



# FREELANCE TRAVELLER

The Electronic Fan-Supported Traveller® Magazine and Resource

Featured Article

## *Explorations*

Miniatures photography by Mark Poles and  
Victoria Clare

Issue 040  
April 2013

## A Note About Production

*Freelance Traveller* is prepared using Microsoft Office Publisher 2010 running on a Windows 7 Ultimate x64 system. The program is reasonably easy to use, and produces good results with moderate effort; it also supports advanced typographic features such as typographic quotes and apostrophes, small caps, ligatures, swashes, and stylistic alternatives (if the advanced features are implemented in the font). Generation of the PDF files is built in to this version of Microsoft Office; no additional products are needed.

The title and heading typeface is ZapfHumanist BT, a Bitstream adaptation of Hermann Zapf's digital redesign of his 'hot lead' typeface Optima, chosen as a 'tie-back' to the title typeface of the original edition of *Traveller*. The black-and-orange of the section headings is also a tie-back to *Traveller's* origins, though we felt that the 'correct' red was too dark. The heading sizes vary from 12 to 16 points. Body text is set in Palatino Linotype, also designed by Hermann Zapf, and is set at 11 points for most body text, giving approximately the same text spacing as Times New Roman at 12 point (which was the original *Freelance Traveller* body text), but a lighter 'color'. Palatino Linotype also 'balances' better as a body text typeface to Optima as a titling typeface.

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Jeff Zeitlin

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From the Editor: Jeff Zeitlin

Critics' Corner: *Mongoose Publishing, Gypsy Knights Games, Zozer Games* (from their respective websites)

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<http://www.freelancetraveller.com>.

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# From the Editor



*How do we bring new blood to tabletop role-playing—and to Traveller, specifically?* Tabletop role-playing as we know it is coming up on 40 years old—long

enough that those of us who were in college when the original *Dungeons and Dragons* was released in 1974 could be thinking of introducing our grandchildren to the hobby. Those grandchildren, though, are growing up in an era of MMORPGs (most of which are combat-oriented), Twitter, Facebook, and so on—an era where face-to-face social interaction isn't seen as central to one's social life. And tabletop role-playing is very much about face-to-face social interaction—even though we have ways of playing without being face-to-face (play-by-email, play-by-post, using Skype or videocalling services, or IRC), few people will argue that "it's not really the same" isn't a true statement. How does one promote face-to-face interaction in an on-line world?

There's another part to that question, too—most MMORPGs seem to be, as mentioned above, combat-oriented. Tabletop role-playing still supports that, but has also grown beyond it, to all sorts of non-combat campaigns, from trading to diplomacy to exploration to ... all of which *Traveller* supports, and supports well. Part of bringing in the new blood would also include making non-combat campaigns attractive—but how?

There are other relevant questions that can be asked: Are tabletop RPG rules too complex? Should there be more computer aids? Are there other issues?

Consider this "From the Editor" to be something along the lines of the Essay Question feature we used to run. How would you bring new blood to tabletop role-playing and *Traveller*? We'll gladly allocate a few pages of a future issue to share ideas that are sent to us. Send your ideas to [editor@freelancetraveller.com](mailto:editor@freelancetraveller.com) or [questions@freelancetraveller.com](mailto:questions@freelancetraveller.com). ☼



# Mongoose Traveller Supplement 7: 1,001 Characters

reviewed by Jeff Zeitlin

*Mongoose Traveller Supplement 7: 1,001 Characters*. August Hahn  
Mongoose Publishing <http://www.mongoosepublishing.com>  
hardbound, 212pp  
US\$34.99/UK£24.99

## On the Shelf

As a “core” supplement, it sports the usual solid black cover with the *Traveller*-and-arrow logo, in yellow. The unnecessary but reasonable tagline is ‘Populating the Stars’.

## Initial Impressions

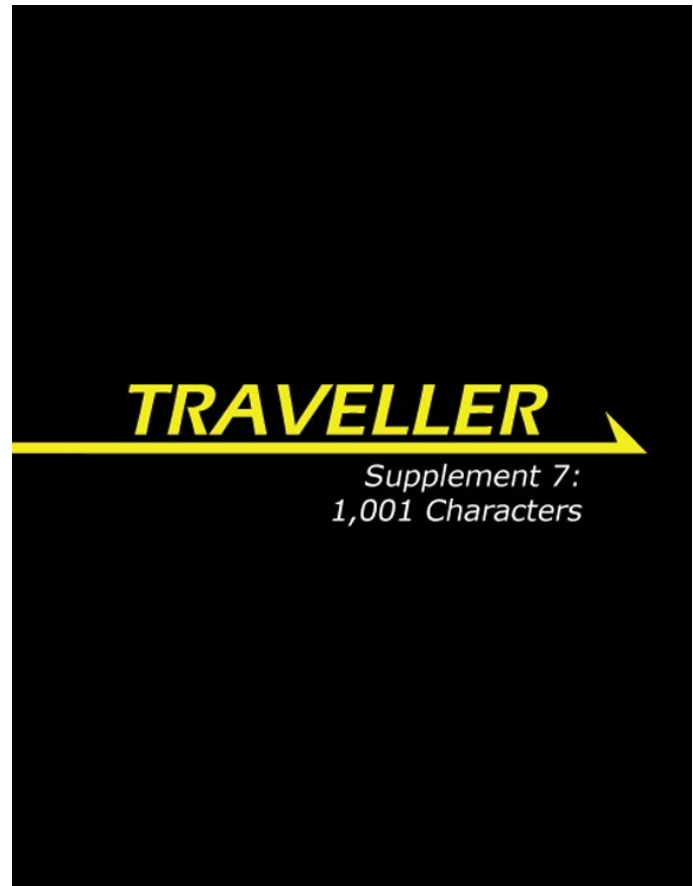
This is Ye Olde Bygge Boke Of Speare-Chuckkers. Page after page of capsule descriptions of NPCs, all in the standard format of characteristics, skills, equipment, and about three lines of textual description.

## On Closer Inspection

With the exception of the very last character in the book, there’s not much more than you’d gather in the initial impression. The introduction indicates that each of the characters is legal under the core rules, and notes that to give the referee some flexibility, level-0 and some cascade skills are left unspecified, the latter being listed as the cascade skill rather than the specific skill (e.g., ‘Gun Combat’ instead of ‘Gun Combat (Pistol)’). Equipment is also minimal, with only the equipment that would be important when meeting the character being specified.

At the end of each textual description, there is a ‘subtitle’, a short phrase that ostensibly describes the character, e.g., ‘popular leader’, ‘murderous thief’, ‘hard-nosed marine’, and so on.

The characters are grouped by broad type, with the type suggesting which books and/or supplements might be useful in expanding on the capsule to turn a NPC into a PC. Within the broad types, they are grouped by more specific roles, making it somewhat easier to select a character based on an already existing concept. The textual description is highly generic, another measure allowing the ref-



eree the flexibility to customize the character to the campaign. None of the characters really stand out as ‘interesting’, but the descriptions are generally good starting points for fleshing out a character concept.

The last character in the book is the exception that highlights the mediocrity of the remainder. Duke Enit Apalpa is a very-well fleshed-out character, with a history tied to the Spinward Marches in the Official *Traveller* Universe, a developed personality, goals, secrets, and so on. One could hold him up as an example of what might be done from one of the other characters, but a referee who could do so would probably not balk at creating the character from scratch, and would probably not choose to buy this volume.

## Conclusion

I can’t say that this volume is really worth the \$35; anyone with the core rulebook, programming skill in just about any third-generation language, and three hours of time could probably do almost as well. On the other hand, if you’re the kind of person who likes to have a box full of index cards

*(Continued on page 3)*



## Critics' Corner

(Continued from page 2)

with NPCs on them, and you haven't built up your box yet, this amounts to a ready-made one. Getting

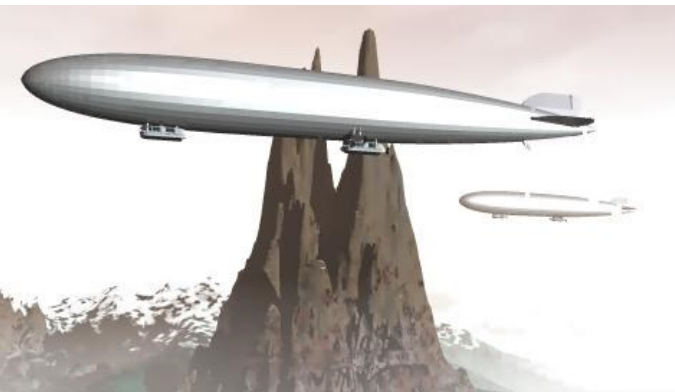
it as a download from DTRPG, at about half the price, might make more sense (unless you're the programmer above). 🌀

## In A Store Near You

## The Showroom

### Strasser-class TL5 Rigid Airship

by Chris Cox and Stewart Wochen



The *Strasser* is representative of the airships once used in war on Terra. They initially had several advantages over aircraft of the period: Their range, their payload capacity, and most importantly they were able to operate at altitudes that keep them safe from ground fire and enemy aircraft. However, with time, aircraft were designed that were able to reach to higher altitudes faster, allowing them to exploit the airships' biggest weakness, the inflammable hydrogen use to lift the airships.

A cargo version useful in remote operations such as mining and transport of lightweight, high value cargo and medical equipment is available at no extra cost. Bomb bays are replaced with same-size cargo bays with electric cargo doors. Additional drop-down jump seats come stock/standard with the cargo bays to allow transportation of personnel if required, but only at the weight-for-weight expense of less cargo.

The class is named after Peter Strasser, who commanded the German navy's airship program during the First World War. In August 1918

Strasser was killed along with the crew of L-70 in what would be the last raid against England of the war.

This vehicle was designed using the Playtest version of *Fire, Fusion, and Steel* for Marc Miller's *Traveller* (T4).

Dimensions: 165m length, 19.1m diameter  
Tech Level: 5  
Total Volume: 44,050m<sup>3</sup>  
Total Mass/  
Useful Lift: 49,720/25,000kg  
Engines: 4×9.56KN TL-5 Propeller+  
Max Speed: 96kph  
Fuel Cap: 13,078kg/14.531m<sup>3</sup> Hydrocarbon distillates  
Endurance: 53.3hours, 246kg/hour  
Accom: Life support (Basic II), 11 Crew (pilot, copilot, navigator, bombardier (or loadmaster in cargo version), 4 gunners, 2 flight engineers, radio operator)  
Cruise Speed: 72kph  
Electronics: TL-5 50km Radio, TL-5 Avionics (Gyrocompass, barometric altimeter)  
Weapons: 4 Machineguns (Medium-5 from "Central Supply Catalog" w/6 reloads each); Bomb payload 3,000kg if Bomber version is purchased  
Cargo: Bomber version=none. Cargo Version=3,000kg.  
Cost: 2.85Mcr  
Oper Skill: Airship  
Ease of Use: +2  
Quality: 5  
Reliability: +1  
Hazard: 0  
Comments: Cargo loadmaster may be omitted if double-skilling another crew member, freeing add'l cargo weight. If Helium used instead of Hydrogen, Useful Lift=21,464kg, payload reduced to 2,500kg, fuel usage reduced to 211kg/hour.





### Talia Mason

profiled by John Lees

*Editor's note: Talia Mason originally appeared in Terra/Sol Games' Shipbook Mirador, and appears in Freelance Traveller with the permission of Terra/Sol's Mike Cross.*

**Talia Mason** (Human Female)

UPP: 79ACEC Age: 54 (26)

DOB: May 25, 2937 (Hanover/Deramus Enclave)

Skills: Computer 2, Research 2, Sensor 2, Survival 2, Art 1, Instruction 1, Investigate 1, Science (Physics) 1, Science (Biology) 1, Science (Planetology) 1, Science (xenology) 1, Vacc-Suit 1, Admin 0, Gun Combat (Energy Pistol) 0, Recon 0, Remote Operations 0, Science (History) 0, Vehicle ( ) 0

Talia Mason was born into the fabulously wealthy Mason family, who own a considerable amount of the planet Hanover in the Deramus Enclave. The Masons are guided by their matriarch, Hanna Mason, and a collection of fourteen Mason family Ghosts\* that stretch back for two centuries, a fairly common arrangement in the Enclave, blending the lines further between organic and digital.

Talia, however, bridled against the sterile conditions imposed by the Masons, and elected not only to embark on a University education outside of Hanover (the family gives generously to Herrenhausen University) but outside of the Enclave as well. She set her eyes on the prestigious universities of the Terran Union. This was just after the Treaty of Assent, and though the Enclave and Terran Union had officially settled their differences, tensions still existed. Her perseverance (and family fortune) eventually got her to the University of St. Mary of Mars (at the main campus of Arsai Mons on Mars in the Earth/Sol system) where she earned a prestigious doctorate of Planetary Sciences (a multidisciplinary field), and a reputation as a serious researcher.

After this academic achievement, Mason moved to the Orion Confederation, and eventually to the fringe of the Confederation with the private exploration firm of Haddrick-Bosch. While work-



ing with Haddrick-Bosch, Mason was watched very closely by Orion State Security (OSS), especially after the discovery of the Kadenfeld Artifact in 2975, when she was forced out of the company despite early gains she made in unraveling the Precursors' secrets.

Mason became an academic some time after that, moving to Terra/Sol and becoming part of her alma mater at the University of St. Mary of Mars-Kansas City, and later at the VanKila Kiertotahti branch, until she decided that she much preferred the thrill of exploration to the somewhat dry and predictable life of the University.

Gathering her finances—only a small portion of which came to her from her family in the Enclave—Mason purchased an aging *Mirador* and had the vessel reconditioned. In true Mason fashion, she auctioned off portions of the ship to collectors, hyping the nostalgia value of the pieces, and managed to get most of what she needed for the retrofit.

Of course, the auction did not cover everything. In the end, she did have to take on investors.

## Up Close and Personal

One of these was Heymore Karsh, an explorer and prospector. He has since died during a mission in uncharted space. His only daughter is about to come of age and Talia wonders whether she should allow the girl to adopt the rough and dangerous lifestyle that killed her father or just get a cut of the profits. The other investor was the enigmatic Gannon Consortium. Mason received a rather hefty grant from the Consortium which has (currently) imposed on her work very little. Whether that state of affairs continues or not is another matter entirely.

Rather than conduct all research herself, Mason rents out the lab space aboard the ship. Her contacts and good name in Academia help her to get scientists looking for field opportunities and to procure grants from major institutions to go to specific worlds. On occasion, she hosts Xeno-Safari hunting expeditions (even during scientific surveys). Even though Dr. Mason finds these somewhat gauche, they have become very popular among the upper classes on Terra/Sol. 🌐

*\*Ghosts are digital downloads of a human mind which convert the individual downloaded to a digital entity similar to but not exactly like an Artificial Intelligence. The downloading process is destructive of the original organic brain. So this is a one time process.*



## Critics' Corner

### 21 Plots III

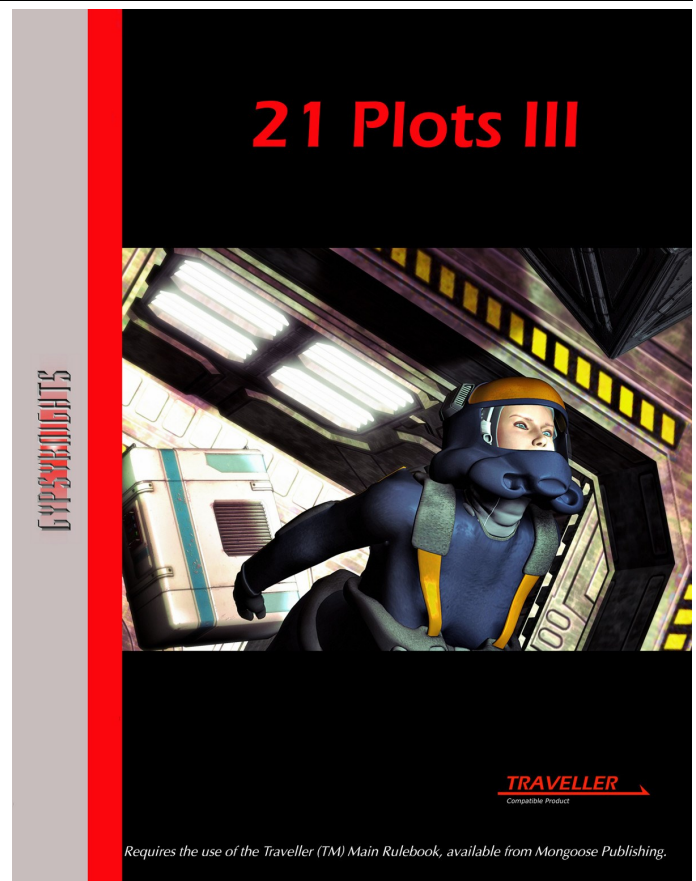
reviewed by "kafka"

21 Plots III. John Watts  
Gypsy Knights Games. .  
25pp., softcover/PDF.  
US\$4.99 PDF/US\$10.99 Softcover

*Editor's Note: This review originally appeared on RPG.Net in October 2012, and is reprinted here with the author's permission.*

Once again, Gypsy Knights Games comes up with a set of adventure hooks for their Alternative Traveller Universe (ATU). This product is closely aligned with the twin releases of the *Hub Worlds* and *21 Organizations*, although possession of either is not required, as an imaginative Referee can easily change names or places to substitute for the places or things that are specific to this ATU.

And, because, it is an "alternate universe" this product is excellently suited for any Science Fiction Role Playing Game, not just *Traveller* – so long as the emphasis is on trading and mobility – as each of these adventures do presume that players have their own ship or at least access to a ship which unfortunately is becoming the norm in most SFRPGs. Without sounding too old fashioned, or grognardy – I remember the days when players had to earn a starship and were always in danger of losing it by hook or crook – but that is not the fault of this supplement –notwithstanding, none of



these situations offer genuine peril. That said, each of these adventure seeds are solid and present a different situation than the other Plots series which for me shows the dedication and hard work in crafting these adventure seeds.

The best part of this book is that it really shows Gypsy Knights' devotion to building better worlds – fully rounded and realized worlds, thus, we do

(Continued from page 5)

not get generic desert worlds that are Dune or Tatooine clones – we get original and thoughtful laid out worlds replete with a history that forms a tapestry and backdrop for these adventures. *Traveller*, all too often, has used a cookie cutter approach distilling worlds to just a series of numbers, leaving the Referee with the laborious task of creating the social science matrix in which adventures can occur. These adventure seeds provide enough background, that if the Referee is not in possession of the correct Sector book or Quick World, they can put some numbers together and fly the seat of their pants – and still create a memorable adven-

ture. And, because it is written in the format of 101 (1001) Patrons in which a basic premise is set up and the Referee can choose or roll 1D6 for possible outcomes – the same basis for the adventure can be reused with completely different results.

If this volume is missing anything is unfortunately an index, undoubtedly, when all plot books are compiled into a single book – an index will be forthcoming but in the meantime, should the Referee purchase a Sector book, it would be helpful to be able to line up a world with an adventure in the case of freeform campaign or series of one-shots (which many a gaming night) is degenerating down to these days, as opposed to a prolonged campaign. ❁

## In A Store Near You

### NHR 1010 Armored Multifunction Robot

designed by Ewan Quibell

Robot ID: NHR 1010 Armored MultiFunction Robot Chassis, TL10, Cr17,405 UPP=N4xxxx, STR=88, DEX=4  
Hull: 1/1, Size=0.165kl, Config=Cont, Armor=10E, Unloaded=0.19948 tons, Loaded=0.19981 tons  
Power: 1/2, FuelCell=0.04 Mw, Duration=1/3 days  
Loco: 1/2, Legs=2, P/W=44, Road=103kph, Off-Road=61.8kph  
Commo: Radio=VDist (50 km), Voder, Interface=Brain, Program, Power  
Sensors: BasicSensorPkg (visual×2, audio×2, olfactory), Touch, Environment  
Off: -  
Def: -  
Brain: -  
Control: Requires 1.7405 Control Point Units  
Append: Medium Arm×2, Rotating Head=10%  
Other: Cargo=0.016 klitres, Fuel=0.0048 klitres, ObjSize=Small, EMLevel=Faint  
Comment: Excess Power=8.2 Mw  
Cost in volume=Cr 13,924

The NHR multifunctional armoured robot chassis is a standard human replacement chassis appropriate for tasks using human designed tools in areas where additional protection is required such as search and rescue or security work. The robot chassis stands 1.75m tall to the top of its head, and the torso, legs and appendages are contoured to approximate standard human dimensions without any possibility of being mistaken for

a human. The robot looks significantly stocky. The weight of the robot is higher than the normal human range although not significantly so. The basic sensor package is placed in the head in the same positions as humans, as is the voder, and the touch sensors are positioned across the chassis to enable the sensors to receive the same data as humans. The environmental sensor allows the robot a significantly better understanding of its surroundings.

The cargo space is in fact space for a robot brain up to 16 litre capacity flexible to the needs of the user. The interfaces present allow the users choice of brain to be reprogrammed with their programs of choice, and allow for the sensors to feed back directly to a computer via direct cable connection or via the radio. The power interface allows the robot to draw power from an external source to remove the need for refuelling or increase the duration of the internal fuel load as may be necessary.

The power-to-weight ratio takes into account the needs of the brain and all other equipment before applying the remaining power to the transmission. This configuration allows all equipment to be fully functional while the robot is moving at top speed.



## In A Store Near You

(Continued from page 6)

Stated unloaded and loaded weights are exclusive of the weight of any brain or control points, as is the cost.

The CP requirement is normally provided by the Brain, however 11 Slave CPs can be installed as well.



## Multimedia Gallery

### Explorations

*Miniatures: Mark Poles; photography, image copyright: Victoria Clare*

A back yard becomes a lush alien environment with some *Traveller* miniatures and a bit of creative photography.



1: A Virushi xenobiologist exits the forest with his readings

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## Multimedia Gallery

*(Continued from page 7)*



2. An Ael-Yael camp guard watches over a cliff edge



3. A Hiver explorer follows a dry streambed from forest to 'grasslands'

*(Continued on page 9)*



## Multimedia Gallery

(Continued from page 8)



4: A K'kree exploration herd warrior stands on guard against *gnaak* 🌀

## Suffer Unto Me the Little Children

by Richard Morey

A problem common among RPGs is the way they treat (or more correctly, fail to treat) the subject of children. Certainly, a hardy band of adventurers exploring some new world may not have much cause to interact with children, but visitors to most settled worlds will probably find the little people in abundance. Apart from adding to the ambiance of the setting, children can serve several useful roles for the referee.

It can be argued that a key element of role-playing, as contrasted with simulation gaming, is the chance for the PCs to interact with their environment on a social level as well as a physical level. A key outcome of that interaction is character development, in the sense of filling out the concept, motivations, and personality of the character, rather than in the sense of increasing stats and skills. Interaction with 'incidental' non-players, including children or pets, is quite reasonably part of that development. That's not to say that children can't have a direct impact on the action; that will be discussed later.

There are several ways in which younger NPCs can influence a PC's development. Perhaps a child attaches themselves to a PC for some reason. Does the PC try to find out why? Does the PC begin to develop a sense of responsibility for the child, possibly taking their needs and welfare into consideration when deciding on possible courses of action? An older child may offer the PC the chance to become a mentor, providing guidance and serving as a role model for a younger person. How does that change the PC's behavior? For more mature PC groups, how does the PC handle the situation when someone on the verge of adulthood, and thinking they're ready for an adult relationship, becomes infatuated with the PC?

Children can also serve the referee as plot devices. Players who opt not to interfere in a situation arising out of an adult's choices, thinking the NPC knew what they were getting into, may feel differently about the same situation if the 'victim'

is a child. A young child's curiosity or a teen's rebelliousness may lead them into trouble that a supposedly rational adult would avoid. This could require the PC's intervention, especially if you have spent time developing a relationship between the PC and younger NPC. A self-anointed spokesperson for their chosen idol may loudly proclaim to any and all, "John ain't afraid o' someone like you!" A child or teen may be victimized to get at the parents, and during the rescue (contracted for by those parents), the minor becomes attached to a PC—and/or vice-versa. Lastly, if a fight is proving too easy for the PCs, how does the young sidekick running into the middle of it in pursuit of their wayward pet alter the combat equation?

Children can also serve as a warning device. If the PCs are being taken in by a smooth-talking opponent, what happens when the young child who has not yet learned to distrust their instincts or guard their words blurts out, "I don't like that man!"? Alternatively, will a child's overt liking or disliking someone throw the PCs off-track?

If you've read this far, you presumably are interested in incorporating children into your campaign—but what are they like in terms of game mechanics? The following table provides the 'numbers.' Several principles guide the development of this table. Most PCs and NPC are generated by rolling 2D6 for their characteristics. This yields an average result of 7 by the time a character reaches adulthood. By late adolescence this is true for STR, END, and INT. DEX takes a little longer to reach full coordination, and EDU doesn't reach average adult level until graduation from secondary school. (Admittedly, this is based on the Western European/North American contemporary situation.) If a child survives their first few years, they aren't as likely to fatally succumb to disease, thus END rises quickly. In the same manner, they develop a basic understanding of the world and how to interpret it early on so INT rises quickly as well. As to SOC, teens don't carry quite the same weight as adults, with younger children having even less social clout. Therefore, a minor's SOC is



(Continued from page 10)

either one (B in the table) or two (A in the table) points lower than their parents, at least until they have established their own identity as adults.

An infant is relatively weak and helpless, thus children start out with low characteristic values. As the child ages, automatically increase their characteristics by the increments on the table. It is possible to vary these values by a point or two; bear in mind that a two-point variance at the lower levels reflects a much greater difference than the same variance later in life.

Children start to develop (*Traveller*) skills around age six. The number in the table reflects how many skills an average character will acquire, and coincides with the background skill numbers for regular adult character generation. In keeping with that approach, these skills should be taken from the World Trade Code and Background Education tables in the *Traveller Core Rules*. 🌟

**Editor's Note:** A second version of the table has been included here for calculating a child's development for any final stat values. To use this table, multiply the final (adult) stat value by the number for the stat on the same line as the desired age, rounding fractional results up. The assumptions, similar to the author's stated assumptions for the first table, are as follows:

1. One-third of the child's physical development (STR, DEX, END) will occur between birth and age six. This is a time when the child is growing and learning rapidly, and becoming physically autonomous. Half of INT will also be developed in this period.
2. Half of the child's physical development will take place between ages 12 and 18, when puberty begins and the child matures into an adult. The ability to learn is still high, but tends to slow down, so only one-third of INT will be developed in this period.
3. Edu will develop at a steady rate through this period. This would be more an artifact of the formal education systems in use than any inherent limitations, so feel free to vary it.

Minor Character Characteristics and Skills, Average Char, Ages 1-17							
Age	STR	DEX	END	INT	EDU	SOC	BG Skill
1	1	1	1	1	0	A	
2	1	2	2	2	1	A	
3	2	3	3	3	2	A	
4	2	3	4	4	2	A	
5	3	3	5	5	2	A	
6	3	4	6	6	3	A	1
7	4	4	6	7	3	A	1
8	4	4	6	7	3	A	1
9	5	4	6	7	4	A	1
10	5	5	6	7	4	B	1
11	6	5	6	7	4	B	1
12	6	5	7	7	5	B	2
13	7	5	7	7	5	B	2
14	7	6	7	7	5	B	3
15	7	6	7	7	6	B	3
16	7	7	7	7	6	B	3
17	7	7	7	7	6	B	3

Minor Character Characteristics and Skills, Proportional, Ages 1-17							
Age	STR	DEX	END	INT	EDU	SOC	BG Skill
1	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.083	0.000	A	
2	0.111	0.111	0.111	0.167	0.059	A	
3	0.167	0.167	0.167	0.250	0.118	A	
4	0.222	0.222	0.222	0.333	0.176	A	
5	0.278	0.278	0.278	0.417	0.235	A	
6	0.333	0.333	0.333	0.500	0.294	A	1
7	0.361	0.361	0.361	0.528	0.353	A	1
8	0.389	0.389	0.389	0.556	0.412	A	1
9	0.417	0.417	0.417	0.583	0.471	A	1
10	0.444	0.444	0.444	0.611	0.529	B	1
11	0.472	0.472	0.472	0.639	0.588	B	1
12	0.500	0.500	0.500	0.667	0.647	B	2
13	0.583	0.583	0.583	0.722	0.706	B	2
14	0.667	0.667	0.667	0.778	0.765	B	3
15	0.750	0.750	0.750	0.833	0.824	B	3
16	0.833	0.833	0.833	0.889	0.882	B	3
17	0.917	0.917	0.917	0.944	0.941	B	3



## Drop Out

by Ken Murphy

### Part 22

When the Captain and Chief Purser returned to the ship, at 0417 Station Time, Fyyg was surprised to have a pair of callers already waiting to meet with him. The pair, a man and woman, both in heavy leather coats, sat in chairs in the small waiting area outside Fyyg's office, the woman with a foot resting on the edge of an empty chair as they sipped coffee the Servebot had brought them.

Sitting in a chair opposite was Tam, in her greaves as usual, smoking something obviously cadged from the visitors, and involved in a conversation with them when Captain Fyyg arrived.

With his arrival came the crashing salute from Tam, startling the visitors and making Fyyg smile.

Returning a more relaxed salute, Fyyg told the little brunette to report.

Tam stepped up to the tall, thin Captain and leaned into him, whispering into his left ear.

"Astrid and Jeremy Knobb-White. Upper Crust Swells from Willow, down Planetside, and needing a ship to do a bit o' speculative trading. They're very guarded talking about their ducats. Good manners about money is usually a sign of the very well-off, hon'."

"Thank you, Miss Murmisagli," the Captain said, grinning. Turning toward the seated business people, Fyyg motioned for them not to get up as he bent to shake their hands.

Playing stupid for the sake of etiquette, Captain Fyyg asked innocently, "And to what do I owe the pleasure of your visit?"

Jeremy looked hesitantly from the Captain to his partner and back, as if he were deciding whether to speak, only to shut down as Astrid took over.

"Oh, Captain," the snow-haired woman tittered, "what a charmer!" Then she came to the point.

"My Truemate," she said, speaking of her brother and husband, Jeremy, "and I have a fabric

design and production house well known here on Heimdall."

"Yes, of course!" Fyyg nodded, not the least bit sure what this woman was getting to.

"Our upcoming Winter Line needs public testing, but not here on Heimdall, with the prying eyes of the other design houses so near."

"They are all cads! Every one of them, Captain Fyyg, I assure you!" Jeremy stiffly avowed, setting his teeth so tightly that he almost snapped his cigarette holder in two.

"With the ideal colder temperatures almost year-round on Eitr, we wish to test this new line there," the flawless beauty said, using Nordic-Prime's rarely-used older name.

"Of course," Fyyg replied. "And how much cargo will need delivering?" he asked calmly.

"Can your ship handle eighty large pallets of crates, Captain?" Mrs. Knobb-White asked.

"Consider us your Magic Carpet, M'Lady," Fyyg replied, kissing the pale woman's hand.

"When will we need to be expecting delivery, then?" Fyyg asked.

"Oh," the woman turned her wrist slightly and looked down, noting the time on her old-fashioned watch before brushing some hair from her eyes "Would *now* be too soon, Captain?"

"Not if you have your own stevedores, Madam. Most of my crew is at loose ends until Liberty is over later this morning," Fyyg answered. "You certainly shouldn't feel rushed, Mrs. Knobb-White. It is only a matter of hours before our own stevedores return.

"Astrid, please, Captain," the woman said, hanging tightly to his left arm. "I, or rather we...or rather, our company, employs many stevedores, and a full load of them awaits aboard our lighter with our cargo!" she told him, and that was that.

---

As the few crew gathered to watch the cargo transfer from the Knobb-Whites' personal lighter onto the *Waffles*, Tam and Ilsa nudged one another knowingly as the shrill screech of Lady Astrid lashed the private workers mercilessly, in a man-

## Raconteurs' Rest

(Continued from page 12)

ner she'd obviously been used to for quite some time.

It was hell, but in a couple of hours it was completed.

---

Entering through the bridge airlock, Brodie decided to go to the Crew Lounge and have a sandwich.

On the way he passed the Knobb-Whites and a small corps of their pet sycophants who had come aboard after the cargo had been loaded, and were now headed toward the Passenger Lounge.

"Out of my way, you *ape!*" Astrid hissed as she pushed past Brodie.

Brodie rubbed the shoulder where she'd hit him, saying "What a Dame!"

---

The Captain and most of the *Waffles'* remaining crew poured onto the Crew Deck from the elevator. Stepping into the Crew Lounge with Captain Fyyg in the middle of the story, Ilsa laughed, "Magic Carpet! Sure wish I'd been there for that one."

"And she says to me," The Captain continued, "'Captain, This entire affair must be kept absolutely secret!'. Well, we shake hands on it, and I take the opportunity to tell her the standard transport fee for the cargo; four hundred eighty thousand Credits. She says, 'Done!' and we shake on it again."

"You talking about that Ice Queen that socked me, Cap'n?" Brodie asked from his position on the couch where he was eating an Everfresh Sandwich (cheeseburger-and-fried-egg, this time).

"I suspect so, Brodie," the Captain chuckled. "So then, she asks when we can leave. I tell her first the crew must return later this morning, then we'll have to take on passengers. The Lady looks at me and says 'Then I shall buy out all of your cabins for this Crossing, Captain!'"

"Craazy," said Tam, absently, as she practiced her fast draw.

"And it gets more so. I tell her buying out all cabins will be two hundred thousand Credits more! Six hundred eighty thousand Credits all told, and she just laughs, 'Do it!'"

"And now," the Captain declared, "All of that fabulous money is in the safe, right where it belongs. And we leave after the ship's Last Call klaxon at 0800 hours this morning, Station Time."

---

As the time neared for the Last Call klaxon's sounding at 0800, many of the *Waffles'* crew began coming aboard singly and in small groups. By 0830, when it stopped, the crew was accounted for and the *Waffles* slipped away from the station after settling berthing and refueling fees electronically.

On the bridge, sitting on the edge of the formerly empty seat next to Sensors, was the new Navigator, Eljin Tower, working the computer and handling the mapping equipment to figure a sound Crossing from Heimdall back to Nordic Prime. As the pilot followed his simple course outsystem, Eljin went over his Transition course again, attempting to shave some time off of it.

A few hours into the fifty-six-hour trip outsystem, Eljin thought he'd worked up a decent program and showed it to Captain Fyyg.

"How long, Mr. Tower?" asked the Captain.

"The Crossing should take," Eljin replied, "one hundred eighteen hours, Captain."

"Only four days twenty two hours?" the Captain asked. "What do your outside edge calculations show, Mister?" asked Captain Fyyg, not believing the over-short estimation.

"Ummm, closer to six days, Captain," the curly-haired Navigator answered. "Five days, seventeen hours."

The Captain clapped a hand on the short Navigator's shoulder. "Son, I shall be officially amazed at either of those projected outcomes," he laughed.

---

The black gang had worked the dual Garibaldi-Singhs to a feverish pitch before dumping the more than two thousand megawatts of output into the Transition Drives.

(Continued from page 13)

As he lay in his bunk, Gibby moaned "Good job, boys!" before he felt a wave of vertigo wash over him, and his consciousness suddenly drop away, leaving him staring, exposed, before the mandala of Transition; the pulsating energy flipping a switch in his head, and leaving him in some other place, seeing things he could rarely make any sense of. The energy filled him and he could see Kalifra in a vacc suit, telling Brodie, also in a vacc suit, about the markings on some sort of a missile. Then the white noise drowned out any comprehension, and Gibby passed out.

---

That evening, Gibraltar felt fine, and was sitting, dress uniform on, a few seats down from the Captain. The ship's other officers, also in their dress uniforms, were scattered around the large table, along with the Knobb-Whites and the rest of the passengers. The Purser's department, all in spotless white, were serving the large, multi-course meal for First Night of the Crossing.

Toward the end of the meal, Captain Fyyg rose, and, tapping the edge of the glass with a knife, gave a toast welcoming the Knobb-Whites and their entourage to the *Chicken and Waffles* proper, following up the initial toast with a second, wishing all success in their upcoming business venture. A dozen or more toasts were proposed by the passengers.

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Back in the Galley, as the toasts went around and around, Chef Anton and Li'l Mary were sipping the cooking sherry, having finished plating the meal's double chocolate dessert, and just waiting on the Purser's staff to table it.

---

The dessert went over well, and a few more rounds of toasts followed, by the end of which everyone in the room was drunk. Then Lady Astrid asked for some dancing music as she wrapped herself around Captain Fyyg.

"Yes, of course, my dear," the Captain replied. At a motion from the Captain, Number Two went around the room and spoke with a few of the crew, who quickly left the room to return again, instrument cases in hand.

At some urging from the Second Officer, the passengers and crew worked at clearing away the furniture for an impromptu dance floor; several chairs were left in the middle for the band.

Ilsa removed her uniform jacket and sat down.

Tam removed her uniform jacket, and sans firearms, but still wearing her greaves, sat down next to Ilsa, removing her clarinet from its case.

Brodie, keeping his jacket on, sat down behind Tam with his large, boxy kalimba.

Word passed, and several minutes later, Drive Hand Second Class, Bentley Chang showed, still greasy from his shift down in Engineering, the electronic Stick in his hand.

The band started with that ancient standard 'For Sentimental Reasons', and after a lengthy lead-in, Ilsa stood and began crooning.

Dressed in a little red number, Astrid pushed into Fyyg, her nipples hard like pebbles, as she first nuzzled, then kissed his neck, asking him, "Be with me tonight, Captain? Is that something you might be interested in?"

Looking past the top of Astrid's head at Ilsa singing, Fyyg replied, "It might be. But it all depends on whether Ilsa would like to join us."

After five or six more tunes, the band took a break and a Micro was set up instead.

"So your wife is your Second Officer, then, Captain?" Astrid said, "I imagine her not being First Officer must be a sore point between you two."

"Oh, you can't imagine!" chuckled Fyyg. "But she came aboard as Number Two, and regardless of how I feel about it, she'll stay Number Two as long as my First Officer remains in his current position."

Ilsa came up to her husband, asking, "May I cut in?"

"Certainly, my dear," replied the Captain, as he put an arm around his wife.



## Raconteurs' Rest

(Continued from page 14)

The white-haired Astrid stepped away from the Captain and his lady, nervous at what they might decide, despite her initial, cool, upper-crust bearing.

Following a few minutes of quite talk between them, Ilsa turned from the Captain and asked, "So who's our new friend, Nordel?" as she slowly looked the pale woman up and down.

"Astrid Knobb-White, from Willow," Fyyg said.

The trio went off to get better acquainted in Fyyg's large cabin.

In the Med Bay, Doctor Wong was busy discussing case histories of the crew with his predecessor's assistant, former IN Pharmacist's Mate Fahad, when Kalifra Donaldson awoke.

After checking over the patient's arm, Wong decided it was time to push her second dose of metabolics, which accelerated healing at a rate of thirty to one, and the same ones which had been used by a Navy Surgeon to help after she'd been practically split in half by a tumbling piece of shrapnel out on the hull of the *Saint Faragut* while involved in anti-piracy action off Rialto. 🌟

## Less Dangerous Game

### Four From the Jungle

by Timothy Collinson

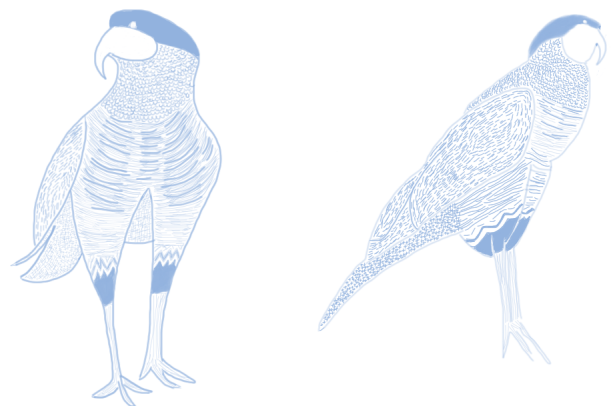
#### Ata-Ata

Behaviour and Diet	Preferred Habitat	Movement Mode(s)	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Instinct	Pack
Chaser, Carnivore	Jungle	Walker	2	5	5	1	10	18
Skills:		Recon 1, Athletics 0, Survival 0						
Attacks: Teeth (1d6)			Armour: None			Number Encountered: 5d6		

The Ata-Ata are small flightless birds weighing on average around 3kg and usually found in 'packs' of two dozen or so. They chase down their prey on the ground, and although they're small, their beaks are sharp and in sufficient numbers they can bring down quite sizeable creatures. Their intelligence and instinct allows them to work together, circling their target before bringing it down. Sharp eyes allow them to see prey at quite a distance if the terrain permits. Their long legs allow considerable speed over the ground.

Their preferred diet consists of small rodents and some reptiles, but they've been known to catch amphibians and even other birds foolish enough to rest on the jungle floor for too long. If

hungry or cornered they can be tempted to attack prey much larger themselves.



# Less Dangerous Game

(Continued from page 15)

## Attacker Plants

Behaviour and Diet	Preferred Habitat	Movement Mode(s)	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Instinct	Pack
Siren, Carnivore	Jungle	Mainly immobile	2	12	13	0	11	0
Skills: Athletics 0, Recon 0, Stealth 0, Survival 0								
Attacks: Claws (1d6+1), plus aerosol hypnotic (Stealth, Deception DM+4)				Armour: Hide (4)		Number Encountered: 1		

The Attacker Plant is something of a misnomer in that it is neither a true plant nor attacks in the strictest sense. This fungal has a frying pan shaped body which usually remains stationary but can move to a limited extent in the glades which it favours to better catch its prey. It emits a mist when it detects a food source which confuses its prey and enables it to move to the ideal spot. Once the unwary creature steps onto the pan like structure, it is enveloped and tiny barbs spring up on the in-

side surface making escape difficult and eventually incapacitating the unfortunate victim.

A particular favourite food source is the Ata-Ata bird (q.v.) which can stumble into an Attacker Plant when a pack moves through a glade. Some naturalists have surmised that it is in fact a corrupted form of the name of this part of its diet which has given rise to 'attacker' in colloquial speech.

## Krasnakley

Behaviour and Diet	Preferred Habitat	Movement Mode(s)	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Instinct	Pack
Siren, Omnivore	Jungle	Flier	1	6	1	0	7	11
Skills: Melee (natural weapons) 2, Athletics 0, Recon 0, Survival 0								
Attacks: Stinger (1d6+2)			Armour: Chitin (4)			Number Encountered: (3d6)x3		

Krasnakley are flying insects with a nasty sting in the tail. Swarms of 40 or 50 may be encountered at one time making them a danger to anything that gets in their path. Their high metabolic rate requires them to eat far more than their size might indicate and they'll eat anything from plant matter to quite large animals.

In addition to their stinging tails, they also have a hypnotic drone that is caused by a combination of their wings and rearmost legs rubbing together. Animals hearing it are lured to the Krasnakley swarm and devoured. Travellers are advised to steer clear of areas where there are

known infestations and to carry anti-venom kits if there is any possibility of an encounter.

Locals, however, value the krasnakley for the *byuur* they produce. Produced from the pollen of plants, this honey-like substance is used by the insects as a means of storing food for their young. Harvested at just the right time, it comes in a liquid form that makes an invigorating drink; harvested a little later in the process and it comes in a solid form that isn't as sweet as honey but can be stored for months without going off and provides a valuable source of nourishment.

(Continued on page 17)

# Less Dangerous Game

(Continued from page 16)

## Vee Sok Kee

Behaviour and Diet	Preferred Habitat	Movement Mode(s)	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Instinct	Pack
Reducer & Siren, Omnivore	Jungle	Walker	14	6	16	1	7	12
Skills: Recon 1, Athletics 0, Survival 0								
Attacks: Teeth (2d6)			Armour: Hide (5)			Number Encountered: 4d6		

Vee Sok Kee (emphasis on the 'Kee') are very tall (18-20m) amphibians inhabiting jungles and in particular riverine areas running through them. They can weigh as much as 800kg. These creatures may be mistaken for trees by the unwary traveller. Typically standing in 'groves' of up to two dozen, the first sign of them is an apparently denser part of the jungle. Their bottom two metres or so are comprised of 6-8 jointed legs depending on subspecies. These legs have 'feet' (more like hooves) which have within them mechanisms for drawing up water and nutrients from the environment. If found in river margins containing mangrove-like trees, the legs may be spread out imitating their roots rather than clustered together like a trunk which is more usual.

Further up their bodies is a band encompassing the entire circumference of the body which is light and heat sensitive. Their top three metres split into several thick frond-like structures, three of which carry eyes, three of which carry ears, and the remainder carry organs that produce a pheromone highly attractive to insects which are



in turn attractive to birds. The Vee Sok Kee feed on the excrement and detritus of these visitors via an orifice situated centrally at the point where the fronds diverge. This orifice, perhaps 20cm in diameter, can inflict damage on any traveller unwary enough to place a limb or other body part in its vicinity.

The legs and body of the Vee Sok Kee are flexible enough that the creature may be encountered lying prone on the jungle floor or floating on jungle rivers using currents and a limited ability to swim for locomotion.

The Vee Sok Kee are believed to mate via organs in their fronds possibly connected to the pheromone producing structures. They lay spherical eggs of up to 10cm diameter with clutches of up to 100 in standing pools of water or occasionally very sheltered riverbanks out of the mainstream. Young Vee Sok Kee hatch within three weeks and are left to fend for themselves although they're very vulnerable to predators for at least another month. They are better swimmers than the adults and are most likely encountered in the water.



## The Artemis Files: #2: Talisman

reviewed by Ravi ('ravels') Shankar

*The Artemis Files: #2: Talisman*. Bradley Warnes.

Original publication: 2012

Current availability: print (mmpb) and ebook

Following my review of the first book in the series, *Elysium*, I have discovered that not only is Bradley Warnes an incredibly nice guy, but that his writing output is phenomenal—even more so as he has a young family and a full time job. In the time that it has taken me to write this book review, Warnes has published two further novels, *Durendal*, the third in the *Artemis Files* series, and *Lexington*, a prequel. When I asked him how he found the time to write, he said that he did most of his writing late at night and early in the morning and when firing on all cylinders, was able to finish one or two chapters a day. I wish I had such self-discipline.

Warnes' developing maturity is plain to see in *Talisman* and continues in *Durendal*. *Elysium* took place entirely on a single world, with a linear plot involving a single protagonist. In *Talisman*, the settings cover three systems, with two protagonists and plot/sub-plot strands that resolve at the end of the book. There are far fewer typos and the language is more assured and less repetitious, but (and this is an important 'but') the novel still keeps its pulpy feel and does not try to punch above its literary weight or pretend to be something it is not.

*Talisman* takes place on Albany, a desert planet, Surinamalabad, a dense jungle world, and the *Talisman* system itself (Warnes' novels are named after key planetary systems which feature in them). There is more exposition in *Talisman* than in *Elysium* (although some of it is deftly hidden), but it is interesting exposition to read. 'Infodumping' is not always a bad thing – and in Science Fiction it's virtually impossible to avoid – if it is engaging which I found the expository conversation between Montclare (the hero) and Chelsea (his sexy sidekick) to be. Warnes uses the opportunity to explain why the Hinterland worlds

have fallen into technological reverse and introduces us to the Genalts – humanity's foes in the last interstellar war who will doubtless play a key part in the series story arc.

I found the starport and startown in Surinamalabad particularly well-drawn (one of the great strengths in Warnes' writing is the character of his locations). It is here that we are introduced to new supporting characters whom Warnes uses to texture the national characteristics of some the polities that make up the Core systems and who further information about the purpose of the Artemis Project.

Warnes is in for the long run and steadily putting into place the vocabulary of his universe. For example, each book fleshes out the national character of a polity of the Core sector through individuals from that place. What is learned in previous books carries forward to next, allowing Warnes to advance the story without having to worry about providing background information.

I am really enjoying the series and am thankful for the speed at which Warnes puts out new books. Not having to wait long for the next novel is always welcome! 🌟

## The Freelance Traveller Forums

Our connectivity issues appear to be mostly resolved; the main issue at this point is having the time to put everything together. We hope to have something set up for limited testing soon, and are seeking volunteers for testing and discussion of various features. Interested people should contact us at [tech@freelancetraveller.com](mailto:tech@freelancetraveller.com). We apologize for the continued delay in restoring this service.

## About The Burrowwolf

At the time this issue of *Freelance Traveller* "went to press", no new chapter of *The Burrowwolf* was ready for inclusion due to other pressures. We are assured that the comic will resume as soon as possible.





# Type M TL15 Scout/Courier

designed by Ed Hinojosa

The IISS "Type M" is the long-overdue replacement for the venerable Type S Scout/Courier. It includes 50% more armor and a model/4 computer. The larger computer allows for a highly automated (and thus smaller) bridge. The ship is designed for long duration picket, interdiction, scouting, and courier duty. It has a standard cargo hold, unlike the Type S, which enables installation of modules. Typical modules installed include lab modules, long range sensor packages, advanced probe drones, etc. When on picket duty, collapsible

fuel tanks and consumables are installed to increase endurance by 1 to 4 months. The collapsible fuel tankage allows an additional J-2 and increases the unrefueled scouting and courier ranges by 100% over the Type S. Often, the collapsible tanks are filled with 12 dtons of H<sub>2</sub>O which is refined during jump to yield 20 Dtons of LH<sub>2</sub> for the J-Drive. This leaves 12 tons of cargo space available while giving the ship 2xJ2 capability. Luxuries are included for automated food prep, laundry, entertainment, etc., on long assignments. There is a sick-bay equipped with an Autodoc and an Emergency Low Berth, allowing for field care of injured crew. For all this, the ship is still cramped, with narrow corridors and low A-Deck ceilings. ☼

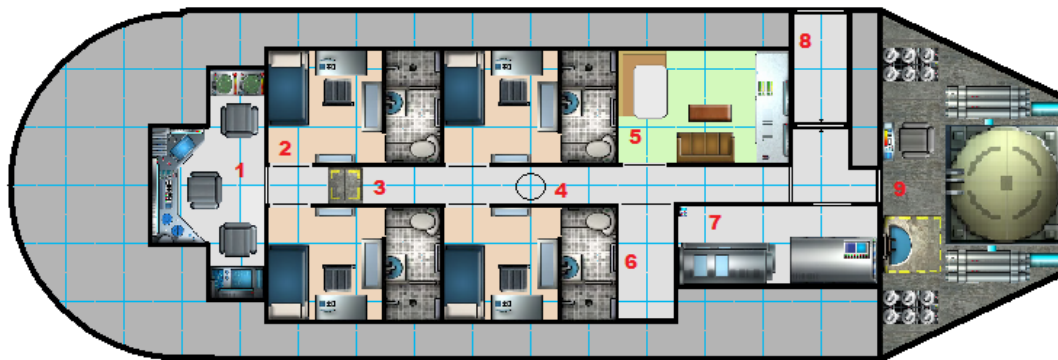
IISS Scout/Courier Type M – TL 15			Tons	Price (Cr.)
Hull	100 Tons Streamlined	Hull 3 Structure 3		3,300,000
Armour	Bonded Superdense	6 Points	5	950,000
Jump Drive A	Jump 2	Fast-Cycle	7.5	22,000,000
Manoeuvre Drive A	Thrust 2		1.5	8,000,000
Power Plant A			3	16,000,000
Bridge	Compact		5	630,000
Computer	Model/4	Rating 20		4,250,000
Electronics	Advanced	+1 DM	3	1,600,000
Weapons	Hardpoint #1	Triple Beam Laser (Long Range, Accurate)	1	7,000,000
Fuel	24 Tons	One Jump 2 and 4 Weeks of operation	24	
2 Fuel Processors	2 Tons	12 Hours	2	100,000
Fuel Scoops	Yes			
Cargo	24 tons		24	
4 Staterooms			16	2,000,000
Extras	Ship's Locker			
	E Low Berth		1	100,000
	Luxuries		1.5	100,000
	Autodoc 14		1	950,000
	Grav Car 15		4	250,000
	Escape Pod		0.5	100,000
Software	Maneuver/0			
	Jump Control/2			160,000
	Intellect			800,000
	Fire Control/1			1,400,000
	Evade/1			700,000
	Library			
Maintenance Cost (monthly)				Cr5,280
Life Support Cost (monthly)				Cr8,000
<b>Total Tonnage and Cost</b>			<b>100</b>	<b>Cr63,351,000</b>

(Deck plans on page 20)

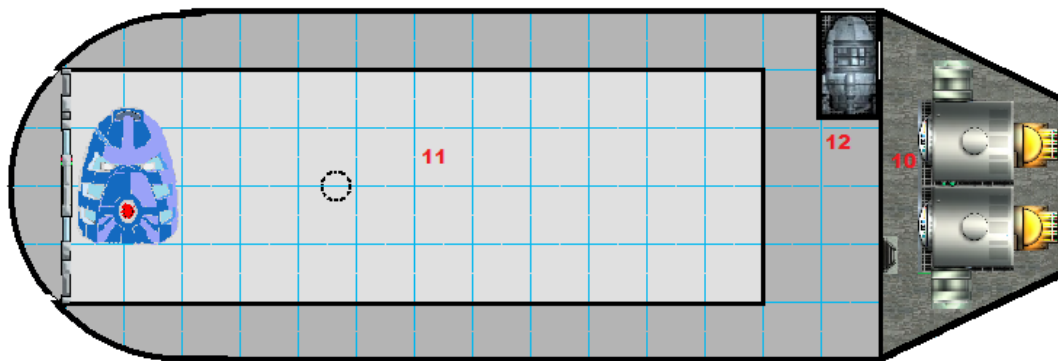
# The Shipyard

(Continued from page 19)

## IISS 100 Ton Scout/Courier Type M

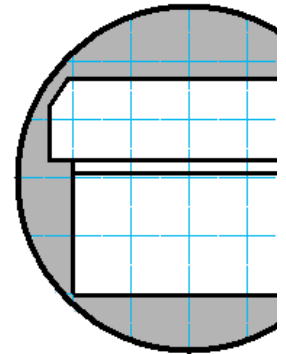


Upper "A" Deck



Lower "B" Deck

- 1: Bridge
- 2: Staterooms
- 3: Cargo access hatch
- 4: Turret maint. access
- 5: Galley & Rec room
- 6: Ship's locker
- 7: ELB & Autodoc
- 8: Air lock
- 9: Engineering upper deck



Ship cross section

- 10: Engineering lower deck
- 11: Cargo hold
- 12: Escape Pod

## Critics' Corner

### Outpost Mars

reviewed by "kafka"

*Outpost Mars*. Paul Elliott.

Zozer Games. <http://zozer.weebly.com>.

59pp., softcover/PDF.

US\$6.99 PDF/US\$5.49 Softcover

*Editor's Note: This review originally appeared on RPG.Net in July 2012, and is reprinted here with the author's permission.*

First and foremost, allow me to thank the publisher Paul Elliott of Zozer Games for gifting me a copy of a PDF for the purposes of this review.

Finally, a *Traveller* Hard SF supplement that is in a Near Earth/*Traveller* Now/Modern *Traveller* milieu and does an excellent job in making the Red Planet a great place for adventure. The TL is 9 with no great breakthrough in either gravitics or jump drive – it is just what I have always wanted to see for *Traveller* and thought of writing myself, with no Transhumanism to muck up the waters.

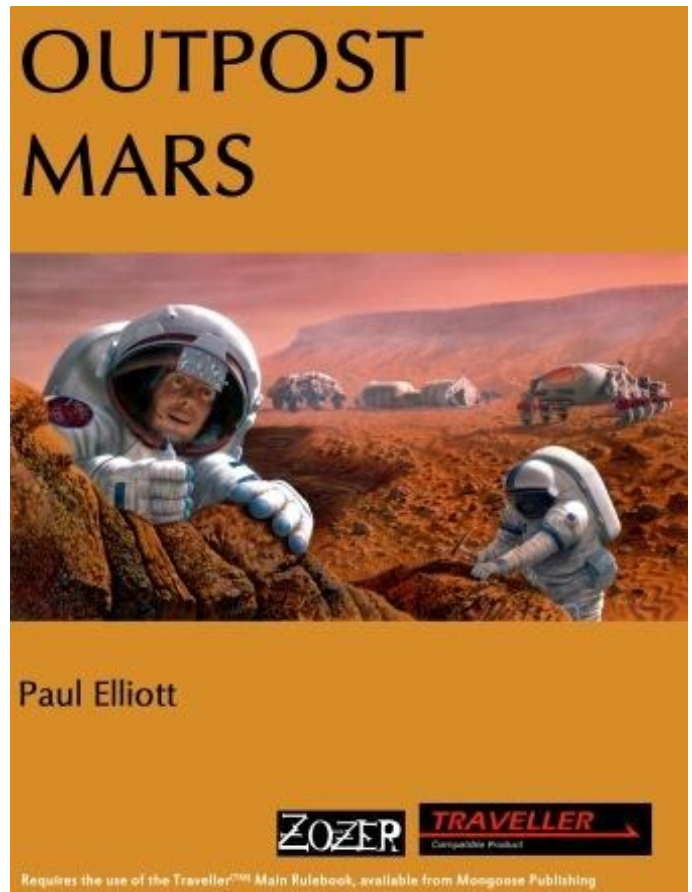
However, Paul Elliot has beaten me to the punch and done an excellent job in highlighting humanity's probable next destination after the full-scale exploitation of the Moon has commenced. The premise of *Outpost Mars* is that players are scientists working for the United Nations Space Coordination Office (why the author did not choose a real agency like United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, I am not sure although, I could have equally accepted a nod to *Traveller's* UNSCA), exploring and exploiting the Red Planet for the good of all. Nonetheless, underneath the surface, players are more than international civil servants—they each have strong drives and motivations that sometimes run counter to each other or to the United Nations' neutral status. Those drives and motivations are in part national (though that is not fully explored because the geopolitical landscape is constantly changing) but more to do with which

(Continued on page 21)

(Continued from page 20)

future is best for Mars. These different drives and motivations play out in the missions that they are set out to accomplish before players naturally come into identifying with the character and thus the party to an extent goes rogue from the UN's agenda or are completely in sync with it and must hunt down the rogue elements. This creates a perfect vibe that mixes *Outland* with *Star Cops* with Kim Stanley Robinson's *Red/Green/Blue Mars* trilogy. And, as Mars seems to be very topical, there is plenty of source material that can be adapted into *Outpost Mars*. There is a fair bit of science contained within this supplement but the Referee is encouraged to use it as a toolbox, picking and choosing the right instrument for the job at hand rather than getting bogged down in the science.

As it is set in the near future, there is no immediate danger of technological breakthroughs that would alter the game; rather, technology is projected along a natural curve. As an example, respirators were developed in the 1940s, but although design and capacities have changed, the basic technology remains the same. Thus, it is possible to reuse many of the things we know in 2012 in 2040 (the present for *Outpost Mars*), fitting in with the 'meme' of *Traveller* being about 'shotguns in space' (more accurately, less lethal weapons, as they can do rather nasty damage to anyone in a Vacc Suit or spaceship hull), rather than lightsabers and portable disintegrators. Missing from the equipment list, however, is a detailed discussion on how the technology would work. For instance, let us take the sealed monorails that could zip across the planet like railroads of old. Where would they get the air supply that would make them incredibly bulky and not very efficient. Or what would be the effects of sandstorms on dirigibles? So, this is harder SF than standard *Traveller*, because of its recognisable technology, but not truly Hard SF, as it still relies upon some handwaving. However, the weakest section is perhaps the one that offers the most potential as the great enig-



ma to set the campaign around – xenoarchaeology. Simply reproducing the comments on RPG.net about possible life and explanations for the Face of Cydonia made the production look amateurish as opposed to the rest of the production, which was really first rate. It would have been better to highlight some of the conspiracy theories surrounding it than some of the explanations, or perhaps some of the RPG.Net comments could better have been attributed to same-named NPCs, instead of merely listing those individuals in the credits. So, I hope this can get edited out of the printed version and a distillation of the ideas to be shared.

Those quirks aside, this is an excellent Hard SF resource for the Red Planet – sections which might have otherwise seemed dry and uninteresting suddenly come alive on a wide variety of topics ranging from atmospheric analysis to topographical analysis to climate. Even an astronomy buff, like me, could learn lots of new things.

Furthermore, the gamey bits like character generation are handled very well, with just a few base careers and then the potential to add on more. *Out-*

(Continued from page 21)

*post Mars* also takes advantage of a nice mechanic that was once established in a JTAS article long ago and which I have used frequently: players do not muster out. There is only one career but three branches to choose from. It is hoped that future supplements might address the modification of existing *Traveller* careers to the milieu and add the dimension of nationality which might be used as an extra skills table or just flavor. *Outpost Mars* also provides a nice mechanic called motivation which comes into play in determining player goals, allying one's self with a particular group, and forming relationships with others in the group.

Next is the referee's section for running *Outpost Mars*: essentially, what characters do, a guide to how to create missions, and the complications that might arise. Some samples adventure seeds are here, though one can find others throughout the whole book. Following that is the somewhat adversarial relationship that the UNSCO has with potential rivalries—mostly national militaries—which are trying to put their nation first and extend classical Imperialism to the next higher level beyond the Earth itself. However, the relationships need not be adversarial but can be mutually beneficial.

A list of other media sources, such as books and movies, round out the product, suggesting some print and celluloid products—stories, plots, or backgrounds—that can be integrated into *Outpost Mars*. I would have liked to see more but I recognize that everyone has their own future.

The art, while phenomenal, is unfortunately taken from one source: NASA public domain art thus giving a perhaps overly US-centric point of view another thing that can be hopefully corrected once this nears completion as a print product. There must be many international artists who have their work in the public domain that would love to

get additional exposure that one can use. However, my biggest beef and my greatest criticism – is that the reader is left wanting more. So, the question is whether Paul Elliott will continue to take us on a Grand Tour of the Solar System, beyond Mars, to the Belt, to Titan, to Venus, and to the other bodies of the Solar System? In this product, rather than quenching a thirst, he ignites a hunger for more. This excellent work has to continue, to expand on the drips and drabs we are already given, whether it be scant and tantalizing details of the settlements or even how we got there. What changed from the Great Recession into investing into the Space Program?

I guess I am hungering for *Traveller* set in a technothriller present. I would gladly collaborate on such a project. I eagerly await the dead tree copy and hope that it is not too late to incorporate some of these positive criticisms. However, as one can see in spite of these criticism, that I find it a brilliant piece of work and hope the author can make good use of the suggestions. So keep up the excellent work and I cannot wait to see more expansions for this branch of the *Traveller* tree. 🌱

*Editor's Note:* *Outpost Mars* is compatible with the subsequently-released Zozer product *Orbital*, a 200+ page sourcebook for the same era, "kafka"'s review of which was reprinted in our March 2013 issue.

## News About Traveller

### Recent Traveller News and Findings

February 2013

- **Rainer Games** has released *The Ken of Klem*
- **Christian Hollnbuchner** has released *Police Truck: Blaster, APC: Chameleon, and Motorcycle: Cyclone*
- **Zozer Games** has released *Attack Squadron: Roswell*
- **13Mann** has released *Traveller ROBOTS*, an English translation of their German supplement
- **Gypsy Knights Games** has released *Clement Sector*
- **DSL Ironworks** has released *Bastards of Foreven Book 0: Stories from the Frontier* 🌱





# The Lyman Drive: An Alternative to the Standard Jump Drive

by Jeff Zeitlin (with consultation from Ken Pick)

This article was originally posted to the Freelance Traveller website in June of 2002.

## Introduction

A major source of complaints in ship designs for *Traveller*, when using any of the standard rule sets, is the necessity for allocating major portions of hull space for fuel storage. At the same time, the reduced cargo capacity and increased cost of fuel makes most starships economically marginal at best, and impossible at worst. Given the description of purchasing a ship in the standard rules, it could be considered strange that most far and free traders aren't 'skips' (evading repossession for nonpayment).

The Lyman Drive offers a possible alternative making it easier for a small ship to be economically sustainable, while not completely eliminating the need to scrimp and save between payments. It also offers the possibility of designing small ships with extended jump range—ideal for exploratory ships.

## Fuel Usage

The Lyman Drive requires more fuel for a Jump-1 than a standard Jump Drive, but the fuel requirements for higher jumps are significantly lower—a Jump-6 requires less than 15% of hull to be allocated to fuel carriage/storage. The fuel usage figures depend on jump range and tech level of construction, and are as follows:

Fuel Usage as Percentage of Hull Volume						
Jump	TL10	TL11	TL12	TL13	TL14	TL15
1	13.6	10.2	10.2	10.2	10.2	10.2
2	-	13.6	12.1	12.1	12.1	12.1
3	-	-	13.6	12.7	12.7	12.7
4	-	-	-	13.6	13.1	13.1
5	-	-	-	-	13.6	13.2
6	-	-	-	-	-	13.6

If no figure is given, a Lyman Drive of the indicated capability cannot be constructed at the indicated (*Traveller*, not *GURPS*) Tech Level.

(If you want to simplify, just say that fuel usage is a flat 15% of hull volume.)

## Gain in Available Tonnage

The decrease in required fuel means a potentially drastic increase in usable space in the hull—either for the comfort of the crew and/or passengers, or for increased cargo-carrying capacity. The amount of hull volume recovered (as a percentage of total hull volume) is as follows:

Recovered Volume as Percentage of Hull Volume						
Jump	TL10	TL11	TL12	TL13	TL14	TL15
1	-3.6	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2
2	-	6.4	7.9	7.9	7.9	7.9
3	-	-	16.4	17.3	17.3	17.3
4	-	-	-	26.4	26.9	26.9
5	-	-	-	-	36.4	36.8

If no figure is given, a Lyman Drive cannot be constructed with the indicated capability at the indicated Tech Level.

Observe that Lyman J1 drives actually result in a loss of available tonnage.

## Increased Cost

Although the Lyman Drive has reduced fuel costs, it has higher purchase and operating costs.

The Lyman Drive must use refined fuel only. This requires either limiting the ship's ports of call to Class A/V and B/IV starports (C/III if the port is known to have refined fuel available), or the ship must be equipped with a refiner to allow the use of unrefined fuel (at Class C/III, D/II, and E/I ports) and/or wilderness refueling (anywhere). Standard ship refiners can be used.

'Jump governors' cannot be used with the Lyman Drive. All jumps use the same amount of fuel as the drive's rated maximum jump.

The cost of building the drive is higher, depending on both the desired maximum range and the tech level of construction, as follows:

Cost of Lyman Drive as Compared to Standard Jump Drive of the Same Capability						
Jump	TL10	TL11	TL12	TL13	TL14	TL15
1	115%	114%	113%	112%	111%	110%
2	-	128%	126%	124%	122%	120%
3	-	-	139%	136%	133%	130%
4	-	-	-	148%	144%	140%
5	-	-	-	-	155%	150%

If no figure is given, a Lyman Drive of the indicated capability cannot be constructed at the indicated Tech Level.

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Note that this increase is to be applied after all other cost factors associated with the drive (e.g., foreign manufacture costs, exchange rates, tech level effects, and so on).

Lyman Drives themselves take up the same amount of space on the ship as an equivalent Standard Jump Drive.

The cost of maintaining the Lyman Drive is higher than for standard jump drives. Apply the same increases from the construction costs table above to the cost for all parts and servicing, including annual maintenance.

(If you want to simplify, the cost of building and maintaining a Lyman Drive is 30% higher than a standard Jump Drive.)

All die rolls related to operating the Lyman Drive have an unfavorable DM of 1, effectively increasing the skill required of the engineer (and therefore the amount the engineer must be paid).

## Economics

At J1, don't use the Lyman Drive—it reduces revenue capacity while increasing costs.

At J2, the increased cost of the Lyman Drive offsets the increased profitability from having additional cargo space, resulting in an increase in the CER (see Ken Pick's *Commercial Efficiency Analysis of Selected Starfreighters*, <http://www.freelancetraveller.com/features/shipyard/analysis.html>) that is only marginal. In speculative trade, a Lyman Drive ship will still have to work to make ends meet, but may be able to survive on routes that would bankrupt a standard design. The advantage can be 'played up' by increasing the total hull volume (that is, larger ships will see a greater benefit than smaller ones).

In the case of the RL2 Stretch Fat Trader, the TL15 Lyman Drive brings the ship from economically nonviable without subsidy to minimally profitable in unsubsidized speculative trade.

The advantage of the Lyman Drive makes itself felt at J4. At this level and above, incremental increases in hull volume are disproportionately allo-

cable to revenue generation, and profitability as a common-carrier at standard rates is virtually guaranteed.

Comparative Commercial Efficiency of Lyman Drive Starships					
TL	Ship	Tonnage Gross	Net	Price (MCR)	CER
Jump-2 Examples (from Freelance Traveller Shipyard)					
11	Type AL2 Far Trader	300	135	84	3.21
11	(Lyman Drive-211)	300	154	92	3.35
12	(Lyman Drive-212)	300	158	92	3.43
15	(Lyman Drive-215)	300	158	90	3.51
11	Type R2 Stretch Fat Trader	500	277	178	3.11
11	(Lyman Drive-211)	500	309	192	3.22
12	(Lyman Drive-212)	500	317	191	3.32
15	(Lyman Drive-215)	500	317	188	3.37
11	Type RL2 Stretch Fat Trader	600	317	228	2.78
11	(Lyman Drive-211)	600	355	245	2.9
12	(Lyman Drive-212)	600	364	244	2.98
15	(Lyman Drive-215)	600	364	240	3.03
Jump-3 Example (from The Traveller Adventure)					
12	Oberlindes Type CT Cargo-carrier	1000	462	410	3.38
12	(Lyman Drive-312)	1000	626	469	4
15	(Lyman Drive-315)	1000	635	455	4.19
Jump-4 Example (from The Traveller Adventure)					
13	Tukera Type AT Freighter	3000	1369	809	6.77
13	(Lyman Drive-413)	3000	2161	924	9.35
15	(Lyman Drive-415)	3000	2176	905	9.62

## Non-Commercial Use of the Lyman Drive

Where commercial viability of the ship is not at issue, the Lyman Drive offers significant advantages. Extra space can be put to use to increase crew/passenger comfort, or to carry additional needed supplies or equipment.

## Military Implications

At J2, military ships can use the additional space for loading ammunition, and may possibly be able to mount additional weapons batteries. Such a ship will have an advantage over standard designs of equivalent displacement.

At J3, another option becomes available: the ship can both fight and run, without the need for fuel tenders or on-site refueling. A fleet fully equipped with Lyman J3 Drives instead of standard J3 drives becomes eminently suitable for raiding hostile systems, or for fighting a war of attrition. It also becomes possible for such a fleet to attack the mainworld of a system without needing to fight outlying units to secure a fuel source.

At J4 and above, both capabilities become available together.

## Doing It My Way

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Again, incremental increases in hull volume can be disproportionately allocated to mission usage. A Battle Tender equipped with the Lyman Drive will be able to carry more Battle Riders than one equipped with standard jump drives.

### Non-Military Implications

As with military ships, the benefits available will be increased mission tonnage, increased range, or both. The difference is in how the benefit is applied.

Exploratory ships of J3 capability or greater immediately gain 'out-and-back' capability. This allows systems to be explored without the necessity of assuring the availability of fuel in the target system. Ships of J4 or greater capability also gain increased space for mission-related material (e.g.,

enhanced instrumentation, or increased supplies to allow a longer mission). J2 ships will gain mission capability, but not range.

Colonization vessels with J3 capability either allow for larger colonization efforts or for planting colonies at a greater distance from the launch point. This potentially allows for the selection of better colony worlds, or the staging of colonization missions from planets with better infrastructure or greater available resources.

Couriers, yachts, x-boats, and other similar non-military vessels travelling primarily between well-established worlds will gain both increased mission space (which may be devoted to increased comfort for crew and/or passengers) and increased range, if they are capable of J4 or more. J3 ships gain one or the other, but not both; J2 ships will gain mission space. ☸



## In A Store Near You

### NHR 1100 Fishery Robot

*designed by Ewan Quibell*

Robot ID: NHR 1100 Fisherybot, TL10, Cr 39,085.5  
UPP=xxx03x  
Hull: 1/1, Size=6.75 kl, Config=2SL, Armor=4E,  
Unloaded=710.2kg, Loaded=6,703.3kg  
Power: 1/2, FuelCell=211.8kw, Duration=7/21  
Loco: 1/2, StdGravThrust=2000kg, NOE=40kph,  
CruiseAtm=270kph, TopAtm=360kph,  
MaxAccel=0.31G  
Commo: Radio=VDist (50 km), Interface=Brain  
Sensors: Radar=Dist(all weather), ActAudio=Dist,  
Environ  
Off: Hardpoints=1  
Def: DefDM=+2  
Brain: NHR Low Function 110 CPU=Linear×7, Stor-  
age=Std×30, FundLogic=LowData,  
FundCmd=LtdBasic, Software=Grav Vehicle-  
1, Hunting-2  
Control: Panel=Electronic Link  
Append: -  
Other: Cargo=5934.8 litres, Fuel=454.9 litres,  
Fish Scoops, ObjSize=Small, EMLevel=Faint

The NHR 1100 Fisherybot is a basic and low-cost fishing robot designed to travel anywhere on a world's surface its oceans and seas with the ability to carry a ton of cargo. It comes supplied with a variety of seafood hunting options, although it is limited to one type of seafood at a time.

A single NHR 1100 can catch up to 0.43 metric tons of seafood, enough to feed approximately 3,000 sophonts, and can keep in touch with its base, returning with its catch as needed. The NHR uses an adaptation of vehicle fuel scoops to travel over its prey and scoop them into its holding tanks where they are kept alive with a constant flow of water. The 1100's tanks are rarely filled with high density seafood and thus its performance is considerably better than the 0.31G rating.

The NHR 1100 costs Cr391 annually to maintain, and lasts for approximately 10 years of full operations. ☸



## Feedback

Please tell us ...

- what you think of both magazine and website
- what you think of the articles we publish
- how we can make our magazine better
- how we can make our website better
- what kind of articles you do or don't want to see
- what you think of our look
- how we can make it better

Please, give us your opinion! We've provided several ways you can do so:

- e-mail: [feedback@freelancetraveller.com](mailto:feedback@freelancetraveller.com).

- feedback form at <http://www.freelancetraveller.com/infocenter/feedback/ftfbf.html>.
- Forums:  
Traveller Fanzine section of SFRPG: <http://www.sfrpg-discussion.net/phpBB3/viewforum.php?f=36>  
Lone Star at Citizens of the Imperium: <http://www.travellerrpg.com/CotI/Discuss/forumdisplay.php?f=13>

**Note: you must be registered with the forums to be able to use this method.**

## Traveller on the Internet

**IRC: The #Traveller and #LoneStar channels**

*Freelance Traveller* sponsors channels for *Traveller* fans on the Undernet and Otherworlders IRC networks, and the two channels are "bridged" so that if you're visiting either, you can see what's going on in the other, and talk to people there. For more information about both channels, see our informational pages at <http://www.freelancetraveller.com/infocenter/travnet.html#IRC> and <http://www.freelancetraveller.com/infocenter/travchat/index.html>. Come talk "live" with other *Traveller* fans about anything at all, *Traveller* or not, and make both channels "jumping" places to hang out!

You can also run "play-by-IRC" game sessions in either channel; please stop in and ask one of the channel operators (FreeTrav or EMT\_Hawk) to schedule it, so we can ensure that the 'bridge' and the 'bartender' are set into a nondisruptive mode.

*Please watch the Traveller Mailing List, the Mongoose Traveller forum, and the Lone Star section of the Citizens of the Imperium forum for announcements of Topical Talks!*

## Information Center: Request for Information

Here is a list of all of those publishers that we are aware of that are currently putting out material for *Traveller* (any version) or *Traveller*-compatible material not specifically for *Traveller* (this list is based on products that the editor owns, and notifications from "follow your favorites" from DriveThruRPG). If you know of others, or if any of those on this list are not in fact currently operating/publishing, please write and let us know. We'd also appreciate either lists or pointers to lists of all of the *Traveller* and *Traveller*-compatible material put out by any of these companies, or any companies that we may have omitted from the list. If you have contact information, we'd appreciate that as well.

### List of Traveller/compatible Publishers

3Hombres Games  
Avalon Game Company  
Avenger Enterprises  
Christian Hollnbuchner  
D.B. Design Bureau  
DSL Ironworks  
Expeditious Retreat Press

FarFuture Enterprises  
Forever People  
Game Designers' Workshop(!)  
Gorgon Press  
Gypsy Knights Games  
Jon Brazer Enterprises  
K-Studio  
Loren Wiseman Enterprises  
Mongoose Publishing  
Postmortem Studios  
QuikLink Interactive  
Samardan Press  
Sceaptune Games  
Scrying Eye Games  
Spellbook Software and Games  
Spica Publishing  
Steve Jackson Games  
Terra/Sol Games  
Toxic Bag Productions  
Zozer Games

# Submission Guidelines

## What is *Freelance Traveller* looking for?

We're looking for anything and everything to do with *Traveller* – reviews of products, house rules, alternate settings, NPC profiles, world write-ups, adventures, equipment, starships, fiction, “color” articles... If you see it in *Freelance Traveller*, or on our website, we're interested in it. Even if you don't see it in the magazine or on the website, we might be interested; write to [editor@freelancetraveller.com](mailto:editor@freelancetraveller.com) and ask.

Some things that we want that you might not think of as “*Traveller*” would include reviews of non-*Traveller* products that easily lend themselves to being ‘mined’ for ideas for use in *Traveller*, or reviews of fiction (in any medium) that “feels” like *Traveller* in some way. In these cases, your article should focus on the *Traveller*-esque aspects of the item. There may be other things, as well; if you're not sure, write and ask.

## What about ...

The rule of thumb is “If it's a *Traveller* ruleset, or a setting that has been published for use with a *Traveller* ruleset, go for it!”. That includes the non-Official *Traveller* Universe settings that have been published for use with any version of the *Traveller* ruleset, including (but not limited to) *Judge Dredd*, *Strontium Dog*, *Babylon 5*, *Reign of Diaspora*, *Twilight Sector*, the two GURPS variants on the Official *Traveller* Universe, Avenger Enterprises' *Far Avalon*, and the forthcoming *Traveller Prime Directive*, and any others we may have forgotten.

## ...Hyperlite?

We've made the decision to support *Hyperlite* as though it were an alternate *Traveller* setting, much like *Twilight Sector* or *Reign of Diaspora*. The changes that Sceptune Games has made to *Traveller* to get *Hyperlite* aren't really much more than the differences between Classic *Traveller*, *MegaTraveller*, *Marc Miller's Traveller*, and *Mongoose Traveller*, and converting between any of those systems and *Hyperlite*, in either direction, should be ‘trivial’.

## ... Diaspora, or Starblazer Adventures?

If your article is about “crossing over” between these products and any of the “standard” or supported *Traveller* rulesets or settings, by all means, submit it! If it's support for those systems beyond *Traveller*, we'll accept and hold the submission, but will not print it unless/until we've had a reasonable level of expression of interest in such support from our readers.

## How should I submit my article?

### What needs to be in the submission?

At the very minimum, we need the submission itself, your name (for credit), and a valid email address to contact you at if we need to.

### What format should I submit it in?

That depends on what you're submitting. Generally:

Text should be submitted in Microsoft Rich Text Format (RTF), Microsoft Word 2003 (DOC) or 2007/2010 (DOCX), OpenOffice Writer (ODT), or plain text (TXT). Most word processors will support one of those; if yours seems not to, please write to us for assistance. Avoid PDF if at all possible; it is difficult to reformat PDFs for our magazine or website.

Graphics should be submitted in the format that's best for the type of graphic. Most of the time, that will be GIF, PNG, or JPG/JPEG. Submitting in higher resolutions is better; we have tools to resample a picture to make it smaller if we need to – but it's not possible to make a picture larger without it becoming pixellated.

If you're submitting a graphic that you'd like to see us use for a cover of an issue, please make sure that it will fit nicely on both US Letter and ISO A4 pages—we'll crop the picture to fit, to avoid distorting shapes, so please leave reasonable “margins”; don't run “critical” imagery right to the edge where it will look bad if we crop it. A good resolution is 100 dpi or more.

Plans (deck plans, building plans, maps, etc.) may be better submitted in a vector-based format such as CorelDRAW! format (CDR) or any format that can be imported into CorelDRAW! X4. Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG), Windows Metafile (WMF), Enhanced Metafile (EMF), Encapsulated PostScript (EPS), or Microsoft Visio (VSD) are some common vector formats that can be imported.

### How do I get it to you?

Email it to us at our submissions address, [submissions@freelancetraveller.com](mailto:submissions@freelancetraveller.com). Your subject line should specify the type of article that it is, and what section you think it should be put in, e.g., “Combat Rules for Doing It My Way”.

