

GIANT BUG INVASION

by Mike Berkey (michael.berkey@gmail.com), Copyright 2010. For more Microlite20 awesomeness, head over to the Microlite20 website at <http://www.koboldenterprise.com>.

This is more of a tool kit for playing gonzo weird science scenarios than anything else. It's primarily intended as an expansion to the (now absurdly non-micro) SpyLite system, but is fairly compatible with other versions of Microlite20 with a bit of tweaking.

So, here we go. Mad Science and more nasty bugs than you can shake an emergent quantum stick at.

New Talents

Big Chin. You regenerate Action Points more quickly. Not only do you gain an Action Point back on a natural 20, you also get one back on a 19, so long as the roll itself was successful.

Bulletproof Nudity. This Talent is mainly intended to simulate characters who never seem to tote more than a bikini and a machine gun, but since this is an egalitarian game, it's okay for guys to have this Talent as well. If you're baring some skin, then you have a +1 bonus to your AC. The more skin you're showing, the more the bonus, up to a maximum of +3. Wearing clothing or armor negates this effect. At the GM's discretion, the character can take a small hit to skill and to-hit rolls when "over-dressed" or dressed too conservatively.

Field Biologist. By examining the corpses of icky non-human things and using the fruits of modern science, you and your teammates gain combat and skill bonuses. Requires that Knowledge be a Trained Skill. You can examine any new species of critter killed, assuming you have access to sufficient lab equipment (even a field kit will do in a pinch). Make an Int + Know check vs DC 20. If successful, all attacks and skill rolls against these critters will be at +2 by you and the rest of the team for the rest of the adventure. If the check is DC 30 or better, then all damage inflicted is increased by +1d6. The GM may adjust the DC's up or down to reflect the difficulty of the situation or quality of equipment.

If I Had A Hammer. Improvised weapons never break for you and you do an additional +2 damage when using one.

Mad Scientist. Requires that Knowledge be a Trained Skill. Instead of being forced to roll for your Mad Science gadgets, you can create your own. When this Talent is first chosen, choose a Source for your character—from now on all gadgets you make will have that Source. Taking this Talent again allows you to choose an additional Source for your gadgets. This bonus does not necessarily extend to other party members, except with GM permission (in this case, your character designed and built the party's gadgets).

Serious Hate On For (Insert Target). If there's one thing you hate more than traffic jams, it's... Pick one kind of target every time you choose this Talent (bugs, zombies, bus drivers, whatever). When making a damage roll against this kind of target, you can reroll any 1's or 2's that come up. Rock'n'roll.

Weird Science. Requires Mad Scientist. When rolling for Quirks for your own mad gadgets, not only do you always know what the result is, you can roll twice and choose one of the two results. This bonus does **not** extend to other party members, even when they are using gadgets that you have designed.

Mad Science

Mad Science extends the standard SpyLite Gear Point system and produces devices that are slightly more powerful, but weird and unpredictable.

You can declare any item bought through the Gear Point system to be "Mad."

Roll twice, once for a Source and once for a Quirk. You will know ahead of time what the Source is, but it's recommended that the GM roll the gadget's Quirk and let the players find out what it is through experimentation.

Sources (d8)

- 1 **Biological.** The device uses biological engineered components—viruses, specially bred or mutated creatures, tamed insects, what have you. In order to stay working, it must be fed, either through a prepared solution or whatever's handy.
- 2 **Chemical.** The device uses special chemicals which can run out eventually. The device is prone to leakage when it breaks, as well—**roll d6:** 1-3 harmless chemicals, 4-5 inconveniencing (stains, smells bad), 6 hazardous.
- 3 **Electronic.** The device is entirely electronic. And by electronic, we're talking vacuum tubes, Jacob's Ladders, arcs of exposed electricity. Mad Science never takes half measures. **Roll 1d10** after every use—on a 1 or 2, it has run out of power. In addition, anybody within 5 feet of the item when used (besides the operator) must save vs DC 15 or get zapped for 1d6 damage.
- 4 **Radioactive.** The device is highly radioactive. It has an effectively unlimited power supply, but leaks radiation like a rusty Pinto leaks oil. Anybody exposed to the item for more than an hour has a flat 1 in 10 chance per 4 hours to develop a random mutation. The details of any mutations are up to the GM, but they should be embarrassing and unexpected.
- 5 **Robotic.** The device works via advanced robotics—the more implausible and Rube Goldberg-esque, the better. While it never seems to run out of power, sometimes the robots will go on strike and must be convinced to continue working.
- 6 **Quantum.** Nobody knows quite how the thing works, only that it does. It has a tendency to disappear when looked at out of the corner of the eye, only to reappear when looked at squarely. Occasionally it emits weird noises and appears to occupy unexpected dimensions. On any skill or to-hit roll of one, it causes reality to rewrite itself in some way. **Roll 1d6:** 1-3 Superficial, 4-5 Minor, 6 Major.
- 7 **Steampunk.** The device runs on coal and steam or a complex mechanically-wound clockwork mechanism. It is massively complex for its size and usually rather bulky. **Roll 1d10** after every use—on a 1 or 2, the machine makes a loud clattering noise and falls apart. Putting it back together requires an Int + Sci roll vs DC 20 or more.
- 8 **Roll again.**

Quirks (d8)

- 1 **Creepy.** The item is so bizarre that everyone within 30 feet of the item must save vs DC 15 when it's operating or run the hell away (or at least back off to what appears to be a safe distance). This includes friendlies, but not the operator.
- 2 **Efficient.** If the gadget is a weapon, it either uses less ammunition or affects more opponents per use. If not a weapon, it helps out more with the task it was designed for, but not always in the most obvious ways. For example, an Efficient Lockpick might pick the lock you're trying to open and then wander off and pick 1d3 more locks for you. Or it might spray a chemical that weakens the door's material so that if the lock-picking attempt fails, it's easier to batter down the door.

- 3 **Emergent.** The item has a tendency to gain new features after a while. Every time it's used, roll 1d10. On a 1 or 2, the device gains another Gear Point, which can be spent immediately, on anything, so long as it's still physically attached somehow to the item. The new ability can't be directly related to any previously-bought abilities.
- This can happen 3 times for a total of 3 extra Gear Points. **Roll d6:** 1-3 the choice of new ability is up to the GM, 4-6 player's choice.
- 4 **Evolving.** Every time a skill or to-hit roll is made by 5 or more than the required number while using the item, add +1, up to a +5 total for the gadget. At +5, roll for another Quirk. If the Quirk is "Evolving", re-roll. After that, no more bonuses are gained.
- 5 **Explosive.** The item works once, extremely well, and then breaks. Weapons inflict maximum damage or affect a very wide area, skill-boosting items give an automatic 20 and other items solve the task in record time. Once the device breaks, the Gear Points are "lost" until the end of the adventure.
- 6 **Foul.** The device constantly emits a nasty stench when in operation. -2 to all skill or to-hit rolls within 20 feet when in use. The smell also stains clothing after a while and attracts vermin.
- 7 **Powerful.** +1d6 more damage or an extra +1d6 to a skill roll (roll each time used). If the device doesn't give an obvious bonus (for example, a rebreather), then you can give it another related special ability. For example, a Powerful Rebreather might give the character a swimming speed boost because the bioengineered pygmy sharks that you're using for gills also help pull you along. In exchange for this, however, fumbles are more potent, too. The details should be left to a sadistic GM.
- 8 **Symbiotic.** Every time it's used, make a Str+Phys roll vs DC 15. If the roll is **failed**, the device becomes a part of you. The good part is that you now have a new intrinsic ability with all the bonuses that the device offers. The device no longer takes up Gear Points to possess. The downside, other than being a mutated freak that scares children and small animals, is that you have all the limitations of the gadget's Source.

Generic Bugs

Rather than listing stats for several million different flavors of bugs, take one of the following templates and add one or more of the following Bug Powers. By doing so, you can stat up a freight train-sized Tarantula quickly by giving a Colossal Generic Bug "Wall-Crawling", "Poison Bite" and "Web Spit." A Large Grasshopper could have "Armored Carapace" and "Jumper."

If you have no specific critter in mind, then roll the Bug Powers randomly.

Bug Type (d8)

- 1 **Generic Bug, Tiny.** Bird-sized. HD 1d8-2 (3 HP), AC 14, Bite +5 (1d6-2). Str 6, Dex 14.
- 2 **Generic Bug, Small.** Dog-sized. HD 2d8-2 (7 HP), AC 11, Bite +4 (1d6-1). Str 8, Dex 12.
- 3 **Generic Bug, Medium.** Man-sized. HD 2d8 (9 HP), AC 11, Bite +2 (1d6). DR 1. Str 10, Dex 10.
- 4 **Generic Bug, Large.** Car-sized. HD 4d8+16 (34 HP), AC 12, Bite +7 (1d8+4). DR 2. Str 18, Dex 9.
- 5 **Generic Bug, Huge.** Cabin-sized. HD 8d8+64 (100 HP), AC 10, Bite +14 (1d10+8). DR 3. Str 26, Dex 6.
- 6 **Generic Bug, Colossal.** Very large. HD 16d8+192 (264 HP), AC 12, Bite +25 (3d6+12). DR 5. Str 34, Dex 4.

7 **Swarm.** Each swarm consists of 2d10 Tiny or smaller bugs and will attack one target at a time. Swarms take half-damage from non-flame based weapons and disperse when their HP are exceeded. HD 2d8 (9 HP), AC 17. A swarm will have multiple bugs buzzing around a target, biting, itching or getting into clothing (causing the target to take -1d4 to hit and AC per round while the swarm is attacking). The swarm will also perform a bite attack for +5 (1d6-4) at the same time.

8 **Roll again.**

Bug Powers

Roll d20, 1d3 times...or choose:

- 1 **Armored Carapace.** Tiny and Small bugs: +1 AC, +1 DR. Medium: +2 AC, +1 DR. Large: +3 AC, +2 DR. Huge: +4 AC, +2 DR. Colossal: +5 AC, +3 DR.
- 2 **Boosted Ability. Roll d6:** 1-2 +2d6 Str, 3-4 +2d6 Dex, 5-6 Intelligence becomes 10. Don't forget to recalculate the monster's abilities!
- 3 **Camouflage.** Whether through an innately camouflaged form or color-changing abilities, the bug has a natural stealth ability that provides +4 to all stealth rolls in the proper settings (e.g. walking sticks in a forest), allowing them to blend into their environment provided. Particularly effective camouflage can provide up to a +8 bonus.
- 4-5 **Fast Breeder.** This type of bug breeds exceptionally fast—every few hours, their numbers double.
- 6-7 **Flier.** Not only can the bug fly, it can also perform a dive bomb attack, given enough maneuvering space (+2 to hit and damage). The creature gains +1 AC when in flight.
- 8 **Grabber.** The bug has pincers like an ant or giant grasping claws. Its strength is effectively 4 higher when grappling.
- 9 **Hive Mind.** The bugs can communicate with each other telepathically, allowing for a preternatural level of teamwork. At the GM's option, the Hive Mind can form a highly intelligent gestalt, even if individual bugs are unintelligent.
- 10-11 **Incredibly Tough.** The bug's resilience gives it +2 hp/hit die.
- 12-13 **Jumper.** The bug gains +2 AC. It can also do a Leap Attack if there's sufficient space (+2 to hit and damage).
- 14 **Nasty Stench.** The bug can spray a foul substance at one or more targets, depending on its size. Save vs 5+(twice the bug's HD) or be nauseated for 1d10 rounds.
- 15 **Pheromones.** The bug has the ability to spray one or more types of pheromones at one or more targets, depending on its size. Save vs 10+(twice the bug's HD) or experience one of the following effects for 1d10 minutes: **Roll d6 (or choose)**—1 Anger, 2 Blissed-out Happiness, 3 Fear, 4 Mild Hallucinations, 5 Intense Confusion, 6 Roll Twice.

16 **Poison bite.** Choose an effect or roll randomly the first time the bug bites someone:

Roll d8:

- 1 **Poison**, (1d6)d6 damage. Half of the damage is taken immediately, the other half after a few minutes. Save vs DC 5 + (1d4x5) to negate.
- 2 **Turns you into a bug** if you don't make the save (DC 15). Effective after 1d10 hours.
- 3 **Digestive enzymes** cause your insides to turn into goo. 1d6 Str drain per round for 1d6 rounds.
- 4 **Paralysis** for 3d6 minutes. Save vs DC 5 + (1d4x5) to negate.
- 5 **Acid**. 1d8+Str bonus damage, also eats through items slowly until cleaned off.
- 6 **Partial paralysis**. As per paralysis, but only affects 1d3 limbs. **Roll d8**—1-2 Left Arm, 3-4 Right Arm. 5-6 Left Leg, 7-8. Right Leg.
- 7 **Intoxication**. Save vs DC 5 + (1d4x5) to avoid.
- 8 **Lays eggs** inside of you (YUCK). Save vs DC 15. Eggs hatch in 1d4 days, killing the host.

17 **Spitter.** Has the effect of **roll d6**: 1-2 Nasty Stench, 3-4 Pheromones or 5-6 Poison Bite, but at range. The area of effect varies, depending on bug size, from a foot across up to 40 or 50 feet.

18-19 **Wall-crawling.** The bug can stick to horizontal and vertical surfaces. In addition, it gains +1 AC.

20 **Web Spit.** Spits a sticky web that can be treated as if the creature was grappling at +4 Str. The area of effect varies, depending on bug size, from a foot across up to 40 or 50 feet. At the GM's option, Swarms can "team up" to do this on swarmed targets.