

Bellerophon Para-monkeys

These primate-like, mammal-equivalents inhabit Bellerophon, the second planet orbiting 51 Pegasi. They mildly resemble humans, in much the same way that a dolphin resembles a fish; major differences include pupiless green eyes, short brown to red hair covering most of their bodies, and a vestigial tail. Also, Bellerophon Para-monkeys are about as intelligent as a cow. On their home planet they are scavengers and molluscivores (snails on 51 Pegasi can grow to impressive sizes, at least for snails). Most Terran colonists of 51 Pegasi consider them to be mildly annoying critters, but the monkeys tend to be innocuous enough not to be pests.

Fascinatingly, most of Terra's enemies are absolutely convinced that Bellerophon Para-monkeys *exactly* resemble baseline human beings, and that human beings get upset when the monkeys are abused for propaganda purposes. Human xenologists are not exactly sure why this galactic-level misapprehension exists, either. It's not species-related; you can convince any one individual alien easily enough that Bellerophon Para-monkeys aren't that important to humanity. But get them in a group of a hundred or more and it's suddenly all "Back off, *hoomon*,

or your cousin gets it.” Despite all the times that such a strategy never worked

Maybe it’s just all due to the fact that most species find Bellerophon Para-monkeys delicious? -- Humans typically don’t, by the way. But there’s something about the flavors that just seems to appeal to alien palates. It would explain why aliens keep menacing the monkeys; even when the bluff is called, they still have a Para-monkey to eat. It doesn’t seem to make much sense; but, then again, the first thing one learns when learning xenology is that ‘why’ is often a question without an answer when dealing with alien motivations. If you could understand them easily, they wouldn’t be very alien.

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