

Wachagga

Race Rules and Overview

The Wachagga are a race of people who live across the mountains, far to the west of the Oasis of Shadowmoor. They are a stout, and straightforward people, who live practical and simple lives, yet hold vast knowledge of craftsmanship, manipulation of the world around them, and a unique view of the history of Amroth.

As a race, they are divided into four tribes, and their land is separated among them - Fire to the east, among the ridges of the volcanic mountains that form a natural border between their domain and the barbarian steppes. Water to the west, up and down the coast where they operate small fishing boats and coastal trading vessels. Earth lives in the south, among the jungles and swamps of the bottomlands, tending their herbs and farms. The Chagga of Air roam the plains, tending great herds of cattle. In the center of the lands lies the great city, Ndombwe, surrounded by walls 90 feet high, with towers inside that can see the mountains and the coast from their height. Contained within are the two greatest treasures of the Wachagga people: the Elders House, where clan chiefs and local village kings can settle disputes and arrange tributes; and the Chuo Kikuu, or University - center of learning and knowledge. Masters of history, philosophy, and lore study and learn, sending out young scholars to explore and discover new information with which they can achieve their own status as a teacher. Almost all mages among the Wachagga study here.

It is said that the Wachagga arrived first on the plains, from lands beyond the sun, refugees from an eternal war in which they were but pawns. Each tribe was very small, and made a pact to meet once every year in the same place to ensure that such wars never again plague their people. The place eventually became Ndombwe, and for the most part the peace has been held. There are rumors that the land they came from was another realm of existence entirely, and some think that their unique ability to manipulate the elements, and mastery of elemental magic support this school of thought.

The Wachagga are not a long-lived race - an elder is fifty years old, and may serve on the Elder's Council from that age, if chosen. It is rare for a Wachagga to see eighty years, and even rarer still for one hundred. Children are raised by their clan until they see fifteen summers, and are then given the rite of passage to adulthood. From there, they must marry, travel to another clan to make their living, or go to Ndombwe to continue their studies at Chuo Kikuu.

The last thirty years have been a difficult time for the Wachagga. The magical collapse that prevented new births, and for a race with a short lifespan, has proven devastating. Now that the natural cycles of Life and Death have been restored, the entire nation has begun to explore the world once again, ready for adventure.

Culture

Wachagga tend to marry early, or leave their clan to find a partner or follow their chosen trade. For example, a local blacksmith may not be needed in the village they were raised in - so they will travel to find a suitable place to ply their trade. It is considered good to travel before marriage, since there will be less disruption to the family. In some circumstances, whole clans will move to start a new settlement if the local area cannot support the population.

Children are raised by the extended family, and even at young ages are taught the basic skills needed to make their way in life. They are given a wide variety of teaching by all the members of their clan, so that they may experience every task that must be done to keep their clan healthy. Once they begin to express an interest in a career, the child will move in with an adult who plies the trade they wish to learn.

Once a child has seen the sun pass over fifteen summers, he or she will undergo their clan's rite of passage to adulthood. This ceremony differs from clan to clan, but usually involves some sort of endurance test, followed by a feast and festival. All children rising to adulthood are initiated together, and are considered brothers and sisters. They are forbidden to marry from this group, as well as direct blood kin.

Wamaji:

Living along the open coast, the Maji tribe are ideally suited for trading and fishing. Their coastal ships are seen on all parts of the continent, trading steel, cowries, and patterned textile goods for spices and finished goods uncommon among the Wachagga. They also control the island of Pemba, just off the coast. Pemba is a popular port-of-call for Sampan and Dwarven sailing vessels for trading.

Wahewa:

The Hewa tribe are primarily nomadic, settling down in seasonal villages to overwinter and assist their cattle herds in calving. They are the only tribe for whom the rite of passage to adulthood takes place in late winter, as this is one of the few times the whole clan is together. Known for their colorful cloaks and jewelry, it is rare to find a mhewa dressed plainly.

Wamoto:

Masters of the secrets of steel, the Wamoto live in the foothills and mountains of the Arusha mountains, named after the city in which they smelt iron into steel. Arushan steel is world-famous for its quality, and other cultures eagerly trade for it due to its resistance to corrosion, ability to keep an edge, and superior strength. Most every mmoto is employed in the production of Arushan steel, whether mining, working the forges, or producing crucibles or aqueducts for smelting. It is this steel that moves the Chagga economy, but without the rest of the tribes, the specialized Fire workers could not survive.

Waardhi:

The Ardhi tribe lives in the southernmost portion of the Chagga domain, in the bottomlands characterized by jungle, swamps, and mangrove marshes. Theirs is the best arable land of all the Wachagga, so they provide a large part of the food, trading it in Ndombwe or Pemba for the goods and services they cannot produce. Unique amongst the Wachagga, the Waardhi are more attuned to Earth magics, and are the only ones who may specialize their magical studies in Earth magic. They are well-known for their healing abilities, and it is common for other tribes to travel to the Earth lands for healing beyond the skill of their local healers.

Stats:

Stats

Advantages: All Wachagga gain one innate resist of their tribe's element (Fire, Ice, Lightning, or Acid) at no build cost. They also may learn the Read Magic at half cost (First Aid and Healing Arts for Earth Wachagga), and can specialize in Elemental Magic at character creation. (If they are not specialized, the character must wait until 7th level to do so)

Disadvantages: Wachagga may not specialize in Confining Magic, nor any Earth specialty. Earth Tribe Wachagga may not specialize in any Celestial magic, but instead may choose any Earth Magic specialty.

Makeup/Costuming requirements: All Wachagga have scales colored by their element (Red for Fire, Yellow for Lightning, Blue for Ice, and Green for Earth) around their eyes and down the side of their face and neck.

Wachagga warriors prefer using spears, or a one-handed weapon with shield. Most mages study elemental magic, while Waardhi casters mostly remain earth generalists. New characters who have specialized into Elemental magic are assumed to have studied at Chuo Kikuu for at least some period of time.

Roleplay guidelines

Language notes:

The Wachagga names are based on Swahili, an East African language that is quite common in east and central Africa. The grammar, in particular, is very different from European languages. Nouns have a root that is modified by prefixes to determine the case being used. In particular, this is important when using the tribal and cultural names:

Chagga (noun root) Describes someone or something from the Chagga people.

Wachagga (plural noun) - Chagga people, can be used specifically (Those Wachagga over there) or cohesively (All Wachagga are concerned about their family's status in their clan.)

Mchagga (Singular noun) - Refers specifically to an individual Chagga. (I am mchagga, that mchagga there is a skilled elemental, etc...)

The same prefixes are used with the tribes as well (Ardhi/Waardhi/Maardhi; Hewa/Wahewa/Mhewa) etc.

Note: All Chagga will refer to themselves and their tribes in this manner, but it is not expected that non-Chagga will use these terms.

Syllable Prefix Pronunciation:

Any Chagga word that begins with a consonant prefix (m- or n- in most cases) is pronounced with no extra vowels. For instance, mchagga is pronounced mmm-chagga, not em-chagga or ma-chagga. Ndombwe, the largest city of the Wachagga, is likewise spoken as nn-dombway.

Chagga tend to have reserved personalities - they prefer to take a wait-and-see approach to many problems, until they are sure of the outcome. They hold their family, clan, and close companions in high regard, and generally work to better their group's wellbeing rather than their own. The proverbs 'It takes a village to raise a child' and 'Many hands build houses, many houses build towns' epitomize the mindset. In