

The Zhuik

Humanoid- but not mammalian- the Zhuik are a Federation member species native to the Beta Quadrant. Descended from arthropods, the Zhuik have a reputation for being hot-blooded fighters, though most are soft-spoken unless aroused to anger.

Personality

The Zhuik are noted primarily for their politeness- they are (almost) universally soft-spoken and courteous, and see rudeness as an indicator of genetic disorder.

The fragility of their genome force the Zhuik to adopt a utilitarian approach to life and death. Zhuik see death as natural and will kill without remorse when necessary. The alleged Zhuik eagerness to fight is dictated by this need to protect their society.

Zhuik politeness and courtesy are such that they consider it dishonorable (if sometimes necessary) to kill at a distance- they must (traditionally) face their foes person-to-person and identify themselves before engaging in potentially-lethal actions.

Politeness and etiquette aside, the Zhuik tend to be curious and inquisitive, as well as logical and analytical. Most Zhuik who leave their homeworld do so eager to understand life and the universe around them.

Culture

The Zhuik are a female-oriented society (Zhuik males are only semi-sentient). Descended from hive-dwelling arthropods, Zhuik cities and culture retain the close, collective character of their distant ancestors.

The Zhuik are organized along genetic/family lines into extended clans and colonies led by a hive-matriarch. Zhuik mythology and superstition also revolve around the life-giving All-Mother, a creator deity and divine ruler and family loyalty is a premier virtue among the Zhuik.

Given their sensitivity toward genetic error and purity, Zhuik place extraordinary emphasis on their children and their well-being. Scars and other permanent injuries are frowned upon in Zhuik society, as they are seen as too-indicative of deformity or mutation.

Physiology

Zhuik physiology and blood are copper-based, and they have green, chitinous skin, disposed as hexagonal plates on their torsos. They tend to be average in height, but thin and lithe in build.

Zhuik senses cover a slightly broader range than human-norm. Their hearing and eye-sight are average, but their antennae are sensitive to weak thermal and electromagnetic forces, which affects their perception of color and substance. Those perceptions allow Zhuik to perceive living beings and powered devices not readily apparent to normal sight. Because each species has a unique "*hz'zhivezh*" (electromagnetic signature), Zhuik can also "see through" certain forms of disguise. Most often, however, perceiving "*hz'zhivezh*" as a strong indicator of the target's emotional state (much as a human might interpret body-language).

The Zhuik's sensitivity to weak electromagnetic forces also means that they may be disoriented or incapacitated by stronger electromagnetic fields and pulses.

Zhuik do not possess mammalian lungs or a heart, but instead respire through a series of cardiac tubes running along their torso from just above their hips to the base of their neck.

Interstellar Relations

Zhuik are recent Federation members, and (comparatively) few of their people have traveled off-world. Those who have were generally traders, merchants, scholars, or researchers looking to exploit new markets or probe the depths of Federation science and technology.

A handful of Zhuik have enlisted in Starfleet, but they remain few in number.



The Zhuik

Species Adjustment

+1 Daring, Insight, Presence.

Trait: Zhuik. Humanoids descended from arthropods, Zhuik possess a chitinous skin, antennae, and a utilitarian approach to life. Zhuik antennae are sensitive to weak thermal and electromagnetic signatures which allows a level of perception not readily visible to the naked eye.

Species Talents

Talents:

Extended Senses: Zhuik are able to perceive electromagnetic and thermal forces. Any Tasks in which detecting those parts of the spectrum is useful reduce in Difficulty by 1. Circumstances, such as low light levels or EM/thermally-transparent cover, do not affect the Difficulty of Tasks, as long as those Tasks do not relate to perceiving very fine details.

Knife-Fighter: Zhuik are trained from an early age to wield a blade in defense of themselves or their colony. Whenever you make (or are targeted by) a melee attack and purchase additional d20s by adding to threat, you may re-roll your dice pool. Additionally, you possess a traditional Zhuik blade (usually a knife) and do not pay an Opportunity cost to equip it.

Notes:

The Zhuik first appeared in the Star Trek: The Next Generation novel "Debtor's Planet" by W.R. Thompson.