

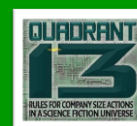
Name	Vornid	By:	Robert Avery	Tech Level:	2
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Infantry										
Infantry Squad	Role	No.	Weight	Expertise	0	1	2	3	4	Equipment
Vornid Pirate Squad	Leg	8	Heavy	Regular	1, 2, 3	4	5	6, 7, 8, 9	10	

Support Weapons						
Support Weapon	Role	MR	TGT	Load	Expertise	Notes
"Borrowed Artillery"	IS/AT	4	DF	Both	Regular	
"Borrowed AA Missiles"	AA	4	VF	Bolt	Regular	
Slishian Gunner	Inf. Supp.	3	DF	Autogun	Regular	

Vehicles							
Vehicle	Role	Crew	Move	Expertise	Armour	Weapons	Notes
Horrid Artillery Toad	SPG		WLK	Regular	6	One SV6 IF Boom	Cannot move and fire in same turn
Horrid Carapace Single Gun Tank	AFV		WLK	Regular	12	One SV6 DF Both	Close combat capable
Horrid Chitin Double Gun Tank	AFV		WLK	Regular	12	Two SV6 DF Both	Close combat capable
Horrid Gas Bag	AFV		HOV	Regular	2	SV2 Flame	
Horrid Grandmother Tank	Command		WLK	Regular	12	Two SV4 DF Both	Minelayer
Horrid Minelayer Tank	AFV		WLK	Regular	10	One SV4 IF Boom	Minelayer
Vornid Drones	Recon		HOV	Regular	1	None	

Specialists	
Horrid Scanner (EWSO)	



Off-Table Support	

Characteristic Cards	
Fade (in vegetation); Rally	

Chrome	
Minelayers: Certain Horrid vehicles are capable of laying patches of Horrid larvae that act like mines. Each action the vehicle spends laying mines deposits enough mines for a 2" by 2" patch directly to either the right or left of the vehicle i.e. next to the flap that opens to lay the mines. The mines are both AP and anti-vehicle. As the mines are biological rather than mechanical, they will not attack Vornid, Slishina or Horrid troops. The mines cannot move once laid. Horrid minelayers may move and lay mines in the same turn.	

Order of Battle	
Loose bands of 2-4 infantry squads, with ad hoc, stolen support weapons.	
Larger forces comprise several bands that have come together for a particular mission, usually led by a Slishian.	

Figures from:	
Vornids and Fungoids from <i>Khurasan Miniatures</i> ; Slishians from <i>Hydra</i> ; Vornid drones from <i>GZG</i>	

Mysterious and inscrutable, the Vornids are motile botanoids, plant-like sentients capable of rapid movement, and advanced technological development. They are relentless pirates and fanatical crusaders in the destruction of the peace-loving Molch, for some strange reason perhaps relating to their spiritual beliefs.

Larger than humans, Vornids often use similar tactics, fighting in squads, with commanders and varying numbers of heavy weapons specialists in each squad. Their weapons are very powerful, and while the Vornids themselves are not as agile as humans, they are extremely tough and utterly relentless in combat.

More Background

Perhaps the strangest of all the sentients in known space are the Vornids, commonly called "slavers" or "pirates" because they often engage in piracy or raiding for the primary purpose of seizing other sentients to sell in the galactic slave market. They inhabit a chain of heavily fortified colony pods on the mid-level belts of the gas giant Vornus 5, and also live, sometimes temporarily, in many colonies and outposts in outlying star systems. They possess sophisticated technology and are capable of FTL travel.

Vornids are the only known sentient botanoids capable of fairly rapid movement. They transport themselves using a series of motor-vines emanating from the base of the body trunk, and are also capable of precise manipulation using mid-trunk manipulator-vines. They are capable of obtaining energy by both consuming other life-forms just as animals (and some plants) do, or by more conventional photosynthesis. They "see" by continuously emitting spores from a single "eye" on top of the body trunk, which return information to the individual. While radically different from the senses of most sentient animals, this system evidently produces roughly equivalent awareness of the creatures' surroundings.

Because of the unlikely physical nature of the Vornids, the prevailing theory amongst federal scientists is that, rather than evolving into this form, they were engineered. One possibility is that the Vornids were created as a race of slavers by an imperial race which no longer exists, or has yet to reveal itself. The Vornids' social interactions with other sentient races are limited to raiding, piracy, trade in slaves and goods (putting slaves into the market and taking raw materials and finished goods from it), and banking, which is a thriving business for them. Due to their active engagement in slavery the Federation has criminalized any form of trade or financial transaction with the Vornids, including use of their galactically-famed banking system, but alien civilisations (and less scrupulous Freeholds) are actively enaaed with the Vornids on all levels.

actively engaged with the Vornids on an equal level.

No matter what the level of engagement may be, however, until recently there were no species of animal sentients in known space which had any significant level of comprehension of Vornid motives, biology or society. They remained a mystery even to the Garn, who heavily employ the no-questioned-asked Vornid banking services, and the Karkarines, who often act as interpreters and go-betweeners for the Vornids.

Their motives may not be known, but their methods are. When on raids, the Vornids appear on a planetary surface in force, relentlessly driving sentients before their implacable advance. Their large Slaver Galleys skim rapidly along, hugging the surface, huge barbed grabber-vines dangling down, embracing any unfortunates in their path and stuffing them into expanding trap-bladders on the bottom of the Galley. Any creature that enters these trap-bladders cannot escape or be rescued unless it is released by the Vornids themselves, as species-specific toxins are released into the trap-bladder when any attempt is made to open them.

The great Slaver Galleys also function as combat transports for the Vornids, each Galley being able to carry a squad on a dorsal troop platform, into the surface of which the squad is able to root itself securely, using their motor vines. The Galley mounts its own firepower, a huge ventral rifle of formidable power, capable of destroying a heavy tank with a single shot, as well as two deck guns manned by Vornid crew. These deck gunners are the only crew apparent on a Slaver Galley, and so it seems that the Galleys are themselves living creatures, because they maneuver and also fire the ventral rifle when no Vornids are seen aboard.

Vornid infantry squads are made up of the basic troopers with their trichome rifles, which propel multiple stingers at great speed. These stingers appear to be guided by the shooter, as they swerve and strike at targets that are out of direct line of sight, making their shooting attacks unusually effective. Over time the stingers adapt to take advantage of the genetic peculiarity of their targets. Depending on the susceptibility of the targeted species the stingers can cause rapid death, temporary immobilization or, in the most resistant species, only mild irritation. The most common human response is incapacitating pain, although multiple attacks can lead to cardiac arrest. The trichome rifle is suited for use solely by the Vornids themselves, and should not be handled under any circumstances as the weapon self-venomates upon contact with animal tissue.

Vornid troopers apparently need to use both of their manipulator-vines to shoot the trichome rifle, although Vornid commanders, recognizable from their ventral thorns, wield a small pistol-like version of the rifle in one manipulator-vine, leaving the other free for other purposes.

The largest weapons carried by Vornid infantry are the thorn cannon and the heavy trichome gun. The thorn cannon has considerable anti-armour capability and is able to penetrate the battle dress of Federal SAB troopers. The heavy trichome gun is essentially a cognate of Federal squad automatic weapons, being capable of longer ranges and a much higher rate of sustained fire than the trichome rifle. These heavier weapons can either be carried by some troopers in infantry squads, or in their own units.

As botanoids, the Vornids are extremely tough and exceptionally difficult to kill in battle, particularly because most weaponry in use amongst the major powers has been developed for purposes of incapacitating animal life forms. They also do not seem to experience fear or panic, and as such proven combat tactics often do not yield the expected results. Whilst Vornids are relatively agile for botanoids, they are still not as fast or maneuverable as most animal sentients. However, they are capable of digging their motor-vines into the earth and are extremely difficult to expel from a position.