

# Insectoids

Insectoids are large insect-like creatures. They originate from the time of the Ancients, who genetically engineered them to fight off the expanding Mechanoid Hive.

Insectoids are generally peaceful as long as their hives are not disturbed, but may attack hapless travelers who wander too close or try to interact with them. They can be found above ground in desert regions, or underground in Insectoid Hives, who serve a Queen. They may organize into a deliberate Infestation against human colonies when the Queen feels their territory is being aggressively encroached upon, often due to deep drill mining or other disturbances of their cave systems. During an Infestation, they will dig upward into the center of a colony, often inside the outer defenses, targeting the colony's electrical power sources, mining equipment, and any humans who are nearby.

Insectoids are recognized in three common forms: Megascarab, Megaspider, and Spelopedes.

- Megascarabs are dog-sized hard-shelled insects resembling beetles, who form the worker caste.
- Megaspiders are bear-sized crablike insects with giant, razor sharp claws and chitinous armor.
- Spelopedes are sheep-sized insects resembling a hybrid of the previous two, with large claws primarily used for digging.

Other, much rarer forms have also been reported.

- Insectoid Queens are gigantic, whale-sized insectoids who have a distinctive glowing golden undercarriage and walk partially upright on razor sharp talons. They are slow moving and vulnerable.
- Gigalocust are elephant-sized drones who are only seen near insectoid Queens, and protect her by rapidly closing distance to threats and shredding them with their ripper-blade appendages and sharp mandibles.

Insectoid Hives are comprised of a mass of boulder sized pulsating structures which birth new Insectoids larva periodically. The Insectoids tend and protect these hives, under the direction of the Queen. These hives are quite warm to the touch, and when punctured, ooze a substance known as Insect Jelly which is edible, nutritious, and incredibly sweet and delicious. Some cultures prize this jelly and preserve it in sealed jars to eat or sell as a delicacy. Similarly, insectoid chitin is used by some cultures for armor, weapons, and some structures.

