The oypak are relative newcomers on the world stage, though they've existed in isolation in their swampy homes for centuries. These marsupials are industrious and family oriented. Many, however, mistake their small size and good nature for indolence. When oypak explore the world outside the waterways they call home, they often bring back new innovations to their people. The question still remains if they can survive this influx of culture, or if other cultures can survive them.

**HISTORY**

The oypak believe they were once spirits of the river from which they take their name. In “stories of the long ago,” as they refer to their folk tales, the oypak’s spirit ancestors wished to explore more of the world than just the banks which contained the river’s waters. The curious water spirits pleaded to the gods to be allowed to know the rest of the world, and their prayers were answered. To move beyond the river’s banks the spirits needed to be solid, sacrificing the purity of their spiritual form and the associated magic powers in order to become flesh and blood. The truth of this origin story is unknown, largely because no scholar or wizard has cared enough about the oypak to investigate, however it is the oldest and most important legend of the oypak people.

Regardless of the veracity of this legend, the oypak have always been attached to the swampy waterways of the world, particularly the river from which they were named. Initially, they were migratory travelers and sedentary life wasn’t anything they cared for. Whether this was part of the wanderlust they had as spirits or just a natural pattern of a tribal society looking for more fertile hunting and gathering areas is not entirely clear. What is known is that the waterfolk have, for as long as can be remembered, poled their flat bottom barges up and down the waterways and through the boggy swamps, fishing and hunting gator. Everything they needed was supplied to them by the water and no one was better at reaping the river’s harvest than the unassuming oypak.

A little more than one hundred years ago an industrious family of oypak cobbled together a few land-based dwellings and built a pontoon bridge to create a river crossing. Never before having a group of permanent structures, the small village was just called “Outpost” and was initially little more than a few buildings and palisade. Being industrious folk, however; the family who started the settlement quickly learned to dredge the rivers for logs to make sturdier structures. Outpost grew into a multifamily town, housing nearly three dozen—a large number for a group of wanderers.

Scavenging the wood lost to the waterways by logging concerns further up the rivers wasn’t the only innovation
the oyapok made when settling. Changes in how they fished the waters—using both trotline and jug-line fishing—ensured the village would never go hungry. They also began to teach themselves about the basics of agriculture. Although the swamps couldn’t handle large crops, small personal gardens and pot growing allows for the production of herbs and spices that are easily traded for other things they need.

The quick growth of Outpost brought the attention of more than just other humanoid traders. The great dragon Dessuterrix had been driven from its former home and decided Outpost was the perfect spot for its new lair. The dragon attacked, burning many of the structures to the ground. Using tribes of swamp kobolds, it also captured and enslaved those oyapok who could not flee. To this day there are oyapok who are forced to serve the great dragon, many believe under duress, but this may have changed over time.

Although their first attempt at building a community was torn asunder by this outside force, the oyapok themselves were not deterred. Other small settlements have grown up and down the waterways. As they expand closer to the lands of the more common folk, they have come into contact with humans, elves, and dwarves.

**Physiology**

Oyapok are small; around the same height as halflings and gnomes. However, their watery lifestyle means they tend to retain an extra layer of fat to keep them insulated on long dives. Their bodies are covered in short coarse fur, usually in shades of brown and black with the occasional rings of white. The fur tends to be water resistant like many other water-dwelling creatures. They very much resemble bipedal water rodents with a pointed snout and small sharp teeth.

Two features set the oyapok apart from many other sentient creatures. The first is a long prehensile tail which they use to aid them in many of their daily tasks. The second is a pouch used to contain their young until they are ready to survive on their own. Both males and females have this pouch so childrearing may be done by either sex. The pouch has a unique muscle around its opening that can seal water tight if the parent needs to swim away with the child.

They are excellent swimmers and rely on this ability for many of their daily routines. Their bodies have grown into this role by evolving with fleshy bits of webbing between their fingers and toes. Their lungs also have a large air capacity and they have the ability to hold their breath far longer than most humanoids. This helps when their alligator prey gets the upper hand and tries to drown them.

Oyapok have a gestation period of about six months in the womb but the small underdeveloped newborn then makes its way out of its mother’s womb and into the rear-facing pouch. If the mother has important duties the father will use his pouch to contain the developing offspring. The child needs another three to five months to mature before it’s ready to come out of the pouch. During this period the parent pushes the baby out, sealing the pouch so it can’t get back in, for longer and longer intervals. This helps teach them to move about in the outside world. Once out of the pouch oyapok children stand and walk within a few days.

**Age**

Adulthood: 20 years Intuitive: +2d4 years (22-28 years)
Self-Taught: +3d6 years (23-38 years) Trained: +4d6 years (24-44 years)

**Male**

Base Height: 2 ft. 10 in. Height Modifier: +2d4 in. (3 ft. – 3 ft. 6 in.) Base Weight: 40lbs Weight Modifier: +2d4 lbs. (42-48 lbs.)

**Female**

Base Height: 2 ft. 8 in. Height Modifier: +2d4 in (2 ft. 10 in. – 3 ft. 4 in.) Base Weight: 35lbs Weight Modifier: +2d4 lbs. (37-43 lbs.)

**Family**

The ideal of family unity is perhaps the most defining characteristic of oyapok society. Until they began settling in small towns and villages each extended family existed on its own, plying the riverways in a raft of barges and boats tied together. The size of oyapok families is limited only by the size and number of the boats that form their home and are always multi-generational, with the elderly helping to raise and educate the young while parents work. Even with the settlements, family remains the core of their societal structure.

Although there are occasional marriages within a single family line, oyapok generally marry to other family flotillas. The decisions of which family a couple goes to is decided on a case-by-case basis. In many instances the family with the most space on their barges gets the couple. If one of the oyapok couple is the eldest child of the patriarch and matriarch and currently next in line, they stay in that family. Families of equal size will occasionally swap kin through marriage with a family member of each moving over to the other watercraft and taking a mate.

Family units usually consist of a patriarch and a matriarch known as the Papere and Mamere, although the
title is often shortened to Paw-Paw and Maw-Maw. The oyapok hold both male and female members of the family in the same esteem. Both the Mamere and Papere must pass on before the next duo can become the new family elders. Leadership is passed down to the oldest living married child of the current pair.

Even though the title of Mamere and Papere are passed down to children, the rest of the family elders are still considered important members of the clan. They are sought out for knowledge, guidance, and advice. Although the Maw-Maw and Paw-Paw have final say, the elders are usually brought in for an informal council on matters affecting the whole clan.

Although the oyapok are a fun-loving people, the primary duty of the clan is to work. Hunting, fishing, and scavenging all have to be done constantly to bring in most of what the clan needs. With the advent of oyapok colonies, garden tending and crafting have also become common jobs. Most jobs are passed down through generations. You'll most often find all fishermen on one branch of the family and all gator hunters on another.

One of the most important roles within a clan is the traiteur, a kind of faith healer. This position is not passed down through direct lineage as it is considered a calling. The family traiteur remains unmarried and usually bears no children. The traiteur can be male or female but tradition demands the position is passed down to a member of the opposite sex.

Childrearing is also not specific to gender. Both male and female members of the oyapok have pouches for their young to inhabit. Like any other job, childrearing is usually left to one branch of the family. Once the child no longer requires the pouch to survive, the caretakers of the clan keep the pup, teaching her the ways of their family while the mother or father returns to work.

In the evenings the family unit gathers for meals. To many outsiders this seems like elaborate celebrations, which adds to the perception of oyapok as layabouts. The truth is the oyapok play hard because they work hard.

Every night is a celebration of the family unit with food, drink, music, and dancing. In the larger villages, multiple families will share in the celebration with cooks from each family contributing to a huge feast which the whole village will share.

SOCIETY

Oyapok society has been growing and changing over the last century. Originally they had little in the way of permanent encampments, being mostly large family groups that barged up and down the swampy waterways. These days, however, they have begun to form smaller villages and towns, and some oyapok have adopted more sedentary lives.

Regardless of whether they still ply the waterways or have taken to living in one of their people's settlements, the oyapok hold two things sacred: work and family. A family group works together all day plying the river for wood, hides, and/or meat. In the evenings the family—or in the case of settlements multiple families—celebrate the day's work with food, drink, and music. These almost daily celebrations have given the appearance to some outsiders that all the oyapok do is carouse, and many think of them as lazy or carefree for this reason.

If work is the centerpiece of life away from the barge or colony, then cooking is the centerpiece of home life. A common oyapok saying is, “you pray with your stomach to feed your soul.” Cooking is as much a part of life as the spirits, and they consider onion, garlic, and green pepper a holy trinity, included in every meal. Oyapok food may be considered common ingredients prepared with cunning.
and ingenuity; the same principles they use in their daily work. Those not prepared for oyapok cooking get what the waterfolk call ‘firebell’ from the abundance of salt and red pepper used in most meals.

Music is the great joy of the oyapok. After the evening meal, the night rings with the sound of their mostly handmade instruments. Wooden flutes of all varieties are common; many of which have extra holes that allow only the oyapok to play them with their prehensile tails. With the advent of colonies, it has become easier to make accordions which also play a huge part in oyapok music. The single most beloved instrument is the fiddle and although one learns to play on someone’s older instrument, they are not considered a real fiddler until they build their own.

Regardless of how outsiders feel about them, the oyapok are an accepting and inquisitive people. Until a person proves otherwise, the oyapok will accept them into their homes and treat them like family. There are some notable exceptions, though. Lizardfolk and kobolds are never welcome in an oyapok town; years of animosity have seen to that.

ALIGNMENT AND FAITH

The oyapok tend more toward the good axis of the alignment scale. They value an upright and honest nature. Life on the waterways is hard, every family member needs to be able to be relied on. Oyapok who aren’t trustworthy are often cast out of the family. Although a traveling lifestyle makes others think of them as uncivilized and thus chaotic, the oyapok hold to many formal traditions and see hard work as an important part of life. They tend more toward lawful or neutral alignments.

They know the gods exist and pay homage to each in their own way. The beings they most revere are the natural spirits of the lands in which they inhabit. To the oyapok these spirits are considered like distant cousins; brothers and sisters of the curious river spirits who became the first of their people. The oyapok religious experience mostly revolves around praising the good spirits of the world and appealing to the evil ones to leave them alone. Although this form of spirit worship is common among almost all oyapok, many will still take a deity as a patron. The most common is The Traveller, due to his supposed influence on the growth of the oyapok people. As legend goes, the family that settled Outpost was visited by the wandering deity in one of his physical forms. He taught the elders the language of the outsiders and the concept of currency.

Oyapok do not build churches although they do keep shrines to the spirits. The spiritual leaders of the riverfolk are called traiteur. The traiteur are faith healers who bring the power of the spirits to bear to aid their people. There is no one path to becoming a traiteur; alchemists, clerics, druids, oracles, shamans, witches, and even bards can become a clan’s traiteur. The position of traiteur is exclusively passed down across gender. A male traiteur can only teach a female apprentice and a female may only teach a male.

RELATIONS

The oyapok have only in the past half-century begun to venture out of the swamps and away from the rivers. Their contact with humans, elves, and dwarves has been minimal because of that. Many oyapok are curious about these races. Tales of annexation of the river dwellers first outpost by the dragon Desuterrix have, however, brought distrust and fear of bad luck with them.

Gnomes known more for their love of nature and travel, encountered the oyapok long before they began traveling away from the river. Both being small races has also seen a camaraderie form between their peoples. Of all the common races, gnomes are the quickest to find hospitality among the river dwellers, and you will often find a few of either race living in oyapok villages.

The swamps and rivers are a very fertile if dangerous home for the oyapok, which they share with many other hostile creatures. Between border disputes and the hunting of gators and lizards, the oyapok and the lizardfolk have long since grown into a state of mutual animosity. Kobolds have always been an issue for the river dwellers as they would raid the oyapok’s stores rather than hunt or forage for themselves. With the coming of Desuterrix, the kobolds have grown bolder—especially the group claiming to be the dragon’s children. The swamplands are also home to many trolls, and the oyapok have had to deal with the giant-kin on more occasions than they like to speak. Luckily trolls tend to be a solitary and stupid lot, and though weak and small, the oyapok are thankfully both plentiful and cunning.

ADVENTURERS

Many oyapok still have the wandering heart of the river spirits inside of them. Adventurers are common among them, through all ages. Attuned to the natural world, especially rivers, lakes, swamps, and bogs the oyapok tend toward more nature-oriented classes. Druids,
rangers, hunters, shamans, and witches are the most common paths the oyapok take. Water-based sorcerers, clerics, and oracles are not uncommon and summoners who can call forth the spirits of the water aren’t unknown either. The oyapok rely heavily on herbs and poultices and occasionally you will find a nature-based alchemist among their numbers.

Beyond their connection to the waterways, the oyapok’s inquisitive nature can lead them to becoming rogues and swashbucklers. Their people’s enjoyment of music and oral history means bards are both plentiful and held in high esteem by the oyapok. Those who specialize in gator wrasslin’ tend to become fighters and brawlers.

**Oyapok Names**

**Male:** Bastien, Etinne, Everard, Gregoire, Loic, Placide  
**Female:** Clotille, Edmee, Isabau, Josette, Marielle, Sidonie

**Standard Racial Traits**

**Ability Score Racial Traits:** Oyapok are nimble and quick-witted, but their small stature makes them weaker than other races. They gain +2 Dexterity, +2 Wisdom, and –2 Strength.

**Size:** Oyapok are Small creatures and gain a +1 size bonus to their AC, a +1 size bonus on attack rolls, a –1 penalty to their CMB and CMD, and a +4 size bonus on Stealth checks.

**Type:** Oyapok are humanoids with the oyapok subtype.

**Base Speed (Slow Speed):** Oyapok have a base speed of 20 feet.

**Languages:** Oyapok begin play speaking Common and Oyapok. Oyapok with high Intelligence scores can choose from the following: Aquan, Boggyard Draconic, Giant, Gnome, Grippli, and Halfling.

**Defense Racial Traits**

**Defensive Training:** Oyapok gain a +4 dodge bonus to AC against monsters of the reptilian subtype.

**Halfling Luck:** Oyapok receive a +1 racial bonus on all saving throws.

**Feat and Skill Racial Traits**

**Natural Affinity:** Oyapok receive a +2 racial bonus on Survival checks.

**Offense Racial Traits**

**Hatred:** Oyapok gain a +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against humanoid creatures of the reptilian and giant subtypes because of their special training against these hated foes.

**Senses Racial Traits**

**Low-Light Vision:** Oyapok can see twice as far as humans in conditions of dim light.

**Movement**

**Powerful Swimmer:** Oyapok are excellent swimmers and have a swim speed of 50 feet and gain the +8 racial bonus on Swim checks a swim speed normally grants.

**Other**

**Hold Breath:** Oyapok can hold their breath for a number of rounds equal to four times their Constitution score before risking drowning or suffocating.

**Prehensile Tail:** Oyapok have long, flexible tails they can use to carry objects. They cannot wield weapons with their tails, but the tails do allow them to retrieve small objects stowed on their persons as a swift action.

**Favored Class Bonuses**

**Alchemist:** The alchemist gains +1/4 of a new discovery.

**Bard:** Add +1 to the bard’s total number of bardic performance rounds per day.

**Brawler:** Gain a +1 bonus to the brawler’s CMD when resisting a bull rush or grapple combat maneuver.

**Cleric:** Add +1/3 to the amount of damage dealt or damage healed when the cleric uses channel energy.

**Druid:** Add a +1/2 bonus on wild empathy checks made to influence animals and magical beasts that live in swamps or water.

**Fighter:** Gain a +1 bonus to the fighter’s CMD when resisting a bull rush or grapple combat maneuver.

**Hunter:** Add a +1/2 bonus on wild empathy checks made to influence animals and magical beasts that live in swamps or water.

**Oracle:** Add +1/4 to the oracle’s level for the purpose of determining the effects of one revelation.

**Ranger:** Add a +1/2 bonus on wild empathy checks made to influence animals and magical beasts that live in swamps or water.

**Rogue:** Add a +1/2 bonus on Perception checks while in a water (rivers) or swamp.

**Shaman:** Add one spell from the cleric spell list that isn’t on the shaman spell list to the list of spells the shaman knows. This spell must be at least 1 level below the highest spell level the shaman can cast.
**Sorcerer:** Add +¼ to the sorcerer’s caster level when casting spells with the water descriptor.

**Summoner:** Add +¼ to the eidolon’s evolution pool.

**Swashbuckler:** Increase the number of times per day the swashbuckler can use charmed life by ¼.

**Witch:** Add +¼ to the witch’s caster level when determining the effects of the spells granted to by the patron.

### NEW ARCHETYPES

#### TRAITEUR (CLERIC)

Spirit healers and guides of river life among the oyapok. If there were any hard evidence that the oyapok had souls descend from the river. By learning to infusing water with positive energies the traiteur can do miraculous things.

**River’s Blessings (Su)** — The river is the source of all oyapok’s souls, and is deeply rooted in their belief structures. At first level, the traiteur can imbue a single body of water with a touch spell to affect another creature in the same body of water. The spell has a limited power, and the energy disperses after a small distance. As the traiteur gains levels, the range of the spell increases from touch to 5 feet per caster level.

Spells cast on a hostile creature require a ranged touch attack, however friendly creatures are automatically effected if they wish to be. Casting touch spells in this fashion increases your caster level by two for the purposes of overcoming spell resistance.

This replaces the domain class feature.

**Wash Away Agony (Su)** — At 1st level the traiteur learns an ancient ritual for healing wounds with water. By scooping water into her hands and pouring it over her head, she infuses it with positive energy. This water must come from a river, lake, pond, stream, ocean, bog or swamp. As a standard action that provokes an attack of opportunity, you expel this water and may heal a single creature 1d8 points of damage within 10 feet. At third level, and every two levels thereafter, this increases by an additional d8.

At 7th level, the traiteur’s water expulsion may sacrifice a healing die to remove a single negative level, or repair stat damage as per the restoration spell.

At 15th level, the traiteur may spend a full-round action and submerge a willing creature from head to toe in water infused with her healing essence. This restores hit points as if you had rolled 8’s on all of your dice.

You may use this ability 3 + your charisma modifier times a day. Feats or class features that modify the channel energy ability also affect this feature.

### FOUDRE (WARPRIEST)

The oyapok are traditionally spiritual creatures, and friends with many of them. Foudre are creatures are forced to listen to the less desirable spirits of the world around them constantly. Either because those spirits are the most insistent or because they haunt the oyapok and drive them unfortunate ends.

**Primal Chains (Ex)** — The spirits around you cry and are rent asunder by your very presence. You detect as undead and as an outsider for the purposes of spells that detect these creatures. When you cast a spell that summons an elemental of some kind, your caster level is increased by 3 for the purposes of duration.

This replaces the Aura class feature.

**Lacerations of the Elements (Su)** — The lamentations of the spirits and the anguish of the latent elemental energy around the foudre allow him to become a channel for their anger. At first level choose a single element from the following list: acid, cold, fire, or electricity. Once chosen, you cannot change that choice. As a standard action you learn to lash out with your chosen element in a spectacular array of devastation. A single creature in a 30 foot radius takes your sacred weapon damage + your charisma bonus in points of damage with an element equal to your choice. Creatures can avoid this damage by succeeding a will save DC: 10 + ½ your warpriest level + your charisma modifier. You may expend one of your uses of fervor to add your fervor damage in addition to your sacred weapon damage.

This replaces the blessing class feature.

**Plackart of Elements (Su)** — At 7th level, the spirits coalesce around you in an attempt to bond with your physical form. The elemental wisps bind to your armor and attempt to protect you, granting you spell resistance equal to 10 + ½ your warpriest level rounded down. Additionally, as an immediate action, you may expend one of your Fervors for the day when you are hit to deal damage to your attack as if you had hit them with your sacred weapon.

This replaces the sacred armor class feature.
THE TRAVELER

Alignment: Neutral Good  
Domains: Good, Liberation, Travel, Void  
Subdomains: Friendship, Freedom, Exploration, Stars  
Symbol: A night sky with stars and a road travelling up the center.  
Garb: Followers of the traveler tend to wear sturdy functional clothing. Boots, gear appropriate to the weather and a walking staff. Clerics usually dress in browns and beiges, the colors of the roads they walk.  
Favored Weapon: Quarterstaff  
Worship and Holidays: The traveler doesn’t take to organized worship, most people give him a silent prayer at the beginning or ending of a journey. Roadside shrines where wanderers can leave a tribute for safe passage are also quite common.  
Typical Worshippers: Anyone who travels from place to place. Merchants, rangers, gypsies, halfling troupe, and astronomers  
Center of Worship: Being a god of roads The Traveler doesn’t have a central place of worship and he very rarely has churches. His priests are mostly itinerants, travelling from town to town and inn to inn.  
It is said that The Traveler walked out of the void after the other gods created the world. He is neither of this realm or an ascended god like Ametus. Whether these tales are true or not are only known to The Traveler himself and he doesn’t speak of such things.

When The Traveler appears, which he does more frequently than anyone realizes, he seems quite ordinary. The first words on the lips of anyone asked to recount his appearance would be nondescript. He is of average height and average weight for whatever race he choose to take, although he prefers humans and halflings. His hair and eyes are neither exceptionally light nor dark, and his age is equally hard to determine. He is dressed in rugged leathers and travelling clothes with an old worn staff for a walking stick.  
The Traveler is never at rest and even his constellation moves with alacrity across the sky, as if trying to see the world from every angle. It is said every road has seen the tread of his boots in human – or halfling – form and that it was he who taught men to navigate by stars before there were roads. He could never stand a sedentary life, reveling in freedom to go anywhere at a moment’s notice. Because of this he despises slavery and captivity in any form and his clerics work to free enslaved people both physically and by working to change the laws that allow the practice.  
The road is his friend and it is made better by travelling companions. It is said that, unlike the other gods who stay in the heavens, The Traveler wanders the roads even now. He joins up with groups traveling from place to place and always loves a good story. Wanderers will almost always spin yarns among groups of strangers with the belief that if The Traveler is secretly among them he will bless their journey for a tale well told.

CLERICS

Most clerics of The Traveler are themselves wanderers and can sometimes seem gruffer or less civilized than clerics of other gods. This outward appearance hides jovial itinerants who want nothing more than to share the road with others. Although his faith isn’t centralized, with most autonomous clerics there are a few small groups which share common goals.  
The Seekers of the Stars focus on The Traveler’s role of celestial navigator. They work to make accurate star charts – because not every journey has a road. It is rumored that there is an observatory secreted away on a mountain top where any Seeker may come to look at the stars through a large telescope. A copy of every chart the organization has ever made is said to be housed here as well.  
The Friends of the Road are a group of roadside inn owners who are also clerics of the wandering god. Their small inns are a refuge during long journeys, offering travelers a soft bed and good meal. The Friends also offer an unofficial mail service, any message left at one inn can be picked up at any other of the senders choosing. Each year the Friends of the Road gather at one of the inns for a rowdy party. Although the date of the party remains the same every year, only the friends know at which inn it will be held and it’s become a game amongst travelers to guess which one

Clerics of The Traveler pray for their spells under the night sky while gazing up at the stars.


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Cover art by Chris Robertson. Interior art by James Jacobs, Michael McInerney, and Dave Steele.
Cultures of Celmae

Oyapok

These small marsupial humanoids live and hunt the stagnant swamps of their homeland. Displaced by the cruel black dragon Dessuterrix, the Oyapok are only now emerging from the shadows of their dark age to join the rest of the civilized world. Will they be accepted?