

Dross Species Information



Feminine

Masculine

Dross are shark-like native sapients to the Zeiophine system, found across all major inhabited worlds seemingly naturally. Their dispersion pre-dating any Imperial contact is used as evidence to support various theories surrounding the lost Ixxithian civilisation thought to have engineered them and other Zeiophine sapients. The Dross are very scientifically and technologically inclined, compared to other Zeiophine sapients.

Next to the very colourful and bio-luminescent Zeioph, Dross tend to have more mundane patterns and hues. And of course lack the photophores of their cousins. They're also a bit more drab at birth than their Verroth cousins too. However, they culturally make up for this with often vibrant tattoos and piercings to decorate their bodies.

Their [unique biology](#) also sets Dross apart, as their instinctive behaviours and biology work together towards geo-engineering worlds they inhabit to a degree even greater than Zeioph when present in large populations. This is another factor going in favor of the theory that Zeiophine life was engineered.

Adult age:

28 [ISY](#).

Average lifespan:

Biologically immortal.

Average height/length:

1.5-2m Juvenile, 3-4m Adolescent, 6-12m Adult, 15-25m+ Elder.

Dominant Gender:

Males and Hermaphrodites.

Physiology:

Dross Physiology is similar to Zeioph, in that they will continue to grow in an abundance of food and room. So long as their environment supports them, given time Dross can reach proportions rivalling and exceeding that of Seraph-type synthetics. Such massive Dross though suffer significant downsides with difficulty living on land, and have to hibernate for extended periods to avoid depleting their environments of food. Many refer to Dross as sharks, due to the uncanny resemblance, but past the outer looks, the similarities end.

Dross biology reflects the high pH chemistry found in many Zeiophine life forms, though unlike actual Zeioph or Ixxith, they do not produce highly basic secretions. Most Dross bodily fluids hover around pH 9.0 - 10.25 with waste fluids being the top of that range. Unlike their Zeioph cousins, Dross also do not use bioluminescence to communicate. This has cause Dross to develop their own language offshoot from the Zeioph dialect that does not require bioluminescence.

Dross have a hard carbon and metal based skeleton, unlike Earth sharks. This solid structure better suits their partly amphibious nature. Unlike Zeioph who are fully amphibious, Dross can and will dehydrate rapidly out of water or high humidity environments. Only a few hours out of the water, with no intake of moisture can cause temporary harm. After a few days without significant hydration Dross usually succumb to more permanent damage and even death.

Dross possess a complex digestive system, consisting of 4 stomachs and a somewhat short intestinal tract with a spiral valve and a cecum for fermenting the vegetable portion of their diet. Dross do not have any blunt teeth to chew food, so they rely on a gizzard like portion of their guts to grind up fruit and vegetation for proper digestion. Along with animal matter, Dross usually eat a variety of sea plants and fruit that often falls into the water near coastlines.

Unlike their short digestive tract cousins, the Zeioph, Dross guts play host to a multitude of flora and fauna that aids their digestion and immune system. Their complex gut makes a home for dozens or even hundreds of individual gut-leeches and various types of gut-worms spanning nearly 10 species and an impressive array of flora from gullet through to anus. All of these natives are essential to healthy digestion of their broad diet.

Some strains of anaerobic microbes in Dross guts release oxygen byproducts that can be re-absorbed by their host and are generally released into the environment if not. This adds to their utility in passive geo-engineering. Generally speaking, a single Dross cannot produce enough oxygen to self sustain unless in a state of deep hibernation with significant material present in their guts to fuel the production process.

Much like their Zeioph and Verroth cousins, Dross use a partially optical nerve system and supplementary neuro clusters around their body. This gives Dross good reaction times and nerve transmission speeds in spite of their often large sizes. However next to their Zeioph cousins, Dross have on average slower reaction times to external stimuli.

Dross posses two sets of gills for breathing, smaller neck slits, and their larger main gills on their sides in order to take in sufficient oxygen. The lower gill slits on their side also allow water taken in while catching prey to be vented out instead of swallowed. To this effect, a Dross' throat is quite wide and has little peristaltic musculature. Dross mostly rely on the flow of water to bring food down their throats and within reach of their gullet. Just past the gill openings is their stomach.

Externally, Dross are fairly plain, ranging from pale white, to more dark blues and greys. Dross skin pigmentation changes with their exposure to the light, darkening for white and grey skinned Dross. And in the case of blue skinned Dross, getting more colour. Dross who live deeper underwater tend to be lighter coloured, while those who live in the shallows, or often venture on land can be quite dark. Those who live very deep and rarely see natural sunlight are often pure white or pale blue.

Like their Zeioph cousins, Dross have tendril like appendages on their heads. Though in the case of Dross they are more flat and broad, often oar like and less prehensile than Zeiophs. Dross also have ear-like fins on their heads, extending from their ear-holes. Though in water these fins serve little purpose they and head tendrils are seen as attractive features for breeding partners to have. While outside water, Dross ear-fins are able to somewhat assist in hearing.

In acknowledgement of their needs, all Dross are given the best in [vaporator](#) technology by the Empire without any deduction to their rations so they can enjoy freedom upon land. Dross often end up in non-combative roles in the Imperial fleets, being adapted for life underwater microgravity has little impact on their bodies letting them serve in space without simulated gravity indefinitely. Always wearing life support similarly gives dross an advantage in emergency situations as well.

Out of all Zeiophine species, Dross have the highest intellectual capacity and greatest neural plasticity. The Dross natural aptitude for learning and technology further cements their role as engineers, medical personnel and even officers throughout the Imperial fleets. As well as their mental prowess, Dross have impeccable fine motor skills and sharp eyesight in and out of water.

Dross anatomy includes two rows of triangular teeth with usually smooth sharp edges, though serrated teeth are known in some genetic groups of Dross. Unlike earth fish Dross have rather expressive lips and partial cheeks, letting them more fully close their mouths. Out of all Zeiophine species, Dross have the most expressive and flexible mouth, lip and facial structures.

Behaviours:

Dross curiosity knows no bounds, they constantly seek to learn as much as they can about machines and enjoy tinkering with new discoveries, often dismantling and rebuilding technology they come across. Dross have a limited interest in chemistry and less tactile sciences, though it pales in comparison with their mechanical fascination. The hands on approach lends Dross to careers as engineers, surgeons, mechanics and artisans.

Traditionally, Dross get along well with the other Zeiophine species, despite all of them actively engaging in predation of one another. Inter-species predation and cannibalism are an oddly accepted interaction that pre-dates Imperial contact with the residents of the Zeiophine system. In modern Zeiophine culture, predation is greatly reduced, and is mostly relegated as a punishment for crimes.

Dross are more relaxed than other Zeiophine species, generally seen as laid back and easygoing next to the wilder Zeioph and more aggressive Verroth. Dross are generally hard to anger, though all the same they are a predatory species and can be quite dangerous to outsiders. Like many Imperial species, Dross are known to consume non Imperial sapients without hesitation.

While not normally known for aggression, when needed Dross can prove capable of quite aggressive acts. When Dross hierarchy is broken, and during hunting, Dross are known to be quite aggressive as required. However unlike their Zeiophine cousins Dross quickly return to their relaxed state when aggression is no longer required.

Dross are known to become anxious when very far removed from any large source of water. In deserts, or on dry planets Dross can become agitated and anxious relatively easily if they remain for long periods. This response is linked with their perishability outside of moist environments, unlike their Zeioph cousins. Verroth share this anxiousness away from water, and need similar acclimatization and accommodations on dry arid worlds.

Cultural Traits:

Dross culture is highly dependant upon a system of superiority and dominance, the vast majority of Dross will not even communicate with another outside their species who they view as a subordinate or inferior unless they perform an act of submissance. Within Zeiophine culture, this system is accepted, and casually carried out in day to day life.

Commonly the act in question is of a somewhat sexual nature, but not for the purposes of pleasure. Licking the anal or genital area, or even full fellatio are common gestures. Within the Empire, particularly during Revika's reign this practice was widely accepted and even made its way into Imperial culture in regions with many Dross and other Zeiophine species.

Often Dross will perform acts of submissance to those they accept as their superiors, making them favoured among some commanding officers. Others species begrudgingly participate in the Dross culture, and some actively reject it. Within a family, elder relatives supersede external social standings for Dross. This usually has parents with submissive children, and elder siblings dominating younger ones.

Dross have an affinity for body piercings and tattoos, and most have rather intricate designs pierced into themselves, from corsets to bars on their muzzles and even elaborate genital piercings, usually done to decorate and make themselves more attractive or show social status and familial ties.

Alongside bodily piercings, most Dross wear decorative clothing that further shows their status. Much of this clothing is designed around and into their piercings and tattoos, particularly in the form of ribbons or using piercings to be held onto the body. Corset piercings are a rather popular form of accessorising amongst Dross.

Along with familial ties, Dross body modification and clothing goes back to tribal roots. Most Dross can be traced back to their tribal roots via their civilian attire and body art. Due to the significance of body modification in Dross culture, non-Dross with body art tend to draw their attention in both good and bad ways.

By nature Dross are very curious, and very quickly took to dismantling and learning about technology. Before Imperial uplifting, the Dross often made advanced analog devices, calculators, clocks and navigational tools to name a few. Post Imperial uplifting, Dross are one of the species most interested in cyberization, and outright changing their bodies to synthetic ones.

Many Dross either shed their organic bodies or get significantly enhanced around when they reach maturity, and in some cases even sooner. This fascination with and acceptance of synthetics makes Dross some of the most well adapted into the mix of natural and synthetic species within the Empire.

History:

Dross history is interwoven with the other Zeiophine races, they culturally evolved together, interbreed and shared a society pre-Empire. And still continue to do so, even within the Empire. Dross were the most mechanically inclined of the Zeiophine races, making them the first to deeply grasp the concepts of space travel and a technologically enhanced life.

Interestingly, Dross appear to have evolved and developed on more than one of the Zeiophine worlds, physiologically the Dross of different worlds are close to identical. Apart from mostly cosmetic changes, they are genetically similar enough to produce viable offspring. Behaviourally there are greater differences though, such as on Vehementh, the native Dross are more wild, though still curious. Before being uplifted they dismantled many Imperial deep sea probes.

The Dross were likely transposed millennia ago by the Ixxith civilisation before its downfall, if not entirely created by them, as Zeiophine religion may suggest. The Dross upon different Zeiophine worlds have different cultures to some degree. On Zeiophine Prime they are more accepting of war and combat, Upon Vehementh they are more shy and reclusive. And upon their main homeworld [Dross](#), they have a more religious culture dedicated to the eldest Dross, [Moravia](#) that lives upon the [moon that bears their name](#).

The Dross were uplifted along with their other Zeiophine cousins when the Empire made first contact with Samira Voshkel's burgeoning faction upon Zeiophine. Most Dross went along with the takeover of Samira for the benefits of a technological uplifting, and because Samira is aesthetically Dross-like due to her ancestry. Being visibly part Dross, Samira was accepted as their leader more readily than any other would be.

Once uplifted and joined into the Empire, Dross history and culture readily intertwined with Imperial ideals set forth during Empress Revika's rule. Compared to the first Empress, Dross culture was far more compatible with the cultural shift Revika created.

Glossary:

- **ISY:** The Imperial standard year, equal to about 3.1 Earth years.
- **Lapis Territories:** A set of Imperial worlds predominantly inhabited by Zeiophine species such as Dross, Verroth and Zeiophs along with other aquatic and semi-aquatic species.
- **Xenobiology:** Biology differing significantly from earth-biology. Generally based on non-carbon chemistry or entirely different groups of amino acids. Read also: [Hypothetical Biochemistry](#)
- **Vaporator:** A device that allows creatures with gills to breathe comfortably outside water whether or not they are amphibious.
- **Dross (moon):** A mostly watery moon in orbit of Zeiophine prime. This world harbours a large number of Dross, and in particular a pair of ancient and massive Dross known as Moravia and Boius.
- **Moravia:** An ancient Dross that lives upon the moon named after their species. Often worshipped as a living deity due to her age and sheer size. Moravia is also the largest living organics documented by the Empire. Her brother Boius similarly resides upon Dross, with similar reverence.
- **The Empire:** An interstellar Empire within the milky way, and the largest singular faction within it. Its full name is the Pan-Galactic Oligarchic Hibiki Empire. The Empire is built of many races with a fairly egalitarian society. While semi-autocratic, it's leaders are specifically engineered for the role of leadership.
- **Ixxith:** A feral but sapient species, believed to once be technologically advanced enough to have engineered all other sapient life within the Zeiophine system.
- **Verroth:** A cousin-species of Dross, originating upon the worlds in the Zeiophine system. Likely engineered by the Ixxith.
- **Zeioph:** Another cousin species of the Dross and native to the Zeiophine system. Also likely engineered by the Ixxith.

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