

The Taverns of Crab Cove - Random Encounters

Introduction

Crab Cove is a busy fishing and pearling port set around a natural beach and harbour backed by low cliffs a little inland - but it could be any coastal town in your own fantasy campaign.

It is full of NPCs each with their own history to tell. Their are ready to share local gossip, legends and folklore, useful information for the players or even hooks to an adventure.

If your players are having some downtime in The Lucky Lobster or The Black Pearl Inn - the two taverns in Crab Cove - who will they run into and what will they learn? Roll now to find out!

Crab Cove Tavern Encounters

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1. As rich as a Covian

You are quietly enjoying a cup of fine mead in the Lucky Lobster when in bursts Tim Baker, marches up to Dwayne Rock the barkeep and begins demanding payment for 20 loaves delivered last week. Tim claims the tavern's owner is "as rich as a Covian". Roll DC 10 knowledge to see what this means.

"As rich as a Covian" refers to the controlling family of Crab Cove including Martina Covian, the mayor. They made their money as pearlers in the area. They have been so successful they are rumoured to be shape-changing merfolk!

2. The Ballad of the Lunar Dragon

This particular evening in the Black Pearl Inn there is quite a crowd as word has gotten around Crab Cove there will be a performer. Sure enough after soup and a couple of ales a singer steps up to the makeshift stage against the wall. He gives a very passable rendition of the Ballad of the Lunar Dragon

The legend on which the song is based is well-known in these parts. It tells of Raegarth the rock dragon who eons ago lived on the largest visible moon, called Lune. Over his enormous life span Raegarth grew equally enormous until his body occupied much of Lune's surface. There was no creature on Lune that could rival him in power or stature.

Raegarth did have a rival, however. An equally enormous dragon called Etheroulla. Her domain was the air. Some say Etheroulla was the greatest silver dragon who ever lived.

Every year Etheroulla would challenge Raegarth to fight to the death to see who was greater. Every year Raegarth accepted on one condition - she must face him on Lune. But Etheroulla knew Lune was the source of Raegarth's strength and would not fight him there.

The stalemate lasted for ten thousand years until Etheroulla came to know that Raegarth had fathered and was guarding a clutch of eggs. At last Etheroulla saw her chance. She sent a series of thieves to steal one of Raegarth's eggs.

Each thief met with a fatal end at Raegarth's hands until finally one was successful. When Raegarth discovered that one of his eggs was in Etheroulla's possession he flew at the air dragon in rage, leaving the safety of Lune behind him.

The awesome battle that ensued lasted a year as each dragon ripped and tore at the other. In the end, deprived of the source of his strength, Raegarth was vanquished. He crashed towards earth smashing into it in flames like an enormous meteorite.

It is said that the remains of his huge body make up Dragon's Neck island, Great Snout and the Dragon's Teeth (the collective name for East Fang, West Fang and Great Fang islands). To this very day if you look up at Lune you can just make out the dragon-shaped impression made by Raegarth as he leapt to do battle.

3. Planky Town

The Black Pearl is your choice for this evening's repast where you order the house special - fish stew. A fellow diner at your table who introduces herself as Helga Fisher remarks that all the seafood dishes prepared by the Black Pearl's chef are sourced from the fishermen of Planky Town.



Forming the eastern 'claw' of Crab Cove, Planky Town began life as a pier for mooring boats. Over time more piers were built, boats moored permanently, connecting planks were fastened and Planky Town grew floating on the water. It is home fishermen, crabbers and all manner of sea-lovers.

Helga says Planky Town is the best place for catching a ride to Port Farring which is less than a day's sail almost exactly due south. She mentions that her cousin Aaron Fisher often takes travellers across the Dragon Straits for a very reasonable fee in his fishing boat.

Overhearing Helga's pitch, a man chimes in that he thinks John O'Mann's long canoe towed by his two giant turtles is more pricey but faster and, given the treacherous nature of the straits, provides a safer and more reliable crossing.

A third person sharing your table points out that the fastest way across the straits is on seahorseback though the rider needs to be skilled. He says there are seahorse stables in Planky Town where you can hire one.

4. A Fine Vintage from the Shires

Dwayne Rock the barkeep in the Lucky Lobster approaches your table. "I hear you've been earning good coin on your adventures around Crab Cove. Might I interest you in trying some of the finest wine around? Milldew vintage all the way from the halfling shires!"

The Milldew vintage is indeed deep, rich and way more delicious than any local fare you've tasted. As you and Dwayne are appreciating its merits two halflings approach. Dwayne recognises them as the merchants. They are Arnie and Blossom Milldew, vintners from the shires.

"We overheard your kind words", says Blossom. "With the wine we brought vines to establish a vineyard on Dragon's Neck. We are about to begin our daily ceremony for the vine spirits to keep them safe and healthy. As fans of its produce, we would be honoured if you would join us."

Outside they have two sorry-looking vines in clay pots on a hand-cart. Reverently Arnie waters them saying, "Vine spirits we thank you for staying with us on our arduous journey from your home in the Shires. We pledge we will not rest until you are safe in the earth again soon."

As he says this two colourful butterflies flutter past and rest momentarily on the plants. The vines seem almost visibly to perk up. Indicating you Arnie continues, "Know that our friends have tasted your bounty and wish to honour your generosity". Roll DC 20 perception.

The butterflies flutter towards you. They land delicately on your outstretched hand. They flex their colourful wings a few times before taking off again. As you watch them go you catch half a glimpse of something - were they not butterflies but tiny humanoids with wings? Fairies?

Blossom thanks you for being part of the ceremony by offering another glass of their delicious wine. "It seems the vine spirits like you." she says. "We are going north into the Clans Lands to find a suitable place to start our vineyard. You are welcome to join us if you like?"

GM note: establishing the Dragon Neck's franchise of the Milldew vineyards will feature in an up-coming adventure module. Be sure to follow @TavernTalk3 on Twitter and subscribe to our email list [here] (<https://form.jotform.com/202211273537446>) to receive our updates.

5. Trading in Illegal Items

Market day always brings merchants to Crab Cove so it's no surprise when you find yourself opposite one in the Lucky Lobster. He introduces himself as Marvin Waters and explains he has been trading with the clans of Dragon's Neck in recent weeks. He reaches into his bag and produces a fine piece to show you.

It is a very finely carved drinking horn with a grizzly bear motif finished with silver highlights. Marvin says it was made by craftsmen of clan Bearclaw from the tusk of a huge wild boar. He is willing to part with it for 10 pieces in gold. Rolling a DC 18 appraise check will reveal that this is a fair price.

You know the Bearclaw are renowned for their bone and ivory carving skill and this is certainly a fine example. It likely merits ten gold pieces. Before you can begin negotiation Marvin draws closer and whispers, "I see you are a connoisseur. Allow me to show you something far more impressive."

He looks around furtively before surreptitiously producing a second drinking vessel. It is even more finely carved with a dragon circling the cup and its tail coiled around the base. The material is like ivory but tougher and lighter and with a silvery sparkle. "Crafted from the eggshell of a silver dragon", he says in a whisper

You understand the whisper. The Gardadeles - the dragonborn family who rule the Icebound Kingdoms within whose borders Dragon's Neck lies - long ago banned the trade in dragon artefacts. On an open market this goblet would fetch 1,000 in gold but given its illegal nature Marvin will take just 500. Are you interested? Rolling a DC 20 appraise check reveals that 750 gpc is fair value. Rolling a DC 18 knowledge (Arcana, History or Local) check further reveals that drinking from a silver dragon egg-based vessel confers an extra 1 hp of healing after resting.

6. Lunar Dragon Acolytes

You are back in the Lucky Lobster when a couple of acolytes show up and begin preaching. Dwayne Rock, the barkeep, has heard their spiel before. Unimpressed he starts shooing them out. Roll DC 15 persuasion to convince Dwayne to let them stay if you want to hear their sermon.



Dwayne allows them to stay if they promise they will talk only to you. They have travelled from Great Snout island five days sailing to the west. They worship the great Lunar Dragon which they claim slumbers beneath your very feet. (*GM note - see entry 2. Ballad of the Lunar Dragon for more details. If the players have not already heard the ballad, the acolytes will be happy to convey the details of the legend.*) They are eager to tell you more if you will listen.

Great Snout is famous for its twin active volcanoes. The acolytes introduce themselves as Brother Callum and Sister Cowley. They claim the volcanoes are actually the nostrils of their lord Raegarth as the Lune Dragon is known to his followers and the regular eruptions are his breath.

Brother Callum claims Dragon's Neck Island is the remains of one of Raegarth's neck bones protruding from the sea and that several other nearby islands are formed of other body parts such as Great Fang, West Fang and East Fang, three isles collectively known as The Dragon's Teeth

Sister Cowley tells you that Raegarth has begun to stir from his long slumber and will soon awaken to take them and all his followers to live in paradise on Lune. He will not be merciful to followers of Etheroulla or any other gods. Together they urge you to join their ranks and help search for the great awakening spell to completely revive Raegarth before it is too late.

7. Missing Messages

Dwayne Rock the burly barkeep of the Lucky Lobster in Crab Cove is grumbling that he hasn't received a potential new mead supplier's price list from East Fang island. He thinks the carrier-raven rookery master's messenger boy has lost it.

Overhearing Dwayne's grievance, a trader who claims to have recently been on East Fang disagrees. She says a strange disease killed all their messenger birds and East Fang's rookery master was powerless to do anything about it.

A half-elf bystander offers a third opinion - he believes the Hensmen clan who dominate the eastern portion of Dragon's Neck island are shooting down the birds looking for something among their carried messages though he knows not what exactly.

GM note: Missing Messages will feature in an up-coming adventure module. Be sure to follow @TavernTalk3 on Twitter and subscribe to our email list [here] (<https://form.jotform.com/202211273537446>) to receive our updates.

8. Fenton Archer

You decide to patronise Crab Cove's second tavern, the Black Pearl. Over stew you get talking to a ranger named Fenton Archer who is recently returned from the mainland where he was trapping for pelts in Goodwood. He claims that neighbouring Wildwood is encroaching on Goodwood. A successful DC 12 knowledge check reveals more information about Goodwood and Wildwood. Alternatively roll DC 8 persuasion for Fenton to tell you what he knows.

Fenton has made many forays into Goodwood as a trapper often making good coin for the pelts he collects. It is less dangerous than bordering Wildwood where he rarely ventures, wary of legends of fearsome monsters making their home there.

He is thinking of trying his luck trapping in the forests just north of Crab Cove. He asks if you think this is a good idea. On a successful DC 12 knowledge (local) you can offer him this advice:

You tell Fenton not to venture too far from Crab Cove as most of the island is claimed by one of the 3 clans who live there - Hensmen in the east, Warrers in the north and Bearclaws in the west. They wouldn't be happy finding a strange trapper working in their territory!

9. Marriage

You meet a talkative trader just returned from East Fang. She tells you all about the upcoming wedding between the daughter of a high-ranking Gremoss clan leader and Bloodan, heir to the Warrer clan chieftain who controls the northern reaches of Dragon's Neck.

She has gossip too but seems reluctant to share. A successful DC 10 persuasion check will result in her spilling the beans.

In a conspiratorial half-whisper she shares that during the betrothal party on East Fang one year ago Mary Gremoss actually fell in love with Bloodan's younger brother Yarlin Warrer and has been sending him regular love letters ever since.

10. Ryan Covian and Salty Jack

A well-dressed man enters the Lucky Lobster and speaks to Dwayne Rock the barkeep. Dwayne motions in your direction. The man approaches. "I hear you are adventuring folk. I wonder if you might aid me with this." He produces a beautifully carved ivory scroll tube from his tunic.

The man, introduces himself as Ryan Covian. He is just returned from Great Fang island where he attended the funeral of a beloved aunt who had named him in the will. Going through his aunt's affairs he came upon this. He opens the tube and carefully unrolls the aged scroll in front of you.



The scroll is clearly some kind of map. Ryan is convinced it will lead to the deceased lady's riches. Unfortunately all the place names and inscriptions are written in runes you do not recognize. Roll DC 12 knowledge for an idea on how to help.

Your first suggestion is to approach Mayor Covian who knows all of the goings-on in these parts. It turns out, however, that Ryan is her cousin and not keen on revealing the expansion in their family's fortune just yet. Roll DC 15 knowledge for where else you might seek help.

On your many trips to Port Farring, the capital city of the lands governed by Erolf the Orc, you have met scholars who extol the library of Grimweaver where all manner of knowledge and wisdom is collected amidst its towering shelves. Perchance a translation may be found there?

Failing that Ryan could make his way from Port Farring to Grendel's Oak to ask Grendellan for directions to the legendary Tree of Great Wisdom. It is said this talking tree knows everything in existence IF you can find it and persuade it to speak to you!

Your final suggestion for Ryan is to make the perilous journey south from Port Farring to the Mountains of Mourne. It is there that the Oracle of Avadon makes her home though she is known for her prophesies more than her linguistic abilities! If he decides on this route you recommend he brings an offering!

Salty Jack - an old-timer from Planky Town with toothless gaps in his smile who is a frequent visitor to the tavern - suddenly speaks up. He claims he knows what Ryan's scroll is but wants to know what's in it for him in exchange for his knowledge. Roll DC 15 persuasion.

For the very reasonable cost of a tankard of mead, Salty Jack explains that he recognises a single name on the map - Dragon's Neck island. It is written in the language of the merfolk that live beneath the waves around the coast and the map must show undersea locations.

After a second tankard Salty Jack reveals something more startling - how he recognised the symbols. He claims that Dragon's Neck is filled with pockets of 'wair' - places where the elemental planes of water and air overlap. Beings native to both can freely mingle in these spaces.

Jack tells you he has often met and traded with merfolk in a wair pocket under Planky Town where he also learned those symbols. He further claims the Covians use a wair pocket to meet with merfolk leaders regularly to help maintain their stranglehold on the pearl industry.

Ryan Covian gives Salty Jack a disdainful glance. "That rumour is a nasty slander and completely baseless. The Covian family has built it's pearl business through generations of hard work and sweat!" Roll for Sense Motive.

You have the distinct impression that Ryan Covian isn't being entirely transparent. In fact now you notice that some of the carvings on the scroll tube match some of the runes on the map. Maybe Ryan hasn't been straight about where you got this map in the first place!

