

Sophonts

The **Traveller** universe is filled with non-human sophonts. Many of these can be created using the **Traveller** Sophont Creation System. The result is a completed Sophont Creation Card: by which a player can generate sophont characters (both player-characters and non-player characters).

Sophont Creation is based on two far-reaching assumptions:

Intelligent Non-Humans. This system generates sophonts: intelligent races who exist in roughly the same planetary environments as humans. They breathe atmospheric gases (or water) normally found on human-inhabited worlds and they can live in roughly the same environments.

In Interstellar Society. Sophonts created by this system live within the greater social and economic structure of interstellar society; they compete with everyone else (including humans) for jobs and positions in that society. Members of the created race can pursue careers in the same way that any human character does. Members of the race can be player characters.

THE PURPOSE OF THE SOPHONT CREATION SYSTEM

The purpose of the **Traveller** sophont creation system is to provide a variety of non-human characters to populate the **Traveller** universe. Explorers visiting a world find it populated with non-humans unlike those on neighboring worlds; merchants trading with a world encounter unique non-humans to deal with; passengers on a starship find a variety of strange and fascinating fellow passengers.

Each use of the **Traveller Sophont Creation System** creates a unique intelligent race for **Traveller**. The results are recorded on a **Sophont Creation Card** (this process does not create a character: it records the information needed to later create one or more characters for this specific race).

The **Traveller Sophont Creation System** is expressed as a dice-driven random process, but it can also be used as a deliberate system, with the user selecting elements from each procedure to achieve specific results.

All of the details of Sophont Creation are allowed the creation of characters which use the same rules as apply to humans (more or less) in **Traveller**.

Other Information. This **Traveller Sophont Creation Process** necessarily refers to other information, rules and charts from **Traveller**. Worlds are more fully created and defined elsewhere. Character generation is more fully detailed elsewhere. While this process strives to be complete, this chapter cannot contain all relevant information, and other chapters may need to be consulted.

WHAT SCS DOES NOT DO

The **Traveller Sophont Creation System** cannot create all possible sophonts or address all possible situations. Clearly, a referee can imagine and implement an alien lifeform which falls outside the range of sophonts created here.

The **TSCS** does not create non-physical bodies, fantasy creatures, or beings well outside the environment tolerable to humans, and this list is not exhaustive.



THE WISE MAN'S GUIDE TO SOPHONTS ISS, Encyclopediapolis, 1107

The preferred guide to the intelligent species of the Imperium is published by the Imperial Interstellar Scout Service as a continually updated database with a hardcopy option. The text includes sophisticated search options and is routinely consulted by naval and civilian crew before contact with an unfamiliar race.

The following are standard concepts for the Imperial Interstellar Scout Service and its classification of sophonts.

Sentient. Endowed with feeling and unstructured consciousness; generally aware and capable of action and reaction, but guided more by instinct and desire than by structured thought or planning. Able to adapt effectively to the environment, either by making a change in oneself or by changing the environment or finding a new one. Sentience is often called animal intelligence. A tiger, a goat, and a gazelle are all sentient. From the Latin for *feeling*.

Sapient. Possessing intelligence: the mental ability to reason, think abstractly, comprehend ideas, and learn. Generally capable of being educated and achieving insights. Sapient and sophont are synonyms, but sapient generally has a lower threshold. The traditional usage: sapients are (still) bound to their original homeworld. Sapients are intelligent. From the Latin for *wise*.

Sophont. Possessing intelligence: the mental ability to reason, think abstractly, comprehend ideas, and learn. Generally capable of being educated and achieving insights. Sapient and sophont are synonyms, but sophont generally covers a broader range. The traditional usage: sophonts have traveled to the stars and have presences on other worlds. Sophonts are intelligent. From the Greek for *wise*.

TERMINOLOGY

The following terms are used.

Species is a biological classification of beings which share the same genetic and biological structures. Dog (*Canis lupis*) is a species. Humanity (*homo sapiens*) is a species.

Race is a sometimes used term for an intelligent species. Humanity is a race. Aslan is a race. Less frequently, race refers to subdivisions within an intelligent species (for non-intelligent species, the equivalent is breed or subspecies (poodle and spaniel are breeds or subspecies within the dog species)).

Alien (from the human point of view) is any **non-human** intelligent species. However, because non-humans consider humans aliens, a less point-of-view term is required: we use the term **sophont**.

Sophont is any intelligent species. If the species has never ventured beyond its homeworld, the alternative Sentient is often used.

The Major Races

Interstellar society applies the term Major Race to sophont civilizations which have independently invented/ developed/ discovered jump drive. Because such civilizations also become prominent over large regions, Major Race also refers to the relative power or importance of the species.

The Minor Races. By default, any sophont civilization which is not Major is Minor. Minor races most likely do not venture far from their homeworld; they are typically encountered on their homeworlds, a few neighbor worlds, and in other systems within 10 parsecs of their homeworld.

HOW DO WE IDENTIFY A SOPHONT?

It's easy to create a name for a race of Sophonts (really no more than random words), but the standard reference to any specific Sophont is the LongName: the racial name of the Sophont accompanied by the homeworld name and its homestar and orbital data.

For example,

The Urdushkha of Irdi (Irluush 5 [F4 V])

The Solomani of Terra (Sol 3 [G2 V])

The Aslan of Kusyu (Tyeyo-3 [G4 V])

Non-Natives. Some worlds have a substantial population of non-native sophonts. Where they live as a group on a world, they are referred to as "from" if they are not on their current homeworld.

For example, there is a substantial Terran settlement on a world orbiting Vega: They are referred to as

The Solomani from Terra (Sol 3 [G2 V])

AN OVERVIEW

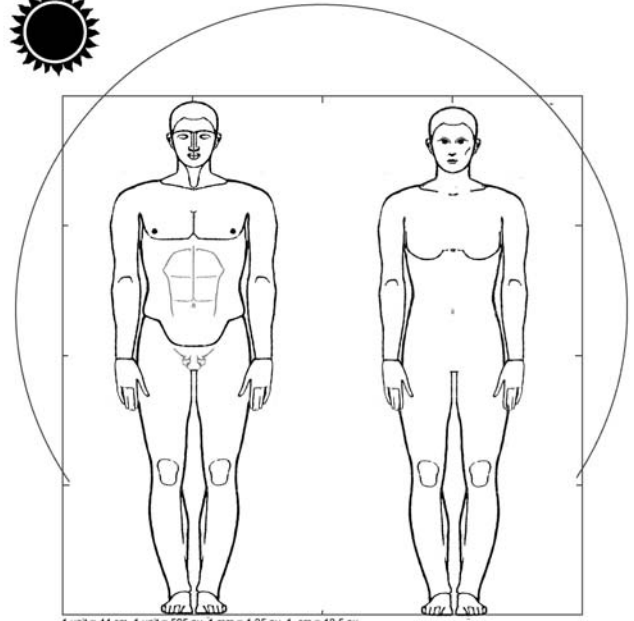
The SCS process proceeds through several pages of charts:

Introduction. This introduction is an overview of the Traveller Sophont Creation Process.

01. The Sophont Creation Checklist recapitulates the steps necessary to create a Sophont race.

02. The Sophont Creation Card records the information needed to generate a **Traveller** character from the created race.

03. The Sophont Creation FillForm is a worksheet for recording and calculating in the details of a Sophont. Ultimately, this information is transferred to the Sophont Creation Card.



The Solomani of Terra (Sol-3 [G2 V])

04. Basics. The process selects or creates a plausible homeworld and determines the environment in which the race evolved.

05. Environment. The process selects the homeworld terrain and environmental conditions in which the sophont evolved.

06. Characteristics. The process determines the six personal characteristics for the race.

07. Caste. If the race has Caste as its social characteristic, then the process determines the details of the racial caste structure. This page is skipped if the race does not have Caste.

08. Gender. The process determines the gender structure of the race.

09. Life Stages and Aging. The process determines the stages of life through which race members pass: from infancy to retirement. This information is used to determine the lifespan and the effects of aging.

10. The Senses. Races may have the same senses as humans, or they may be different. The process determines which senses the race has and how the senses function.

11. Sophont Body Structure. The process determines the basic physical structure (symmetry, number of limb groups, location of the brain case, and location of the senses) of the race. It also determines details of appearance (armor, skin appearance, natural weapons, and body fluids) of the race. These details may or may not be of any use in most play. Many are for background.

12. Special Abilities. Tables determine the presence or absence of special abilities, with availability to the race as a whole, to members of genders, and to members of castes. This page also contains the skill lists for Skill-based Caste.

13. Manipulators. Images illustrate the abilities of the manipulators assigned under Body Structure.

14. Uniques. The process suggests structures for those rare sophonts who have unique or non standard abilities.

15. Size. Formulae calculate the average or expected size for the sophont based on characteristics, and against a standard of Human =100.

16. Example Sophont Description. A sample description for a sophont shows in detail how characters may encounter data entries on a sophont.

17. Example NIL Description. The NIL Native Intelligent life short format for describing sophonts is described.

18. Example Sophonts. A (non-exhaustive) list of sophonts in the Traveller universe is provided.

THE SOPHONT CREATION CARD

Centralized record keeping for Sophont Creation is provided by the Sophont Creation Card. The two-sided card records the details of the Sophont, and serves as the reference tables for creating sophont characters.

The Fillform. The Fillform is a worksheet designed to make Sophont creation a smooth process.

04. HOMEWORLDS

The Homeworlds Page details the creation of the native star system and world for the Sophont.

Pre-Existing Information. If information on the homeworld and homestar is available, it may be used. It should conform in structure to the information generated here.

Plausible Homeworlds. A homeworld is plausible if it has Atmosphere 2 through 9 and a Population of 7+.

Stars

Stars are identified by their Spectral type and Size in the format G2 V, where G is the Spectral Type (taken from OBAFGKM), 2 is the Spectral Decimal (in the sequence 0123456789), and V is the Size (in the sequence Ia-Ib-II-III-IV-V-VI-D).

This creation page ignores multiple stars. If present, they are lesser than the HomeStar and of no real importance in the Sophont Creation process.

Naming and Identifying Stars. A star is typically named and identified. For example,

Sol (G2 V)

Worlds and Orbits

The location of the homeworld in the system is important. Worlds may be planets (orbiting the star) OR satellites (orbiting a planet).

Worlds are identified by their name or by their starname and orbit. Planet orbits are numbered in the sequence 0-1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-11-12.

For example,

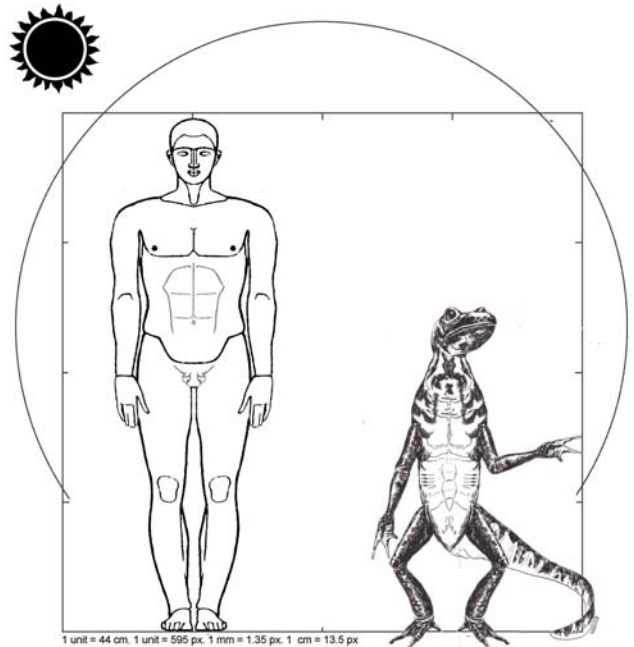
Terra (Sol 3)

Satellites are identified by their name, or by their starname plus the orbit of their planet and the satellite orbit. Satellite orbits are identified by letters in the sequence: Ay-Bee-Cee-Dee-Ee-Eff-Gee-Aitch-Eye-Jay-Kay-Ell-Em-En-Oh-Pee-Que-Arr-Ess-Tee-Yu-Vee-Dub-Ex-Wye-Zee.

For example,

Luna (Sol 3 Em)

The Habitable Zone HZ. The Habitable Zone Orbit Table shows the orbit number for the Habitable Zone, which is the orbital distance at which a typical world experiences temperatures and climate hospitable to humans and similar sophonts.



The Bwaps (Newts) of Maharaban

A world which is in the HZ (noted as HZ=0 or simply HZ) is **Temperate**. It has a range of temperatures, but the world is generally hospitable or habitable.

A world which is one orbit closer to the star (HZ= -1) is **Hot**; circumstances such as albedo and greenhouse effect lessen the heat effects to allow the world to be habitable, although it is at the upper temperature limits of human habitability.

A world which is one orbit farther from the star (HZ= +1) is **Cold**; albedo and greenhouse effects may lessen cold effects to allow the world to be habitable, but it is at the lower temperature limits of human habitability.

A world closer than HZ= -1 is too hot for routine occupation. Such worlds however, in Orbit 0 or 1 have a habitable **Twilight Zone**.

A world farther than HZ= +1 is too cold for routine occupation.

Satellites are classified for habitability based on the orbit their planet or gas giant occupies.

Natives

If a world has Population 7 or higher and Atmosphere 2 through 9, it has a Native population and is suitable for Sophont Creation.

Extinct Natives. If a world has Atmosphere 2 through 9 and Population 0, then a Native Population can be created, but it is Extinct. There may be ruins of the extinct sophonts scattered about the world.

Exotic Natives. If a world has Atmosphere A+ and Population 7+, its Natives are Exotic. They breathe exotic atmospheric gases and require protective suits and breathing gases in human friendly environments.

Special Cases. There is also always the chance that the native population is in decline (less than Pop=7), or undiscovered (probably less than Pop=7) in remote terrain.

Non-Natives

Sophont inhabitants of a world may be non-native, including Transients, Settlers, Colonists, Corporate, and Transplants.

05. NATIVE ENVIRONMENT

The Native Environment page details the evolutionary origins of the Sophonts: the terrain in which they evolved, and the type of locomotion they use, and the ecological niche their forebears occupied.

Native Terrain and Locomotion

The native terrain for the Sophonts provides insights into the origins of the species, and influences the type of locomotion it uses.

Terrain. Eleven general terrain types are specified. If the world has a Twilight Zone, special terrain types are allowed.

Locomotion. The system of movement for the Sophont is detailed, and further influences the physical structure of the Sophont.

Ecological Niche

The ecological niche and subniche shows what position in the food chain the Sophont occupies.

06. CHARACTERISTICS

The Characteristics page details the assignment of the physical, mental, and social characteristics for the Sophont. Separately, the number of dice rolled for each Characteristic is determined.

Humans. Humans have characteristics Strength, Dexterity, Endurance, Intelligence, Education, and Social Standing. 2D is rolled for each characteristic.

Big Sophonts

The extreme upper reaches of the Characteristic Values Table produces Characteristics with values 4D 5D or 6D. Because the lower range of these rolls produces abnormally low values, the first two dice of each roll are automatically 6 each.

For example, for a sophont rolling C1 Str = 4D, the actual roll is 12 + 2D.

07. CASTES

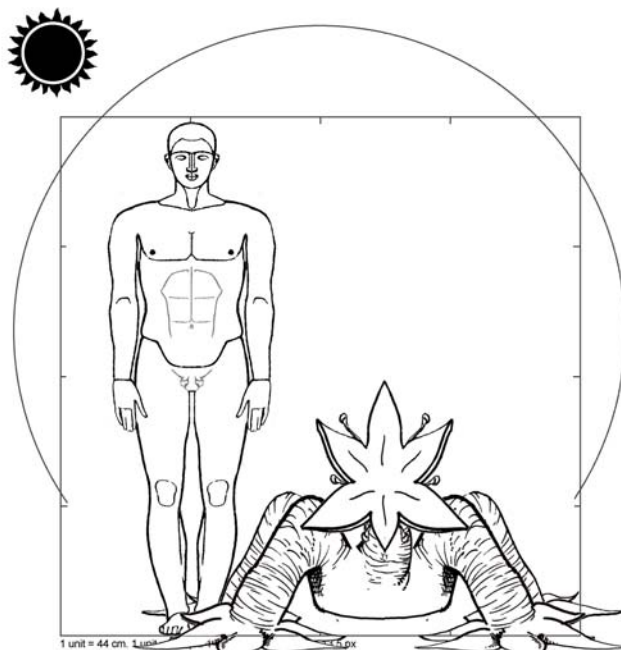
The Castes page details the structure of Castes for the sophont. If Characteristic C6 does not equal Caste, this page is skipped.

The Central Concept. The Caste Creation process creates a Caste Generation Table with entries 02 through 12; when the SCC is used to create individual characters, this table is used when determining individual Caste for a character. For example, in the process of creating four different Sophonts (we'll call them the Ay, Bee, Cee, and Dee), each with Body Caste Structure. For each, the creator rolls Flux for each entry. He will need nine rolls for each Sophont. The (example) rolls are

EXAMPLE ROLLS

	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
Ay	0	0	0	0	0	x	0	0	0	0	x
Bee	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	x	0	+1	+2	+3	x
Cee	+5	+4	+3	+2	+1	x	0	-1	-2	-3	x
Dee	0	+1	-1	+2	-2	x	+3	-3	+4	-4	x

(This is a table of example die rolls to help understand Sophont Caste Creation. Each row is a pregenerated set of Flux rolls used in the example. The first row [Ay] is a constant roll of zero [column 7 does not need a roll]. Row Bee starts at -5 and works its way up; Row Cee works its way down. Row Dee is random.) The rolls create the results below:



The Hivers of Guaran (Primary- 2 [K1 V]) A667800-F

Specimen Caste for the Ay, Bee, Cee, and Dee

F	Entry	Ay	Bee	Cee	Dee
1	K02	Muscle	Healer	Claw	Muscle
2	K03	Muscle	=Gender	=Special	Muscle
3	K04	Muscle	Antibody	Voice	Memory
4	K05	Muscle	Sensor	Muscle	Muscle
5	K06	Muscle	Memory	Muscle	Sensor
6	K07	Muscle*	Muscle*	Muscle*	Muscle*
5	K08	Muscle	Muscle	Muscle	Voice
4	K09	Muscle	Muscle	Memory	Antibody
3	K10	Muscle	Muscle	Sensor	=Special
2	K11	Muscle	Voice	Antibody	=Gender
1	K12	Brain*	Brain*	Brain*	Brain*

F= Frequency: the number of times this entry is expected to occur out of 36 rolls. * Automatic Entry.

These tables are used in Character Generation; a player creating an individual sophont character for the Ay Bee Cee or Dee would use this table to determine the Caste for the character:

Ay caste characters are almost all Muscles. One in 36 is a Brain.

Bee caste characters have a one in 36 chance (entry 02) of being a Healer. They have a dedicated gender member.

Cee caste characters have a one in 36 chance of being a Claw (some sort of warrior) (entry 02). Note that they have Special caste (which is then determined from the Special column).

Dee caste characters have a 12 in 36 (1 in 3) chance of being a Muscle (entries 02, 03, 05, 07). They have both a special and a gender entry.

08. GENDER

The Gender page details the structure of Genders for the sophont. Information about Gender is recorded on the back of the SCC.

The term Gender is used to convey a combination of social, cultural, and reproductive concepts not fully conveyed by the term Sex.

The Central Concept. The Gender Creation process

creates a Gender Generation Table with entries 02 through 12; when the SCC is used to create individual characters, the Gender Generation Table is used when determining individual Gender for a character. For example, in the process of creating four different Sophonts (we'll call them the Ay, Bee, Cee, and Dee), each with Dual Gender Structure. For each, the creator rolls Flux for each entry. He will need nine rolls for each Sophont.

The (example) rolls are

	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
Ay	x	x	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bee	x	x	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Cee	x	x	+5	+4	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3
Dee	x	x	0	+1	-1	+2	-2	+3	-3	+4	-4

Specimen Gender for the Ay, Bee, Cee, and Dee

F Entry	Ay	Bee	Cee	Dee
1 K02	Female*	Female*	Female*	Female*
2 K03	Male*	Male*	Male*	Male*
3 K04	Female	Female	Male	Female
4 K05	Female	Female	Female	Male
5 K06	Female	Female	Male	Male
6 K07	Female	Female	Male	Male
5 K08	Female	Male	Male	Female
4 K09	Female	Female	Female	Male
3 K10	Female	Male	Male	Female
2 K11	Female	Male	Female	Female
1 K12	Female	Male	Female	Female

F= Frequency: the number of times this entry is expected to occur out of 36 rolls. * Automatic Entry.

These tables are used in Character Generation; a player creating an individual sophont character for the Ay Bee Cee or Dee would use this table to determine the Caste for the character:

Ay gender characters are predominately Female (out of 36, 3= Male; 33= Female).

Bee gender characters (out of 36, Male= 13; Female= 23).

Cee gender characters (out of 36, Male = 24; Female= 12).

Dee characters (out of 36, Male = 21; Female = 15).

09. LIFE STAGES

The Life Stages page recounts the various developmental periods in the life of a Sophont. Life Stages are reckoned in Terms.

Humans. Humans begin life with a two year infancy (a half Term) followed by nine Life Stages of two Terms each (=74 years).

Non-Humans. Different sophonts can have Life Stages of different lengths. Each Life Stage (after Infancy) may be as short as zero Terms (effectively skipped) and as long as four Terms.

For example, a very-long-lived (and very rare) Sophont could have all Life Stages four Terms (16 years) long. After its two-year Infancy, nine 16-year Terms gives the Sophont a life expectancy of 146 years or more. On the other hand, a

Why Aren't These Races Called Aliens?

Humans see non-humans as *aliens*; but non-humans see humans as *aliens*. We need a word that conveys the idea of an intelligent species. Aliens doesn't work. Extra-terrestrial (besides being too long) excludes those who live on Terra, and most humans don't live on Terra anyway. Xeno (Greek for stranger) is basically a synonym for alien.

Sophont (originated by Karen Anderson, and appearing first in works by Poul Anderson about 1966) fits the requirements: "an intelligent being more or less equivalent in reasoning power with humans." Accepted usage excludes machines unless they have true artificial intelligence (and not just great processing power).

very-short-lived (and also very rare) Sophont could roll ones on the Life Stage Duration table: for a two-year infancy, a one Term childhood, and a one Term Peak: giving a Life Expectancy of 10 years.

10. THE SENSES

The Senses page determines the possible senses and their parameters for the Sophont. The senses are more specifically detailed in the Sense chapter.

Senses are identified by Strings of applicable digits that control precisely how a sense works.

Vision. The vision string includes a constant that controls Vision Actions and the three specific wavelengths (sometimes called **colors**, and ranging from the ultra-violet to the infra-red) which can be seen.

Hearing. The Hearing String includes a constant that controls Hearing Actions. It also shows the central sound frequency (and what frequencies on either side) that can be heard; and the central sound frequency (and side frequencies) use by the voice.

Smell. The Smell String includes a constant that controls smelling, and evaluates its sharpness. The characteristic scent for the Sophont is also created.

Touch. The Touch String includes a constant that controls the sense of touch, and evaluates its sensitivity.

Awareness. The Awareness String includes a constant that controls Awareness, and evaluates its acuity.

Perception. The Perception String includes a constant that controls Perception, evaluates its acuity, and gives strength to the ability express oneself in Perception Voice.

Language Medium or Type

The Language used by a Sophont is dependent on the senses available. The tables determine the primary Language form for the sophont.

11. BODY STRUCTURE

The Body Structure page determines the essential structure of the sophont, including the location of the brain and senses, the number and types of limbs, and a variety of body features.

12. SPECIAL ABILITIES

The Special abilities page determines special abilities available to the race as a whole, or to members of genders or castes.

13. MANIPULATORS

The manipulators assigned under Body Structure are illustrated.

14. UNIQUES

In order to take into account non-standard or unusual abilities, body structures, or body processes, the Uniques chart shows several possible concepts.

15. SIZE

The Size chart shows formulae for calculating body size (based on Human=100) for the Sophonts.

AN UNCONVENTIONAL OVERVIEW OF HUMANITY

It is possible to describe a Sophont in alternate ways, each of which has its own validity. A conventional, egalitarian view of humanity produces the WGTS entry below.

From Page 6 of
Wiseman's Guide To Sophonts (Solomani Rim edition).

The Solomani of Terra (Sol 3 [G2 V]

HomeWorld Profile: Terra A877B99-D

Terra (Sol 3) is a temperate world orbiting a G2 V primary.

System Details

The Sol system contains 4 worlds (plus various minor planets and satellites), four gas giants, and one planetoid belt.

Body Structure

Solomani are bilateral bipeds (classified HBS-T-AN-LN-N). The Solomani body structure consists of a head with brain and senses and a torso with two limbgroups. Limbgroup one has arms with hands. Limbgroup three has legs. Under the LG4 FN-FN standard classification system, LG2 LG4 are omitted. The Solomani body is characterized by a bony interior skeleton covered by skin. Interior body fluids are blood.

The Solomani are Plains Walkers: generally adapted to and most comfortable in plains terrain. These sophonts originally occupied the Omnivore Hunter/Gatherer ecological niche. Solomani breathe Air-8.

The genetic profile is SDEIES. The Solomani have an average life expectancy of 74 years. On the standard Imperial Size spectrum (where humans are 100), the Solomani are size ranked 100 .

Gender Structure

The Solomani have a Dual (technically FM) gender structure. The reported gender census (IISS Survey Report: 420-892R) is Female: 51, Male: 49. (shown as percentages).

Gender Based Differences. Observed differences between genders roles include: none significant.

Caste Structure

The Solomani have no apparent caste; any differences within the species appear to be cultural in nature.

Sensory Abilities

The Solomani have a range of senses which includes Vision, Hearing, Smell, and Touch.

The sense of vision is generally Standard; Solomani eyes are sensitive to the band: RGB.

The sense of hearing is generally standard.

The sense of smell is generally inferior.

The sense of touch is generally standard.

The Solomani sense of Vision is dominant.

The racial scent is HUM-7FV (based on an IISS survey).

Special Abilities. Talents.

There is no indication of special abilities or talents.

Supporting materials for this entry are on file at Encyclopediopolis on Reference, and at AAB data repositories throughout the Imperium.

From Page 6 of
Sophontology Rethought (Solomani Rim edition).

[Only alternative texts shown.]

Gender Structure

The Solomani have a Group (technically 1234) gender structure. The reported gender census (IISS Survey Report: 420-892R) is One: 46, Two: 44, Three: 5, Four: 5 (shown as percentages).

Gender Based Differences. Observed differences between genders roles include:

The One (corresponds to Female) is the baseline.

The Two (corresponds to Male) is generally slightly stronger; slightly less dexterous; slightly less endurant.

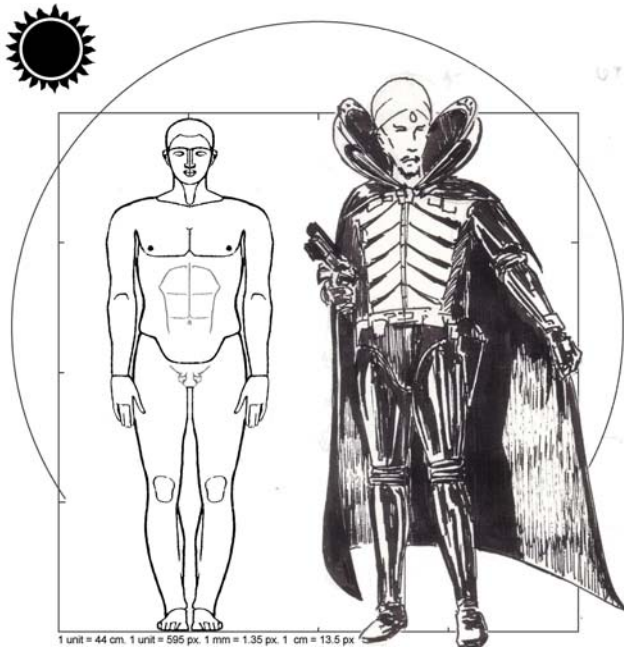
The Three (corresponds to Neuter [non-breeding; Male pattern. Gay] is generally equivalent to Male.

The Four (corresponds to Neuter [non-breeding; Female pattern. Lesb] is generally equivalent to Female.

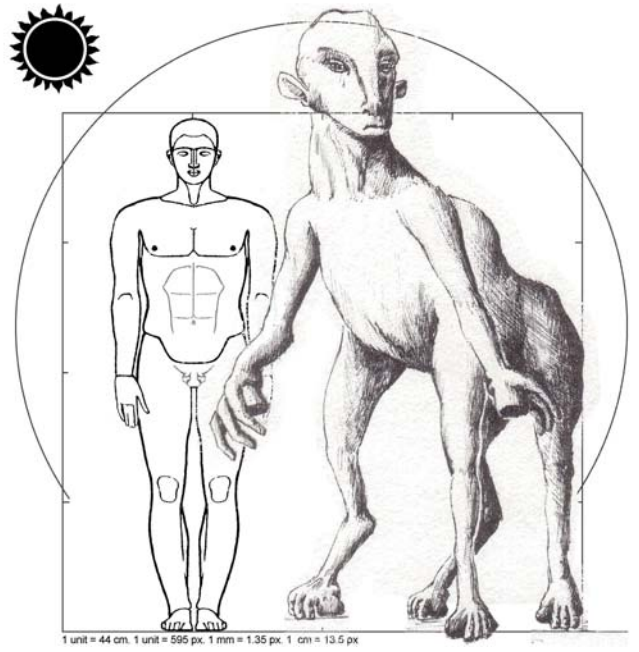
Special Abilities. Talents.

There are reports that individuals are capable of Psionics at low levels (approximately 10% of the population).

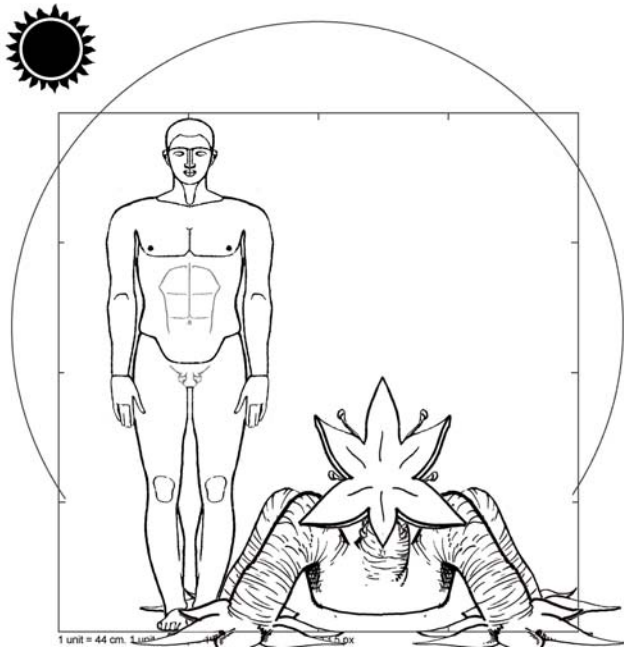
There are reports of individuals capable of Perception.



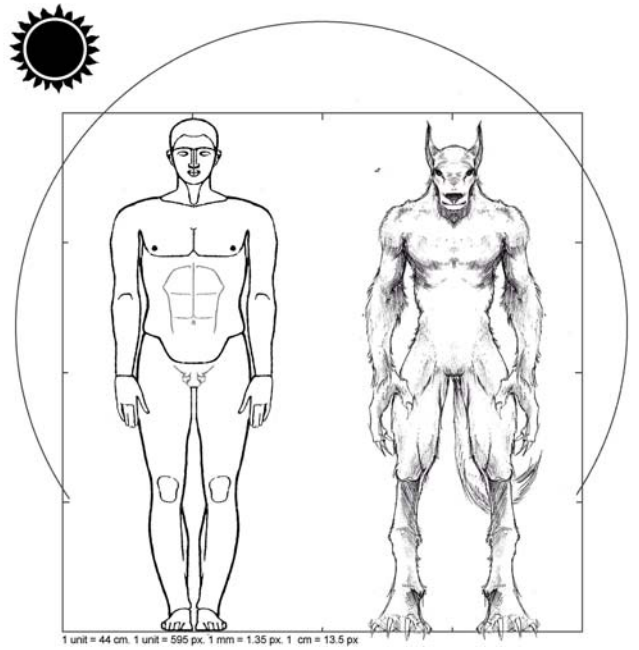
The Zhodani of Zhdant (Pliebr-2 [K0 V] A6549C8-F



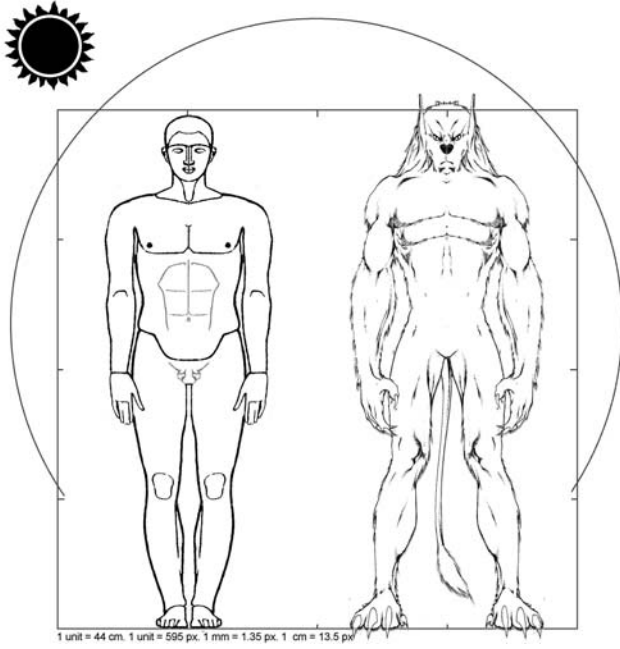
The K'kree of Kirur (Gzang-5 [F1 V]) B863A03-F



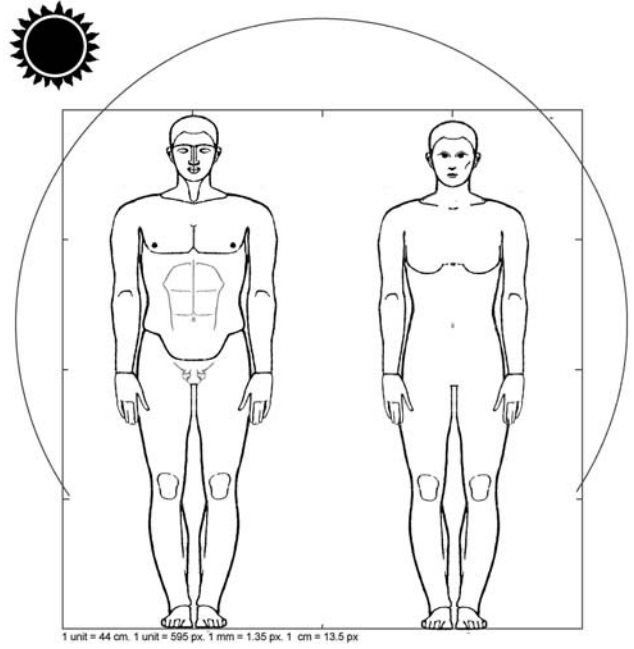
The Hivers of Guaran (Primary- 2 [K1 V]) A667800-F



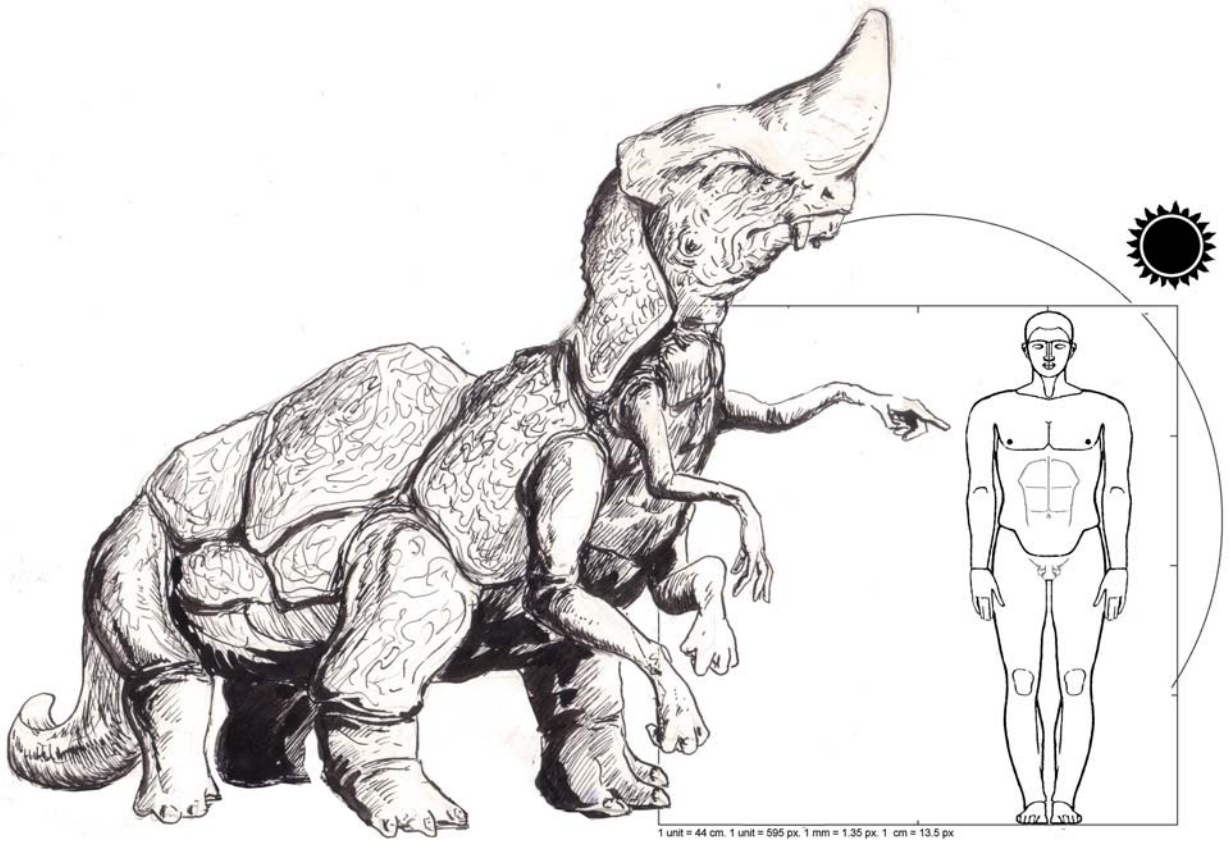
The Vargr of Lair (Kneng-3 [G5 V]) A8859B9-F



The Aslan of Kusyu (Tyeyo-3 [G4 V]) A876986-E



The Humans of Terra (Sol-3 [G2 V])



The Virushi of Virshash (Thintle-0 [M1 D]) DA86954-6