

# The Gravid Impressions

Description: one of seven caves found scattered around the world. The caves all feature odd markings of clearly artificial, but also clearly non-human, make. The entrance to the Avian and Procyon caves are too small to be easily navigated by humans, and the Cephalopod cavern is underwater. All of the caves fairly hum with theurgical power.

Locations:

- Avian (location: Somerset)
- Cetacean (location: Timor Sea)
- Cephalopod (location: Indian Ocean)
- Pachyderm (location: Kenya)
- Pinniped (location: La Plata)
- Procyon (location: Ohio)
- Ursine (location: Siberia)

The caves hosting the Gravid Impressions are genuine fanes to gods; but they are not *human* gods. Neither are they animal gods, as humans would see them. As near as anyone can tell, they are gods **of** animals. And they are

not quite finished. To human perceptions, the markings in each Gravid Impression are only evocative of the type of animal that they represent, and that only to the most perceptive clerics and theurgists. Everybody else gets an inchoate feeling of motion, smells, and sudden, half-heard sounds. But the impressions are both definitely real, and theurgically significant.

To call the Gravid Impressions fanes 'controversial' is to lightly make one of the grander understatements of the current era. Animals are not supposed to have deities. *Animals are not supposed to have deities.* So it's bad enough if they merely exist; but if any species not called *homo sapiens sapiens* is actually deliberately **worshipping** them, then things get suddenly (but hopefully not retroactively) *very* bad. Proto-sapient species (which, by ruthless arcane definition, includes any species that actually has gods) simply have many more rights than non-sapient species. This is not a legal question; this is an arcane, metaphysical one.

Fortunately, in arcane law ignorance **is** a valid defense. Unfortunately, some magical organizations out there have decided to take that particular thought to its logical conclusion and firebomb the Gravid Impressions fanes before it gets out to the public that we're sharing the planet

with at least a dozen species whose mistreatment can trigger a nasty karmic backlash, if only among the knowing. While the would-be godslayers' allegiance to humanity is admirable, in this case it will probably only result in the gods of the Gravid Impressions waking up fully -- and with a hostile attitude towards humanity. We do **not** want a global war with any of the species on that list, up to and including the little ones like Procyon.

I mean, haven't you seen those movies? You know, the ones with the raccoon and the gun? Sure, in real life the recoil would be murder -- but they could probably handle a switchblade, and that would be all sorts of unfortunate. Not to mention, far too difficult to keep out of the news.

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