

# A Codex entry for the Kael

PirateHyena

## Kael

**Name (Singular & Plural):** Kael or Neck (Singular) and Neckal (Plural)

**Sexes:** Female and Male, although sexual dimorphism is minimal

**Height:** 2'3" to 5'9", not considering the length of the leg or legs, which can vary largely

**Weight:** 50 to 98 kg (110 to 216 lbs)

**Average Lifespan:** 130 to 150 terran years

**Skin and Scales:** Most of the kael's body is covered in tiny scales that often shimmer in the light; exceptions are quill-beards and hair, as well as the genitals

**Hair:** Kael are either bald or have quill-like hair, that can differ largely in hardness and naturally is quite lengthy, although some kael choose to trim it

**Beards:** Some kael, even females, have short beards consisting of thin tentacles; Quill-beards usually grow longer than facial tentacles and only occur in males

**Eyes:** The eyes of a kael have no distinguishable pupils and irises; they are colored, often brightly or even vibrant, in a single shade of blue, green, orange or white

**Ears:** Like many aquatic or amphibious species, the kael's ears appear not as prominent as the ears of most core species; instead they are merely two holes on the sides of a kael's head, comparable to the ovir's

**Antennae and Horns:** Few kael grow a singular lobe from their forehead, similar to some deep water fish on various planets; an even rarer occurrence are curved and pointed outgrowths made entirely of keratin, that emerge from the sides of a kael's head just above the ear-holes

**Legs:** The legs of the kael consist of one to six thick tentacles, which are exceptionally muscular and devoid of any bones

**Homeworld:** Plexul

## Features

One of the most peculiar facts about the kael's physical features is that their facial features take one of three possible forms. The most common is characterized by two slits for nostrils and the entire lack of a nose, accompanied by an exceptionally wide mouth. The kael call this a wogen's face. The second most common form, the so called lord's face, bears a prominent snout with large round nostrils, comparable to a terran hog's or cow's, although lacking fur. The rarest of the three facial forms is called a thrakt's face and can be compared to a terran human's face, except that it is covered in small scales, the mouth is filled with retractable, sharp and pointed teeth and the chin is not as round as a human chin. All kael have retractable teeth and mouths that can be opened rather wide. While the thrakt's teeth are roughly triangular in shape and a half to one and a half inches long, the other kael's teeth are rather thin and very long, about 5" average. They can be bend once, in the case of children twice, to be retracted inside the mouth. These dental features in particular, paired with the eyes of the kael, make many races feel uncomfortable around them.

All kael move with the help of one to six large and fleshy tentacles, that range in length from 2'4" to 6', while fewer legs are usually longer. The kael use their tentacles to swim in water or slide across solid surfaces. The kael's legs are usually covered in thick, leathery skin under the tiny scales that also adorn the rest of their body. Their arms are just a bit thinner than human's, but represent humanoid arms in structure. The fingers, five to the count, are quite thin and long, webbed and covered in scales, like the entire arms.

The torso of any kael appears almost human, although it is often thinner and a bit lengthier. The skeletal structure of the torso is almost humanesque, although the kael have only nine or in some cases eight pairs of ribs. One feature of the kael's biology that really puzzled researchers is the two separate, but fully functional aspiration systems they possess. The Neckal have two lungs into which air is drawn, mostly through the nose, which are quite similar to most mammals. These are solely used for aspiration when air is available and can otherwise be collapsed or filled with water. When the lungs are filled with water, this can be let out with the help of special muscles in the back and through two holes in the back, above the rump, for extra speed while swimming. While under water, the kael use a system that draws minerals and oxygen through special pores, that are located in the neck and behind the ears. Just as the lungs can be collapsed, while under water the kael often close their nostrils completely and their eyes, due to the scarceness of light, usually get bigger, the deeper they dive. Another distinguishing feature is the lack of a belly button and nipples. Both male and female kael have small breasts, usually A or in rarer cases B-cups in size. These have no effect in upbringing, but are believed to have evolved and are primarily regarded and used as a form of exhibition of beauty, for males as well as females. Why the kael vary so significantly in facial appearance and leg-count is still unclear to scholars.

### **Typical Habitat and Homeworld**

The planet of Plexul is the second to its sun in the {name} system. It is encircled by four moons, as well as a small ring of debris. The surface of the planet measures around 2.064.348.000 km<sup>2</sup> (796.838.000 sq mi) and has a landmass of merely 8 %, which consists of roughly 6.821.800 islands mainly located around the equator. Water on the planet reaches as deep as 11.000 meters.

The most notable lifeform on Plexul are the kael, who number about 6 billion. There are presumed to be about 1,6 billion different animal species and many more species of plants, most of which grow and dwell in deep water.

Kael primarily live on the ground of the sea. Some grow spices and other plants on the islands of Plexul, but they reside in the depths if they are able to. Where exactly the individual society or the individual kael resides is dependant on their lifestyle and cultural and economic ideals, which are quite diverse. In general it can be said that the kael prefer high pressure environments to low pressure environments, but they are able to survive in both. If they are in a low pressure environment for a longer time, it is advised that they keep a special diet and many take a traditional form of medicine to prevent bodily diseases as well as depression.

### **Reproduction**

Children in most kael societies are seldomly considered related to their biological parents. They are instead adopted, either by individuals, families or whole clans, depending on the form of family in the individual society. There is always a guardian for the single child, but the guardian is not necessarily considered a parent.

This practise of adoption originates in the kael's mode of reproduction. In general a female kael that is ready lays several dozens of unfertilised eggs at a special location, preserved solely for the purpose. After the female has left, the places are only to be used by one kael at a time, a male might spray his seed on and inseminate the eggs. If a portion of a female's eggs are inseminated, it is considered improper for another male to inseminate the rest. The destruction of fertilised eggs is considered one of the most severe crimes and to be punished horribly, often by the mother herself, who is allowed to look out for her eggs.

## **History**

Since the kael, before the discovery of their system, had no concept of, or interest in, scientific historical research and written record, the reconstruction of their history is troublesome. There is quite a lot of evidence, that there have been many terrible wars on Plexul about 600 years before the first contact. Oral traditions also tell about a lot of warfare on the planet, but the exact numbers, participating factions and locations are largely lost and can only in few cases be reconstructed. What can be learned from the oral traditions of the kael, is that their societies are and possibly have always been very flexible. The kael cities are no older than 100 terran years and it seems to have been a frequent and unproblematic practise to tear a city down and reconstruct it in a different place that has similar or adequate caves and soil.

## **Culture and Society**

The kael or Neckal, as they sometimes call themselves, do not have or have ever had a centralized planetary government. Instead they politically organize in assemblies of roughly 30.000 to 13.000.000 individuals, that usually travel and hunt together. The concept of nationhood is foreign to them, just as ownership of territory in a legal sense is. Although most of the Neckal societies are nomadic, either following their prey or travelling with their livestock, some assemblies stay at local structures, for the most part consisting of cave-like dwellings. Cultural production is, however, not limited to these cities. The kael seem to be very proud of the fact, that the most important and most praised cultural goods are a shared effort between several, usually two to five, assemblies. Political governance on the level of assemblies varies. There are several communities where certain positions are inherited, although children are often adopted, and in some there are enforced systems of a ruling class, but there are also many cases of more flexible systems where power is distributed in reoccurring competitions or votes.

Communication between the different societies is largely done through a wireless transmission network, spanning the whole planet of Plexul and even to the corresponding moons and another planet of the solar system, that can transport acoustic signals as well as two-dimensional images, physical impulses and a simple form of three-dimensional imagery. In the age post intergalactic contact, this network is supplemented by the universal forms of communication.