

Ghostwriting Animals

Hi again Flint! Here is your animal file. I developed this ecosystem for the ris'wars' world, with the following criteria in mind:

1. most animals will need to be fish (or something similar), and
2. most animals will live in, or near, saltwater, much of it shallow
3. areas of high altitude are rare.

Everything you see on this file is the result of 4 hours of work. There's lots more I could do, so as such there's a certain amount of 'scaffolding' present on this file. Anything behind a black marker [REDACTED] is a note that helps me to structure the ecosystem. I've kept them in just in case you want me to keep working on this world, so I can continue with relative ease; they're not confidential, they're just not the actual finished work. You're more than welcome to check them out if you like.

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So as you can see, you've got a full set of Orders - there are several under each Class! Their names are placeholder names so if you were to hire me to do more work on this part of the ecosystem I'd come up with names for these species.

The Real-World Classes and their Characteristics

Desolfir



The animals of this Class are cold-blooded and live on land. They lay hard-shelled eggs which means they must protect them from being cracked, which is often a tricky ask for cold-blooded animals - for example, climbing is risky for an ectotherm, so laying their eggs at the tops of trees, defending those eggs, and finding food are three demands that are hard to fulfil all at once.

Keeping their eggs dry is also highly important as their young require oxygen, which comes through the porous shell. Furthermore, it's entirely possible for the eggs to drown if the atmospheric humidity is too high. For this reason these creatures prefer high areas of exposed rock further inland to breed. They also like dead forests, for this reason.

Many species lay their eggs communally in the few available areas that qualify, and they have silvery scales, which herds of them flash at predators in order to distract them from their eggs.

There is clear evidence of their evolutionary history as aquatic animals, as many species have vestigial gills and webbed feet.

Number of limbs: 6



Amskinth



Another cold-blooded Class. These are adaptive to all sorts of water environments. Their skins are fine, sensitive, and absorb oxygen, which helps them survive in and out of water.

Number of limbs: 4, usually all fins



Leyga

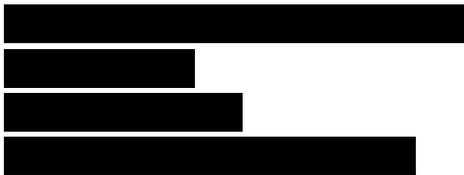


These creatures rely to a great extent on warm and humid weather. This allows them to get warm enough to fly, and even then they can only fly relatively slowly and in warm environments to prevent their bodies from chilling too much.

Their eggs are something to behold - scintillating, jelly-like coverings protect a developing embryo at the centre.

These creatures are capable of living above water and below, but for the above reasons they prefer shallow water where they can stay warm. As water holds onto warmth for longer than air, many species spend much of their lives underwater.

Number of limbs: 4



Wyre



Warm blooded creatures with smooth, scaly skins. They're better adapted for living on land and in shallow water than primarily in the water, although like most species on this planet they're able to do both.

Moving in and out of water can be harmful for a warm-blooded creature so those who live in water generally stay in it, to prevent leaving it and chilling, while others remain out of it and avoid going in unless they are able to warm up after returning to land.

Their scales allow them to dry very quickly, meaning that being wet and losing body heat that way is a low risk to them.

Number of limbs: 6

[Perhaps this is the Class the ris' war themselves came from?]



Glitten



Another warm-blooded Class. These are live-bearing, which presents interesting challenges in a world with so many strong currents. A large number of species are gliders with skin between their limbs, some are true fliers, and there are also climbers and adept swimmers. Their fur gives them an advantage in keeping warm.

Number of limbs: 4



“Planet Ris’War” Order Characteristics

In taxonomy an “Order” is a group of species which are closely related and often have a certain number of characteristics in common (e.g., birds of prey, sharks and rays, primates, etc.) Each Class contains multiple Orders, so the following is a list of Orders and a broad description of each.

I haven’t come up with ‘proper’ names for each species as that’s particularly time-consuming, but they do have temporary names.

Desolfir

Lightfingers [Name TBC]

[REDACTED]

Description: These animals possess green-bioluminescent fingertips which they move to mimic the movements of glowing insects. Opening and closing their hands allows them to create the same effect as fireflies (or at least, their equivalents on this world), which light up and extinguish themselves in a fraction of a second.

Parropets [Name TBC]

[REDACTED]

Description: Graceful and sinuous, and often pale-coloured or possessing scales that contrast between black and white, these animals camouflage themselves against the sky by remaining in the canopy. They often poke their heads out of the canopy to catch the sun.

Rainseekers [Name TBC]

[REDACTED]

Description: These creatures seek out fresh water, usually from rain. The benefit of this is that temporary puddles bring certain insects that must breed quickly. Larger species may pick small animals from the edge of these short-term water holes.

Run-for-covers [Name TBC]

[REDACTED]

Description: An Order made out of several hundred species of generic, small-bodied, and voraciously hungry invertebrate hunters. Some species live in water - both fresh and salt - while others live on land. Often they’re hard to see, and the most a watcher will see of one of these creatures is a vague flash in the corner of their eye as a well-camouflaged individual scurries for cover.

Night listeners [\[Name TBC\]](#)

Description: A relatively common sight in the mid-to-upper boughs of forests, these creatures are predators. They watch and listen out for scurrying animals and lunge for/ambush them. They tend to hunt in the most humid areas, as the nights are warmer there than in dryer areas.

Colourful runners [\[Name TBC\]](#)

Description: These creatures are made to be seen! Males have very brightly and ornately patterned scales, and many also have extra horns, flaps, and other details to enrich their appearance. They prefer bare areas - early-season meadows, rocks, and leaf-free trees - where they can be seen, and they are excellent runners. They have to be to avoid being hunted to death.

Kicky bastards [\[Name TBC\]](#)

Description: Mostly herbivorous, but fierce nonetheless. One doesn't want to corner a larger species within this Order. They're very prone to kicking (indeed, their mating season involves a great deal of scratching, kicking, and biting), and few explorers would wish to be kicked by something with 6 legs.

Secret egg-layers [\[Name TBC\]](#)

Description: Smooth-bodied mini-predators that blend in with the land around them. For a long time they were so well camouflaged that ris'war had no idea where their eggs, which are laid in small clutches at the bases of tree-branches, came from.

Waverunners [\[Name TBC\]](#)

Description: These creatures show up in huge numbers to dig in the sand, silt, and mud whenever the tide goes out. They're so manoeuvrable thanks to their 6 legs that they can outrun waves breaking on the beach or in estuaries. Very hard to catch. Because their ability to run fast is so vital to their survival they tend to be the most successful wherever there is a hard to reach piece of bare rock where they can bask and get very warm, first.

Amskinth

Escape-swimmers [\[Name TBC\]](#)



Description: Delicate creatures with their forelegs adapted into large wings. They prefer to fly in humid environments, as flight can dry the skin on their wings, which can permanently damage them. Most of the time these creatures live underwater, where they tuck their wings tight against their bodies and/or face into the current, as their wings can otherwise be pulled open. If found by a predator, these creatures do indeed open their wings, which helps them to escape quickly via a combination of being pulled away by the current and swimming.

Mudhats [\[Name TBC\]](#)



Description: Large, heavy-bodied animals that doze in shallow water where the water keeps their skins well moisturised. Often they'll coat themselves in mud so that they can keep their eyes above the water's surface. They make formidable apex predators so are best avoided.

Wave-skirters [\[Name TBC\]](#)



Description: Another airbourne creature, although unlike the escape-swimmers they're gliders and not true flyers. These animals climb up mangroves where they eat whatever insects they can find. If disturbed they leap and glide, usually out to sea where it's difficult for any creature in the water to follow them due to the waves crashing in.

Heavy-lights [\[Name TBC\]](#)



Description: Long, round-bodied animals that can either drift in the water by straightening their bodies, or by bunching up into a ball, which allows them to sink. Their small fins allow them to steer when straight.

Bright mobbers [\[Name TBC\]](#)



Description: Beautiful on account of their colours, these creatures are highly conspicuous. They survive on account of being intelligent and vigilant for danger. Most are blue or yellow, with red species being somewhat rarer. Like other members of the Class amskinth they must lay their eggs in places that are moist enough to prevent them from drying out but not so wet as to drown them, and this is when they are at their most vulnerable. Large groups lay their eggs together, with the males and females

remaining together. They males attend, and if danger approaches they mob or otherwise distract the predator.

Dainty muzzles [\[Name TBC\]](#)

[REDACTED]

Description: Dainty creatures that live in rock-pools and pick at the tiny invertebrates that get stranded there.

Plague-creatures [\[Name TBC\]](#)

[REDACTED]

Description: Small and will almost invariably avoid larger animals. These creatures breed notoriously quickly and can form plagues if the season is good for them.

Thumpers [\[Name TBC\]](#)

[REDACTED]

Description: The first time one hears these creatures they can be rather alarming. They make thumping noises within their bodies to attract a mate, they'll usually make this noise under the water but may do so above the surface, while hauled out on rocks, branches, or the beach.

Secret swimmers [\[Name TBC\]](#)

[REDACTED]

Description: Creatures that can withstand the planet's strong tides due to their size, and which are well enough insulated to dive in deep waters and avoid becoming too chilled - so long as they stay within warm-water corridors. Their skins often feature sharp contrasts of dark and light.

Leyga

Salthunters [\[Name TBC\]](#)

[REDACTED]

Description: Among the more dangerous leyga, these creatures soar above the water, looking for animals to catch. They're notoriously ambitious hunters and will attempt to catch prey that may seem too big for them. While they will hunt in salt water they almost invariably take their catch back to a body of freshwater to eat it there.

Spawn-mimics [\[Name TBC\]](#)

[REDACTED]

Description: An Order of species that can vary the appearance of their eggs to ensure that other leyga will guard or otherwise care for their offspring - or that the reputations of certain spawns for being poisonous will protect them. Their spawn can be pearlescent, clear, brown or black; can come in individual eggs or as a mass, and the eggs at the centres can be dark, pale, or even translucent to give the appearance of a mass of jelly already expired.

Feather-shedders [\[Name TBC\]](#)

Description: Rather uninspiring creatures that swim-walk around on the sea bed using sharp claws. Their feathers grow and eventually come loose from their skin, but thanks to a unique matrix that they form, they remain in a sheath over the animal's body that looks indistinguishable from younger feathers. This makes the animal look larger, due to the feathers growing underneath the old ones. When they're caught, they slip out of the old feather sheath and swim away. This is thought to aid the survival of the species, as larger animals appear to be a better catch and tend to be slightly hindered in their movements, much like a sick or old animal, meaning that younger individuals are left alone and have the opportunity to escape when the older animal is caught.

Screaming mothers [\[Name TBC\]](#)

Description: While most leyga lay their eggs and leave them alone, most members of this Order are characterised by their tendency to stay and protect theirs. Some species are more formidable than others, and these can do genuine harm to potential predators, but smaller ones employ a range of strategies such as nasty-tasting jelly, screaming, and aggression.

Living leaves [\[Name TBC\]](#)

Description: Many species within this Order can be rather pretty. Their main characteristic is that they have strong claws, and cling to any available surface. Often they gather in large groups, and when they do this they often cling to submerged trees. When they do this they look like blossoms or fine leaves.

Graceful swimmers [\[Name TBC\]](#)

Description: The fins of these creatures are what truly defines them. Larger and more structured than those of most other animals, they can use them for steering while swimming, and can gain a mastery over the surf that most other animals struggle to

manage. They are also highly intelligent and curious in addition to looking rather appealing, with their feathers being fine and silky.

Egg-chain swimmers [\[Name TBC\]](#)

[REDACTED]

Description: Easy prey for many species, and usually with an iridescent sheen to their feathers, which allows them to dazzle and confuse predators - so long as they stay together. They breed so prolifically that during spawning season they create giant chains of jelly, often spanning for tens of miles along the coast, containing huge numbers of eggs.

Roundbodies [\[Name TBC\]](#)

[REDACTED]

Description: Animals adapted to live in the roughest surf. Their ribs are reinforced to allow them to be dashed against the rocks in shallow, turbulent waters without being damaged. Their necks are virtually non-existent and their faces are usually short, which gives them a ball-shaped appearance. Similarly their fins are tough and their feathers are smooth - this appears to help them glance off the rocks in their habitats.

Wyre

Hot killers [\[Name TBC\]](#)

[REDACTED]

Description: Carnivorous animals that gain their edge from being able to reliably warm themselves. Many species of these exist, and they are adapted to a wide range of environments.

Weedpickers [\[Name TBC\]](#)

[REDACTED]

Description: Highly adaptable creatures that find most of their food in the water and are able to use their mid-and hind-limbs to pick vegetation out of the shallows and pass it up to their mouths without putting their heads down. They're stout and strong, allowing them to put vigorous energy into escaping, although they're a meal very worth having for most animals.

Chunky prey [\[Name TBC\]](#)

[REDACTED]

Description: Prey animals that live a short distance from water. The females are larger than the males, and it's inadvisable to get bitten by one as their jaws are surprisingly strong.

Gulpers [\[Name TBC\]](#)



Description: Large-mouthed animals with an aggressive streak. While these could easily be prey animals, their bluster and tendency to bite attackers tend to put most animals off them, whether they're strong enough to attack properly or not. They do indeed eat smaller animals and could be counted as a mid-level predator. Their necks and throats are large.

Grabby hangers [\[Name TBC\]](#)



Description: These creatures come in a range of body types, based on their tendency to hang from trees. Most are omnivorous, and when they're keen to eat meat they'll often they'll hang over water where they can dart a claw down and grab anything swimming close to the surface. They may hang with their hind legs or front, use their mid-legs or not, and some use all three claws on one side of their body only.

Land heavy-lights [\[Name TBC\]](#)



Description: Long-bodied animals that can pull the same trick as the heavy-lights, but will also venture onto land to find food and lay their eggs there.

Shiny prey [\[Name TBC\]](#)



Direction: These creatures gather in large groups. They're invariably vegetarians, and they're relatively sizeable prey animals. Their scales are often silvery, iridescent, striped, or spotted, which helps them confuse and dazzle predators while they escape.

Glitten

Silt-hunters [\[Name TBC\]](#)



Description: One of the marine Orders within the glitten Class, these creatures use their powerful, flat limbs to glide through the water, usually muddy, opaque water. Their fur is close-fitting and has almost evolved away.

Nighthunters [\[Name TBC\]](#)



Description: An Order of long-bodied creatures that use their warm-bloodedness to hunt nocturnally. They often take animals that are either asleep or in torpor, which gives them a fierce reputation, especially as some species hunt in packs. Their limbs are almost vestigial but still function well enough for them to run if required.

Heavyjaws [\[Name TBC\]](#)



Description: The jaws of the animals within this Order are reinforced by extra bone, cartilage, and keratin. This helps them to fight for mates, protect their young, and eat tough plant matter, but it does make them somewhat front-heavy. Most species are flyers.

Silent flyers [\[Name TBC\]](#)



Description: Another mostly nocturnal Order. Most species in this Order eat invertebrates, and usually this is on the wing. Some are active flyers which grants them extra manoeuvrability to catch their prey, while others are gliders, which allows them to approach insects silently.

Piebalds [\[Name TBC\]](#)



Description: Most species within this Order have a high contrast - usually black and white - in their fur patterning. This allows them to hunt in clear water and in the air. They use their limbs for walking, not flying.

Low silhouettes [\[Name TBC\]](#)



Description: These species are evolved to keep a low profile - their bodies are low to the ground, and their legs are short and often bent to keep the sternum close to the ground. They're hunters, and often very effective at it.

Carcass eaters [\[Name TBC\]](#)



Description: The rough surf creates a lot of carcasses, and the failure rate of eggs is quite high. For this reason, scavengers such as these species are common and successful. They are very mobile creatures and can climb, and are often adept gliders.