

THE TUFFYWOG PIPER

AN ADVENTURE FOR 1ST TO 3RD LEVEL CHARACTERS



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THE TUFFYWOG PIPER IS A FIFTH EDITION adventure for **three to six characters of 1st to 3rd level**, optimized for a party of **four 1st level characters**. After kidnapping an intrepid bard, a faction of toad-like creatures called tuffywogs have come to possess a set of magical pipes that allows them to control rats. Looking to expand their territory beyond the swamplands outside the city, the tuffywogs have used the pipes to invade the sewers beneath Dryessa, claiming the tunnels as their own by "divine decree." A minor nuisance to say the least, the local authorities need the tuffywogs dealt with, lest their kind continue to spread. This adventure takes place in the city of Dryessa in the Siothas campaign setting but can be placed easily into any setting that features a large sewer system beneath a town or city.

BACKGROUND

Vitale Greenguard was running low on song inspiration. After hearing about a traveling merchant who had a curious encounter with the toad-like tuffywogs in the swamps outside Dryessa, the bard decided that he would venture outside of the city to learn what he could about these strange creatures in the hopes of developing new creative material. Not far off the road, Vitale found what he was looking for when he was ambushed by the tuffywogs. Using his silver tongue and impressive pipe-playing, Vitale parlayed with the creatures and convinced them to bring him to their king for an audience. The tuffywogs happily did so, but unfortunately for Vitale, the audience did not go as planned. King Sullywumbo was delighted to discover that rats of the swamp were drawn to Vitale's pipes and seemed to hang on their every note. The tuffywog king was so enraptured with Vitale's pipe-playing performance that he took the pipes for himself and made the bard his personal court jester. With the pipes in hand, King Sullywumbo declared that the gods had smiled upon their tribe and that the "time had come to take the undertunnels from the dryfolk." King Sullywumbo and his band of tuffywogs have now infiltrated and occupied a long-neglected set of sewer tunnels beneath Dryessa, with Vitale in tow. Maintenance workers have reported their presence to the authorities, who are keen to rid the tunnels of the creatures before they are allowed the chance to spread.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

There are numerous reasons the characters may be interested in confronting the tuffywogs in the sewers beneath the city. A few of these reasons are outlined below.

A Posted Bounty. The local guard has posted bounties on the noticeboards and tavern walls of the city, explaining the recent tuffywog infestation in the sewers below the market

district. The city authorities are willing to reward 100 gp to any who can clear out the tuffywogs, with an additional 5 gp premium for each dead tuffywog.

A Bard in Need. The bard that has been kidnapped by the tuffywogs may be a friend of the party's or a friend of someone the party is close to. All that is known is that the bard told people he was headed out to the swamps to learn about the peculiar toad creatures. He has not returned since, and those close to him hope that the tuffywogs in the sewers may know something about his whereabouts.

Rumors of Magic. Rumors have spread throughout parts of the city that suggest the tuffywogs in the sewers have got their grubby hands on a magical item that allows them to control the hordes of rats in the tunnels. Surely a capable adventuring party would be able to best such base creatures and take the magical item for themselves. Intrigued, the party decides to investigate.

GETTING TO THE SEWERS

Once the characters have accepted the quest, the authorities (or some brief investigation) can guide them to a southeastern corner of the city home to rundown warehouses and housing for the poor. There, in an empty alley, an iron sewer grate lies askew over a manhole. A ladder descends 15 feet from the manhole into a dark sewer tunnel. From within the tunnel, characters can see the flickering of torchlight to the east. Following the tunnel towards the light leads the characters to the beginnings of the tuffywogs' territory (area 1).

GENERAL FEATURES

The tuffywogs have found a neglected area of the sewers that connects to an underserved portion of the city above. Over the years, this area of the sewers has been used for other nefarious purposes, including as a hideout for a dark cult. It was only by chance that a maintenance worker discovered the creatures as early as he did. The tuffywogs have brought in supplies and have begun building their own defenses and fortifications. Unless otherwise stated, the features of the sewers are described as follows:

Ceilings, Walls, and Floors. The sewer pipes and corridors are constructed from solid cast iron. Ceilings in pipes and corridors are 6 feet high. Rooms and connecting chambers are built from limestone and terracotta, with 8-foot-high ceilings.

Doors. Doors are built from solid slabs of cast iron, with AC 20 and 27 hit points. They are unlocked.

Light. The tuffywogs have lit the torches that are mounted in wall sconces throughout the tunnels and chambers, casting the sewers in dim light.

Foul Water. Water runs through many of the tunnels and chambers to form channels and pools. Unless otherwise stated, these streams and pools are 3 feet deep. A creature who becomes submerged in the waters must make a successful DC 10 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for one hour.

Rat Infestation. Rats swarm throughout most of the sewers. Often these rats are harmless, but occasionally, if agitated, one may attempt to take a bite out of the characters.

The following locations are keyed to the provided map of the Dryessa sewers.

I. MARKING TERRITORY

A wooden totem decorated with fish bones and carved to resemble the head of a sneering toad emerges four feet from the water in the middle of this square chamber. Dozens of rats scurry across the walls and ceiling. Tunnels extend to the north and east.

The totem was placed by the tuffywogs to mark their territory in the sewers. It is held up by a pile of tuffywog waste beneath the water's surface.

Encounter: Charmed Rats. The rats in this chamber have been charmed by the tuffywogs and their set of magical pipes. Any characters who enter this chamber are attacked by two **swarms of rats** that swiftly coalesce around them. The swarms disperse when reduced to one-quarter of their hit points or fewer.

2. VALVE CORRIDOR

Three rusted valves are set into the wall at the end of this corridor. There are two circular drainage openings in the west wall fitted with rusted iron grates.

The valves were never connected to any mechanisms and are non-functional. They squeal loudly when turned. Characters with passive Perception of 12 or higher can hear muffled sounds of conversation coming from beyond the north wall. A character who presses their ear against the wall to listen can hear the sound of someone singing a tale of adventure to someone being referred to as "my king." The tuffywog "king" (in area 14) demands to be entertained constantly by the bard the tribe has taken captive.

3. RETIRED PIPE

The iron grates blocking access to the pipe beyond are in poor condition. They can be pried loose with a DC 12 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or a DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check.

The interior of this pipe is dark and smells strongly of mold.

This pipe was built during the initial construction of the sewers, but building crews eventually decided that it was unnecessary.

Treasure: Murder Victim. A skeletal corpse in commoner's clothes lies crumpled in the middle of this pipe. This unfortunate soul was murdered and dumped in this unused pipe years ago by a gang of bandits. The corpse wears a *ring of protection* on its big toe, which the bandits failed to notice.

4. GUARDED CORRIDOR

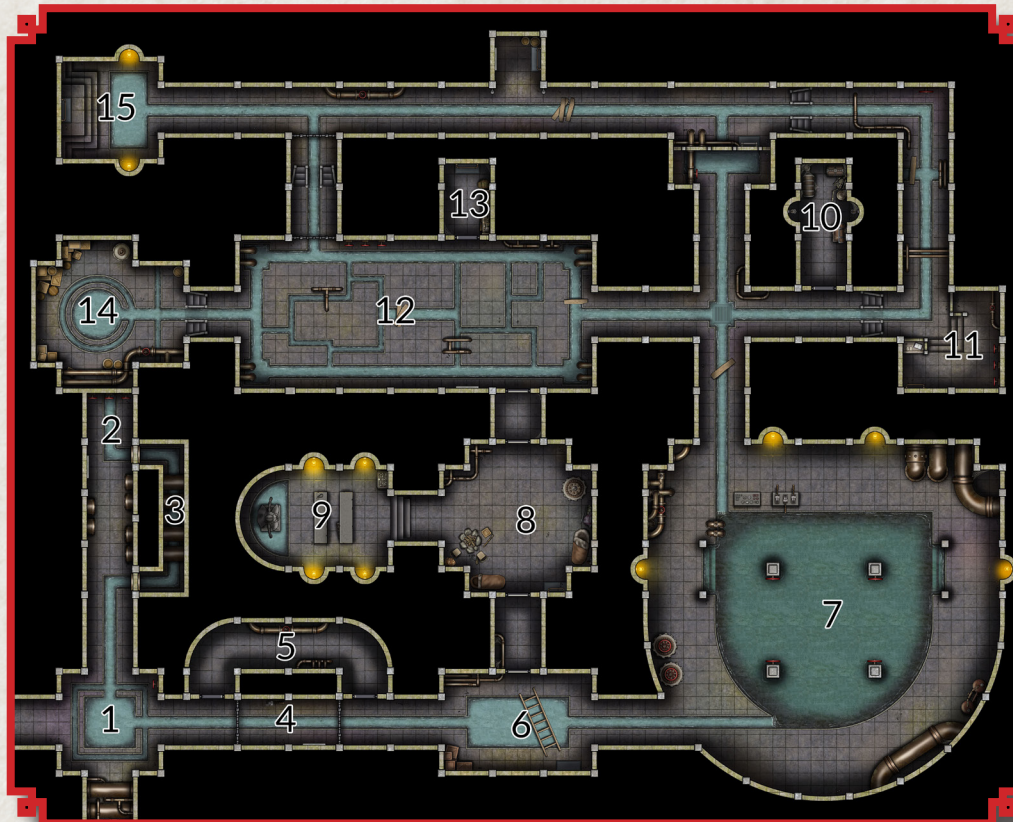
This tunnel extends for a few dozen feet before opening into a larger rectangular chamber beyond. Two doors line the north wall of the tunnel.

The west door in this corridor has been barricaded shut from the other side by the tuffywogs and can only be opened from the corridor with a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check. The east door opens normally.

Encounter: Tuffywog Ambush. Two iron gates have been retracted into slots in the ceiling; their prongs slightly protrude from the small openings. Characters with a passive Perception of 13 or higher notice the suspended gates. Four **tuffywogs** (see page 7) are on guard duty in the connecting chamber (area 3). They keep an eye on the corridor through a peephole in the west door, which they have barricaded shut with a wooden bar. Characters can travel through this corridor unnoticed with a successful DC 13 Dexterity (Stealth) check. When at least one character steps between the two gates and is noticed, the tuffywogs pull a pair of levers to drop the gates. Two tuffywogs then enter the corridor through the east door and begin firing darts at characters caught between the gates. Characters caught between the gates can lift them up to allow others



THE DRYESSA SEWERS



to crawl under them with a successful DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check. Each gate has AC 15 and 12 hit points. The two tuffywogs in the connecting chamber reinforce the tuffywogs who entered the corridor after two rounds. If only one tuffywog remains, it attempts to flee toward the king's chamber (area 14) to sound the alarm.

5. CONNECTING CHAMBER

The west door to this chamber is barricaded shut and can be opened with a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check.

Two levers emerge from the south wall of this chamber. A pile of broken furniture and supply crates has been pushed around the west door.

The levers in this chamber activate the corresponding gates in the adjacent corridor. Levers pulled upwards pull the gates up, and vice versa. The levers require no ability check to operate.

Encounter: Tuffywogs. There are four **tuffywogs** posted in guard duty in this chamber unless they have already been alerted to characters in the adjacent corridor (area 2).

6. BROKEN LADDER

A rotted wooden ladder lies across a pool of water in the middle of this chamber. Crates are stacked in the southwest corner of the room. A door exits to the north. A tunnel extends into a larger chamber to the east.

The ladder was used years ago by maintenance crews to fish out a coin they had dropped into the pool without getting their lowers wet. It has been left there since.

7. DRAINAGE CHAMBER

A pair of drainage channels feed into large reservoir of water that occupies the centre of this hemispherical chamber. Four valves mounted on pedestals are arranged equidistantly within the reservoir. The silhouette of a corpse and sword can be seen lying at the bottom of the water; they are surrounded by a small school of fish swimming in lazy circles. Beside the reservoir is a set of levers and table of switches. Tunnels lead to the west and north.

The reservoir is eight feet deep. It collects storm and floodwaters and is drained through a series of connecting tunnels which are activated using the central valves. Which position the valves are in and which connected tunnels the reservoir drains into are of little consequence to the

Defeated by Tuffywogs

The tuffywogs crave admiration and respect more than they crave blood. If the characters are bested in combat, the tuffywogs make no extra attempt to kill them. Instead, they restrain the characters and bring them to King Sullywumbo so that they may acknowledge his beauty and superiority. The following describes a rough sequence of events if the characters are captured:

- The characters are stripped of their weapons, their hands and feet are bound, and they are placed in the supply room (area 13).
- Their weapons are stored in the armory (area 10).
- A single guard is posted outside of the supply room where the characters are held captive. The tuffywogs plan to make the characters sweat for a few hours before bringing them to grovel before their king.
- The characters are brought before the king and are demanded to grovel. After the king is satisfied that the characters have groveled enough, he orders them killed.
- A pair of tuffywog guards hauls the characters to area 7 with plans to kill the characters and dump their bodies in the reservoir.

The characters can outsmart the tuffywogs after being captured in a number of ways. In the supply closet, they can free themselves from their bindings with a successful DC 13 Dexterity check, which they can attempt every half hour. Once freed, the path forward is up to them. They can overpower the guard, trick him, or bribe him. They can sneak to the armory to recover their weapons. They can convince the king to let them free with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion or Deception) check. There are many options. As the GM, work with your players to hatch a thrilling escape plot while maintaining tension at the table.

characters. The mechanism for opening the reservoir for drainage is controlled by a series of levers and switches nearby. The reservoir hasn't been drained in years and its mechanism is old and in disrepair, requiring a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check to get it working again. Draining the reservoir reduces the water level to a depth of one foot.

Encounter: Swarm of Quippers. The reservoir is inhabited by a small **swarm of quippers** that have inhabited this section of the sewer for years, feeding on the waste that has filtered through the system. If the characters enter the reservoir without draining it, the quippers attack relentlessly. If the reservoir is drained, many of the quippers are sucked into a connecting sub-tunnel.

Guard's Corpse. The body at the bottom of the reservoir belonged to a member of a city guard party that initially investigated the tuffywog problem. It has been torn up by the quippers, and the sword and other gear the guard once

carried is mundane. The characters can return the body to a senior member of the guard for a 100 gp reward.

8. COMMON QUARTERS

This chamber is filled with sleeping skins and wood and stone debris. Small knives and other crafting tools are littered about. A small campfire has been reduced to embers in the southwest corner of the room. A tunnel leading west has been boarded up by wooden planks.

Encounter: Tuffywogs. Three **tuffywogs** spend their time in this room sleeping, crafting weapons and defensive structures, and fraternizing. The tuffywogs attack intruders immediately. If only one tuffywog remains, it attempts to flee to the king's chambers (area 14) to sound the alarm.

9. SUSPICIOUS SHRINE

The tuffywogs have decided that the contents of this room are evil and have boarded it up to hide it away from the rest of their lair. A five-foot section of boards has AC 12 and 10 hit points. Alternatively, boards can be removed with a successful DC 12 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.

A life-sized statue of a humanoid figure with its arms outstretched dominates the west end of this room. A crown that sits slightly askew has been carved on the statue's head. Two stone pews are arranged in front of the statue. A dozen half-melted candles are arranged on a small set of wooden shelves on the east wall.

Hazard: Dark Statue. The statue was built by the original occupants of the sewers; a fringe cult dedicated to a dark, forgotten god. At the base of the statue is an iron censer colored with rust. A character who makes a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Religion) check can identify the statue as a symbol of Chavdar, a minor deity of endings. A character who touches the statue without offering an appropriate prayer to Chaydar can hear harsh, indecipherable whispers in their head as they take 3 (1d6) psychic damage.

10. ARMORY

Wooden chests in this room hold stone-tipped spears, blow darts, arrow shafts and heads, and nets.

The tuffywogs keep their extra weaponry here. They have slowly been bringing in more weapons and supplies from the nearby swamp.

II. GIANT TOAD

A fat, spotted toad sits upon a pile of sewage that leaks steadily from a burst pipe in the east wall. Its eyes are closed, and it appears to be sleeping. The corroded bones of a humanoid hand are strewn across the floor nearby. Behind the toad, amongst some scattered pieces of

adventuring gear, a small pile of gold pieces spill out from an overturned coin purse.

Giant Toad. The *giant toad* has lived in this part of the sewers for years, feasting on the rats that infest the tunnels. The tuffywogs tried to tame it but were unsuccessful; the hand belongs to a tuffywog that was swallowed by the toad some days ago, who burped up some of the bones during digestion. The tuffywogs have left the toad be for now, with plans to return later. The sack of gold pieces and gear belonged to a former adventurer who fell victim to the toad. Characters can sneak around the sleeping toad to gather the gold with a successful DC 12 Dexterity (Stealth) check. Failing this check causes the toad to awaken and attack.

Treasure: Coin Purse. The sack contains 27 gp.

12. MAIN HALL

Wooden spikewalls have been arranged across the midsection of this spacious rectangular chamber to create a narrow east-west chokepoint. Tunnels extend in all directions.

Characters with a passive Perception of 13 or higher notice a series of nets that are suspended from the chamber's ceiling. These nets are tied off near the west wall of the chamber.

Encounter: Alarm Raised. If the alarm has been raised, the two **tuffywog** guards from the king's chambers (area 14) as well as the tuffywog that sounded the alarm position themselves on the west side of the spikewall, with one ready to release the nets above. When the characters enter the room, the nets fall, and each character in the room must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or become restrained. A character can use its action to make a DC 10 Strength check, freeing itself or another character within its reach on a success. Dealing 5 slashing damage to the net (AC 10) also frees the character. The tuffywogs in this room fight to the death to protect their king.

13. SUPPLY CLOSET

This room is filled with crates, barrels, and piles of materials the tuffywogs have gathered for storage, including sharpened stakes, coils of rope, rocks, and pieces of leather.

The crates and barrels hold mundane supplies and tools left by the original construction crews of the sewers. The tuffywogs have been using this room to store the materials used for the sewer's defenses.

14. KING'S CHAMBERS

Steps rise to an elevated chamber with a circular pool of water in its center. In the middle of the pool is a ramshackle raft and throne constructed from bits of wood, stone, and rope. The west wall of the room is filled



with scattered piles of mundane items, coins, and small treasure items. Near the north wall is a nervous-looking young man, leashed and hobbled with lengths of rope. Sitting atop the throne and flanked by two giant rats is a fat tuffywog holding a set of pipes and wearing a crown of twigs and mud decorated with a single dirty emerald.

Encounter: King Sullywumbo. King Sullywumbo, a **tuffywog** with 15 hit points, sits here flanked by two pet giant rats tamed using the *pipes of the sewers* he took from the bard. If the alarm has not been sounded, Sullywumbo is aided by two tuffywog bodyguards. If Sullywumbo is confronted with his bodyguards, he immediately orders his guards to seize the characters. The guards attack with the aid of the rats. Sullywumbo himself does not fight. If Sullywumbo is without his guards, he blusters, cowers in fear, and offers the characters treasure from his "hoard" in exchange for his life. He is a coward and does not fight to defend himself.

Vitalie Greenguard. Vitalie Greenguard is dirty and disheveled but otherwise healthy. His brown hair hangs slightly over his eyes, and he often rubs his crooked nose while he speaks. He is enormously grateful to see the characters and can explain how he was captured after a failed negotiation attempt and how he has been forced to perform for Sullywumbo ever since.

Treasure: Sullywumbo's Hoard. Sullywumbo's "hoard" of treasure is mostly useless garbage, including strangely shaped rocks, decorative pieces of wood, and fossilized turds. He has, however, gathered a small amount of real treasure, including the emerald in his crown worth 25 gp, an onyx worth 25 gp, 34 sp, and the *pipes of the sewers*.

15. SECRET SARCOPHAGUS

Stone steps rise towards a dais against the west wall of this room. Atop the dais is a smooth, rectangular block of stone, six feet wide and three feet high.

Treasure: Secret Sarcophagus. The rectangular block of stone is actually a sarcophagus built by the cult decades ago to hide the bones of one of their important members. Characters with a passive Perception of 13 or higher notice an extremely slim seam in the stone that suggests a lid. The lid is slotted nearly perfectly over the body of the sarcophagus and requires a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to open. Inside are a set of desiccated, skeletal remains clothed in a tattered black robe. Also in the sarcophagus is a *staff of healing*.

AFTERMATH

If the characters have bested the tuffywogs, any surviving members leave the sewers and promise never to return again. This is true whether or not the characters have left King Sullywumbo alive. After the characters rescue Vitale, he offers that they keep the *pipes of the sewers* as a reward, if they're interested. At GM discretion, the characters may go on follow-up adventures to deal with the larger tuffywog threat within the swamp, perhaps because the a larger, unrelated tribe has allied with whatever remains of King Sullywumbo's group.

TUFFYWOG

Medium construct, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

Skills Stealth +3, Athletics +3

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Tuffywog

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Amphibious. The tuffywog can breathe air and water.

Speak with Frogs and Toads. The bullywug can communicate simple concepts to frogs and toads when it speaks in Tuffywog.

ACTIONS

Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

Blowgun. Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 30/60 ft.,

one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.



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