Lycanthropes

Belief in the curse of lycanthropy dates back to classical antiquity - In 440BC, Herodotus described a tribe of Scythians who transformed into wolves for several days each year before returning to human form. Other notable writers such as Pausanius and Ovid recount the myth of Lycaon who was transformed into a wolf by Zeus for the crime of infanticide, cannibalism or impiety, depending on the source.

Wolf-men were also prominent in Germanic paganism, where the tribe's warriors would take on the aspect of the wolf as part of their initiation. These beliefs were largely suppressed by the arrival of Christianity in the early medieval period, as such transformations had all the hallmarks of devil worship.

In the Americas, the Navajo peoples believed in Skin-walkers - evil witches that could turn into, possess or disguise themselves as an animal to terrorise the local population.

Belief in werewolves surged during the witch hunts of the early modern period with many executions and imprisonments across France and the Holy Roman Empire. In some cases, there was clear evidence of murder and cannibalism, but no association with wolves, while in others, no evidence of any man-made crime, but plenty for animal attack. Generally speaking, the werewolf myth played into the general moral panic that fuelled the brutal repression by witch hunters and inquisitors.

The resurgence of the lycanthrope in popular fiction began in the 19th century, with many writers of gothic horror drawing on early myth to terrify their straight-laced Victorian readers. In 1847, G.W.M Reynolds penned Wagner the Wehr-Wolf - where the principal character made a deal with the devil to become a wolf for 18 months in exchange for youth and wealth.

Werewolves and lycanthropy crop up again in Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde by Robert Louis Stephenson, and in Bram Stoker's Dracula - which attributes many of the werewolf's characteristics to the titular vampire. Since then, werewolves have been a staple of fantasy fiction - often as feral antagonists or tortured protagonists.

To recreate these fearsome monsters in Warlords of Erehwon, I've drawn upon classical, medieval and modern depictions to make something truly terrifying for the tabletop. The core of this new unit is the Lycanthropy special rule.

Lycanthropy: Upon being issued with a Down order, the unit can choose to transform into a powerful hybrid. The unit's statline is replaced with the purchased hybrid while transformed. Replace the model with something suitably imposing on the tabletop. The unit keeps all the pin markers and rolled damage results while transformed.

If the unit fails an Order Test while transformed, it immediately returns to its original form and may not transform again this turn. They also follow the normal procedure for down orders.

I've chosen to represent the afflicted lycanthrope as a cursed wretch, wracked by the pain of repeated transformation. Their equipment is suitably shoddy, although they may get the opportunity to loot some better gear from the mangled corpses of their opponents.

You get four different hybrid forms to choose from; these are not prescriptive types and I'd encourage you to think of them as broad archetypes rather than specific animal hybrids. A wolf hybrid might be a classic werewolf, or an Aztec jaguar hybrid or Navajo skin-walker. Each hybrid form has its own strengths and weaknesses, but share some common traits - like the Terror special rule.

LYCANTHROPE							
Monster Unit	*Points Value: Wild 40pts Bound 60pts Allied 80pts*						
Unit: Lycanthrope	**Ag**	**Acc**	**Str**	**Res**	**Init**	**Co**	**Special**
1x Cursed Wretch armed with a cudgel and sling	6	5	4	4	8	7	Tough, Lycanthropy, Stealthy, MoD2
0x Wolf Hybrid	7	5	6	6	7	6	Tough 2, Fast 8, Terror, Frenzied Charge, Surly, Savage, 3x HtH SV1, MoD2, Lycanthropy
0x Bear Hybrid	5	5	8	9	6	6	Tough 3, Slow 4, Terror, Berserk, Vengeful, Stubborn, Surly, 2x HtH SV 3, MoD2, Lycanthropy
0x Boar Hybrid	4	5	7	7	4	6	Tough 3, Fast 7, Terror, Ferocious Charge, Stubborn, Rapid Sprint, Surly, 1x HtH SV 4, MoD2, Lycanthropy
0x Rat Hybrid	7	5	4	4	8	7	Tough, Fast 6, Terror, Stealthy, Venomous, Woodsman, Surly, 3x HtH SV 0, MoD2, Lycanthropy
Options							

- The Lycanthrope **MUST** choose one of the following options:
    - Wolf Hybrid @95pts
    - Bear Hybrid @107pts
    - Boar Hybrid @90pts
    - Rat Hybrid @75pts

- Replace the Cursed Wretch's sling with a bow @free or a longbow @ pt
- Replace the Cursed Wretch's cudgel with a sword @1pt
- Give the Cursed Wretch light armour @2pts changing Res to 4(5)

Vampires

Much like the Lycanthrope, the vampire as we know it was created by gothic horror writers in the 19th and 20th centuries, weaving together numerous disparate myths and legends into a form that would both terrify and titillate their audience. Belief in these creatures predates our modern conception by several thousand years, born out of tales of blood-drinking demoness Lillith in ancient Mesopotamia.

The Slavic kingdoms of Eastern Europe and the Balkans are where the vampire myth propagated, with blood-sucking strigoi rising from their graves to stalk the living years after their death. These stories travelled by word of mouth back and forth across the continent, attracting the attention of rulers like King James I of England and Scotland, whose treatise - Daemonologie is one of the earliest known written works about vampires.

During the so-called Age of Enlightenment, the population of Europe was transfixed by vampires. Hysterical villagers dug up graves to stake the dead through their decomposing hearts, and government-appointed officials roamed back and forth across the countryside in search of blood-sucking undead. The mass hysteria began with a few high profile cases in East Prussia and the Hapsburg Monarchy, news of which spread like wildfire across the continent.

The vampires of early myth were bloated and discoloured corpses, a far cry from the pale-skinned seductors of gothic fiction. These suave creatures stepped off the pages of James Polidori's seminal novel The Vampyre in 1819, during a writing competition that also spawned Mary Shelley's Frankenstein. Polidori's works would go on to inspire Carmilla by Joseph Sheridan Le Famu and Dracula by Bram Stoker.

From then on, the vampire has entranced readers and cinema-goers - a menacing, seductive monster hell-bent on draining life from the human body. More feral incarnations have also prowled across tabletops as bosses and antagonists.

To recreate these kings of undeath in Warlords of Erehwon, we need a couple of special rules.

Life Drain: When a model with this special rule defeats a unit in close combat, place a token or other suitable marker on their base. While this model has a token on its base, it gains +1 Str per marker, and is able to re-roll a failed Res test as if it had the Tough special rule. After making a re-roll, remove one marker. The model may only have a maximum of three tokens on its base at any one time.

Vampiric Transformation: Upon being issued with a Down order, the unit can choose to transform into a different form. The unit's statline is replaced with the chosen forms while transformed. Replace the model with something suitable on the tabletop. The unit keeps all the pin markers and rolled damage results while transformed.

If the unit fails an Order Test while transformed, it immediately returns to its original form and may not transform again this turn. They also follow the normal procedure for down orders.

Vampiric Vulnerabilities: Models with this special rule may not cross running water - in effect this means that all obstacles classed as rivers or streams are impassable, even if they have crossing points like bridges or fords. In addition, these models may not cross the threshold of dwellings - making most (agree beforehand which buildings count as dwellings) buildings impassable to them.

Rather than present a single monster, I've chosen to broaden my scope slightly.
As immortal creatures of the night, vampires have centuries to hone their skills, therefore I've made a distinction between "elder" vampires and their more recently turned compatriots.

ELDER VAMPIRE							
Monster Unit			Points Value: Wild 190pts Bound 200pts Allied 210pts				
Unit: Elder Vampire	Ag	Acc	Str	Res	Init	Co	Special
1x Elder Vampire with sword and light armour	7	6	7	10(11)	10	10	Undead, Baleful Glare, Terror, Life Drain, Vampiric Transformation, Vampiric Vulnerabilities, 3x HtH, MoD 3
0x Swarm of Bats Form	6	-	4	5	3	8	Undead, Terror, 3x HtH SV1, Flies, Fast 8, Life Drain, Vampiric Transformation, Vampiric Vulnerabilities, MoD 3
0x Spectral Form	7	-	6	7	10	10	Spectral Undead, Terror, 3x HtH Deathly Chill, Fast 6, Life Drain, Vampiric Transformation, Vampiric Vulnerabilities, MoD 3
Options							

- Replace the Elder Vampire's light armour with medium armour changing Res to 10(12) @ 2pts or heavy armour changing Res to 10(13) and gaining Heavily Laden @ 4pts

- Replace the Elder Vampire's sword with a Bloomin' Big Axe or Improbably Vast Sword or Halberd @ 1pt
- Upgrade the Elder Vampire to Magic Level 1 @ 25pts
- Upgrade the Elder Vampire to Magic Level 2 @ 50pts

VAMPIRE							
Monster Unit			Points Value: Wild 145 Bound 155 Allied 165				
Unit: Vampire	Ag	Acc	Str	Res	Init	Co	Special
1x Vampire with sword and light armour	7	6	7	9(10)	9	10	Undead, Dread, Life Drain, Vampiric Transformation, Vampiric Vulnerabilities, 3x HtH, MoD 2
0x Swarm of Bats Form	6	-	4	5	3	8	Undead, Dread, 3x HtH SV1, Flies, Fast 8, Life Drain, Vampiric Transformation, Vampiric Vulnerabilities, MoD 2
0x Spectral Form	7	-	6	7	9	10	Spectral Undead, Dread, 3x HtH Deathly Chill, Fast 6, Life Drain, Vampiric Transformation, Vampiric Vulnerabilities, MoD 2
Options							

- Replace the Elder Vampire's light armour with medium armour changing Res to 9(11) @ 2pts or heavy armour changing Res to 9(12) and gaining Heavily Laden @ 4pts

- Replace the Elder Vampire's sword with a Bloomin' Big Axe or Improbably Vast Sword or Halberd @ 1pt
- Upgrade the Elder Vampire to Magic Level 1 @ 25pts
- Upgrade the Elder Vampire to Magic Level 2 @ 50pts