

Delsaurian Sandtrouncer

The Delsaurian Sandtrouncer is a large reptilian creature that earns its name from its homeworld of [delsauria](#) and its impressive stride. Thought extinct, the Sandtrouncer was uncovered as thriving and alive beneath the surface of the planet in [YE 40](#).

Appearance



A massive creature closely matching the size of equestrian beasts and large livestock, the Sandtrouncer is a powerful beast that normally reaches eight feet or taller upon adulthood. This immense size is supported by thick, powerful legs and a scale-wrapped body. Sandtrouncer strides are mostly digitigrade whilst moving, allowing them intense speed when in open areas. Its fore arms are fairly human-like however, with four thick finger-like toes to allow the Sandtrouncer to grasp and burrow through soft material like sand with ease whilst allowing it fairly advanced climbing strength. Solar skin-fins atop its spherical head allow the beast to help ventilate heat from its head while on the surface and feathers along its spine allow it to fan itself by simply shaking, improving its capacity to survive in Delsauria's extreme heat. A pair of strong jaws and a special pair of fangs allow the Sandtrouncer to break rock and hard exoskeletons of creatures, so that it can grind it down with powerful molars inside its mouth. The eyes, nostrils, fins, lower jaw, and footpadding all are formed of a somewhat rubbery-like protective skin. Its eyes and nostrils, however, also boast a UV-protective lens that seals them shut in the sunlight and in heavy winds. Within the mouth of the Sandtrouncer is a long, thick red tongue that carries a sticky saliva. Last but not least is the prehensile barbed tail, allowing it to grasp lightweight objects and lash out to defend itself.

Variations of Appearance

Although there are no extensive mutations of the Sandtrouncer, they do have a variation in colors that can be fairly immense. Their scales are always a dark shade, regardless of color, with their rubbery sections always grey or black. The feathers and barbed tail-tip of the Sandtrouncer are always the same color, but will often be a bright color to try and imitate venomous and poisonous creature's warning signs. Their headfins, in a similar vein, can be any color but will always be very pale due to how thin the skin is. Finally, the belly of the Sandtrouncer is often a darker toned than their body color to provide better protection from any reflecting sunlight beneath it.

Behavior

To understand a Sandtrouncer is, as many [Delsaurians](#) put it, very difficult. Long ago, they were considered both beasts of burden but also a great companion. While away from the impact of more intelligent life, the Sandtrouncer has become far more wild and flighty. Although they could likely kill a large Delsaurian, these beasts prefer to run instead of fight. This evolutionary will to survive has been why many suspect the Sandtrouncer no longer has claws. However, this survival trait extends to those who befriend the beast. This makes them tremendously affectionate to their owners and protective almost to a fault. Entering the territory of a Sandtrouncer will often lead to them evading contact and watching, and only choosing to attack if backed into a corner.

As loners who enjoy surviving and thriving together, the Sandtrouncer is an unusual pack animal that often travels in groups of up to ten both below and above ground. Ventures to the surface by wild Sandtrouncers are often kept short, due to their immense size and limited protection from the heat. This means that they will often run and try to cover distances above ground whilst slipping beneath ground when hunting or to evade detection. They do not, however, live in burrows. Rather, the Sandtrouncer is highly nomadic and maintains multiple territories to its pack.

Alpha Sandtrouncer can be both male or female, with their mates holding a Beta position. The alpha are often the longest-living, rather than the strongest, due to the respect of intelligence shared between the creatures. When faced with threats, a pack will often form a protective circle around their Alpha, with the Beta taking a leading position in the defense to imitate the role. This defense mechanism often strengthens younger Sandtrouncer by pitting them against threats or dangerous situations, whilst preventing the loss of intellectual members that can ensure the upbringing of younger beasts.

When wounded, the Sandtrouncer has shown the first signs of advanced intelligence by using their saliva to lick patches of dirt or even subterranean plant matter and applying it to their wounds. This mental evolution is believed to have come about from watching and studying intelligent life, such as Neplelsians licking and sticking things like tape over gunshot wounds. However, native Delsaurians argue that this is something the Sandtrouncer could always do. Regardless, this remains one of the most odd and unique things of this majestic beast.

Senses

The sensory suite of the Sandtrouncer is fairly focused on two, the touch and hearing sensory abilities. Although their sense of smell is fairly strong as most creatures tend to retain while less-intelligent, their sight is fairly average from living mostly underground. To compensate for this, the fins atop the Sandtrouncer's head and two ear-like holes between them work in tandem to generate echo-location whilst underground. Flapping these fins and its feathers generates noise, which allows the Sandtrouncer to accurately judge up to two-hundred meters of underground terrain with a maximum sensory range of a staggering four-hundred. Its sense of touch is also adjustable within its palms, allowing it to increase sensitivity as needed or even dull it to almost nothing. This allows the Sandtrouncer to adjust to the intense heat of the sands slowly, while allowing it to feel the wetness of the ground while submerged.

And whilst the sense is far from advanced, the evolution of its headfins allows the Sandtrouncer to gauge its body temperature and that of the temperature around it fairly accurately. This allows it to carefully monitor just how hot it truly feels or, if exposed to extreme lows, how cold its body is getting.

Diet

The diet of a Sandtrouncer is a fairly hefty one, but is supported by micro-organisms, bugs, and plant material. Meat is rarely introduced outright, but calling the Sandtrouncer an omnivore would be accurate because they have been reported to eat smaller creatures they catch if necessary. The amount one of these massive creatures can eat a day is roughly twenty-five pounds, depending on what it eats and how active it is. An active one can eat a staggering fifty pounds to replenish its strength, while one that has done little can get by easily on as much as fifteen pounds.

Life Cycle

The life-cycle of a Sandtrouncer is actually remarkably simple and boasts only four stages. Laid in either 1-3 egg clutches once a year, the Sandtrouncer lies dormant for nearly 3 months before hatching. In most cases, this takes place underground to prevent disrupting the egg or endangering the babies once hatched. However, if born on the surface, the parents will escort the youth below-ground. If a Sandtrouncer parent or couple are part of a pact, these youth are generally stored in the same space. They are born featherless and often with their headfins droopy and lacking muscular control.

These Sandtrouncer youths, known as Pups, will live here for around 6 months and rely on their parents for feeding. Over this time, the reinforced parts of their body will harden and their muscles will adjust to carry their fins high. Control of their tail and basic survival techniques are taught by the parent, parents, or pack. This means often short ventures to the surface and even some participation in staged hunts. At this time, Sandtrouncer youths generally pair up and begin to form either new additions to the pack or prepare to set-out on their own. After these six months and the completion of any pairing, the Sandtrouncer Pups reach the stage known as Roughts.

Sandtrouncer Roughts are aptly named because they spend a rough period between 2 and 4 months undergoing individual growth. This period varies based on genetics and food consumption, where they either leave or join the pack. The sign of maturity is marked by the beginning growth of their feathers, starting from their head and moving along their body. Once these feathers reach the start of their tail, a

Sandtrouncer is considered a matured adult, marking the final stage of their life. Sandtrouncer do not have a known limit to their age, being able to effectively live as long as they are fed and their body can sustain itself. They do not, however, keep growing. Most Sandtrouncer are expected to pass away in a range of 14-16 years, due to the toll of the desert harming them too much to continue repairing their body.

The majestic beasts will only find a paired mate up to three times in their life, upon which the death of their third mate will lead them to no longer travel in packs. This is not to be confused with the amount they will lay eggs, as the Sandtrouncer can lay eggs out to ten years of age. After this point, their body becomes incapable of producing or fertilizing an egg clutch.

Domestication

Sandtrouncer are notoriously fickle and hard to domesticate, primarily because of their flighty nature. However, this can be aided through a domesticated Sandtrouncer being in proximity to calm their pack instincts. Domesticating couples as a result often is extremely easy and the preferred method based on historical precedence, even using a domestic single Sandtrouncer to lure in and domesticate a wild one seeking a mate. Acquiring an egg and raising them to adulthood helps as well, as they will likely imprint upon those who take care of them while young.

Common Uses

Once domesticated, the Sandtrouncer is willing to act as a beast of burden to those who are willing to treat them well. In particular, most Delsaurian natives use them as cheap digging equipment, as they will even eat the bugs and uncovered plant-life. Other uses are to ride them or to harvest feathers that they molt for souvenirs and the new product of [Delsaurian Pillows](#)

History

An ancient beast, the Sandtrouncer once looked completely different. Many reports indicated them as carnivorous beasts with clawed feet that actively hunted both [ancient Delsaurians](#) and early [Nepleslians](#). However, these were also long-considered extinct until [YE 39](#) and [YE 40](#), when the booming underground expansion came into contact with a healthy population of them in the underground caverns of Delsauria. These new Sandtrouncers were instantly picked back up, but rather than as war beasts or farm protectors, they had a new use through their feathers. Reunited yet again, the Delsaurian people both native and Nepleslian worked together to bring this flourishing beast and its boons of underground nurturing to figure out exactly how the elusive creature had survived. This study has led to some successes in finding and tapping underground humidity wells that have begun the earliest stages of a new ecosystem developing. Underground, Delsauria is returning to life and the surface has begun to receive early signs of life. Now, instead of a doomed world destined to be hot and troubling, there is hope yet again that progress can one day lead it to become a far less hostile world and evolve new fauna and flora to fit the world's growth and prosperous future.

How to Obtain Sandtrouncers (for players)

To acquire a Sandtrouncer, I encourage you to talk to your GM or take your plot to Delsauria! If you choose the latter, please contact the current FM of Nepleslia to figure out how best to have it happen! Remember, though, that Sandtrouncers are large and valuable. The price, if you need one attached, is roughly 5,000 DA to buy one from a wrangler/seller!

OOC Notes

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