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INTRODUCTION

Formic Dustup is an adjunct of the Dustup rule set, which itself is a variant of Stargrunt II published by Ground Zero Games. Please see <http://www.kriegspiel.com.au/dustup/> for a copy of the Dustup rules.

FORMICS

The Formics (also known as the “colony” or the “hive”) are a race of six limbed insectoid aliens. They are able to travel the galaxy in giant hive ships and can quickly infest a planet.

They come in a variety of sizes, ranging from the small nymph to the large guardian, with each type, referred to as a “caste” performing different roles. They are able to mutate rapidly and seem to generate new types of bodies as needed. Additionally, each basic body type also comes in a variety of configurations with different specialised limbs to do different tasks, including wielding biological weapons that themselves appear to be genetically modified creatures.

Each unit is generally made up of the same type of creature with the same mutations. Hence, they are sometimes referred to as “broods”.

Observations suggest they have a form of “hive mind” and may be controlled through pheromones or perhaps a form of psychic connection.

Game Rules

Creatures are formed into units as for other races. Each unit is normally made up of figures from the same caste with the same mutations. Units are activated in accordance with the normal rules and each unit receives two actions. Units may perform any of the actions described in the core rules, according to the limitations described below (see behaviour). They become suppressed as for any other troop type and may use an action to attempt to remove a suppression marker.

For the purpose of spotting hidden units, treat most broods as if they had “aided sensors”. That is, they use a D6 as their sensor die type. Some broods may have a mutation that enhances their senses.

Unit Leaders

Formic units don’t have a leader per se. However, it is useful to mark one model as a unit leader for the purpose of measuring ranges etc. Units do need to maintain cohesion and thus the location of the leader matters. If a unit leader model is killed, remove another model instead.

Behaviour

Individually, most of the insectoid types have only limited intelligence and behave rather simplistically. The two most common types of behaviour that have been observed are: aggressive and passive. Warriors are the only significant caste that is able to behave independently.

However, when nearby a leader creature, such as a king or brain, the creatures appear to behave in a far more coordinated manner as if they are obeying the orders of the leader.

The normal confidence, morale and motivation rules do not apply to the colony. Formics are not concerned about casualties and do not take confidence tests. Unless subject to default behaviour, units are considered “steady” for the purpose of any die roll that uses confidence as a modifier.

However, when a leader (king, prince or brain) Formic is killed all broods within 12” must make a leadership test with a threat level of +2. If the brood fails to score at least half the required number, the unit goes haywire and will run 1D8 inches in a random direction (avoiding obstacles and other units) and is then considered to have been activated that turn. If it fails to score the required number, but does score half, then it gains an additional suppression marker and is also considered activated. This can increase the number of suppressions above 3. Otherwise the brood maintains its link to the hive mind and is fine although it may now be subject to default behaviour described below.

Confidence Tests

Formics do not take confidence tests in the normal way. However, they do have some reactions to events.

Units that are defined as passive, whether within hive mind proximity or not, take an extra suppression marker if they suffer a casualty or damage.

Units that are defined as aggressive, ignore casualties. When taking a courage test to charge, treat a minor failure as a minor success. If they suffer casualties as a result of defensive fire, they ignore them and proceed with the attack. They do not include casualties or damage when making a final courage test to see who won the combat.

Default Behaviour

Hive Mind

Broods within 12 inches of a leader model (king, prince or brain) are under the control of the hive mind. It may be activated normally and perform whichever actions the player desires. However, if it began outside that range, it is subject to default behaviour. The exception is the warrior caste which have their own direct link to the hive mind and can act as desired.

Aggressive

Castes that are aggressive must attempt to close assault the nearest enemy. This applies even if they are well beyond assault range. The normal courage test is applied if the target unit is within range. That is, if the Formic unit's movement is D6, then the courage test occurs if the target is within 24” (two moves at D6x2). Otherwise, the Formic unit simply moves two moves in the required direction.

If the unit is suppressed, it must first unsuppress and will use any remaining actions to move toward the nearest enemy.

They are considered “confident” for any tests that use confidence as a die modifier.

Passive

Castes that are passive will move towards the nearest cover that does not take them closer to an enemy. If they are already in cover, they may shoot at the nearest enemy.

If the unit is suppressed, it will first attempt to remove any suppression markers.

If the unit is ‘propped’, it will remain where it is.

They will defend themselves in close combat if attacked.

They are considered “shaken” for any tests that use confidence as a die modifier.

Independent

Independent castes may behave entirely as desired by the player. While they can be suppressed, they are not subject to other confidence or motivation rules. They are considered “steady” for the purpose of any test that uses confidence as a die modifier.

Terror

Few humans are undaunted by the presence of Formics. The knowledge that they are likely to become food for the hive instils most humans with what can only be described as terror. When assaulted by a unit of Formics, most humans treat them as a terror weapon. Additionally, Formics cause panic as described for terror weapons.

Troop Types

Nymphs

Nymphs are fairly small by colony standards; less than the height of a man. They tend to swarm together and can therefore overwhelm opponents by sheer weight of numbers.

Known variants include winged nymphs (move D12) and nymphs armed with spike pistols.

In close combat, a swarm of nymphs has a strike value of 3. Broods usually consist of between 4 and 12 swarms.

Workers

Workers form the backbone of every colony. The basic worker is roughly human sized and has 3 pairs of limbs. The hind limbs are the primary means of locomotion, and some variants have particular powerful legs allowing them to leap great distances (move D8), while others, often called drones, are winged (move D12).

The middle pair of limbs are generally equipped with a strong curved claw, but also aid in movement. The fore limbs are essentially hands that allow the worker to manipulate objects. In some varieties the hands have mutated into claws or slashing talons, while others have evolved to carry weapons.

In close combat, each worker has a strike value of 2, although some mutations will vary this. A brood usually consists of between 4 and 12 workers.

Warriors

Warriors stand almost twice as tall as a human. Their rear legs are used for movement, freeing up both other pairs of limbs for combat. Warriors probably have the greatest variety in form being armed with claws, talons and a variety of biological weapons. There is also a winged variety.

In close combat, each warrior has a strike value of 3, although this will vary depending on mutations. A brood usually consists of 4 warriors.

Guardians

Guardians are heavily built warriors with stronger armour that are the size of a small vehicle. They come in two basic types, often referred to as bull-beasts and gun-beasts. The former have no ranged weapons, but a variety of claws and talons as well as armour plating making them formidable in close combat. The latter are generally less well armoured, although still very tough, and carry particularly heavy ranged weapons. One notable variant wields a back mounted heavy weapon comparable to a human artillery piece, complete with the ability to fire indirectly.

In close combat, a guardian has a strike value of D10, which may vary depending on its mutations. A brood usually consists of a single guardian.

Leaders

The leader, or “king” is a particularly large warrior. As with other warriors it can take a variety of forms and carry a variety of weapons.

In close combat, a leader has a strike value of D10, although this will vary depending on mutations. A brood consists of a single leader and they follow the rules for monstrous creatures.

There is also a “prince” variant. This is essentially a modified warrior.

Brains

A small number of aliens appear to be nothing more than brains. They have limited combat capability and only vestigial limbs, but significantly enlarged heads. They serve as a conduit for the hive mind.

In close combat, the brain has a strike value of D6. A brood consists of a single brain and they follow the rules for monstrous creatures.

Dragons

Occasionally, a very large creature is encountered. These are often referred to as “dragons” because of their size and appearance. Some are even capable of flight. One variant dragon has been observed that appears to function like a huge brain.

A brood consists of a single dragon and they follow the rules for monstrous creatures.

Their basic strike value is a 2D8. That is, a D8 for each pair of limbs if armed with basic claws. If a pair of limbs is replaced with scything talons or crushing claws, the strike value increases to D10. If replaced with a pair of monstrous tentacles the strike value increases to a D10 and the enemy's quality die is shifted down during combat.

If a pair of limbs is replaced by a ranged weapon, its close combat strike value drops to a D6, but it gains the ranged capability of the weapon.

Those that carry guns tend to behave passively, while those with only close combat weapons tend to be aggressive.

Tabular Data

The basic body types are listed in the following table.

Troop Type	Quality	LV ¹	Close Combat Impact	Armour	Size Class	Move	Behaviour
Nymph	Militia (D4)	3	D6	D4	1	D6	Aggressive
Worker	Green (D6)	3	D6	D4	1	D6	Passive
Worker (leaping)	Green (D6)	3	D6	D4	1	D8	Aggressive
Worker (flying)	Green (D6)	3	D6	D4	1	D12	Passive
Warrior	Veteran (D10)	1	D8	D8	1	D6	Independent
Warrior (burrowing)	Veteran (D10)	3	D8	D6	1	D6	Aggressive
Guardian (gunbeast)	Veteran (D10)	2	D8	D8	2	D6	Passive
Guardian (bullbeast)	Veteran (D10)	2	D8	D10	2	D6	Aggressive
King	Elite (D12)	1	D10	D10	2	D6	Independent
Prince	Elite (D12)	1	D10	D10	1	D6	Independent
Brain	Veteran (D10)	1	D8	D6	2	D6	Independent
Dragon	Green (D6)	2	D10	D10	3	D6	Varies

Mutations

The following tables describe some of the more common variations on the Formic body types.

Locomotion	
Special Rule	Description
Fast	Fast troops move one die type faster than their basic type. That is, a type that normally uses a D6 for movement would use a D8 if they are fast.
Leaping	Leaping troops are able to leap over most linear obstacles such as walls without the usual penalty to movement.
Winged	Winged creatures jump, using their wings to help cover ground quickly. They usually use a D12 for movement and may ignore most types of difficult terrain.
Floating	Some bugs appear to hover over the ground either supported by air sacks or some unknown mechanism. They are treated as grav vehicles for the purpose of terrain effects except that dense woods are difficult terrain.
Flying	Some dragon caste creatures are in effect aircraft. They move using a D12, ignore all terrain and typically do not land.
Burrowing	

¹ Leadership value

Enhancements	
Acidic Saliva	When a unit receives wounds from a brood with acidic saliva, mark the target unit with an acid counter. When that unit makes a medical test to see if the wounded recover, subtract 1 from the die roll.
Chemical Stimulants	This brood gains a +1 quality die shift when in close combat.
Toxic Saliva	This brood is able to spit a toxic chemical when engaged in close combat. Each model in a brood adds 1 to its standard close combat strike value, or shifts its strike die up by one if it is a single model brood.
Hardened Exoskeleton	This brood has its armour die shifted up by one.
Enhanced Senses	When attempting to spot a hidden enemy, treat the unit as if it had enhanced sensors. That is, they use a D8 as their sensor die type.
Tendrils	This brood has wormlike tendrils around its mouth that enhance its awareness of its surroundings. They gain a positive quality die shift for both attack and defence in close combat.
Heavy Tail	Some large creatures have a particularly heavy tail that can be used as an extra weapon in close combat. Such a creature adds a D6 as an extra support die when striking in close combat and any enemy model struck in close combat suffers a negative armour die shift when determining if it is wounded.
Scythed Tail	Some large creatures have a scythed tail that can be used as an extra weapon in close combat. Such a creature adds a D12 as an extra support die when striking in close combat, however, they also take a negative quality die shift when defending in close combat.
Regenerate	Some large creatures are able to regenerate or repair damage. When such a creature is activated, roll a D6. On a 1 or 2 remove one damage marker.
Tusked	Some large creatures have tusks or horns that it uses when charging into close combat. Such a creature gains an extra D10 as a support strike die when attacking.
Poison Glands	Any enemy wounded by a brood with poison glands is considered poisoned. When making a medical test, subtract 2 from the die roll.
Spined Back	Some large creatures have a spiny back that they can use in close combat. At the end of a round of close combat, when rolling to determine the outcome of the combat, enemies facing such a creature suffer a negative quality die shift.
Toxic Cloud	Some large creatures exude a toxic cloud that both obscures and disorients their attackers. Enemy units in close combat with such a creature suffer a negative quality die shift for both attack and defence.

Weapons

Close Combat Weapons

The simplest of aliens have one or two pairs of claws. In close combat, they have a strike value as described for their caste type. However, each caste also has a variety of mutations that enhance its close combat ability.

Weapon	Notes
Slashing Talons	Slashing talons allow the creature to make wide sweeping strikes that potentially catch more than one opponent. For each pair of slashing talons add 1 to the strike value of the attacker, or shift up the strike die by one whichever is relevant.
Ripping Talons	Ripping talons are particularly strong and can tear through armour. For each pair of ripping talons, increase the impact die of the creature by one.
Crushing Claws	Crushing claws are able to grab and hold an opponent squeezing them with a vice like grip. For each pair of crushing claws increase the impact die by two.
Monstrous Crushing Claws	For each pair of monstrous crushing claws increase the creature's impact die by three.
Chitin Swords	Some creatures are equipped with biologically crafted swords made of razor sharp, hardened chitin. For each pair of chitin swords, apply a positive shift to the creature's impact die and add 1 or shift up the creature's strike value.
Whips or Tentacles	For each pair of tentacles a creature is equipped with, apply a negative die shift to the enemy's quality die when they are attacking the creature.
Whip and Sword Combination	Some creatures, especially leaders, use a combination of whip and sword. Apply a negative die shift to the enemy's quality die when they are attacking the creature and apply a positive die shift to the creature's impact die.
Monstrous Tentacles	These large tentacles are particularly good at tearing apart vehicles. For each pair of tentacles, apply a negative die shift to the enemy's quality die when in close combat. Additionally, apply a negative die shift to the enemy's armour if it is a vehicle including a mech.

Ranged Weapons

The colony is able to manufacture a variety of biological weapons that graft themselves to the host creature in a symbiotic relationship. Most such weapons effectively replace one pair of limbs on the host creature.

Workers are only capable of carrying small arms. Warriors may carry small arms or support weapons. Leaders and dragons typically carry heavy weapons. Very large dragons may carry special heavy weapons.

Heavy weapons carried by broods do not require 1 action to set up but are considered to have average stabilisation. Those creatures that carry more than one ranged weapon may fire each one as a separate action.

The most common weapons are described below.

Weapon	Class	FP	Impact	Notes
Bug Shotgun	Small arms	3	D6/ -	Assault, Range 24
Bug Spitter	Small arms	1	D6/ D4	Assault

Maggot Spitter	Small arms	2	D8/D6	Assault
Needle Spitter	Small arms	2	D6/ -	Assault
Needle Fists	Small arms	2	D6/ D4	Assault, Pistol, Range 12, FP applies to the pair
Barb Spitter	Support	D10	D6/ D4	Assault, Suppressing
Heavy Venom Spitter	Heavy 2	D10	D12	Assault
Heavy Barb Spitter	Heavy 2	D10	D8/D6	Assault, Suppressing
Twin Maggot Spitter	Heavy 1	D10	D8/D6	Assault
Venom Spitter	Support	D10	D8	Assault

Suppressing Weapons

A suppressing weapon causes a suppression marker on the target even if the shot actually misses.

Assault Weapons

Many Formic ranged weapons are labelled as assault weapons. This reflects their tendency to advance to contact as quickly as possible.

Assault weapons may be fired as part of a move action. If doing so, only assault weapons may be used. The range is measured at the start of the move and the target range die is shifted up by one. Assault weapons may only be fired once per activation.

Assault weapons may be fired at the start of a close assault attempt after the attacker passes the courage test.

Note, the die shift is in addition to any others such as stabilisation.

Pistols

Pistols typically have a reduced range. They may be used in close combat with a strike value of 1, unless specified otherwise.