

Electric Beast

AKA: Zap-beast, shockbeast, electro-beast, zapcritter

-- a work in progress. plenty more info to add! --

Species: Zzzapbeast (electricity-elemental creature)

Diet: Carnivore

Life Span: Unknown

Designation: Supernatural (Elemental)

Note: This species does not actually have a name; they're simply a type of electric elemental. I often refer to them as 'zapbeast' or one of the other species nicknames seen above.

Physical Traits:

The body shape resembles that of a large mammalian feliform carnivore such as a puma, though built for speed and agility instead of strength. Each catlike paw has four digits, all of which end in extremely sharp and fully retractable claws. Said claws are kept sheathed and thus completely hidden unless in use.

The tail is long, thick, and flexible, but not prehensile. This appendage is more or less uniform in shape and width until approximately three-quarters of its length, at which point it tapers slowly to a pointed tip. It helps the beast keep balance and express emotion, but can also be used as an effective weapon. It is always at least the length of the body itself, though some individuals have much longer tails. This type of tail could be considered somewhat kangaroolike/lizardlike.

The rotund skull structure vaguely resembles that of a catlike mammal, but only superficially so. The muzzle is very short, and there is no fleshy nose-- only a pair of small nostrils. All teeth are non-differentiated and 'primitive'-style uniform in shape and do not vary; they are very sharp and pointed (think therapsid or piranha or crocodile). The ears are somewhat like those of a hound-type dog, long and drooping (in all females and about half of males). The remaining males have ears of the same general shape, but they are erect instead of floppy. Ear shape among the males is not hereditary, but apparently random.

Eye appearance can be one of several types, and can vary over time even in the same individual: they can be opaque and solid, have a visible iris but no visible pupil, or have the full sclera, iris, and pupil visible. Note that the sclera is rarely white, but usually a very pale shade of the iris color. Same goes for the pupil, which is rarely black but instead a dark shade of the iris hue. The pupil is round, never slitted. Regardless of colour and type, a zapbeast in the grips of strong emotion (especially of a negative nature) will have eyes that become a solid, brightly glowing yellow-white until they calm down.

Like most predators, zapbeasts have acute senses of sight and smell. Hearing is good, but since most zapbeasts have floppy ears, their hearing is compromised and thus not as useful as their other senses. Some males have erect/upright ears, and these individuals can hear very well. Their sense of touch is also well developed, with highly sensitive pawpads.

All flesh (including skin, tongue, gums, pawpads, body tissues, organs, etc) is bright blue or bluish-purple, depending on the individual. There is a sharp, spiky 'pelt' of short quills (similar to those of the prehensile-tailed coendou porcupines of the tropics), and these quills cover almost every part of the beast's body. In between the quills, and in the few spots mostly absent of quills (such as the muzzle, ear edges, and paws) is sleek, dense fur of the same hue as the quills. Quills and fur are longer on the tail and the manelike ruff around the neck and chest. This mane is optional; some individuals have it, some do not, and even those that do sometimes lose it.

Zapbeasts are true elementals, which means they represent and embody their 'element', the energy known as: electricity. As such, they are not true mortal/natural animals and do not need to breathe as a regular critter would. That is why their blood is blue; their circulatory and respiratory systems function in a vastly different way than our own. Their mammalian appearance is misleading.

Like many other elemental beings, they have the ability to adopt the form of their element and so can become sentient arcs of lightning energy for brief periods of time. This electric energy can move rapidly and is usually a blinding neon yellow-white in hue. In some individuals it is blue-white or purplish-white instead. The zapbeasts call it their 'flash' form.

All flesh, blood, eyes, fur, and quills are electroluminescent (can glow at will via electrical means). The bones, claws, and teeth do not glow.

--species colour key--

Eyes: Metallic Gold OR Amber OR Neon Blue (changes to solid yellow-white when upset, regardless of hue). Heterochromia is not found in this species.

Flesh/Skin: Bright Blue OR Bright Bluish-Purple

Quills: Bright Lemon Yellow (usually solid, rarely striped or ticked with black)

Fur: Bright Lemon Yellow (usually solid, rarely with black markings)

Skeleton & Teeth: Metallic Gold (teeth appear white due to their white enamel)

Blood: Blue

Claws: Metallic Gold or Black, rarely White

Gender Differences:

Adult males are slightly larger and heavier than females, and are generally physically stronger to some degree. While the females always have floppy ears, males can have either floppy or erect ears. Males have a slightly longer muzzle than females, and their quills in certain places (head, neckruff, tail) are often longer as well. Black markings on the fur/quills are more likely to be found on males than females, but still relatively uncommon.

Population/Reproduction:

As rare elementals, the zapbeasts are supernatural and their entire population is restricted to less than a dozen individuals at any given time. Zapbeasts form close and lasting bonds. They tend to pair up (or group up; poly relationships are common) for life. Though they rarely choose to breed, these beings are fertile upon maturity. Courtship behaviour includes ritual dancing and simultaneous discharge of large amounts of electricity. They mate as mammals do, though both males and females have internal sex organs that are not easily visible unless you catch 'em "out and about" in the act of mating. After a successful mating and gestation of 13 months, a female will bear one (rarely two) pups but does not suckle them, as she lack teats. The pups, affectionately called zaplings or shockits, mature slowly over a span of about two decades and are cared for by both parents, as well as their extended family. They are born with little control over their electric powers, and so must be approached with caution until they grow old enough to develop the skills needed to keep their non-elemental buddies safe from harm.

Abilities:

Electrical Traits: As electric elementals, zapbeasts can discharge high-voltage electricity at will, with nearly unlimited energy reserves and for extended periods if they wish. The exact limit of duration and potency of the electricity varies depending on the individual. The color of the electric energy the zapbeast emits also depends on the individual, though the only known colors are blinding neon versions of yellow, blue, purple, and white. Though it rarely occurs and takes quite a bit of effort, should the zapbeast reach the point at which he or she is spent, it takes a few hours to rebuild the electrical charge to its full power. The exact amount of time this would take to recharge depends a lot on the individual. The electro-beasts are completely immune to electricity of any source and strength; in fact, they can absorb external electricity and obtain energy and nourishment from it, though they are carnivores by choice and prefer to feast on the meat of large warm-blooded herbivores such as ungulates and equines. Prey is dispatched quickly, with as little pain and cruelty as possible.

The skin, quills, and fur frequently emit static. In addition, excess electricity constantly crackles,

sparks, hums, and arcs across a zapbeast's body, with rising intensity and frequency if the individual is excited or angry. They enjoy and are most active during lightning storms, and with intense concentration a mature adult zapbeast can even summon or create such a storm.

Personality/Habits:

Despite their zoomorphic appearance and lack of advanced language, these creatures are fully sapient, on par with a particularly bright human. As representatives of their element, they are very high-strung and easily excited beings, and both sexes can be quite aggressive if provoked. It's not hard to get them worked up to a fever pitch over something they've got even the slightest bit of interest in! They are predatory carnivores (with a sadistic streak that tends to show itself during play) but are generally good-natured, and most have noble intentions. With only rare exceptions, these creatures are erratic and chaotic, free in spirit and not fond of too much order or law, which they see as restrictive at best and a form of tyranny at worst. They are loyal and passionate beings, forming strong bonds with family and friends alike. Once established, a pack of zapbeasts are quite likely to remain together for life. Zapbeasts prefer to dwell in open environments such as grasslands, where they can use their speed and agility to good effect and their fleeing prey has nowhere to hide. They tend to prefer warmer (but not scorching or humid) climates.

Lastly...

A note about Erratic Static: This is not a character, not a fictional entity. This is a spiritual representation of myself and the energy that has always defined my soul: electricity. So this critter is simply the way I choose to represent my essence and connection to electricity. I do not consider myself 'otherkin' or 'therian' or anything like that. I'm still as human as anyone else. :)