**Weres:** A “were” is any being who can change from human to animal form, or to a sort of hybrid form, at will. The most common types of weres are werewolves, followed closely by werecats. Scattered other weres exist throughout the world, depending on the native fauna of the area. As yet, no werefish, werebirds, or wereinsects are known to exist.

How weres came to be is still a matter of some mystery. Some claim they’re the outcome of bestiality; others that they were created by witches or vampires as their pets and soldiers. The weres themselves claim to be created by Nature Herself, as stewards of the planet. They could better live in harmony with the animals around them, yet they also possessed the capabilities of the more destructive humans.

With this mindset, it’s of little surprise that weres of all stripes tend to get on well with witches and Fey. The weres don’t believe Nature should be manipulated at all, but seeing as how the witches tend to encourage growth and nurture their environments, rather than a normal human’s tendency to slash and burn and destroy, the weres let them do their little spells and chants. They figure if Nature doesn’t want Her powers used that way, She’ll say so.

Werewolves being the most common of all weretypes, and the best known, this paper will focus largely on them. Many of the werewolves’ patterns of behavior are shared by weres worldwide, with only a few little differences, usually because of their lupine heritage.

**Werewolves:** Werewolves can, as the name suggests, take a totally human form, a totally wolf form, or a hybrid form. Like all weres, they are subject to the phases of the moon, being at their weakest, in all forms, during the New Moon and at their most powerful during the Full. Lunar eclipses affect weres strangely: for most of the were population, their powers are still at their highest (as all eclipses occur during full moons), yet they, for some reason, bleed more readily, as if their blood were at high tide. This is one of the reasons that weres tend to call eclipses “Blood Moons” and look on them as bad omens. Yes, a were is still hard to kill during a lunar eclipse, but any injury sustained is more dangerous. Female weres who are menstruating are given special care during eclipses. One in every 10,000 weres has a genetic ability in them that their peers call “the Lunar Rage”. During the totality of the eclipse, a were with this ability possesses powers 10 times greater than their normal full moon powers. This insane enhancement occurs only for the length of time the eclipse is at totality, however, that can range from a few minutes to more than an hour. And despite the name, the affected were does not seem to suffer any sort of increase in anger or adrenaline, nor suddenly become beserk. They are simply much more powerful for that short period of time. Solar eclipses, by contrast, do not affect weres in any way, outside of the fact that they always occur during new moons, and thus the weres are weakened as is normal.

Werewolves tend to be nomadic, living in tribal groups that are made up of anywhere from 5 to 10 packs which are, in turn, made up of 2 to 4 families. They roam their “territory”, a set swath of land, usually large. There is a tribe that roams from the Dakotas in the summer down to the Gulf of Mexico in the winter, and it is known to other weres that this is their territory, their homelands, and that any interlopers are subject to this tribe’s laws if they wish to travel through or stay on this land. The packs move separately but in parallel, so as not to draw so much suspicion or awareness. They travel in the form best suited to the environment: when passing through cities, they are human, but a return to the countryside means a return to wolf form, the preferred travel form. There are some members of the tribe who do not roam with them: the elderly or sick, the very young and the mother caring for them will all stay in a city while their family, pack and tribe go on without them. Sometimes a were will just want to put down roots for a little bit, stop and explore a particular place. So long as it is judged able to protect itself, this is allowed, though a city with other known tribe members staying in it is preferred.

The werewolf’s family, pack, and tribe exist largely as a sort of mobile commune. All food, money and any useful material goods (tools, etc.) are looked after by the Alpha, the Pack Leader, and his family. The tribe has an overall Alpha who coordinates with the pack leaders on the distribution of resources, usually allotted out by ranking within the pack. Although only Alphas are referred to as such, there is a definite pecking order, and when food or resources are scarce, this establishes who gets priority. This also comes into play in mating.