

Shravana Hive

Most aptly called a dwarf planet, the Shravana Hive is a large asteroid with significant tunnel systems inhabited by the eponymous breakaway group of the [Freepacers](#). It is tide-locked to its star in the [Shravana System](#), which has a tendency toward dangerous solar flares. Thus, most access is from its face locked in perpetual night, and wise pilots seek shelter inside, particularly when they're not privy to early warnings.

The asteroid is carbon-rich, and has ample water supplies, though its mineral wealth is mostly imported. It was chosen as a site for a mining facility less due to its riches than due to its relative safety and strategic location. The large asteroid is very stable, can resist impacts, and electronics within it—including synthetic intelligences—are immune to disruption from stellar storms, allowing the population to work in the system without fear of being disabled, or needing repeated rescues.

The location within the densest part of the inner asteroid belt makes it a simple matter for a typical 'spacer mining fleet to take shelter within, before a flare hits. The Hive's hangar bays have room for thousands of their ships—their entire fleet, in other words—though not enough for a [Star Army battleship](#), let alone a Freespace mothership. Surface gravity is negligible, at approximately 1/20th standard.

Settlements

Local settlement ranges from marvels of engineering to decrepit shanty towns, though the distinction between the two is more philosophical than economic. Starships are sometimes used for transportation *inside the tunnels*, though use of the local vactrain line is strongly encouraged for ordinary commutes, despite its lack of creature comforts... like air and seating. The Hive does not have true cities, but it does have two towns and numerous smaller mining villages. The two towns are named Newtown and Oldtown, as their given names were religious in origin, and have since been rejected.

Oldtown was the site of the colony's original factory-settlement, and it has not grown since then, so much as collapsed and been propped up in a new configuration. It is a good place to learn and get things done, but a bad place to enjoy life, so it has few permanent residents, aside from its remaining native [Type IIs](#) and their Type V monitors. Many others come here to work, as there is nowhere else to build ships, or refine vast amounts of incoming ore and fuel.

Newtown is a true beehive colony tunneled into the rock, and unfolds like a flower in all three dimensions. It is designed to balance efficient transit flow with safety, aesthetics, and living space. If Oldtown is the center of industrial and military might in the Shravana System, Newtown is the heart of its culture and politics. In any case, there are seldom more than 5,000 individuals in either town at a time, and almost never both at once; the remaining population is out in ships, in villages, or stationed on other asteroids, in descending order of prevalence.

History

Prior to [The Freespacer Schism](#), this colony was inhabited predominantly by [Type II](#) mining, refining, and factory workers who provided supplies, shelter, and simple repairs to fleets that passed through the system. The colony was orphaned by the loss of its mothership in [YE 30](#), and descended into anarchy. At least, moreso than usual.

Deserters and dissidents, likewise orphaned, soon arrived with the ships they'd managed to snag from their crumbling fleets, as they fled the [genocide](#). Those who were not prepared often lost their ships. Few remained operational, and most arriving [Automata](#) were destroyed, but the majority of the 'natives' and organic new arrivals survived the reestablishment of the colony. The latter conscripted the former to cannibalize their ruined ships to provide parts for new habitats, and to rebuild their old factories.

With the efforts of [Groundbreaker Eight-Four 4242-4286](#) and her crew, the colony's needs for food, water, shelter, basic manufacturing, and general normalcy were met; and the remaining data storage and networks were tamed into a small, independent network patterned after the [Polysentience](#) by [YE 31](#). However, immigrants were still arriving from the [schism](#), ships were still running out of spare parts and becoming inoperable, and the frontier colony still did not have the ability to replace its losses, build its own ships, or grow its population. Worse, the data haphazardly brought in by the colonists was missing vast amounts of scientific and technical information, including that needed to maintain their own industrial systems.

If nothing was done, the refugee camp and its commandeered factory would inevitably become a graveyard, even without outside enemies. It was at this time that the first council meeting that would form the basis of the Shravana Hive's government was convened. They voiced their concerns, made their suggestions, ejected dissidents, and made account of their skills. Those who remained were the 'inner circle', and they made their first decision without consulting the other colonists: They were to commandeer all surviving ships to ensure that some would be able to leave the system, with their best agents on board, to start gathering tech and talent from other [Freespacers](#)!

In the course of their adventures in [YE 32](#), they retrofitted their starships to have greater endurance in the hostile conditions of the [Shravana System](#), convinced many powerful figures to defect to their cause—including a Type V from the Technocrat faction—and designed and built new mining craft that could explore and exploit other asteroids in their home belt, without a hopeless rate of attrition.

In [YE 33](#), the Shravana Hive finally became self-sufficient, with an established government, a nearly-complete 'Hivemind' network that could support the full population—including enough Type Vs to man and monitor every ship and ground facility—and full facilities for the creation of new [Freespacers](#). At the time of its formation, almost all of the Hive's Type [Type IIs](#) were [Automata](#), and almost all of its [Type IIIs](#) were organic, and so production was dedicated to organic [Type IIs](#) and synthetic [Type IIIs](#) in an attempt to restore some sort of balance.

Present Year

By [YE 38](#), the number of [Freespacers](#) of any given Type, and the number of organic minds versus

[synthetic intelligences](#), has come to approximate that of [the Free State](#) at large. Some inequalities remain, as the Hive's fleets are designed, maintained, and operated almost exclusively by organic [Freespacers](#), while the situation is reversed for their mines and factories. Type Vs do most of the work in either field, and can smooth things over for both groups, but they provide their own source of friction, as they are essentially 'unionized': It is not legal to operate any ships or facilities without a Type V monitor, and the Type Vs themselves enforce this requirement.

The [Shravana Hive](#)'s efforts to rapidly restore balance to their demographics have left behind other snarls; there remains an *age gap* between the organic and [SI](#) groups, within the II and III Types, creating stereotypes of energetic but reckless organic Type IIs, immature and chaotic Type III automata, Type II automata as grumpy old salts, and organic Type IIIs as objects of envy, reverence, desire, or pathos. This is further compounded by a policy of assigning new citizens strict physical specifications, while 'grandfathering in' the forms of old natives and first-generation immigrants, many of whom no longer function in their original role, or have different cultural backgrounds.

Though the vast majority of the population are nothing but citizens of the [Shravana Hive](#), there remain a few hundred foreign nationals. Some claim to be employed as merchants or diplomats, but on the whole, they are hackers, smugglers, pirates, or other criminals. The Hive tolerates and provides a haven for these, so long as they do not prove disruptive, and their activities are profitable for the collective as a whole. They have become quite willing to extradite them since [YE 33](#), and the Hive's ships are no longer available to transport non-citizens.

OOOC Notes

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Last update: **2023/12/20 18:22**

