

Lizardmen

Overview:

The lizardmen, or Tochtec, of Amroth live in a dense, jungle and swamp environment bordered on three sides by mountains, and the fourth by steep cliffs that fall into the eastern ocean. Heavily fortified by nature, they live a relatively peaceful life of farming, hunting, and seeking knowledge of the world around them by studying the stars.

The lizardmen themselves are relatively secretive - they are peaceful, but do not tolerate outsiders in their lands, and will escort unwelcome guests away from their domain. The warriors of the tochtec regularly patrol the mountain passes into their lands, and are quite willing to use force to protect their people if necessary.

They trade in goods and knowledge, with many unique natural resources available to them. Dwarves, barbarians, and wachagga alike meet in the great city of Coutlat to trade, meet, and learn of new things. Even the sampan are known to send youngsters far inland to learn what can be learned here.

Culture

Most lizardmen live in small family groups, farming/hunting/making their general way. They produce far more than they consume, and trade their produce into the cities where they barter for manufactured goods that they need. They, all of them, do whatever it is that they're good at to advance the sum of knowledge their people have over the world and it's magical and mechanical secrets. It takes a particularly keen mind to study the deepest secrets, which not everyone possesses, so it is considered no shame to be a 'mere farmer' or hunter. In fact, some of the brightest minds among the lizardmen retire early to the simple life of farming or hunting, or a craft, because each tooth of each gear in the machine of the cosmos has value. This sends a large proportion of the lizardmen into a druidic bent, and all hold a reverence for nature, although progress and production is also important to them. They only clear land that is needed, and, when done with the land, they remove all of their buildings and let them return to nature. Because of this, the number of cities are few, and there is a common network of merchants and traders who move goods back and forth to and from the cities. There good roads, but they are hidden and difficult to find, because they don't want marauding outsiders to steal their knowledge.

It is said that the tochtec scholars record their studies on gold tablets, and that they are stored in some hidden city of knowledge. It is also said that the lizardmen are secretly ruled by a caste of necromancers, using not only undead servants but also giant snakes. Some rumors have it that the tochtec rules are more benevolent, and that kind-hearted feathered serpents have rescued lost explorers and brought them back to civilization. Of all the rumors, no member of the lizardman race has spoken openly of any of this.

It is known that they have two main cities:

Coutlat - The city most focused on craftsmanship and commerce.

Coutlat contains most of the skilled craftsmen and artisans of the lizardmen. It is rare that a foreigner visits this city. The routes and roads into the interior of the jungle are closely guarded secrets, and visitors tend to be escorted. Those privileged few who have seen the city tell of large, stepped observation platforms from which sensitive and technical measurements of

the movements of the stars are made, and craftsmen line the streets on market days, selling finely-wrought goods and taking orders for custom work. There are masters in stonework, carpentry, weaving, and other trades here, but the most valued of them all is goldsmithing. The tochtec place great pride in items and creations that can withstand the wages of time. Gold, with its indestructible properties, is a highly prized material for objects of art, war, or skilled trade.

Tectol-Otza - The main center of trade and commerce with outside cultures. Located in the southwesternmost parts of the jungle, near the mountains that border the lizardman domain and the human barbarian lands below, there are several passes with roads that lead here. Most outsiders consider this to be the greatest city of the lizardmen, and indeed, much of the world.

Castes:

Lizardman society is divided into castes, which are determined for each child at birth. The determination is made not by lineage, but by the signs and portents that surround the new arrival. Seers witness every birth, grant names to the child, and place the child into the appropriate setting for rearing and instruction. Most caste members will marry within their caste, although out-of-caste matches do occur. Regardless, a new child will be placed in fosterage if the signs dictate that the child is destined a different life from that of its parents.

Tradesmen are the foundation of lizardman society. They farm, hunt, produce, and manufacture every item and object that is needed for the nation to thrive.

Warriors are trained from birth, and enforce the laws, defend the people, and ensure that the signs and portents declared by the seers comes to pass as required. Not all warriors fight with a blade, however. Many are skilled mages, and yet others are tacticians and strategists, with the ability to read signs in their own right.

Seers rarely leave the jungle, content to spend their days watching the signs, foretelling the portents, and asking others to witness significant events and bring back reports, so that the knowledge may be added to the histories. The seers are true visionaries, and are generally aware, in some capacity, of most important events. Due to this, a common saying among tochtec families is, "May the Seers never be aware of your presence."

Stats

All lizardmen have +2 body, +10 body to their class maximum. Their reptilian metabolism enables them to learn to Resist Disease, and their contemplative nature grants them the ability to buy Lore skills and Astrology at half cost.

All lizardmen must have green makeup with scales on all exposed skin, with a yellow, scaled band from the chin down the throat. Painted bodysuits or green-colored form-fitting clothing will help this. Most lizardmen have very short tails that are normally covered by their clothing, although some grow long.

Roleplay Guidelines

Lizardmen are limited in their speech: they may not speak above a whisper, and they tend to hiss a bit.

Their names are rather involved, and refer to the mystic signs and portents that surround their birth, so a fully translated Tochtec name may be as complex as "18 rabbit in the rise of the great mountain, full moon over the river," or as simple as "Great comet." The complexity of the name depends on the wealth of the family giving birth - the deeper the reading, the more specific the signs and portents surrounding a specific Tochtec name. These names are often written in the language of the ancients, but rarely spoken so. More often, they're spoken in common. Most lizardmen have never learned the ancient tongue.

Traditional lizardman weapons are swords made of shards of volcanic glass sandwiched between two thin boards of stout wood, with a handle beneath, spears, or clubs made of dense wood or thick thighbones of great lizards, although more practical warriors simply use steel.

Dress is also simple - men and women wear tunics and a short, unpleated skirt, and typically sandals or low, soft boots. Clan, guild, or professional affiliation is indicated with headdresses and embroidered shoulder-pieces for the more notable positions, or a simple narrow apron hung from the belt for typical citizens.