

Pollies [GURPS]

ST 20; DX 5; IQ 5; HT 40;
Move 3; DR 10; SM +2

This species is originally from a frigid planet with no oxygen in its very thin atmosphere, and covered with extensive but shallow seas of somewhat diluted glycerin. Pollies are *technically* amphibious; it is more accurate to say that they do not breathe and are mostly resistant to changes in atmospheric pressure. Modern breeds have been genetically adapted to live comfortably enough in vacuum; they are **not** suited for Earthlike conditions. The species is about the size and weight of a 20th century minivan; it has four eyes (two each, front and back), four mouths (one on each side), and a set of cilia on which it slowly moves around. Pollies reproduce by egg-laying; the eggs typically outgas a mildly disgusting smell to discourage predators.

Modern Pollies live on inorganic garbage, mostly; their non-bioengineered ancestors had a diet of some very strange polymer compounds. Natural or engineered, a Pollie's appearance is garishly colored. They can live

about thirty Earth years, but most are slaughtered for their 'meat' after ten or so.

The attraction of the Pollie is that its body produces any number of handy 'synthetic' compounds. Simply put, a Pollie has a hide of polyvinyl chloride, an outer dermal layer of nylon, polyester hair, internal organs made of spandex, uses kevlar for tendons, excretes rayon, and its urine is extremely packed with acetate. It's thus a popular herd animal, particularly in zero-atmosphere locations. It's also a surprisingly popular pet, at least among species that can live in vacuum: Pollies are docile, reasonably smart, and will return affection. Despite the Pollie's average size and weight, it is difficult for Terran and other oxygen-nitrogen species to get hurt by one: the animals have a remarkable talent for getting out of other creatures' way.

Converting native Pollies to its current form would have been the work of a monomaniacal madman at TL8, a fairly heroic undertaking at TL9, and a six-month process at TL10.

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