, hence the name. The temperature range of the suit is quite large, settings ranging from -100⁰C to -50⁰C, while in operation the suit suffers only a +/- 1⁰C fluctuation in constant temperature. The suit is fully compatible with the FEN Scout Helmet, having matching fasteners and seals, including facilities to extend the cooling tubes, via a 'cap' in to the helmet. It is also designed to be worn under all of the major power armour types. In addition, the FEN 88C has been upgraded, to give it a basic armour capability. Once the ID of a location is passed, the suit is ruptured and will cease to function as a cooler suit.

Repairs to the suit cost 5c per ID point and can be carried out by any FEN technician, or by anyone with a relevant skill.

The suit is made from a silicon based laminate, incorporating honeycombed ceramic lattice, interwoven with a kevlar based cloth. It is rumoured that FEN based the suit on refinements made to the DarkNight 00985.DN Body Armour salvaged from Dante, these rumours are fuelled by the fact that there are no direct design credits for the FEN 88C, the closest we get is the reference to the 'co-operation' between the FEN design team and Giazinni Feraldo of MAL in the design of the suit. The suit refinements include the use of the wearers bodily movements to aid in the pumping of the coolant fluids, as well as a new barrier material used to keep the fluids contained in the myriad of fine tubes that run throughout the suit.

It is rumoured that MAL are trying to buy the license to produce the suit from FEN, and that they already incorporate aspects of it's design in their new (upgraded) Shock Armour.

The suits are usually black, though all shades of grey through brown can be ordered. The honeycombing of the ceramic plates within the suit means that all of the cooling tubes are hidden and the suit has a completely smooth skin, broken only by pockets and MagHold plates.

The FEN 88C comes already equipped with eight MagHold; three ammo, two pistol & blade, two rifle and one Power Claymore on the back (usually used to hold climbing kit, etc.).

The FEN 88C is only available through FEN, and there is no real Black Market demand for the suits as there are so few rogue Wraith Raiders.

The FEN 88C profile is as follows;

Armour Type	Cost	B/M Cost	P.V.	Head
FEN 88C	150c	2,500u	2	-

Torso	Arms	Legs	Mod's.
10	8	8	Temp.

The FEN 88C weighs 6kg, it is not 'powered' as it's Power Pack is used to keep the coolant system working. The Power Pack of the FEN 88C costs 50c and lasts for 2000 hours, it weighs 0.3kg and is rechargeable. The Power Pack is silent when in use, though it may be detected using heat sourcing equipment.

The FEN 88C can also be fitted with an 'ECM Chameleon Skin', this gives the suit the same characteristics as a 'normal' ECM Body Suit, though it adds only 2kg to the weight and may be powered by the 88C's Power Pack, at a drain of 03% while in operation. The Chameleon Skin modifications cost 120c. It is worth noting that 86% of all FEN 88Cs sold have the Chameleon Skin modification.

KARMA FREEZWARE

"Now Wraith Raiders can enjoy the same sense of comfort, style and security as all Karma customers. No longer need their cooler suits limit their sense of fashion, of individuality. A cooler suit can indeed be

a thing of beauty as well as a functioning item of your wardrobe."

Excerpt of publicity handout 'pulled' from release by Karma, the revised catalogue entry missed the winter 901 SD. release. An extensive advertising campaign was (hurriedly) launched with the new slogan; "It keeps you cool. It keeps itself working so you are free to get on with your job."

FreezAware™, is brought to you by Solutionwear™, a wholly owned subsidiary of Karma, through their WorkWear™ catalogue.

Early in 901 SD. William Kennedy, CO-designer of the Animattire™ range, found himself working along side Joseph Hyrt, a research designer from the department of the environment. They were hoping to bring some of the Karma designs in to line with Monarch uniform codes, opening up a whole new market for the WorkWear™ range.

A cross over from complete 'riot environment' suits resulted in the discovery of batches of material that were unable to emit odours, but seemed almost impervious to heat (or cold).

Once development began on what has become known as 'batch 64', it was inevitable that the Wraith Raider coolant suit would be found to be a perfect home for the material.

FreezAware™ was born, with Joseph Hyrt taking the research department to Polo, while the testing and marketing were completed on Mort, watched over by the WorkWear™ division.

Hyrt soon found the material to be receptive to alteration by the inclusion of local DNA strains. After only three months he had the first samples of batch 65 to take back to Mort.

The rest, as they say, is history.

FreezAware™ launched their own line of Wraith Raider cooler suits in the winter of 901 SD. to a rousing response from the Wraith Raider community, many of whom were given the suit as reward for their services in testing.

"It works fine. I am kept feeling right. After a while I forget I am wearing it. Sometimes this can cause a moment of discomfort. It took a long time to get used to. Initially I kept getting the urge to pull it off and kill it."

Jeera, Wraith Raider Operative with Young Blood, interviewed after field trials, Mort 901 SD.

"It feels wrong but it works. I forget about it quickly. It does the job, I never get 'warm'. Now make one that makes me invisible. I would be impressed if you could do that."

Lliarra, speaking as part of the FreezAware™, 'It's A Hit' advertising campaign, Mort 901 SD.

FreezAware™ Cooler Suit profile;

Armour Type	Cost	B/M Cost	P.V.	Head
FreezAware™	300c	6,000u	3	-

Torso Arms Legs Mod's.
8 8 8 Temp.

Once damaged, it will cost 10c per P.V / ID. to graft on a new section of the suit.

FreezAware™ never gets dirty, it is extremely hard to crease and it can be 'set' to maintain a temperature anywhere between -120°C and -30°C to suit the individual wearer. It can be made in any colour the Wraith Raider desires, and may even be altered by Lumo™ the same as 'normal' skin pigment (duration, dose, etc.).

Any garments or armour may be worn over FreezAware™ with no difficulty, this includes other Animattire™ products such as belts and webbing.

In the future it is hoped that Karma may be able to give FreezAware™ some chameleon ability. Karma have a BPN running for the capture of Shadow Monkeys, and there is a rumour they are experimenting with genes from the Xenon Stormer variant on the suit, though whether Wraith Raiders will ever accept wearing a suit with something akin to sentience, remains to be seen.

BLA 'SKEETA' MULTI-TERRAIN VEHICLE

The BLA Skeeta is a vehicle designed to cover the vast snow covered distances of Polo, being designed to negotiate both snow covered frozen ground, as well as the ice flows.

Essentially, the Skeeta is a huge trike on ski's with a turbine rotor on the back.

The Skeeta is powered by a self contained Power Pack with a life span of 5,000 hours, the pack is rechargeable using any fusion charger.

BLA have designed the Skeeta so that it is easy to maintain and all parts have been 'blast tested' to withstand temperatures of up to minus eighty degrees C.

Most of the Skeeta is constructed using ceramics, allowing for a light weight construction of great strength and durability.

The Skeeta can seat two or three people, single seat versions are available and are the most popular.

"The Skeeta is a useful vehicle. It can cover most terrain types, as long as the weather holds. It carries enough supplies for a month and it does not need to eat. Useful. Of course it has it's limitations. But don't we all?"

Reice, Wraith Raider Third Eye beacon technician, Polo, 901 SD.

Type: Motorcycle

Max. Speed: 90km / hour; 14.4m / phase

Movement: Skis / Tri-axle

Dimensions: 2.2m length, 1.8m width, 1.2m height, (two seater)

Weight: 0.75 tonne

Crew: 1 driver

Passengers: 1 (squeeze 2)

Skill: Drive, Motorcycle

Armament: None

Cost: 1200c

P.V.10, I.D. 170

Acceleration Rate: 1.5

Turning Circle: 3.5

The Skeeta can carry a pay load of up to half a tonne, this restricts speed and will affect handling (modifiers to skill roll for control in difficult situations).

Skeeta's can be modified to take wheels or tracks, this may allow for some extra speed, better turning circle, etc.

Another useful modification is the 'floater bag', this is a compressed air activated bag fitted to the underside of the trike, it allows the Skeeta limited travel over open water, as long as it is calm. Floater bag costs 100c and is reusable, with air cylinders costing 10c each.

WRAITH WORDS

Black Walrus : Sea dwelling mammal, returns to land to feed and breed. Have huge tusks and can weigh up to nine tonnes.

Blizzard Hawk : Small predatory bird, found near Frewen forests or in mountains.

Cha'lan : Cha'lan Sector; sector of space containing the solar system Hurn, which has Polo as one of it's planets.

Chaal : Wraith Raider Contract Killer, Mort 901 SD.

Ch'eerrn : Skill unique to Wraith Raiders; find direction, depth, distance.

Chhela Riahn : Wraith Raider Operative with Ice Dancers, Mort 899 SD.

Chjarr Reeow : Wraith Raider skill, animal / sound mimmick.

Chkar Mountain : Huge central mountain found in the swamplands of Hurr.

Churr : Wraith Raider cub, Polo 900 SD.

Darp : Flightless bird, migratory, found on both ice flows.

Deep Ice Darp : Larger version of the darp, have sharper knife like beaks, completely white.

Farien : Renowned Wraith Raider guide, Polo.

Feran : Wraith Raider Operative with No Sweat squad.

Ferant : Wraith Raider technician, Mort 900 SD.

Fireon : Twelfth planet in the Hurn system.

Firich : Small burrowing insect, like a scorpion, white skin.

Frewen : Species of tree found all over Polo, varies greatly in size, from a few metres to a hundred metres tall.

Friest : Wraith Raider community on the continent of Krawin in the Southern hemisphere.

Fritch Fly : Small insect that lives in Urin Moss, has a very nasty, infectious bite.

Frost Research Station : Southern ice cap research station, target for last recorded Darknight attack on Polo.

Frozen Traingle : Name given to the configuration of the three largests of the central continents.

Furri Seal : Introduced species of seal, replaced native variety which was wiped out in viral plague of 600 SD.

Ganan : Seventh planet of the Hurn system, has one of it's faces constantly shadowed by Polo.

Garan : The smallest of Polo's two moons.

Gharin : Large fish, found mainly in polar waters, feed exclusively on Mureel.

Ghroo : Large, tree like shrub, grows thick and tall.

Ghuna Fungus : Fungal growth that appears near sources of rotting vegetation or animal dens.

Grachon : Reptilian flying creature, found in the central regions, can hunt at night.

Grell : Small fish found all over Polo.

Hunsar : Wraith Raider community on Krawin, in the Southern hemisphere.

Hurn : Solar system in the Cha'lan Sector, containing the planet Polo as one of it's twelve.

Hurr : Largest of the central continents.

Ice Coral : Name given to coral like structure found in the central regions, grows and looks like sea coral, usually pale blue or white, may grow low to ground or in spectacular 'towers'.

Icher : Fifth planet of the Hurn system, has one of it's faces permanantly shadowed by Polo.

Jarlec : Wraith Raider community on the continent of Krawin in the Southern hemisphere.

Jeera : Wraith Raider Operative with Young Blood squad.

Jharan : Wraith Raider Operative with Blue Oyster squad, Mort 900 SD.

Kap Grass : Sparse brown grass that is found all over Polo.

Katern : Tall shrubs which produce blood red berries.

Kiana : Wraith Raider cub, Polo 900 SD.

Klaron : Fish found throughout the seas of Polo, related to the Gharin.

Kranhuk : Small mammal, burrow dweller, renowned for the depth of it's burrows.

Kranin Mountains : Mountain range in the central region of Hurr.

Krawin : One of the larger centra continents, has a space shuttle port.

Kul : Eleventh planet in the Hurn system.

Liaan : Wraith Raider Operative with Blood and Chocolate squad.

Lliarra : Wraith Raider FreezAware™ field testing Operative.

Lsian : Wraith raider settlement on the borders of the Yuran swamplands.

Mowk : Forest dwelling mammal, akin to a giant pig or moose.

Mureel : Micro organism, base food material in the sea based food chain, similar to plankton and krill.

Murrin : Wraith Raider Operative, Feast of Fear squad.

Myran Wastes : Region of swampland found on Yuran.

Polo : Wraith Raider Homeworld, the largest.

Pran Groar : Large feline predator, roams all over Polo.

Prarun : Jellyfish which comes on to the ice shelf to lay it's eggs and die, very poisonous sting.

Pride Council : The Pgathering of Pride Elders that take decisions for the Pride.

Prides : The most basic form of Wraith Raider community gathering.

Pune : Bottom dwelling fish that spiral to surface to feed.

Pure Science : Corporation which owns the water extraction rights for Polo, wholly owned subsidiary of SLA Industries.

Purine : Large bottom feeding crab, believed to have sub terranean breeding and feeding grounds.

Purn Bear : Huge mammalian bear, lives on ice flows, grows to up to seven metres in height. Feeds on Gharin, Walrus and Seal, found in polar regions.

Rahjel : Wraith Raider community found on the slopes of the Kranin mountains of Hurr.

Rark : Cliff dwelling sea bird, very small, feeds on fish and Fritchin.

Reice : Wraith Raider Third Eye technician.

Rhean : Wraith Raider Operative with White Fire squad, Mort 900 SD.

Rhion : Wraith Raider Operative, Mort 900 SD.

Rhol : Small snake, dwells in grasslands and flats of yuran.

Ricer : Wraith Raider Homeworld, next largest after Polo.

Rief : Micro organism that make up the basis for ice Coral.

Rram Beetle : Underground dwelling insect, pincers and tough shell, can be cooked and eaten.

Rwor : Lizard of the Yuran grasslands, largest land dwelling reptile of Polo.

Schew Worm : Small worm that places it's laval young in the branches of the Frewen. The lava crystalise and are known as Schew Crystal, or Frewen jewels.

Skata : vegetable found deep underground, has distinctive, javelin shaped leaves.

Sliaan : Amphibian humanoid creature, found all over Polo.

Slichion : Known as the ice Lizard, varies in size from ten centimetres to four metres in length.

Snow Hares : Found in the central regions and the polar regions, greatest in number near the central swamplands.

Ssran Rar : Wraith Raider skill, alter metabolism.

Storm Whales : Huge whales that roam the central oceans.

Thail : moss plant, tangled twigs and spiked leaves, roots may be chewedd.

Thailer : Wraith Raider Operative, Contract Killer, Mort 899 SD.

The Chase : The name for the Wraith Raider mating ritual.

Urin Moss : Moss found mainly near coastal regions, grows low and thick, home to the Fritch in Fly.

White Fox : Small, feline creature, hunts the Snow Hare, found all over Polo.

WhiteFire : Corporation which has the export rights for ice Coral on the whole of Polo, company co-owned by the Wraith Raider ruling Pride Council of Polo.

Whyum : Mammal, lives in grasslands of Yuran, underground for most of the year.

Yullion Chain : Island chain south of Krawin in the Southern hemisphere.

Yulon : The largest of Polo's two moons.

Yuran : The second largest of the three largest central continents.

Zuuch : Shuttle port on the central continent of Krawin.