

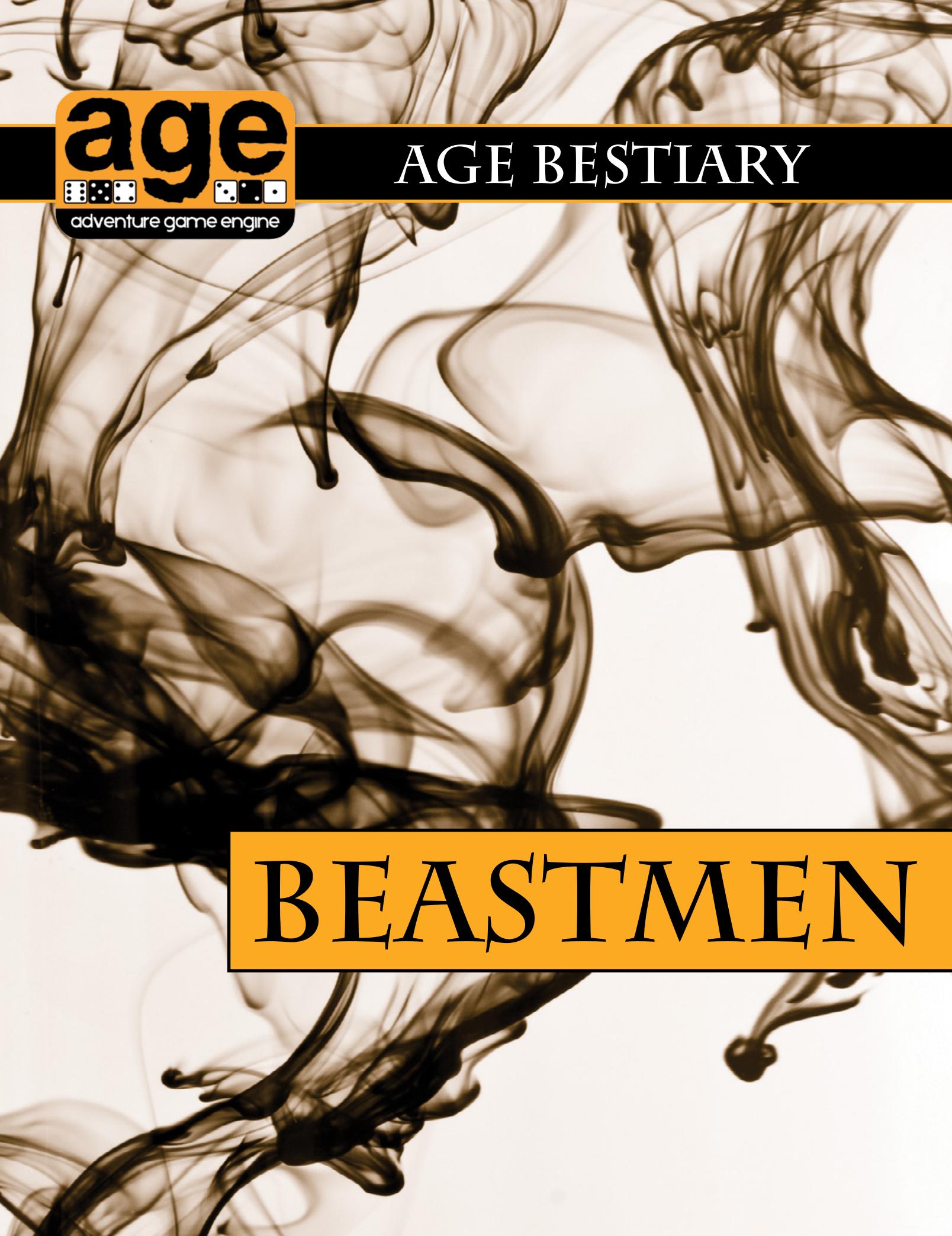


age



adventure game engine

AGE BESTIARY



BEASTMEN

AGE BESTIARY: BEASTMEN

Strange mixtures of animal and beast, the idea of the bestial humanoid who combines human cunning and animal ferocity can be found in numerous cultures and entertainment media. From heroic half-animal men to hungry tribes of man killing beasts, they can be a serious threat or unusual ally to many adventurers.

MYTH & FOLKLORE

Beastmen have origins in myth often tied to the gods and other powerful entities in a setting. In Greek myth, the man-bull Minotaur was the spawn of woman and god whereas Centaurs such as Chiron taught heroes and demigods

much of what they knew. Jaguar men were seen as both divine and terrifying to Mesoamerican cultures, featuring in much of their art and folklore. These creatures represented a mix of the civilized world of man and the wild uncontrolled aspects of nature. In fairy tales, curses are a popular way to create this sort of monster, usually when some hapless human does something to anger a witch or some magical being and is cursed with a half-animal shape in revenge. In some ways, lycanthropes such as werewolves fill much the same roll, though they're a subject for a different product.

In most cases, Beastmen of myth need to be contained or avoided lest they ravage humanity. Even in the case of sympathetic or helpful versions of this monster, it is rare that they live among humans as the differences between man and beast that drive these stories create too much peril for peaceful coexistence.

BEASTMEN IN POP CULTURE

While beastmen might have come from myth and folklore, they've really flourished in entertainment media. Often they are spawn of some unholy experiment where a crazed scientist creates beings too savage to fit in with civilized humans and too distracted by human emotions to truly be animals. The end result is often catastrophic. H.G. Wells' classic, *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, is one of the most famous examples. However, everything from kids' cartoons to B-movie sci-fi fare explores the idea of what happens when you take man and animal and thrust them together in twisted and unnatural ways. Beastmen are a staple of pulp-era action and horror, from various unnatural foes fought by heroes such as

"Not to go on all-fours; that is the Law. Are we not Men?"

"Not to suck up drink; that is the Law. Are we not Men?"

"Not to eat fish or flesh; that is the Law. Are we not Men?"

"Not to claw the bark of trees; that is the Law. Are we not Men?"

"Not to chase other Men; that is the Law. Are we not Men?"

—The Ape-Man, *The Island of Dr. Moreau* by H.G. Wells

"Laws were made to be broken."

—Anonymous

Robert Howard's Conan and Solomon Kane to the twisted Old One worshiping Deep Ones of H.P. Lovecraft. Lizard and snakemen are a staple of many fantasy settings, usually as violent tribalistic monsters though occasionally as an ancient race who ruled the time before humanity.

Beastmen aren't always terrible monsters, and sometimes they are represented as a race themselves. For example *World of Warcraft*, easily one of the most popular video games in the world, takes the classic tale of the Minotaur and used it to create a whole race of tribalistic plains dwelling bull-men. TV shows like the original *Beauty and the Beast* explore the nobility and danger people ascribe to big cats through its lion-faced protagonist, Vincent. Mutated turtlemen have

become heroes in children's cartoons and comics. These versions downplay the ferocity and "otherness" many people feel towards nature in favor of capitalizing on the wonder and fascination present in the animal kingdom and perhaps even hitting on the human tendency to seek totems and analogies for humanity in animals. Thus a stubborn but stalwart hero becomes a bull-man, or an unlikely but clever and spunky adventurer is represented as a talking raccoon.

BEASTMEN IN PLAY

GMs using beastmen in should consider what they want these creatures to represent. Are they twisted perversions of pseudo-science and sorcery or a known race of mostly isolationist hunter-gatherers? Different beastmen might play different roles in a game; sharkmen might be terrifying sea raiders who devour their victims while dog-men are generally seen as allied and companions to humanity. Playing up instinctive reactions people have to certain animals can be helpful, though it might be fun to mix things up and include pleasant peaceful shark-men and angry, militaristic rabbit-men.

Rarity is important to such monsters in a game. One lizardman is a curiosity created by magic or the gods to fill a particular role but a race of lizardmen creates a new society. In general, the rarer this type of monster the more powerful it is, which also changes how it's viewed.

History plays a big part in using such monsters as well. An ancient race of beastmen can be a core part of the setting's history, while a twisted experiment created last week by an evil wizard is more about what's going on the game right now. Both have their upsides. Longstanding races or even individual beastmen can give



rise to exciting legends and adventures involving their culture, ideology, and past actions. However, a rampaging pack of newly-minted monsters can really shake things up and let the PCs know there's something weird and important afoot.

BEASTMEN THEMES

As touched on earlier, beastmen are about mixing animal realities and impressions with humanity. This can be very specific and fact-based, such as beastmen who mimic animal hunting patterns and behaviors but use tools and are highly organized. It can also be very general, with these monsters behaving much like people until they erupt with feral rage when upset.

Beastmen also are often cautionary tales. They're what happens when you use magic or science "man is not meant to meddle with" or what someone gets turned into when they anger the gods. Even heroic beastmen usually have some element of tragedy to their characters, either living as outcasts or hunted by humanity and blamed for every evil act that happens in their presence.

DIFFERENT BREEDS

The following are a collection of just a few of the many types of beastmen that might show up in a game. They can be augmented as necessary with templates and by applying modifiers such as epic or heroic to create even greater menaces. They are organized into general categories involving overall animal types, with a few special cases such as centaurs and minotaurs receiving their own entries.

BEASTMAN, CUTE FURRY

This entry represents a variety of small, cute, and generally friendly creatures. From rabbit men to raccoon men they aren't too dangerous generally, though they can harass foes with stealth, traps, and trickery. These creatures are rarely encountered as individuals, instead being part of a race of adorable and often generally harmless beings.

BEASTMAN, DANGEROUS

This is a catch-all category for beastmen who are men mixed with animals that are generally formidable, dangerous, or impressive. Ape, feline, and canine versions are common but many animals could be represented by these statistics, perhaps with some minor tweaks. These creatures often forgo using weapons, instead content to use their claws and teeth to attack.

CENTAUR

Half-man, half-horse, Centaurs are generally passionate and sensible creatures who stay away from cities and large settlements. Their human torsos can easily use weapons and tools. In fact, some Centaurs are renowned for their craftsmanship and prowess with various weapons. If found in large groups, they tend to organize

BEASTMAN, CUTE FURRY

THE SMALL AND ADORABLE CREATURES PREFER TO TRUST IN GUILE OVER BRAWN.

ABILITIES (FOCUSES)		
1	COMMUNICATION (PERSUASION)	
1	CONSTITUTION	
1	CUNNING	
4	DEXTERITY (BRAWLING, BOWS, LIGHT BLADES, THROWING)	
0	MAGIC	
2	PERCEPTION (HEARING, SMELLING)	
0	STRENGTH (CLIMBING)	
1	WILLPOWER	
COMBAT RATINGS		
14 SPEED	20 HEALTH	
16 DEFENSE	0 ARMOR RATING	
ATTACKS		
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
DAGGER	+6	1d6+1
SHORT BOW	+6	1d6+1
UNARMED	+6	1d3
POWERS		
FAVORED STUNTS: Lightning Strike, Skirmish, Taunt (1 SP)		
WEAPON GROUPS: Bows, Brawling, Light Blades		
EQUIPMENT		
Dagger and Short Bow		



BEASTMAN, DANGEROUS

LARGE HYBRIDS OF MAN AND BEAST, THESE CREATURES EMBODY FERAL MIGHT AND ANIMAL FURY.

ABILITIES (FOCUSES)	
0	COMMUNICATION
3	CONSTITUTION (STAMINA)
1	CUNNING
3	DEXTERITY (BRAWLING)
0	MAGIC
3	PERCEPTION (TRACKING)
4	STRENGTH (CLIMBING, INTIMIDATION, MIGHT)
2	WILLPOWER (COURAGE)
COMBAT RATINGS	
15 SPEED	35 HEALTH
13 DEFENSE	1 ARMOR RATING

ATTACKS		
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
TEETH & CLAWS	+5	1d6+7
POWERS		
FAVORED STUNTS: Dual Strike, Knock Prone (1 SP), Mighty Blow, Threaten		
TALENTS: Unarmed Combat (Journeymen)		
WEAPON GROUPS: Bludgeons, Brawling, Heavy Blades		
EQUIPMENT		
None usually, more civilized or organized versions might use standard weapons and armor		

CENTAUR

HALF-MAN, HALF-HORSE, THIS PROUD SPECIES ARE OFTEN THE COMPANIONS AND TRAINERS OF HEROES.

ABILITIES (FOCUSES)	
0	COMMUNICATION
3	CONSTITUTION (RUNNING, STAMINA)
1	CUNNING
2	DEXTERITY (BRAWLING, BOWS)
0	MAGIC
1	PERCEPTION (SMELLING)
2	STRENGTH (JUMPING, MIGHT, SPEARS)
2	WILLPOWER
COMBAT RATINGS	
17 SPEED	25 HEALTH
12 DEFENSE	4 ARMOR RATING (LIGHT LEATHER & NATURAL)

ATTACKS		
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
SHORT BOW	+4	1d6+3
SPEAR	+4	1d6+5
UNARMED	+4	1d3+2
POWERS		
FAVORED STUNTS: Knock Prone, Skirmish, Seize the Initiative		
NATURAL ARMOR: Add 1 to Armor Rating to reflect tough hide and general durability.		
RUN WILD: When using Skirmish to move around in open ground, double the movement gained with each SP spent.		
WEAPON GROUPS: Brawling, Bows, Bludgeons, Heavy Blades, Spears		
EQUIPMENT		
Light Leather, Short Bow, and Spear		

REPTILE MAN

HUMANOID DESCENDANTS OF THE GREAT REPTILES OF OLD, THESE BEINGS MAKE THEIR HOMES DEEP IN THE WILD.

ABILITIES (FOCUSES)	
-1	COMMUNICATION
3	CONSTITUTION (STAMINA)
0	CUNNING
1	DEXTERITY (BRAWLING, THROWING)
0	MAGIC
1	PERCEPTION (SMELLING, TRACKING)
4	STRENGTH (AXES, INTIMIDATION, MIGHT, SPEARS)
2	WILLPOWER (COURAGE)
COMBAT RATINGS	
11 SPEED	35 HEALTH
11 DEFENSE	5 ARMOR RATING (LIGHT LEATHER & NATURAL)

ATTACKS		
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
BATTLE AXE	+6	2d6+4
SPEAR	+6	1d6+7
UNARMED	+3	1d3+4
POWERS		
FAVORED STUNTS: Knock Prone, Mighty Blow, Threaten		
NATURAL ARMOR: Add 2 to Armor Rating to reflect tough hide and general durability.		
WEAPON GROUPS: Axes, Bludgeons, Brawling, Heavy Blades, Spears		
EQUIPMENT		
Crude stone-headed battle axe and spear, Crude Light Leather		

FISH MAN

AMPHIBIOUS HUMANOIDS FROM STRANGE CIVILIZATIONS BENEATH THE WAVES.

ABILITIES (FOCUSES)	
0	COMMUNICATION
4	CONSTITUTION (STAMINA, SWIMMING)
0	CUNNING
2	DEXTERITY (BRAWLING, LIGHT BLADES)
1	MAGIC
0	PERCEPTION (SMELLING)
3	STRENGTH (INTIMIDATION, MIGHT, SPEARS)
1	WILLPOWER (COURAGE)

COMBAT RATINGS	
12 (17) SPEED (SWIMMING)	30 HEALTH
12 DEFENSE	4 ARMOR RATING (HEAVY LEATHER & NATURAL)

ATTACKS		
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
DAGGER	+4	1D6+4
SPEAR	+5	1D6+6
UNARMED	+4	1D3+3

POWERS		
FAVORED STUNTS: Mighty Blow, Skirmish, Threaten		
AQUATIC: Speed is 17 while swimming. Can breathe and operate underwater indefinitely without penalty.		
NATURAL ARMOR: Add 1 to Armor Rating to reflect tough hide and general durability.		
WEAPON GROUPS: Axes, Bludgeons, Brawling, Heavy Blades, Light Blades, Spears		

EQUIPMENT		
Crude dagger and spear, Heavy Leather (actually crafted from coral, shells, and marine animal hides, no Armor Penalty)		

much in the way wild horses do, with one stallion ruling over a herd or lesser males and females. In battle, they favor hit and run tactics and using their superior movement to their advantage.

FISH MAN

Cold-blooded and alien, Fish-Men live deep in the ocean and only come to land to hunt or at the behest of whatever god or ruler commands them. Rarely friendly to warm-blooded creatures such as humans, they are often the bane of coastal towns and settlements. In the rare case where these creatures are peaceful, they can become allies and guardians of the same seafarers their more violent brethren menace.

REPTILE MAN

Usually an ancient race, reptile men may be associated with dragons or other non-humanoid great lizards of a setting.

MINOTAUR

THIS FIERCE HALF-MAN HALF-BULL CREATURE IS DANGEROUS, VOLATILE, AND BRUTALLY VIOLENT.

ABILITIES (FOCUSES)	
-1	COMMUNICATION
5	CONSTITUTION (STAMINA)
1	CUNNING
2	DEXTERITY (BRAWLING, THROWING)
1	MAGIC
1	PERCEPTION (SMELLING)
5	STRENGTH (AXES, BLUDGEONS, INTIMIDATION, MIGHT)
3	WILLPOWER

COMBAT RATINGS	
11 SPEED	50 HEALTH
11 DEFENSE	6 ARMOR RATING (LIGHT MAIL & NATURAL)

ATTACKS		
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
Two-Handed Axe	+7	3D6+4
Two-Handed Maul	+7	2D6+7
UNARMED	+3	1D3+4

POWERS		
FAVORED STUNTS: Knock Prone, Mighty Blow (1 SP), Speedy Search, The Object of Your Attention		

CHARGE: May use their horns for a charging attack that does 1d6+8 Damage and allows them to move up to 4 yards to attack for 4 SPs. This is considered a Brawling attack and can be performed in addition to a normal attack but rolling doubles doesn't grant additional stunt points.

NATURAL ARMOR: Add 1 to Armor Rating to reflect tough hide and general durability.

WEAPON GROUPS: Axes, Bludgeons, Brawling, Heavy Blades, Spears

EQUIPMENT		
Two Handed Axe or Two Handed Maul (sometimes used one-handed), Light Mail		

If found in groups, they tend to organize in tribes in warm climates, though some could still dwell in ancient ruins and lost cities in the hidden corners of a world. Here we assume a stone-age style tribal society, but adding more advanced weapons and armor or magic can easily transform them into more civilized reptile men.

MINOTAUR

One of the most famous beastmen, the classic minotaur was a unique half-god monster. However, recent versions of this creature involve whole races of these creatures, often portrayed less as savage man-eaters and more as proud but temperamental warriors. Either way, the statistics here represent the bullish might of the minotaur.



CUSTOMIZATION

In addition to the statistics for various beastmen, these characters can be customized to create different types. The simplest method is to add Epic, Heroic, or Elite modifications to create powerful individual beastmen or champions of their race. This also might be applied to a whole sub-type of beastman that are just tougher and more dangerous than their less powerful kin. For example, applying Elite to the Fish Man statistics and adding the Unarmed Combat Talent creates a race of deadly shark-men whose champions and chiefs would be even more dangerous.

Add some talents or powers from character classes is another way to customize these monsters. As they have intelligence on par with humans and most other fantasy races, some beastmen could easily learn the ways of the warrior, the tricks of the rogue, or even magic. In the case of magic, this is usually some sort of shamanistic tradition focusing on tribal rituals and channeling the power of nature. Such individuals also might have the power to turn into large dangerous versions of the animal whose traits they share.

EXTRAS

The following section includes backgrounds for playing beastman PCs and a specialization for such characters.

ACCURSED TO WEAR A BEAST'S SKIN

While beastmen might be a race of their own, some individuals find themselves in this form because of a curse or mystic transformation. These individuals are outcasts and often hunted by the fearful and superstitious. Such accursed characters might not even look like a particular type of animal, but instead are generally animalistic or display a collection of disturbing traits from various animals.

CURSED BEASTMAN

Through misfortune or as punishment for their own wicked behavior, cursed beastmen are now trapped in a bestial humanoid form. This form grants them physical power, but brings social ostracism at worst and a life spent hunted like a dangerous animal at worst. Unless the curse can somehow be lifted, the character will live and eventually die as a freakish reminder of the powerful magic that robbed him of his past life.

PLAYING A CURSED BEASTMAN

If you choose to play a Cursed Beastman, take the following:

- Add 1 to Strength and 1 to Constitution but reduce Communication by 1. Add 1 to your armor rating due to your naturally tough hide. Cursed beastmen are powerful brutes, but their curse drives others to hate and fear them. Base Speed is 12.
- Pick one of the following ability focuses: **Constitution (Stamina)** or **Strength (Might)**.
- You can speak and read the languages of the people and culture you belonged to before you were cursed.
- Choose a class, usually rogue or warrior. Cursed beastmen aren't mages or most would have cured themselves long ago.
- Roll twice on the **Cursed Beastman** table for additional benefits. Roll 2d6 and add the dice together. If you get the same result twice, re-roll until you get something different.
- Roll once on the **Side Effects** table for an additional penalty. This reflects how the curse affects you beyond your unnatural appearance.
- Pick something that will lift this curse. This should be something hard to accomplish given the character's bestial appearance: becoming king of your old homeland, receiving the blessing of an important religious figure on a specific holy day, having a loved one willingly sacrificing themselves for you, and of course the ever-popular true love's kiss.

CURSED BEASTMAN

2D6 ROLL	BENEFIT
2	+1 Constitution
3-4	Base Brawling damage as if it was 1d6 instead of 1d3. If you have the Unarmed Combat Talent, this becomes 1d6+3.
5	Focus: Strength (Intimidation)
6	Focus: Dexterity (Brawling)
7-8	+1 Strength
9	Add an additional rank to your natural Armor Rating.
10	Increase Base Speed by 2.
11	Focus: Strength (Climbing)
12	+1 Perception

SIDE EFFECTS

2D6 ROLL	PENALTY
2	-1 Cunning
3-4	-1 Communication
5-6	Pick a substance like silver, oak, or cold iron. Attacks with weapons of this material do 1d6 damage.
7-8	-1 Magic
9	-2 penalty to any Dexterity rolls requiring fine manipulation or manual coordination unless you have specially made tools or equipment (typically costs at least double the normal cost and finding a willing craftsman might be difficult)
10-11	You must spend 1 extra SP to use the following Roleplaying stunts: Bon Mot, Sway the Crowd, Jest, or Flirt.
12	You revert to your normal form on some special occasion (full moon, holy day, or the like) and lose all your normal bonuses for this background. However, when you turn back you lose control due to the pain and grief of the curse returning and fly into a berserker rage. This lasts for 2d6 hours and you will not remember what you did except in small flashes, but those you hurt during this period are sure to remember.

TRIBAL BEASTMAN

Hailing from a tribe of their own kind, tribal beastmen have all the tools to fit into most groups though how other races view them varies wildly from setting to setting. Some might be welcome companions while others are hated and feared. This background can be used to represent either, though GMs and other PCs should note how such characters are generally regarded for purposes of roleplaying.

PLAYING A TRIBAL BEASTMAN

If you choose to play a Tribal Beastman, first pick one of the following bonus packages:

BEASTMEN



BEASTMAN, CUTE AND FURRY

Add 1 to Dexterity and Increase Defense by 2. Reduce Strength by 1. Base Speed is 10. You may take Communication (Persuasion) as an ability focus instead of the ones listed later. Add 1 to the Str minimum of any weapons you try to use.

BEASTMAN, DANGEROUS

Add 1 to Strength and Constitution, Reduce Communication by 1, Brawling damage is 1d6 instead of 1d3. If you possess the Unarmed Combat talent, increase this damage to 1d6+3. Base Speed is 12.

CENTAUR

Add 1 to Constitution. Base Speed is 15 and use of the Skirmish stunt gives 4 yards of movement instead of 2 as long as you have room to maneuver.

FISH MAN

Add 1 to Constitution. Base Speed is 10 on land and 15 while swimming. You can breathe water as well as air and suffer no penalties to ability use for being underwater. Add Constitution (Swimming) as a focus.

MINOTAUR

Add 1 to Strength and Constitution. Reduce Communication by 1. Base Speed is 10. May use your horns for a Charge Attack

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doing 1d6+3 Damage and allowing you to move up to 4 yards attacking for 4 SPs. This is considered a Brawling attack and can be performed in addition to a normal attack but rolling doubles doesn't grant additional stunt points.

REPTILE MAN

Add 1 to Strength and Stamina, reduce Communication by 1. Increase armor rating by 1 due to your scaly tough hide. Base Speed is 10.



Then add the following.

- Pick one of the following ability focuses: **Constitution (Stamina)** or **Dexterity (Brawling)** or **Perception (Hearing, Seeing, or Smelling)**.
- You can speak and read the languages of your people and one other common language.
- Choose a class, usually rogue or warrior, though a shaman of a beastman tribe might be a Mage if the race can use magic.
- Add 1 to your armor rating due to your tough hide and general durability. Cute and Furry beastmen don't get this bonus but instead can use the Taunt stunt for 1 SP instead of the normal cost of 2.
- Roll twice on the **Tribal Beastman** table for additional benefits. Roll 2d6 and add the dice together. If you get the same result twice, re-roll until you get something different.

TRIBAL BEASTMAN	
2D6 ROLL	BENEFIT
2	+1 Constitution
3-4	Focus: Strength (Climbing)
5	Focus: Perception (Tracking)
6	Focus: Strength (Might)
7-8	+1 Perception
9	Focus: Strength (Jumping)
10-11	Focus: Dexterity (Stealth)
12	+1 Strength

