

Beetle-Americans [25]

Attribute Modifiers: HT +1 [10]

Advantages: Damage Resistance 1 [5], Extra Arms 2 [No Physical Attack, -50%] [10], Flight [Winged, -10%] [30]

Perks: Cultural Familiarity [Human] [1], Honest Face [1]

Disadvantages: Vulnerable (Impaling, x2) [-30]

Quirks Attentive [-1], Broad-minded [-1], Congenial [-1]
Distinctive Features [sentient ladybug] [-1]

Racial Skills: Flight [HT/A] [2]

Appearance: Beetle-American are essentially giant bipedal, slightly anthropomorphized ladybugs. Despite their appearance, Beetle-Americans generally are not considered 'ugly,' at least in human cultures that like ladybugs (which is to say, most human cultures). A typical member of the species has the iconic red wing covers with black dots, but yellow or orange wing covers are also reasonably common. Beetle-American voices are slightly 'buzzy,' but most of them speak human languages well

enough. Humans can learn the Beetle-Americans language with about the same amount of fluency, albeit while needing the occasional bit of percussion. The species largely uses scent cues to differentiate between themselves: humans more or less all smell alike to them. Beetle-Americans, unlike their unmutated ancestors, only lay one or two eggs at a time: their fertility is roughly equivalent to humanity's.

Personality and Psychology: remarkably similar to humanity's, all things considered. Differences include almost no sense of social space, a tendency to react to the unknown by largely ignoring it absent any sign of immediate danger, and a well-founded fear of knives and other stabbing weapons. Beetle-Americans raise families and form pair-bonded relationships. Their major religion seems to be broadly monotheistic; Beetle-Americans tend not to convert to human faiths, although they readily adopt most of the other parts of human civilization.

History: When the nuclear testing of the 1950s produced the obligatory giant mutated insect monsters poised to destroy the American Southwest, things looked truly grim for humanity. It wasn't so much the fifty-foot critters. It was all those giant aphids and neotenus larvae that seemed ready to eat their way across the world's farmland. And

then some of the *predators* of those rampaging crop-destroying insects *also* mutated into giant forms! Plus, they were sentient!

Which would have been bad, except that these bugs were also, well, nice. Kind of weird, but not in an awful way or anything. Beetle-Americans have this odd developing-species culture that seems to be a cross between a government bureau and a hive-mind, but they're generally good, quiet neighbors who pay their taxes. At the moment, they've leveled out to be about one percent of the population of the United States; they're typically located in ranching areas, where they're engaged in domesticating and breeding giant insects for food and resources. Much of Beetle-American cuisine is actually not bad, as long as you remember to never, ever ask what it's made out of.

And why the name? Oh, that's just because of the Supreme Court case. What Beetle-Americans actually call themselves can best be expressed as a drum solo.

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