

# GURPS®

Fourth Edition

# LANDS OUT OF TIME



*An e23 Sourcebook for GURPS® from Steve Jackson Games*

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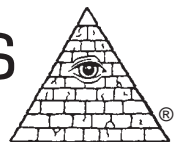
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## About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of **GURPS** players. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! We can also be reached by e-mail: [info@sjgames.com](mailto:info@sjgames.com). Resources include:

*Pyramid* ([www.sjgames.com/pyramid/](http://www.sjgames.com/pyramid/)). Our online magazine includes new **GURPS** rules and articles. It also covers the *d20* system, *Ars Magica*, *BESM*, *Call of Cthulhu*, and many more top games – and other Steve Jackson Games releases like *Illuminati*, *Car Wars*, *Transhuman Space*, and more. *Pyramid* subscribers also get opportunities to playtest new **GURPS** books!

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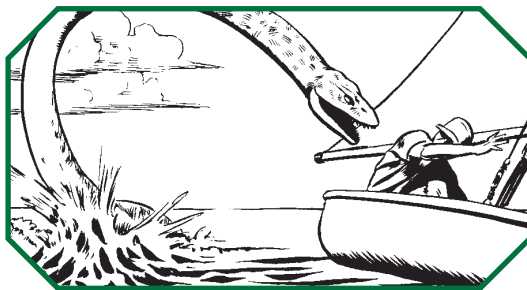
## About the Author

Lizard has been a gamer since 1978 and a freelancer since 2000. He used to own *Melee* and *Wizard*, and played *The Fantasy Trip* at his first gaming con back in 1979 or so. He has watched **GURPS** go from *Man to Man* to the shelf-buckling collection of tomes which comprised *Third Edition*

to the streamlined and elegant *Fourth Edition*. He has produced a number of *d20* and *Dying Earth* products, but this is his first **GURPS** work. He is currently trapped in the Midwest, where he resides with four cats and a girlfriend. In his day job, he writes database software.

# INTRODUCTION

Humans and dinosaurs go together like gamers and pizza. That tens of millions of years separated the last of the dinosaurs from the first of the humans is a mere inconvenience, easily ignored. *GURPS Lands Out of Time* is a sourcebook for human/dino adventuring, providing all you need to know to place man and giant reptile side-by-side.



The appeal is obvious – dinosaurs are just plain cool. It's patently unfair that no human ever got to ride an armored triceratops into battle, cook bronto-burgers, or match his hunting skills against the ultimate predator of the land, the tyrannosaurus. This sourcebook corrects this fundamental injustice.

## ABOUT THE GENRE

The genre of man-and-dinosaur goes back at least as far as the early 20th century, with *The Lost World* by Arthur Conan Doyle. Edgar Rice Burroughs further popularized the genre with *The Land That Time Forgot*. Films such as *King Kong*, *One Million Years BC*, *Jurassic Park*, and *Valley of the Gwangi* are also primary sources. On the small screen, *The Flintstones* and *Land of the Lost* are both iconic examples of the genre.

*We had this doctor with us, from the Natural History museum in New York. Someone figured he'd be useful. The last thing he said to us was, "The tyrannosaur was a scavenger, not a hunter, and it will completely ignore our presence." We brought back what we could find, afterwards.*

*– Jack McGovern,  
Infinity Unlimited  
"First In" Team Member*

The genre is inherently cinematic. The unreality of the premise makes improbable stunts and hair's-breadth escapes fit right in, although more "realistic" takes are possible. An "all-native" campaign can be made into a grim struggle for survival, as the characters confront horrors many times worse than cave bears or smilodons with only stone, bone, and cunning on their side. It can also be a slapstick comedy – from *The Flintstones* to *Caveman*, the humorous possibilities of the genre are well represented. However, most dino-world stories are high adventure, and that is the primary focus of this book.



# CAMPAIGN STYLES

There are two primary campaign styles for a *GURPS Lands Out of Time* campaign. These are the Standalone World and the Destination World.

## On The General Lack of History or Science

*GURPS Lands Out of Time* is about the genre of man-and-dinosaur. Fidelity to genre is more important than fidelity to science. Creatures which lived millions of years apart and in wildly different climates live side-by-side here, because that's the way movies, comic books, and television does it. The focus is on the most common fictional tropes, not on up-to-date scientific theories. Here, the *Tyrannosaurus rex* is a hunter and killer, not a mere scavenger; here, brachiosaurs live in deep rivers with their nostrils sticking above the water. Pterosaurs carry off hapless cavemen in their claws, and stegosaurus really do have a "second brain" in their hips. The cultures and societies of the Cro-Magnon and Neanderthals presented here do *not* represent genuine paleoanthropological thought, but, rather, the outdated stereotypes seen in the source fiction.

Where possible, current theories are noted, so that fact-minded gamemasters and players can adjust as needed. However, the fun of the genre is adventuring with dinosaurs as they should have been, not as they were.

In some cases, more modern interpretations are used in preference to older beliefs, not because they are more accurate, but because they open up more dramatic possibilities.

## STANDALONE WORLD

In this campaign style, the world of men and dinosaurs (and other creatures) exists as an end in itself. The players play natives of the world, and they know of the world only as their home. Adventures tend to be focused on exploration and survival. Often, the player characters are exiles from their native land, or otherwise separated from their own people, and are

struggling to either return home or find a new one. Another common concept is that the characters are tribal leaders, who must manage to keep their people alive despite the many dangers confronting them. This style of campaign is excellent for those with an interest in low-tech roleplaying who still desire fantastic or anachronistic elements.

## DESTINATION WORLD

This campaign style is far more common. In this mode of play, most or all of the characters are not natives; they are visitors from another world, usually contemporary Earth – though "contemporary" has changed as the genre has. The world the explorers come from can range from the late 19th century to the early 21st. There may even be mixed groups – a banestorm or nexus gate could bring people from many different times to the World of Banded Night (p. 38), and they would have to work together to survive.



Arrival at the world may be accidental or deliberate. As a genre convention, though, even a deliberate expedition will quickly meet some unexpected tragedy, leaving the survivors lost and under-equipped. Accidental arrivals were usually on a wilderness trek to begin with, giving them some of the tools they will need to survive.

In such a campaign, it is common to have a single character who is a native of the world. Such a character can provide a great deal of information about the world to the other characters, but this can also undermine the sense of exploration and discovery. For this to work, it is best if the adventurers are exploring a part of the world even the native does not know well, or if the native's knowledge is restricted due to cultural taboos. ("Only the wise one of tribe allowed to enter sacred valley. I do not know what is beyond.")