



Wakahnka Race Details

I had thought the odd little creatures would be easy prey, a good test of my new crew's skills and of *The Sea Jackal's* capabilities. However, as they launched every weapon and spell they had at us along with what bits of stone and timber their crews discarded while they continued to build and

repair damage in the middle of the battle, I quickly learned my folly and ordered a retreat before they managed to sink us. I cannot say if the small birdfolk displayed bravery, foolhardiness, or simply insanity that day, but I do know this for certain: I would strongly recommend caution before igniting their rage.

- *Captain John Drake*, The Sea Jackal

Often confused as a subrace of the aarakocra, the wakahnka (at times lumped in with their raptor-like cousins as "birdfolk") are a rather social race that prefer to live in cities, towns, villages, or farms in or around water. Though they originally hail from the endless seas of the Elemental Plane of Water, most of the wakahnka found in the Material Plane are descendants of explorers who'd been curious about the plane beyond their waters.

While many wakahnka nowadays are content to settle and live out their lives peacefully in the same place as or close to where they were hatched, some (including those newly-arrived from the Plane of Water) maintain a sense of wanderlust and adventure that often takes them far from their homes.

(Art courtesy of [Zumidotexe](#).)

Beak and Feather

Wakahnka are typically dismissed or coddled by other races due to their unassuming looks. Unlike the aarakocra with their majestic wings and fierce beaks and talons, wakahnka have blunted beaks and webbed feet along with elongated necks and plump bodies while lacking any wings of their own. On average, most wakahnka barely surpass 3 feet tall and their plump appearance belies their incredibly light weight, typically somewhere around 20 pounds.

Feathers cover their bodies. While a vast majority of wakahnka sport all-white feathers, there are exceptions though the color palette is rather small of varying shades of brown, black, grey, yellow, and tan. Some males, however, can be seen with other colors such as green, red, or blue feathers typically around the head, chest, or on their arms and hands where wing plumage would be. Both genders can sport multiple colors in varying patterns such as spots and bars.

Small But Fierce

Many have made the mistake of believing that the wakahnka's small size and unassuming appearance means the race as a whole is sweet and cowardly. To their peril, they learn the truth too late: The wakahnka might be small, but they all possess a fierce temper that can override their fear. It might take a while to rouse a particular wakahnka's anger, but a longer fuse doesn't necessarily mean a less explosive outburst.

A wakahnka in the middle of a brawl will use their smaller size to their advantage and consider no trick to be too "cheap" to use: a headbutt below the belt, a jab to the face

with their blunted beak, or even a solid punch to the gut. Pulling on hair or feathers is also considered a perfectly-acceptable brawling tactic to a wakahnka.

This attitude carries over to fighting with weaponry or magic in a "there is no such thing as overkill" style of combat, and the targets of their rage quickly learn that riling up the small birdlike creatures is a mistake, particularly when they flock together in large numbers. For example, the Luskan Ships learned not to challenge the wakahnka of Cua Float after a fierce battle during Cua Float's original construction when wakahnka defenders launched salvo after salvo of magic, ammunition, and even scrap building materials at attacking pirates as construction crews continued building the settlement and repairing damage sustained from enemy attacks. The pirates had managed to sail away but with no plunder and significant damage to their ship.

Avian Mannerisms

Like the aarakocra, the resemblance of wakahnka to birds isn't limited to physical features. Wakahnka display many of the same mannerisms as ordinary birds. They are fastidious about their plumage, frequently tending their feathers, cleaning and scratching away any tiny passengers they might have picked up. This preening behavior also ensures the waterproofing of their outer feathers remains in-tact.

While wakahnka are very expressive with their faces and don't require sounds to accent their speech to get across the same message like the aarakocra do, wakahnka have been known to make noises like common waterfowl when caught by surprise. Also,

newcomers to the Material Plane and some wakahnka hatched there bear what their kind refers to as the "Wakahnka Accent" which roughens the voice and makes even Common sound like quacking, particularly during times of great distress. While other wakahnka not bearing the "accent" have no trouble understanding their brethren, outsiders might experience difficulty until their ears adjust to hearing it.

Since they are used to diving into the waters of their homeland and having the water pressing down on them from all sides, the idea of being underground isn't as terrifying to the wakahnka as it is to the aarakocra.

Mirrored Culture

Constant contact with the Material Plane means the basics of wakahnka culture mirrors what can be found in the Material Plane. Unlike aarakocra, there is a general understanding of ownership though newcomers' definition of it tends to be looser than those who have lived in the Material Plane for quite some time: Both understand the concept of owning objects and the consequences of taking them without permission just fine, but with so little land to claim in the Inner Plane of Water, land rights can be quite confusing to newcomers to the Material Plane since water is constantly in motion and claiming one portion of it is pointless along with the fact that boats can be moved at any time.

The wakahnka are also very social creatures which means--like many races of the Material Plane--they tend to group together into family units and larger communities.

This behavior they refer to as "flocking" which they use for all races, not just their own. These natural social tendencies mean that they are drawn to communities to settle down in, even if those communities are predominantly another race.

Similarly to the halflings, wakahnka have a love of good food and are always willing to try something new or exotic. Gatherings large and small usually include some sort of prepared snack if not a full meal for attendees; all festivals include at least one feast. A skilled cook can usually achieve some social status among their community.

Homelands

The wakahnka originally hail from the outer edges of the Elemental Plane of Water where Water meets Air with some little bits of Earth sprinkled in for good measure. Because there is so little dry land, the wakahnka typically build floating communities atop the endless waters anchored by massive rocks or other incredibly heavy objects to keep them in relatively the same place. Originally everything they needed was farmed and harvested from beneath the waves, but the first explorers to visit the Material Plane brought back seeds of plants that required earth to grow in so floating pallets of farmable land can also be found.

The major "cities" of the wakahnka are really just very large towns that spring up along trade routes due to dense clusters of homes being very difficult to build on these floating structures. As a result, towns are typically made up of boats that are joined together by communal floating walkways and docks along with only a handful of

permanent floating structures for usage by all residents such as a town hall or public library. This means that homes and businesses can often times move from town to town, the former sometimes towing their pallet or pallets of farmable land behind them. To own a permanent floating structure--be it residential, farming, or business--in one of these communities is a mark of status: Owning a permanent structure in a community is the rough equivalent of land-ownership in the Material Plane with owners of large structures being regarded as nobility due to the amount of wealth needed to build and maintain such structures.

Particularly wealthy communities usually have at least one portal to the Material Plane for trading purposes. This could be due to a portal being in that location originally and the community being built up around it or due to resident magic-users such as wizards or sorcerers being hired to create and maintain the portals by wealthy citizens or at shared cost to the entire community as a local tax.

WAKAHNKA IN THE FORGOTTEN REALMS

The wakahnka are well established in Faerûn despite having only two major colonies to their name: Kwaeka Point and Cua Float. Both locations were built as floating communities a few miles out from Neverwinter and Luskan respectively. Each of them has dedicated portals leading back to major communities back in the Elemental Plane of Water.

The majority of wakahnka in the Material Plane tend to spread out onto the mainland though they prefer to settle near lakes and rivers if not the ocean itself. They will find an established community that they like and attempt to join it regardless of whether or not the community was originally founded by wakahnka or if it even has a wakahnka leader. A few, more ambitious members might found their own communities or rise to a place of prominence in the one they joined, and the settlements wakahnka have jurisdiction over typically allow other races to settle down in them...as long as these new members are willing to abide by the rules.

However, wandering off to join other communities rather than building one of their own from scratch has had the effect of spreading the race at times quite thinly. One might journey for miles without seeing a single wakahnka or perhaps only seeing one or two as fellow travelers before suddenly finding a village or town with at least two on every street if they aren't the majority race. Cities located on the water tend to have neighborhoods that are predominantly wakahnka though they can be found in other areas of the city as well.

Adventurous Spirits

As previously-stated, while many wakahnka are content to settle down in one area and live there their entire lives, there is a streak of wanderlust that runs through the race. Young wakahnka in particular have a strong desire to head off into the world for various reasons: to explore, to find their fortunes, to meet new people, or even for just the fun of it. It isn't enough for them to hear or read of another's tales; they need to go out and make their own to compare to those of their brethren.

While their tendency to flock means that most tend to welcome companions on their journeys, some do prefer to "swim solo" and prefer charting their own courses and only joining an adventuring party when their goals or desires align with the group's.

Wakahnka Names

Traditional wakahnka names typically sound like quacks or honks that have no gender differentiation. Those hatched on the Material Plane, however, can usually be found bearing names from other races that are tightly clustered in that area; it isn't unusual to meet one wakahnka bearing a human name and then meet another at a later date bearing an elvish one. If the race the name is borrowed from has a pattern for gendered names, their naming conventions are typically followed.

All wakahnka bear a family name. While some traditional wakahnka family names have endured in the Material Plane, the majority of wakahnka hatched there tend to have family names coming from the waterfowl they bear passing resemblance to with "Duck" being the most common. While wakahnka have no trouble recognizing their own kin, outsiders might have trouble remembering who's related to whom.

Traditional wakahnka names of both genders may have names like these: Cuaken Qua, Kwae Wakhonk, or Hupten Kwakancua.

Material Plane wakahnka names have names like these: Kwaekan Coot, Millie Quakwae, or Dennis Duck.

WAKAHNKA BACKGROUNDS

Backgrounds that are most appropriate for wakahnka include the sailor, the pirate, and the folk hero.

Wakahnka are naturally suited to the sailing life by virtue of their race originating as sailors on the endless waves of the Elemental Plane of Water. Of course, not all wakahnka sailors resist the pull of piracy, so it isn't unusual to find wakahnka on both sides of a naval battle. Regardless, their adventurous spirits often have them accomplishing great deeds that others might spread stories of.

Wakahnka Traits

As a wakahnka, you have certain traits in common with your people. Being naturally proficient with unarmed attacks is one example.

Ability Score Increase

Your Charisma score increases by 2 and your Strength score increases by 1.

Age

A wakahnka is considered an adult at around 20 and typically can live between one or two centuries.

Alignment

Wakahnka can be found on all parts of the alignment spectrum.

Size

Wakahnka are about 3 feet tall and have plump bodies with elongated necks that typically weigh around 20 pounds. Your size is Small.

Speed

Your base walking speed is 25 feet and a swimming speed of 30 feet.

Downy Feathers

A layer of downy feathers beneath your outer feathers helps trap in warmth, giving you resistance to Cold damage.

Natural Brawler

You are proficient with your unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 bludgeoning damage on a hit.

Tool Proficiency

You gain proficiency with the artisan's tools of your choice: carpenter's tools, cook's utensils, or navigator's tools.

Water Lore

Whenever you make an Intelligence ([Nature](#)) check related to the plants and animals of a water source of your choice (lake, ocean, or river), you are considered proficient in the Nature skill and add double your proficiency bonus to the check instead of your normal proficiency bonus.

Languages

You can speak, read, and write Common, Aquan, and Wakahnka.