

Philippine mythical creatures

Main article: [Philippine mythology](#)

Philippine folklore, unlike [Greek](#) or [Roman mythologies](#), has not been organized into a formal pantheon, does not generally contain long [epics](#), nor has it been relegated to history. To this day, Philippine [myths](#) still have an active role in the lives of rural Filipinos. The countless myths circulating throughout the Filipino countryside contain a large variety of **mythical creatures**. Although there is no scientific evidence for any of these creatures, there is also no shortage in the rural parts of the Philippines of people who believe firmly in their existence. This discrepancy is sometimes rationalized by the explanation that only pure and good mortals are able to see these creatures.

Philippine mythical creatures

[\[edit\]](#)Bungisngis

Main article: [Bungisngis](#)

Bungisngis is a one-eyed giant. This Philippine folklore giant lives in forest and woods. It is a happy and a playful cyclops. It is also commonly known as 'Mahentoy' in the northern part of Davao.

[\[edit\]](#)Aswang

Aswangs are shapeshifters. They are human-like by day but transform into different monstrous forms to harass and eat awake humans at night, especially pregnant women who are about to give birth.^[1] Aswangs can change from a human to an animal form, usually as a bat, a pig or a black dog. Some aswangs can change form at will, others through the use of foul oils concocted by evil magicians. Aswangs appear at night to prey upon unwary travellers or sleeping people. It is said that they have a peculiar liking for the taste of human liver. The myth of the Aswang is popular in the Visayas, especially in provinces such as Capiz, Antique, and Iloilo. Aswangs also have a peculiar liking for the fetus of pregnant women and are said to find their quarry by the scent of the mother, which to the aswang smells like ripe jackfruit. Upon finding the house of the pregnant mother, the aswang alights on the roof from where it stretches its tongue until it is as thin as a thread and uses it to enter the womb and feast on the fetus.

[\[edit\]](#)Diwata

Main article: [Diwata](#)

Diwata, [engkantada](#) (from Spanish: **encantada**, "enchantress, charmed") or [engkanto](#) (from Spanish: **encanto**, "spell, incantation, charm") are fairies, nymphs, goddesses or enchanted

persons who are believed to guard natural creations such as forests, seas, mountains, land and air.^[1] *Diwatas* are said to reside in large trees, such as [acacia](#) and [balete](#). They are the guardian spirits of nature, bringing blessings or curses upon those who do good or harm to the forests and mountains. One famous diwata is [Maria Makiling](#), guardian of [Mount Makiling](#) in [Laguna](#) province. *Engkanto* (sometimes spelled *Encanto*) is an umbrella term for most supernatural beings. The common connotation is that they are fairies who reside primarily in the forests and the sea. They can also be called *encantado* (male) or *encantada* (female).

[edit]Duwende

Duwende are [goblins](#), [hobgoblins](#), [elves](#) or [dwarfs](#) (*Spanish: duende* "golbin, elf, charm" < "duen de (casa)", owner of the house). They are little creatures who can provide good fortune or bad fate to humans.^[1] In the Philippines, duwendes frequently live in houses, in trees, underground, termite like mound or hill, and in rural areas. They are known to be either good or mischievous, depending on how homeowners treat them. They usually come out at 12 noon for an hour and during the night. Filipinos always mutter words ("tabi-tabi po" or "bari-bari apo ma ka ilabas kami apo") asking them to excuse themselves for bothering the Duwendes. Filipinos would leave food on the floor, so that the duwende residing (or guarding) the house would not be angry with them. They also take your things, and laugh at you when you try to find it. They give it back when they feel like it, or when you tell them to please give it back.

[edit]Kapre

Main article: [Kapre](#)

Kapre is a filthy, gorilla-like dark [giant](#)^[1] who likes to smoke huge rolls of cigars, and hide within and atop large trees, particularly the [balete](#) and old acacia or mango trees. A Filipino [bigfoot](#), it scares away little children who play at night.^[4] If you're stuck in a place and you keep going around in circles, you're said to be played around by a Kapre. To escape its control, you must remove your shirt/clothing, and wear it inside-out.

[edit]Mambabarang

Mambabarang (summoner) is a [witch](#) who uses insects and spirits to enter the body of any person they hate.^[citation needed] A *Mambabarang* is a kind of a mangkukulam. Mambabarangs are ordinary human beings with black magic who torture and later kill their victims by infesting their bodies with insects. They are different from Mangkukulams - the latter only inflict pain or illness. Mambabarangs use a strand of hair from their chosen victim and tie it to the bugs or worms which they will use as a medium. When they prick the bug, the victim immediately experiences the intended effect.

[\[edit\]](#)Manananggal



A *manananggal*.

Main article: [Manananggal](#)

Manananggal is an *aswang* that can fly after separating itself from the lower half of its body. It eats babies and fetuses from a mother's womb. It eats babies by means of passing their long tongue through a small hole from the roof of a house. The sharp end of the tongue touches the mother's navel to suck the blood of the fetus or unborn child.^[?] This creature's name was derived from the Filipino word, *tanggal*, which means "to separate" because of the manananggal's ability to separate itself from its lower body.^[1]

A *manananggal* can also be a sorceress that visits villages and barrios. To feed, the self-segmenter chooses an isolated place where she will leave her lower torso while she hunts at night. When she separates from her lower torso, she then gains her ability to fly. She then goes off in search of houses where pregnant women reside. Upon choosing a suitable victim, the Manananggal alights on the house and inserts her tongue through the roof. The tongue is long, hollow and extremely flexible. She uses it to puncture the womb of the sleeping woman and to suck out the fetus. At other times, she seduces men with her beauty and lures them to a private place before eating them alive. She usually eats the insides, like the heart, stomach or the liver. Sunlight is deadly to the Manananggal when she is in her monstrous form. Should her two halves still be separate with the coming of dawn, she will be destroyed. According to legend, to destroy the Manananggal, one should search for the lower torso that she leaves behind during her nightly hunts. Salt, ash, and/or garlic should then be placed on the exposed flesh, preventing the monster from combining again and leaving it vulnerable to sunlight. Small containers of salt, ash and raw rice, and the smell of burning rubber are said to deter the Manananggal from approaching one's house.

[\[edit\]](#)Manaul

The *manaul* is a mythical king who became a bird. He was believed to have caused the seas and the skies to fight against each other. The clash between the seas and skies resulted to the formation of the [Philippine islands](#).^[*citation needed*]

[\[edit\]](#)Mangkukulam

Main article: [Mangkukulam](#)

Mangkukulam or *bruha* (from Spanish: **bruja**, "*witch*") are witches, wizards, *bruho* (Spanish:**brujo**, "*wizard, male witch*"), or sorcerers who cast evil spells to humans. This *bewitcher* is also called *manggagaway*.^[1] The *Mangkukulam* uses dark magic.

The difference between a *mambabarang* and a *mangkukulam* is that the *mambabarang* uses magical insects to bring harm to his victims. These insects are released after incantations, when they will search for their supposed victim and burrow under the skin, impregnating her. After some time, matruculans return to the house to kill the pregnant mother, open her abdomen, and eat the growing fetus.

[edit]Multo

Multo, the Tagalog word for *ghost*, comes from the Spanish word *muerto*, which means "dead". Superstitious Filipinos believe that some kind of multo, often a spirit of their former kin, regularly visits them.

[edit]Nuno sa punso

Main article: [Nuno sa punso](#)

Nuno sa punso (literally, *goblin of the mound*) are goblins or elves who live within mysterious lumps of soil (*ant hills*). They can provide a person who steps on their shelter with good luck or misfortune.^[1] Superstitious Filipinos, when passing by a mound, will ask the resident nuno's permission to let them pass with the phrase, "*Tabi-tabi po*". Strange and sudden illnesses that befall a person are sometimes attributed to nunos.

[edit]Pasatsat

Pasatsat is word rooted on the Pangasinense word *satsat*, meaning "to stab". *Pasatsats* are ghosts of people who died or were killed in the Second World War. Coffins during the time were so expensive, so the families of the dead wrapped the corpses in reed mats or *icamen*. The dead were buried in places other than cemeteries because tomb robberies were rampant during that era of extreme poverty. These ghosts usually show up in solitary paths and block passersby. To get rid of such a ghost, one needs to stab (hence *pasatsat*) the reed mat and unravel it, but doing so will show no presence of a corpse, although the mat will emit a noxious odor, much like that of putrid flesh.

[edit]Santelmo

Main article: [St. Elmo's Fire](#)

Santelmo, or *Santo Elmo*, is a fireball seen by dozens of Filipinos, especially those living in the *Sierra Madre Mountains*. It was scientifically explained as electric fields which have diverged

from the lines. However, the sightings were reported since the Spanish era (16th-19th centuries). (See also [Shinen](#) and [Will-o-Wisps](#)) There were also sightings in the [Alps](#) and [Himalayas](#).

[\[edit\]](#)**Sarimanok**



The *Sarimanok*.

Main article: [Sarimanok](#)

A *Sarimanok* is a magical, mythical bird who brings good luck to anyone who are able to catch it. A Sarimanok known as Magaul is associated with the legend of Malakas and Maganda. Magaul was the Sarimanok bird that pecked the bamboo from where Malakas and Maganda were born from.^{[2][5][6]}

[\[edit\]](#)**Sirena**

Main articles: [Dyesebel](#) and [Sirena \(Philippine Mythology\)](#)



[Dyesebel](#), a Philippine mermaid.

[Sirena](#) is a [mermaid](#), a sea creature with a human upper body and a fish tail instead of lower extremities. They attract fishermen and tourists.^[1] Sirenas are reportedly often seen ashore by fishermen, especially in the towns bordering the [Pacific Ocean](#).

[\[edit\]](#)**Siyokoy**

Main article: [Siyokoy \(Philippine Mythology\)](#)

Siyokoy are [mermen](#), sea creatures that have a human form and scaled bodies. The *Siyokoy* is the male counterpart of the Sirena. The lower extremities of a Philippine merman can either be a fishtail or scaled legs and webbed feet. They could also have long, green tentacles. They drown mortals for food.^[citation needed] Siyokoys have gill slits, are colored brown or green, and have scaly skin, comparable to that of a fish.

[\[edit\]](#)**Tikbalang**

Main article: [Tikbalang](#)



A *Tikbalang*.

Tikbalang or *tigbalang* (demon horse) is a half-man and half-horse creature. It has a horse's head, the body of a human but with the feet of the horse. It travels at night to rape female mortals. The raped women will then give birth to more *tikbalang*. They are also believed to cause travelers to lose their way particularly in mountainous or forest areas.^[1] *Tikbalangs* are very playful with people, and they usually make a person imagine things that aren't real. Sometimes a *Tikbalang* will drive a person crazy. Legends say that when rain falls while the sun is shining, a pair of *Tikbalangs* are being wed. Since horses only arrived in the Philippine archipelago during the Spanish colonization (thus, the borrowed term 'kabayo'), there is a theory that the image of a half-horse, half-man creature was propagated by the conquistadors to keep the natives afraid of the night. There are stories claiming that the *Tikbalang* are actually half-bird, half-man creatures, much like the Japanese [tengu](#).

[edit]Tiyanak

Main article: [Tiyanak](#)

Tiyanak are babies who died before receiving baptism rites. After death, they go to a place known as [Limbo](#), a chamber of [Hell](#) which unbaptized dead people fall into, and are transformed into evil spirits. These phantasms return into the mortal realm in the form of goblins to eat living victims. The *tiyanak* can also be the offspring of a woman and a demon. It can also be an aborted fetus which comes back to take revenge on its mother. Most *Tiyanaks* are said to live in forests. If they see a human, they transform into what looks like a normal baby. When the person notices the *Tiyanak* and comes near to take a look at it, the *Tiyanak* changes back to its true form and eats its prey. And since they oftentimes seen coming out of trees it may also refer to [Tboli](#) legends, *Tibolis* are known for hanging their infants in trees who died after birth.

Juan Tamad ([Filipino](#) for "Lazy John") is a character in [Philippine folklore](#) noteworthy for extreme [laziness](#).^[1] He is usually portrayed as a child, although in some interpretations, he is said to be a young man.

Pasatsats are ghosts of people who died or were killed in the Second World War.

Etymology

Pasatsat is word rooted on the Pangasinense word *satsat*, meaning *to stab*.

Origin

Coffins during the time were so expensive, so the families of the dead wrapped the corpses in reed mats or icamen. The dead were buried in places other than cemeteries because tomb robberies were rampant during that era of extreme poverty.

Behavior

These ghosts usually show up in solitary paths and block passersby. To get rid of such a ghost, one needs to stab (hence pasatsat) the reed mat and unravel it, but doing so will show no presence of a corpse, although the mat will emit a noxious odor, much like that of putrid flesh.

kikik

A type of Aswang, the Kikik/Tik-Tik, turns into a enormous, prowling bat or bird at night, looking for pregnant women. As it sucks the blood from the fetus with its long proboscis, it makes a 'kik-kik-kik' sound. Other stories relate the kikik as an Aswang's familiar, its sound masking the Aswang's proximity from would-be victims.

Engkantos and *Engkantadas* are supernatural beings believed by the Filipino people. They are described to be fair skinned, blond, and blue or green eyes and far shorter or much taller than the average Filipino. They are also believed to be mostly tree dwellers. They are remembered for their beauty, grace and charm which attracts many people.the









