

Chelti

Chelti are a native species to the [Kikyo Sector](#) and relatively new to space. Their species evolved on a tidally locked planet in the South East quadrant of the sector filled with dangerous wild life and many natural hazards. This ecosystem has made them evolve high birth rates and short lifespans, as well as other aggressive traits.



Physiology

An average chel will stand around six feet tall at adulthood and keep growing slowly after that, with tough dark skin and segments of hard callus-like skin at strategic places such as the upper chest, forearms and thighs. They are not a pretty species to human eyes, however beauty is often in the eye of the beholder, they think themselves quite fine.

Features tend to vary a lot between sub-species as environmental factors have shaped evolution, size also differs between each ethnicity. A good rule of thumb is essentially the further South a chel hails from, the larger they will likely be. It's also not unknown for cold climate chelti to have short fur.

They have short muzzles with fearsome teeth, large predatory eyes with slit irises. They appear large but

wiry in ratio for their size. Their clawed hands are capable of using human items, although they only have three useable digits excluding opposable thumb.

They are born in litters usually between three and ten in a state humans consider premature and grow in a pouch of either their mother or another family member until they're ready to walk on their own. Both males and females have pouches, although due to cultural norms, the father is rarely involved in raising the children in anyway.

Being omnivores they are capable of eating almost any sustainable food, but are naturally inclined towards meat dishes. Otherwise, they are capable of digesting any food like a human. Note that due to their evolution in hot climates they commonly ingest alcohol to induce blood circulation in cold climates.

Body Break Down

Head



Not pretty, with a short muzzle, large predatory eyes and sharp teeth the chelti face is not something to look forward to. Most have highly visible saw-like teeth at the front with primitive molars at the back. Muzzle size depends on ethnicity, cheti from snowy biomes tend to have larger muzzles for air warming.

Many Northern clans exhibit much more needle-like teeth than other sub-species. For clans from the far South, it's not uncommon for them to have close fur of a sort on the back of the head and on the cheeks.

On the forehead and leading back over the skull are a series of chitinous keratin ridges that give added

protection, these extend back over two-thirds of the spine in a narrow line down the back.

The nose has four nostrils, two on the front, two on the sides further back. They have narrow, mobile ears on either side of their head.

Torso

At first glance most chelti may appear lean, however closer inspection reveals a body built for fast movement and minimal excess weight. The upper chest and shoulders have the trademark chelti callus armour, in the case of the shoulder armour this is mainly for mating rituals rather than a survival trait. However, considering the gouging some females will give, perhaps it was for survival purposes after all.

Females may have ever so subtly slight larger bellies than males to accommodate extra organs for reproduction. Pregnancy is not usually noticeable until the joey is in the pouch and a few weeks old. It should be noted the females hips are not wider than the males, this means that young must be born in a state humans would consider premature in order to fit out of the narrow pelvis. Young grow to birth maturity in the mothers pouch, although often other clan members may assist in childcare duties. It's been known that the inside of the pouch is a pleasure spot for most chelti, giving a feeling of contentment and happiness.

Along the back of the spine is a continuation the keratin armour from the skull, running down along the spine to the lower back.

As usual, the Northern tribes are known for being considerable smaller than other chelti, while Southerners are over more barrel-chested.

Arms

Chelti have long, wiry arms that somewhat resemble a humanoids, they have one elbow and two bones in the forearm, however these bones are usually much longer than a typical humans. Around their forearms is a thick callus that lets them wrap around spiked tree trunks and also acts as a basic natural armour. The forearm is also a common area for ritual [scars](#) that are a strong part of most chelti culture.

This area is usually where occupation scars are given.

Hands

At first glance chelti hands almost resemble a humanoids, however their fingers tend to be longer and are clawed. Also, rather than four fingers, chelti only have three digits plus opposable thumb. Where their pinky would be is a wickedly sharp curved claw usually used to dig into tree trunks, but is also good for gouging and maiming anything else.

Historically used as a predatory weapon and climbing tool, most chelti that perform labour prefer to file it down. Chelti that specialize as clerks are often seen to have long, but flat-ended pinky claws to mark

their non-manual trade. Chelti in more dangerous professions will often grow it out and maintain it simply as a tool for the job.

Legs

Chelti have long, strong legs. Perfect for jumping long distances and grabbing on to rough surfaces. They have two knees, one reversed giving them a look somewhat like that of a canines hind legs, although rather than being 🐾 [Digitigrade](#) they have fully formed feet and toes.

The legs show extremely well developed tendons beneath the skin on what would be the calf muscles on each leg (each leg has two due to the number of knees). The thighs are skinny but have slim fat stores, there is a layer of protective callus on the inner thigh designed to let them being wrapped around trees with spiked barked on their native planet to facilitate climbing.

The muscles in this part of the body have spring-like qualities when under pressure, giving them great agility and jumping ability, although they do not bounce.

Feet

Chelti feet are complicated things consisting of an array of seven toes of varying size and use. The underside of the foot is armoured with chitinous keratin plates to protect them from some trees natural defences. Three large toes at the front provide balance and leverage, two claw toes sit in the space between the big three designed to dig into surfaces for climbing, and two smaller claw-less toes on the back for agility and grip.

Fore Toes

Three of these large toes extend from the front of the foot splayed at angles, usually between 20cm to 25cm in adults with between a 7cm and 10cm natural length claw. Each toe has seven knuckles and is highly flexible, capable of folding under the foot to walk on the marginally softer skin on the top of the toes.

Grip Toes

A large claw that rests above the foot and swings down to dig into soft surfaces for grip. Also used to wedge into tree bark or cracks for extra leverage. The claw also doubles as a foot-based dagger

Hind Toes

Two small toes on the rear of the foot roughly 10cm to 13cm long, designed to grip around tree branches and provide a little extra grip and agility. These toes have no claws.

Internal Organ Dissection

This section labels the differences between chelti organs and our own, anything not listed should be assumed to function the same as a humans.

Skeletal Structure

While somewhat resembling a humans with a central spine, bipedal legs and two arms, the bone structure is very different. Chelti bones are much more flexible than a humans, making them likely to bend rather than snap. The downside is that fractures often splinter the bone, causing large internal damage, limbs are often irreparable from injuries such as this.

Chelti ribs are also interesting in that they're structured into interlocking sections of bone and cartilage, allowing them to dampen shocks, rather than act as a cage. This indicates that chelti organs must be somewhat resilient to bumping and bruising if the ribcage is designed to flex so.

Immune System

Extremely active, this species has had to fight virulent disease almost its entire history resulting in a very effective immune response even to unknown attackers. However this has its draw backs, chelti often have a lot of difficulty accepting cybernetics, drugs tend to need to be more powerful to have an effect and the systems main line of defence eventually turns against its host body and destroys it later in life.

Inflammatory Glands

Chelti themselves do not produce any form of venom, however many forms of life on their home world do, and that's not even including various diseases and parasites. These glands are placed throughout the body to capture and destroy foreign poisons, granting chelti great poison resistance and far longer continued functionality even after extreme doses. An ancient folk cure for the worst venoms have been to place the afflicted chel on the edge of a river with running water washing over their body, this is believed to stimulate the glands and encourage them to fight the poisons infiltrating the body.

Even some modern medicine involves stimulating these glands through vibrations on the skin.

Heart

Sometimes known as the "V6 of Life", chelti hearts are a crafted piece of coordination. Operating at 124 beats per minute at rest in a healthy individual, the chelti heart is powerful but believed to wear out far quicker than other sentient species, probably contributing to their short lifespan.

Lungs

Chelti lungs are interesting in that they fold in on themselves, producing twice the surface area to extract air from. This makes them slightly larger than a humans, but able to deliver the monstrous amount of oxygen that their fast pumping heart needs to supply the rest of the body. Such efficient oxygen extraction might be considered unusual in the oxygen rich environment of their planet, but the amounts needed for heavy exercise seem to have mandated this ability.

It should be noted that such high oxygen requirements, while allowing the chelti to hold their breath for long periods, means that their life support systems must have larger tolerances than a comparable humans.

Olfactory

With four nostrils and two separate nasal cavities, chelti literally smell in stereo. While blindfolded they are able to tell the rough direction of someone in a room simply through smell.

Life Cycle

Joey

Chelti are born underdeveloped compared to humans as the females hips do not widen at the juvenile stage, instead chelti young are kept in their mothers pouch at first before thing divvied up among family members as they get bigger. Rather than what a human would consider as milk, chelti infants are feed a substance closer in content with high protein blood plasma that's sweated through the skin of the pouch.

After about one week the infants eyes open and they're able to move somewhat by themselves. At around six months the joey's leave the pouch for the last time and move on to the next stage.

Juvenile

The juvenile stage has always been the most vulnerable in the chelti life cycle, small enough to be a tasty treat for any predator and not large enough to keep up with the rest of the group should legging be required. This is part of the reason for such a young life expectancy in ethnic chelti populations on their native planet.

This stages lasts from when the chel is six months, to roughly four and a half years.

Young Adult

By this stage the chel is well on the way to adulthood, they're well-developed muscle and bone system

makes them as nimble as their parents but they haven't yet achieved the size of fully adult chelti. Growth begins to slow down at this stage, but never completely stops.

Adult

Achieved when the chel is at full height after about five years of age, growth continues onwards but much more slowly. By this point a chel would already be a fully functional member of society with their own clan markings. Although females are able to conceive before this stage it's much more risky.

Mature

Ages fifteen through twenty and above. These chelti have beaten the odds and have reached the status of being elderly, while they're still in their prime right now they're physically larger than younger adults by a foot or so and are still sexually active. After twenty years of age the chel will likely quickly deteriorate and die over the course of a year or two.

Genetic Kill-Switch

All chelti seem to have an in-built limit to their lifespan, resulting in old age for chelti being roughly twenty standard years. This kill-switch appears to have evolved partly due to their highly combative immune system that acts in a manner similar to hyper-inflammatory syndrome, eventually turning on its own body and destroying it. Other factors include a strange form of cancer that also appears near the same time. Death is usually rather quick and not painful, chelti often use their last six months to manage their affairs before settling in to one of the clan estates and passing away quietly.

Would You Like To Know More?

Recommended Links:

- [Chelti General Information](#)
- [Chelti Culture](#)

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