

## Devouring Earth

### 3.1 Overview

The Devouring Earth is a mid to high-level foe for players. It consists entirely of monsters of various sorts, all with a nature or animal origin to them. They are all bipedal, although few of them conform to traditional human bodies, often having inhuman limbs and/or heads. The group is meant primarily to be found in caves and active in ruined zones. They are particularly fond of wooded areas like parks and forests.

### 3.2 History

There's a theory known as the Gaia Principle that maintains that the Earth's worldwide ecosystem is resilient as a whole, and that as a whole it can adapt to any challenge that might come its way. While the principle might hold true when faced with threats from the natural world, humanity has proven an especially deadly foe for Gaia. In just a couple of centuries, mankind has done tremendous damage to every level of the global ecosystem; damage that might well prove irreparable. Scientists and environmentalists have cautioned about impending ecological doom for decades, but few in power have taken their warnings as seriously as they should. Faced with opposition from any number of powerful, anti-environmental interests, the environmental movement has had few victories, and many of them proved Pyrrhic.

When protests, lobbying, grass roots organizing, and even pro-eco terrorism all failed to seriously stem the tide of ecological disaster, one man despaired of ever saving the world through conventional means. Hamidon Pasalima was born on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi to a poor family with strong roots in the Bugis culture. The Bugis are a fierce, proud sea faring people who, like many in the third world, still live their lives very much in nature's shadow. Young Hamidon proved quite the prodigy and was the first in his community to leave Sulawesi for a more formal college education in Jakarta. There he studied biology and ecology and went on to get a PhD from Oxford before returning to home to help protect his native ecology. Hamidon learned the same harsh lessons countless other activists had learned before him, and rather than futilely fight on, he decided to take more drastic measures.

Hamidon had worked on one of the foremost molecular biology research staffs in the world during his time at Oxford, and had developed some startling original theories of his own that he hadn't shared with his fellow scientists. Back in Sulawesi, he was once again exposed to spiritual and magical systems that played such an important role in his family's belief system. Rather than eschew his ancestral knowledge as most scientists would, he embraced the rituals passed down through the generations. Like many another disheartened soul, he turned to the metaphysical for comfort when the terrestrial world seemed to offer nothing but bitter disappointment. He found much more than comfort. Within the magical practices he discovered the key to unlocking the vast potential within his own scientific theories. While magic and science failed individually to protect the world's environment, Hamidon saw how, together they could be used to teach the earth to protect itself.

As an environmentalist leader in a third world country, Hamidon faced one final hurdle before he could make his inspiration a reality. He had no money. He had no lab. He had no scientific equipment. In fact, there wasn't anywhere in the Eastern Hemisphere that had the equipment he needed. Even with full access to his old facilities at Oxford he couldn't have completed his task. There had been a well-equipped lab in Japan, but it was destroyed during the Rikti war, as was a comparable facility in Sydney that might have served his purposes. And so, his only option was to try and gain access to the equipment at the Paragon Technical Institute in Paragon City. Hamidon had never been to the United States, and his Oxford academic credentials had long expired after a decade of working with the radical environmentalist fringe. He made the long journey to Paragon City and requested time in the labs anyway, revealing a part of his theories in hopes of inspiring interest amongst the Institutes research faculty. The Institute firmly but

politely refused his entreaties. His past protests had landed him on more than one FBI and State Department watch lists. Ever inventive when faced with a crisis, Hamidon decided to turn his notorious past to his own advantage and used his eco-terrorist contacts to hook up with an Earth Liberation Front cell that was active in Paragon City.

The Earth Liberation Front had been sabotaging industrial facilities, freeing research animals, and destroying the storefronts of chain coffee shops for several years. In Paragon City they had a particularly effective cell that included two super powered activists with Invisibility and Telepathic powers that time and again gave the cell access to heavily guarded locations. They welcomed the famed Indonesian environmentalist into his ranks, and once he revealed his plan to them, the cell readily agreed to help him out.

Hamidon and his team broke into the Molecular Fusion Lab over Christmas break, taking advantage of the holiday to work in the lab for several days without interruption. Hamidon had done much of the groundwork in less advanced facilities, and he needed the Institute's equipment for the final stage in his master plan. Surrounded by Earth Liberation Front activists dressed in traditional ceremonial garb, Hamidon presided over a powerful magical ritual that, combined with the lab's equipment produced the final product of Hamidon's dream: a living, self replicating colony of sentient bacteria with the ability to warp living material on a molecular level. He called the creation The Will of the Earth, and he was prepared to release its fury upon the city and then the entire world of man.

As it turns out, it's hard to conduct an hours long ritual in a university laboratory without attracting some attention. Half an hour after his grand success, Hamidon and his Earth Liberation Front comrades were busy collecting themselves and their materials when campus security burst in on them. They security guards held the dozen or so conspirators at gun point while they radioed their situation to the police. Just after they finished their call the invisible Liberation Front member over powered them. Hamidon and company managed to make it out of the building and were loading their van up when a costume clad hero with flight boots landed in their midst and began swinging. The hero also wore infrared goggles that clearly revealed the invisible terrorist and thus he was the first to fall.

Hamidon saw all his dreams crumbling under the fists of this tights-wearing interloper, and so in desperation he opened the canister containing the Will of the Earth and exposed himself to it. At the same time he prayed to the great Earth spirit for the strength to protect the world and his friends from this super powered foe. The magically infused bacteria colony worked just as Hamidon had foreseen, and in moments it had transformed the rogue scientist into a colossal creature of whipping, elephantine tendrils. The monster that was Hamidon destroyed the poor hero with ease, consuming most of the environmentalists as well.

The creature that Hamidon had become still retained the original man's intellect, but at that moment it was an intellect suffering from sever emotional shock at what had happened to him, at what he had become. When three more super powered heroes appeared, two of them with powerful ranged energy attacks, the Hamidon thing's animal instincts took over and it fled. It's amorphous, tentacled form moved with surprising speed and, despite its girth proved quite capable of slipping down into the city's sewer system. The daring heroes pursued, but eventually lost Hamidon when he slipped out of the sewers and into an adjoining network of caves.

Wounded both physically and psychologically, The Hamidon thing came to rest in a dark, damp cave while it tried to wrap its mind around what had just happened. Over the hours and days that followed, it was scarcely aware of what was happening, even as its body adapted and set down roots into the surrounding Earth to draw out nutrients to keep it alive. Nor did it understand the full significance of the pools of bacterial secretions that were slowly forming around its monstrous form. Only when it heard a sickening plop and felt a piece of itself fall to the ground did it truly stir from its torpor.

Over a period of several days the mutated bacteria in The Hamidon's system had been working its magic on the former Earth Liberation Front activists that it had devoured in its initial frenzy. The creature had thought its former friends long dead, but the Will of the Earth had other plans for its former servants. The devoured activists were remade inside the crucible that was the Hamidon. Once their transformations were complete, they emerged from their wombs fully formed, terrifying bipedal monsters with tentacles for arms and lamprey like circular jaws for teeth. The eyeless, plant like former men and women each had a limited Telepathic ability taken from the genetic material of the psionic mutant that had worked with the activist group. The Will of The Earth absorbed the telepathic talent and made it its own, allowing the devoured creatures to communicate with the Hamidon and each other, as well as giving them the ability to perceive the world around them.

The Hamidon came to think of these creatures he'd "given birth" to as The Devoured, and he understood innately that this was how his path would proceed. The more he devoured and thus exposed to the Will of the Earth, the more able the Earth would be to fight back at the pestilent humans that threatened it. And so the Devouring Earth was born, a movement of monsters bent on destroying everything that human civilization had ever created and restoring nature's rule. The Devoured went forth from The Hamidon's cave, seeking new victims to force into the Earth's growing army. These first forays were far from subtle, with the Devoured burrowing up from beneath the ground in broad daylight and snatching innocent civilians as they recreated in a city park. As such events are wont to do in Paragon City, this quickly brought the attention of several nearby heroes, who ended destroying half of the Devoured before they knew what had hit them. A deadly melee ensued in which the heroes ultimately prevailed, but not without some losses of their own. One of the heroes, an altered human with super strength and resilience, fell under the combined onslaught of three of the Devoured. Although two of these creatures died in the ensuing moments, one of them managed to escape with the fallen hero in its clutches. Only two of the original fifteen devoured managed to make their way back to The Hamidon's cave, but they brought the body of the fallen hero with them. The Hamidon quickly devoured the hero, and in its frenzy it caught up its other two servants as well. A few days later the monster regurgitated its meal, this time as three new Devoured, each stronger and tougher than the originals. Once again The Will of the Earth inside Hamidon had broken down the innate powers of the fallen hero's super powers and distributed it out to his followers, much as it had with the fallen activist's telepathy. The plan for future success became obvious. The more super powered heroes The Hamidon could devour, the more powerful its minions would become. In the meantime, the thing had had another revelation. It did not need to devour just humans. No indeed, the Will of the Earth could work its magic upon anything that The Hamidon ingested through one of its many orifices. The scientist still lurking within its twisted psyche lighted upon a particularly ingenious use of a very common resource in its dank, dark cave: mold. The Mold came out from the transformation with limited intelligence and psychic abilities. On its own, a psychic mold still has little value, but the telekinetic abilities it developed allowed it to create a powerful body for itself out of the surrounding rock. The mold adhered to piles of rocks, forming a cement like bond that joined the stones together into humanoid forms that could move with surprising speed and power.

These Rock Troops became the base for The Hamidon's growing army. Although not nearly as intelligent or versatile as The Devoured, they could still do tremendous damage to the world of men. The Hamidon can easily produce the intelligent mold that holds the Rock Troops together, ensuring a constant supply of devoted, if dim-witted soldiers. Their first task was to capture more raw material for their creator to devour and reconfigure. The Hamidon had learned from his previous mistake, and this time employed a little more subtlety in his attack, choosing night in a densely wooded park for his next assault.

Under the command of one of the Devoured, a group of twenty Rock Troops tunneled their way into the park and set themselves up in ambush. The Devoured acted as a decoy, attacking

a group of late night joggers and attracting police and then super powered hero attention. A team of three young heroes answered the calls for help and chased the Devoured into the deep woods. They cornered him in a small clearing filled with piles of rocks. As they moved in to capture the strange creature, the rocks sprang to life, assuming their Rock Troops forms, and pounced upon the hapless heroes. An hour later they repeated the process, and by the morning the Hamidon had nearly a dozen super powered genetic codes to munch on.

Pleased with the success of his mold made Rock Troops, the scientist that still lurked deep in The Hamidon decided to look elsewhere in the natural world for more useful fodder. He turned to the bountiful vegetation throughout the city and twisted them into his devoted Devouring Creepers. Likewise, the Hamidon mutated a fungus into the hideous Mushroom Men.

Obviously these repeated Devouring Earth body-snatching missions did not go unnoticed by Paragon City's heroes. Word soon got out about the mysterious monsters and their tactics for tricking and ambushing lesser heroes. The Dawn Patrol at first suspected it was the return of their foe from the 60's, Major Mutator or someone following in his perverted footsteps. They made a large-scale investigation into the attacks and, to the horror discovered just how much worse the Devouring Earth is than Major Mutator ever could have been.

A team of heroes working for the Dawn Patrol set up a sting operation designed to capture the Rock Troops and Devoured in the act of snatching a hapless hero. One of their most powerful heroes, an invulnerable brawler named Gate Smasher, pretended to fall prey to the Rock Troops' assault. His comrades then followed the Rock Troops back down into their caves, confident they could get to the bottom of the matter. They did just that, although they got much more than they bargained for. The Team managed to penetrate The Devouring Earth's inner sanctum, where The Hamidon sat enthroned amongst his creation, just in time to see the monster devour Gate Smasher whole, the invincible warrior kicking and screaming as he went down one of the abomination's many gullets.

Then it became obvious that The Devouring Earth had trapped the heroes, not the other way around. The walls came alive with Rock Troops, who were immediately joined in battle by hordes of other monsters. Only Kid Lightning managed to escape the slaughter and report back the horrifying results. The Dawn Patrol immediately responded with full force, converging on the cave from all over the city. Unfortunately, by the time they go there, the cave was deserted. All that was left was a 30,000 word rambling Manifesto of the Devouring Earth, written on the cave walls in the blood of the fallen heroes.

An hour later every news organization in Paragon City received a copy of a video tape showing the slaughter of the Gate Smasher's Dawn Patrol team, along with copies of the manifesto, also written in blood, but this time on sheaves of paper made from pressed and dried moss. The author was Hamidon, but he did not identify himself, instead referring to the his group as The Devouring Earth and proclaiming his intention to wipe the polluting carcasses of man and its corrupt technology from the face of the planet. It ended with the now oft-repeated phrase "The time has come for the Earth to reclaim itself from the defilers and devour its foes."

Since they announced their existence to the world, the Devouring Earth has widened its activities to include the whole gamut of anti-industrial terrorism. No longer do they simply raid pet shops or capture lone heroes. Now they launch full-scale assaults on those who they view as the most egregious offenders. The Dawn Patrol has taken the lead in fighting back the monster menace of the Devouring Earth, but every hero in the city runs the risk of coming to grips with these bizarre creatures.

Interestingly, the Dawn Patrol and everyone else on the surface world assumes that the Devouring Earth is actually a human group of some sort, with human leaders. Linguists have examined all of the blood written communications and determined that an educated English speaker who was well versed in the policies and polemics of the radical pro-environment fringe wrote them. As a result, the Dawn Patrol has wrongly focused its investigations on other radical environmental groups, thinking that there must be some sort of link. Ironically, this wrong

headed persecution is actually driving these other groups towards the Devouring Earth's camp, although for the moment The Hamidon seems uninterested in working with other humans of any kind.

The Hamidon currently holds total control over two areas of the city: Eden and the Hive. The Devouring Earth is partway through the process of rendering Eden back to a primeval state, while the Hive is Hamidon's own personal paradise. He has a piece of himself operating in the Hive and producing a constant flow of troops to assault the city.

### **3.3 Goals**

The Devouring Earth's ultimate goal is to wipe mankind from the face of the earth entirely. They do not see any way in which humanity can ever be trusted. History has shown that 99% of the time humans choose their own needs and comfort over those of the planet and their non-human neighbors. Sure, there's the occasional tribe or individual that lives in harmony with nature, but they are few and far between, and not worth saving.

The Hamidon is quite smart and knows full well that his goal of zero humans is, at best, a nearly impossible task. Certainly in the short run the Devouring Earth cannot hope to make any serious dent in the human population. While the Rikti war did help move the process along, that's small consolation since the alien invaders are just as bad, if not worse than the native human defilers. So the Devouring Earth has a number of other goals that it wishes to achieve in the near future; stepping stones towards the final cleansing.

First and foremost, the Devouring Earth needs to expand its resources. While Rock Troops, Devouring Creepers and Mushroom Men are cheap and plentiful, they are of limited use. The Devouring Earth needs to swell its ranks with intelligent, capable creatures. The limiting factor here is of course The Hamidon himself, which can only produce a dozen or so creatures at any one time. As much as it galls it, The Hamidon has come to realize that it needs humanity's scientific equipment to create more of the transforming Will of the Earth that turned Hamidon into the monstrous and powerful progenitor that he is today.

Once it can replicate itself over and over again, the Devouring Earth will be able to expand its operations tremendously. To do this, the group needs a variety of scientific and mystic resources and has thus begun raiding any facility in Paragon City that might have the parts it needs. Likewise The Hamidon has commanded its followers to find as many scientists and mystics as they can so that it can devour them and steal their knowledge.

The next most important goal for the Devouring Earth, one it's pursuing in parallel with its "research," is the taking of territory on the surface that it can hold for its own. The Devouring Earth is forced to spend most of its time in caves and tunnels beneath Paragon City. This fact enrages The Hamidon, since it believes that the Devouring Earth has every right to walk freely on the face of the Earth. Moreover, many of the higher order creatures that make up the Devouring Earth do not like the caves, particularly the creatures based in large parts on plants. The current fractured state of Paragon City offers a golden opportunity for the Devouring Earth to stake out a claim. In two zones, the Devouring Earth has set up more or less permanent habits on the surface world. They have also made forays into some of the larger and more densely wooded parks within the inhabited regions of the city. Meanwhile, outside the city the Devouring Earth has set up numerous retreats and safe locations within the woods and mountains surrounding Paragon City and has plans to start expanding into the ocean as well. However, since The Hamidon still desires a constant flow of fodder, especially super powered fodder, the majority of the Devouring Earth remains within the city walls (or beneath them). Not all of the Devouring Earth's goals are so immediately practical and worldly. The Hamidon puts equal importance on spreading the message. While The Devouring Earth may wish to see all of humanity gone, they generally don't make this desire common knowledge. Their message is still quite radical: humanity should submit to the will of the Earth and serve nature, not the other way around. Few people would agree with such radical beliefs, but those few can still

be useful to The Devouring Earth. The Hamidon does not yet wish to cut all ties with humans, not as long as there are those who can support him in his efforts. These human allies provide valuable information about likely targets and flagrant environmental offenders; information the inhuman creatures would have a hard time getting themselves.

To this end, The Devouring Earth almost always leaves some sort of message or a piece of its manifesto behind whenever they attack a location. Often written in the blood of those that fought them, these messages lay out the many sins against the world that mankind has wrought. The messages are usually specific to the target that the Devouring Earth has attacked. For example, when they assault the offices of a multinational bank, they'll leave scrawled on the walls a statement implicating all of the polluting factories that the bank has provided funding for. The Hamidon is very careful to make sure that there aren't any lies or misleading facts within these horrifying screeds. He believes that the truth is bad enough to frighten anyone. While most people have trouble separating the message from the, for some the message does get through. On a couple of rare occasions, the Devouring Earth's allegations have actually led to formal investigations by the EPA.

Still, for the most part the world's humans have proven less than receptive to the Devouring Earth's propaganda. This rejection comes as no real surprise to Hamidon, who is already pursuing more subtle strategies. The vast numbers of humans it has devoured has given The Hamidon an intimate knowledge of human and animal brain chemistry that is previously unparalleled in scientific history. More than any other being on the planet, it knows how the brain works. Up until recently it has used this knowledge to create the many minions that serve the Devouring Earth. Now it realizes that it can actually create specific chemicals that alter how human brains work.

These chemicals are not simple, brute force drugs like LSD or Prozac. The Hamidon can create and secrete specially designed chemicals that actually create specific thoughts and feeling within the human mind. The Devouring Earth has begun releasing such chemicals in gaseous form at the scenes of their attacks. Anyone who breathes in a sufficient dose of the chemical feels a sense of empathy for the Devouring Earth's cause; they believe for a short while that what these monsters are doing is actually justified. One of The Devouring Earth's major new initiatives is to release more and more of these chemicals into human society, possibly even contaminating the city's water supply in an effort to really change how people think about the environment and the horrifying monsters that would save it.

### **3.4 Look and Feel**

The Devouring Earth never uses any sort of man-made technology, with the lone exception of The Hamidon itself, which is trying to assemble his own lab so he can create more progenitors like it. First and foremost this means that none of the minions wear clothing of any kind. Every one of these things should seem a monster and have no trace of human civilization. The color schemes are also all very natural, earth tones. Browns, dark reds, and other Quake style colors predominate, except for plant-based creatures, which should be a bright, vibrant green.

### **3.5 Behavior Patterns**

The Devouring Earth is among the most proactive of all villain groups. They have the fervor of the most zealous religious fanatics and, unlike many groups; the minions have literally been created for to serve their master's will. As a result, the Devouring Earth's minions do not do much lounging about waiting for something to happen. The Hamidon believes in keeping the pressure on both its followers and its enemies, so there is always some sort of Devouring Earth operation taking place somewhere in the city.

Since they live underground for the most part, the Devouring Earth does most of its traveling via tunnels, sewers, and abandoned subways. Never ones to be confined by the creations of man, the Devouring Earth likes to dig their own caves and tunnels whenever possible. The mold that makes the Rock Troops possible can quickly breakdown rock and move it out of the way. A

mass of rock mold can dig tunnels as fast as a foot every couple of seconds through solid stone and much faster through soil. The Devouring Earth usually collapses these tunnels once they've used them so that no one else (like the Lost or the city's heroes) can follow them back to their bases.

Devouring Earth minions patrol the tunnels, caves, and sewers beneath Paragon City within a mile of each of their "bases." The Hamidon wants to ensure its own safety at all costs and relies on its soldiers to keep all intruders well away from the chambers where it breeds. Anyone wandering about beneath the city has a good chance of running into a creature from the Devouring Earth. Occasionally hapless spelunking heroes will even chance upon a skirmish between the Devouring Earth and The Lost.

When they do surface, the Devouring Earth's minions have a particular fondness for parks and anywhere else there is open greenery. The Hamidon views parks as prison cells; places where humanity is holding nature hostage. Freeing such places from mankind's tyranny is always a primary goal. The Devouring Earth does not want the people of Paragon City to feel safe in their parks. Of course this could well have a counterproductive effect, as a few neighborhoods have started paving over their parks in order to make them less appealing targets.

The Devouring Earth now plans to start trying to actively take back parts of the city and return them to a more natural state. Thus for the first time, Devouring Earth minions walk openly during the day in some parts of the city, particularly the abandoned Zones where they have a free reign to do as they please. The plant based Devouring Creepers are particularly common sights above ground, since they thrive on the sunlight and don't fare to well beneath the ground.

### **3.6 Allies & Enemies**

It's fairly safe to say that the Devouring Earth does not get along with anyone, aside perhaps from a few other radical environmentalist groups. They certainly have no ties to any of the other major or minor villain groups. Indeed, some of them they view as particularly egregious examples of why humanity deserves to be wiped from the face of the earth as quickly as possible.

The Devouring Earth's greatest rival and favorite target amongst the other villains is The Lost. Since both groups operate from the cave network beneath Paragon City, they're constantly skirmishing over territory. More importantly, The Lost are an actively polluting force in the world. Their horrible mutations and frequent use of radiation and bio-hazardous material leaves a wake of disease and corruption in their path. Thus Devouring Earth often goes out of its way to attack concentrations of The Lost, while the Lost themselves never fail to strike down a minion of the Devouring Earth when they have the chance.

Crey Industries rivals The Lost for the top spot on the Devouring Earth's hate list. Were it not for the constant presence of The Lost underground, Crey would probably have no rivals at all. Before Hamidon even dreamed of founding the Devouring Earth he was protesting against the many excesses and crimes that Crey Industries had inflicted on the Earth. Thus, like any other major industrial corporation in the world, the Countess' mega corporation has become a prime target. Moreover, as one of the foremost research firms in the world, Crey offers a tempting target for The Hamidon in its quest for advanced technology to continue its experiments.

The Rikti present an interesting case. The Hamidon has had limited contact with the aliens, since they tend to teleport away whenever they run into a Devouring Earth contingent. It has only managed to devour a few of the aliens, but this has taught him much. Most importantly, he is the only non-Rikti on Earth who realizes just how close to human the Rikti are. The fact that they come from an alternate Earth offers great potential. Perhaps the Devouring Earth can find nature-loving allies on one of these other worlds. Still, although their technology doesn't pollute as much, the Rikti and their war have done significant environmental damage and the Devouring Earth views them as a dangerous enemy of earth.

Nemesis too is largely a mystery. His technological focus makes him a natural enemy, but since he largely operates on the surface world and in great secrecy, the Devouring Earth has had little contact with him. The Fifth Column do have underground bases and are definitely technologists and so are no friends of the Devouring Earth. Thus the villain groups tend to clash whenever they run into each other. The Circle of Thorns operate out of Oranbega, a realm the Devouring Earth cannot seem to penetrate. The Hamidon is very curious about their magical abilities, since they far outstrip its own. It hopes to establish contact with magicians and possibly learn their secrets and so refrains from any kind of conflict with them. The Freakshow are scientific abominations and deserve death like any other man.

When it comes to hero organizations, the Devouring Earth often finds itself at direct odds with its old enemy the Dawn Patrol. Ever since the Gate Smasher tragedy, The Dawn Patrol has made a special point of tracking Devouring Earth activities and trying to destroy the villain group. The Hamidon has come to view its ongoing duel with the group with a bit of amusement, and enjoys doing anything it can to especially aggravate or terrorize its members.

As for origin types, the Devouring Earth always has need of new raw materials for The Hamidon. Altered Humans, Mutants, and heroes with Magical Powers make the best grist for the mill, so whenever possible the minions will do their best to defeat and capture such heroes. Of course they also hate those heroes who rely on technology, like gadgeteers and cyberware heroes. They regard the latter in particular as an egregious affront to nature.

### **3.7 Future Developments**

The Devouring Earth has big plans for the future. As a fledgling group, it is just getting started. What happens in Paragon City will prove the model for all of the group's future activities.

The group's very nature means that it always makes sense to add more monsters to their ranks. All of these future creatures should involve the natural world in some way, as this is the only kind of material that The Hamidon has to work with. Non-bipedal creatures are the next logical step, particularly a series of monsters based on insects and large four legged predators. The Hamidon could also turn dead humans into zombies using the same mold used to create the Rock Troops. These would probably be walking weapons, loaded up with sacs of exploding acid or poisonous and sent into populated areas to release their deadly weapons. Granted, current real world political conditions might make such creatures inappropriate for this game.

The Hamidon will also soon learn that, despite its tremendous power, it cannot go it alone in the world. It will work harder to reestablish its ties to other, human eco-terrorist groups. The Hamidon will supply them with technology in return for their help spreading the Devouring Earth's influence across the globe. In a similar vein, the various mind-altering chemicals that the Devouring Earth has released into the world will begin to take effect. More and more humans in Paragon City start to empathize with the Devouring Earth, against all possible reason.

The Devouring Earth will also seek safer refuges outside of Paragon City, particularly in wilderness areas and in the Hamidon's homeland of Indonesia. Of course, right now The Hamidon has no way of moving its vast bulk across great distances and so remains stuck in Paragon City. However, it has begun to develop seeds that grow into Devouring Creepers that it can ship overseas to prepared growing locations (with the help of its forthcoming human allies). Likewise, it is very easy to ship of container of mold anywhere in the world, as long as you have a human ally to go to the post office for you. In the near future the Devouring Earth will have established footholds all over the world.

The largest area for expansion will prove underwater. While mankind has certainly done its share to hurt the oceans and waterways, they still remain largely untouched by the hand of man. The Hamidon will begin to experiment with aquatic creatures as well, creating fish and shark men, giant battle squid, ultra-fast growing coral, and other aquatic nightmares with which to ravage humanity. This underwater expansion will invariably lead them into conflict with any other civilizations dwelling beneath the waves.

The ultimate goal (in the short term) is the creation of new progenitors like the Hamidon itself. Once the Devouring Earth gains this ability, and can place the beast makers all over the world, their global reach and impact will become truly terrifying.