

HUMBLEWOOD™

Humblewood Playtest

VESPER & FLOWSTONE

OCTOBER 2025



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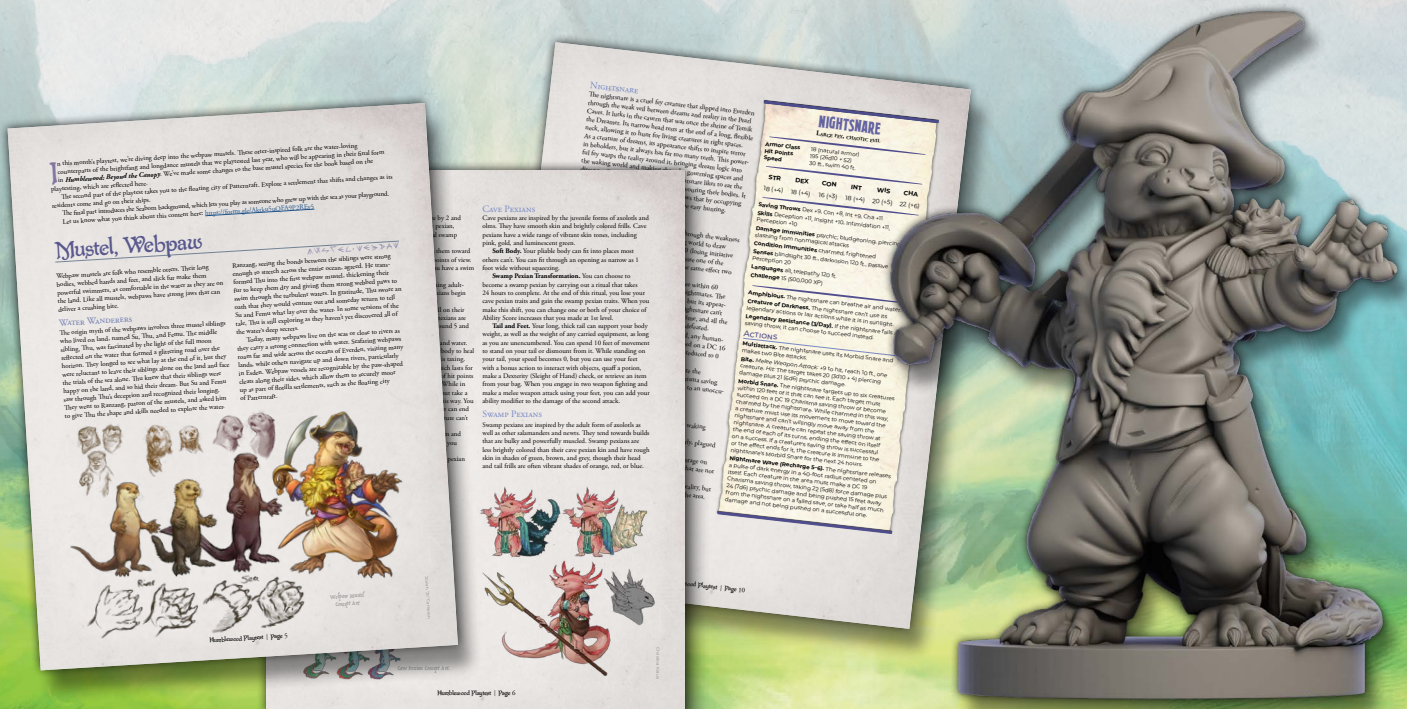
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This month we're introducing the Vesper, a new species for 5E inspired by bats. The vesper are a mysterious folk with limited flight when in total darkness. Alongside the vesper we're also providing you with details about Flowstone, a subterranean city hanging from the ceiling of a vast cave. Finally, try your hand at diplomacy with the new Ambassador background option.

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New Race: Vesper

NEW RACE VESPER

The vesper species is inspired by bats and flying foxes. These cave-dwelling folk are cloaked in mystery and are most at home in darkness. Most folk believe that the elusive vespers are just myths. They feature as villains in ancient birdfolk legends, which describe them as unnatural beings transformed from birdfolk into their current forms by an evil Amaranthine. Other tales paint vespers as blood-drinking creatures of ill omen that come from another world and threaten all of Everden. However, vespers are very real and nothing like the stories told about them on the surface of Everden.

HIDDEN FOLK

The enigmatic vespers have remained hidden from the rest of Everden for many ages. According to vesper legend, they once lived in the sunshine alongside the other folk when the world was young. However, the birdfolk turned against them in a bloody conflict. The war shook the Great Rhythm, and the vesper's patron Amaranthine was forced out of Everden by the primordial birdfolk Amaranthines Tyton and Ardea. This missing Amaranthine's true name has been lost to time, but the vesper call her The Echo. Her last instruction to her people was to hide away to keep themselves safe.

The vespers retreated underground to the connected series of caverns called the Undersky where the birdfolk couldn't follow them. They only dared to emerge at night, though they still had to take care to avoid Tyton's watchful eyes lest he carry them off to his lands of the dead in his great talons. However, The Echo had given the vesper a parting gift—when shrouded in darkness, they could fly.

For generations, vespers stayed hidden away, gathering what they needed from the surface with stealth and cunning. Strange sightings of vespers flitting through the night only strengthened the fear that the other folk had of them, and over time, vespers became thought of as mythical monsters rather than folk by the surface dwellers. Without communication, both sides became mired in fear of the other.

However, in recent times, things have begun to change. A movement dedicated to reaching out to the surface folk began in some vesper caverns. A few adventurous vespers have begun to emerge from their caves to meet with the other folk of Everden, hoping to discover and prove that neither side are monsters. Other vespers fear that this will only bring disaster as they still fear the surface dwellers can never understand them.



WORLD OF SOUND

Vespers have incredibly acute hearing, which grants them the ability to perceive the world around them in great detail through echolocation. The pulses of sound they make to view the world are inaudible to most other folk, but to a vesper, a pitch black location examined with echolocation seems brightly illuminated by waves of sound. Therefore, vesper settlements are not illuminated, though as vespers can't perceive color or writing with their echolocation, they do use candles and lamps in their homes.

The spoken vesper language Vesperanto can only be perceived by a few other folk with exceptional hearing. This led to the rumor that vespers do not speak at all, and the silent vesper is a figure of dark omen in some Everden dramas. In truth, they are highly talkative and have a vibrant culture of song, poetry, and storytelling. Vespers who wish for closer connections with the other folk of Everden are working on ways to make their language more accessible to those who lack their acute hearing.

FLIERS BY NIGHT

The arms of vespers are covered with strong membranes of skin that form wings. While these wings aren't strong enough to fly or glide in the light of day, while in darkness, their natural magic allows vespers to use their wings to fly.

Vespers have an unusual perspective on the world thanks to their ability to climb and hang effortlessly from ceilings. Vesper homes are furnished from roof to floor to make the most of the available space.

VESPER NAMES

Vespers typically have two sets of names. The first is their name in Vesperanto. However, as most other folk can't hear or pronounce the high pitches required, vespers also take on a common-use name. These names most often follow the birdfolk style of a personal name and a family name but can be drawn from other naming cultures, too.

Example Common-Use Personal Names: Bathilda, Chiro, Danya, Fleither, Heckal, Kitt, Mauz, Oksar, Pteter, Tifferrah

Example Common-Use Family Names: Broadhand, Gatherfruit, Glowsong, Keenear, Littlefang, Longtail, Moonhopper, Narrowcave, Shadowing, Silvershade

VESPER TRAITS

Ability Score Increases. Increase one ability score by 2 and another ability score by 1. To play a typical vesper, choose Dexterity and Wisdom. Alternatively, increase three ability scores by 1.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 30 feet, and you have a climbing speed of 20 feet when climbing vertically.

Age. Vespers have long childhoods and rely heavily on their parents or guardians until they are 15. They are considered adults at 20 and can live to around 90 years.

Size. Vespers vary in size, standing roughly between 3 feet and 5 and a half feet. Your size is Medium or Small.

Bat Climb. You can stand and walk upside down on horizontal surfaces without effort or needing to make a skill check. When moving upside down in this way, you use your walking speed, not your climbing speed, and your hands are free.

Echolocation. You have blindsight out to a range of 60 feet as long as you aren't deafened.

Nightblessed. The night gifts you with a limited ability to fly. While in darkness, you have a flying speed of 30 feet. If you enter an area of dim or bright light, you begin to fall.

Hypersonic Squeak. As an action, you can emit an inaudible but impactful burst of sound to briefly disorient your foes. Each creature within a 10-foot cone originating from you must make a Constitution saving throw. The DC for this saving throw is equal to 8 + your Wisdom modifier + your proficiency bonus. Deafened creatures automatically succeed on this saving throw. On a failed save, a target takes 1d6 thunder damage and becomes deafened until the end of your next turn. While deafened in this way, a creature can't take reactions. Once you have used this ability, you must complete a short or long rest before you can use it again.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Birdfolk, Vesperanto, and one other language.

Flowstone



Several immense stalactites hang from the ceiling of a large cavern, hearth light flickering inside cozy dwellings carved in the stone. Bridges of rope and wood connect the stalactites, and dimly lit figures bustle across them, going about their business. Darkness surrounds these stone spires, but the whisper of wings can be heard as flying creatures dart through the dark.

Flowstone is the largest city in the massive system of caverns that runs underneath Everden, called the Undersky. Carved from enormous stalactites, this metropolis hangs over an unfathomably deep chasm that some say leads to another world.

Stoney Home. This inverted city hangs from the ceiling of the Flowstone Cave. Homes, workspaces, and farms where insects and fungi are raised are carved from nine enormous stalactites. Bridges are strung between these stone protrusions but many vesper residents prefer to fly from stalactite to stalactite. To allow this, the outside of Flowstone is not illuminated. In contrast, many homes are well lit and warm hearths can be seen flickering through windows, guiding folk home.

The Echodepth. Below Flowstone stretches the chasm called the Echodepth. Even vespers haven't been able to determine how deep it is or what lies at the bottom. No

expeditions into the darkness have ever returned. Many religious vespers believe that the Echodepth is the passageway that their Amaranthine, The Echo, created as she fled Everden. Some folk think that it leads to the world that she created for the vespers and every year a few vespers choose to venture down in hopes of finding this mythical home. None have ever returned.

The Pendant Council. Flowstone is governed by a council of citizens who meet regularly to make decisions about city infrastructure, distribution of city funds and day to day governance. The council isn't elected, but is instead chosen by lottery at the start of each new year. All adult residents who have lived in Flowstone for at least two years have their names entered and five are drawn, becoming the Pendant Council for the following year. The system is imperfect, but guarantees new voices and visions of the city year after year.

NPCs IN FLOWSTONE

Flowstone is a large city with hundreds of residents. Flowstone's inhabitants are mostly vespers, though a few other folk have burrowed or fallen into the Undersky and decided to stay. As Flowstone is the heart of the movement to reconnect with the world above, outsiders are usually treated with curiosity and kindness.

Here are some examples of the kinds of NPCs that could be encountered in Flowstone.

NPCs IN FLOWSTONE

d6	NPC
1	Cowl the Stubborn [they/them], a mustel miner and entrepreneur, has come to Flowstone to petition the council to allow them to survey the dark outer walls of the cavern for veins of gems and ore. Cowl believes the darkness of the surrounding caves hides never before seen riches.
2	Cruse Glowgrasp [she/her] is a vesper and member of the current Pendant council. She wants to introduce a new annual sporting event to Flowstone, including airborne races for rhopala and vesper, as well as climbing challenges and other feats of athleticism.
3	Lendil Tendfeather [he/him] is a huden gallus farmer who has learned to adapt his seedspeech to allow him to speak with fungus of all kinds. He uses it to help other mushroom farmers get better yields from their crops.
4	Nella Starsfall [she/her] is a young corvum gadgeteer who offers tours around Flowstone in her scratch-built hot air balloon. She is also part of a group of volunteers who perform rescue missions and important deliveries as needed.
5	Bonito Bo [they/them] is a tilian researcher who has come from the Avium to study the moonbug, a glowing insect that seems to only live in and around Flowstone. Bonito has been tasked by their superiors at the Avium to bring back a living sample, but the citizens of Flowstone are very protective of the creatures.
6	Twick [he/him] is a roden explorer who came across Flowstone by accident while tracking a long tunnel from another underground settlement called Lurker's Landing. He now makes a decent living helping locals navigate the nearby tunnel networks and their dangers.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

You can use these hooks to begin an adventure in Flowstone or create your own.

Rescuers Down Under (Low Level). The gadgeteer Nella Starsfall and her balloon have gone missing somewhere in the dark around Flowstone. It turns out she's been trapped in a massive web belonging to a colony of giant cave spiders and now the rescuer needs rescuing. The characters get recruited to look for her in the darkest parts of the cavern and bring her back safely.

Pendant Council Intrigue (Mid Level). The party gets an anonymous note claiming that the Council has been infiltrated by an imposter. The letter suggests that one of the new council members, a corvum bookbinder named Fleet Inkspill [he/him], is not who he says he is, claiming that the

real Fleet Inkspill has been kidnapped and someone has taken his place. Is this truly an imposter, or is the writer of the letter merely out to get Fleet for some sinister reason?

Lurker's Landing Lays Siege (High Level). On the order of the mysterious Gnawful Dodger, dozens of raiders from the underground city of Lurker's Landing raid the city, taking Flowstone by surprise from the darkness. They take the council ransom, demanding the coin from the city's coffers in exchange for their safe return. Can the party get to the council chambers safely and negotiate, or will they have to resort to warfare of their own to break the siege?

New Background: Ambassador

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You have traveled far from your home into unfamiliar lands. You may well be the first of your kind that other folk have ever met. You could be part of an official delegation or an independent agent trying to foster communication between your homeland and wherever you find yourself. Improving trade, disproving unkind rumors, or even averting war are all tasks that may lie ahead of you. You have prepared as best you can, but you know that curiosity and humility will be the most useful tools you have to complete your mission.

Skill Proficiencies: Insight, Persuasion

Languages: any two of your choice

Equipment: an identity document from your home, a precious memento, a simple weapon from your homeland of distinctive design, a scholar's pack, 25 gp in a currency from a distant land

FEATURE: DIPLOMATIC PRIVILEGE

Your diplomatic credentials give you a degree of access and protection while on your travels. If you show proof of your role as ambassador to local authorities when you arrive somewhere new, you can make any Charisma (Persuasion) checks to gain access to important documents, restricted areas and private meetings with advantage. Mending. Even the most damaged relationship can be mended with good mediation. (Good)

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

d8	Personality Trait
1	I have been to many places and I love to talk about them.
2	I collect local currencies from every different region that I visit.
3	I come from humble beginnings and look to prove myself to the world.
4	I am eager to experience everything new around me.
5	I write the name of every person I meet in a notebook so I don't forget them.
6	I am sometimes overtaken by homesickness and melancholy.
7	I believe a firm handshake is the best first impression.
8	I try to learn at least twenty words of the language of each new place before I visit.

d6 Ideal

- 1 **Connection.** Communication is the antidote to conflict. (Good)
- 2 **Respect.** Guests should abide by the laws of their hosts. (Lawful)
- 3 **Adaptability.** Change yourself to suit the situation. (Chaotic)
- 4 **Open Minded.** It is natural that things will be different in different places. (Neutral)
- 5 **Conniving.** Learning about others is the first step to manipulating them. (Evil)
- 6 **Mending.** Even the most damaged relationship can be mended with good mediation. (Good)

d6 Bond

- 1 I love my home and feel the weight of my responsibility to represent it well.
- 2 I was blackmailed by someone back home into taking up this mission.
- 3 I have fallen in love with someone from outside my home, and now my loyalties are torn.
- 4 Although I am working for the authorities in my homeland, I am actually a double agent for a different faction back home.
- 5 I leapt at the chance to leave my homeland because I did something unforgivable.
- 6 I have children back home, and I must work to secure a safer world for them.

d6 Flaw

- 1 My enthusiasm for the new things around me can become overbearing.
- 2 I can never fully relax.
- 3 When I am met with suspicion, I react in kind.
- 4 My thoughts are always far from the present moment.
- 5 I enjoy using my unusual status to make others feel off balance.
- 6 I get envious of the nobility and upper class folk I get to mingle with.