

**MICHAEL SURBROOK PRESENTS**

# HERE BE DRAGONS



**A MEDIEVAL BESTIARY OF  
FANTASY MONSTERS**



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## A MEDIEVAL BESTIARY OF FANTASY MONSTERS

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To people of the Middle Ages, the world around them was a fearsome place, filled with strange and fabulous creatures of all shapes and sizes. There were tiny snakes capable of killing a man with but a glance, birds who blotted out the sun as they flew overhead, and whales large enough to be mistaken for islands as they slept on the rolling surface of the sea. In India, there lived the man-eating mantichora, while Ethiopia boasted such creatures as the swamp-dwelling catoblepas and the color-changing parandus. Even in England, one had to beware of the dragon-like wyvern, while the French had to deal with such river monsters as the Gargouille and La Velue.

Extensive descriptions of such creatures could be found in one of the medieval bestiaries. Produced in great numbers during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, many of these books were written and illuminated by monks, and included numerous moral and religious lessons. Creatures listed in bestiaries were presumed to illustrate some aspect of God's will in their habits and base nature. For example, the phoenix's rising from the ashes of its death-bed was seen as proof of Christ's resurrection, while the dragon's ability to entangle prey with its tail was likened to the Devil's snaring men through lies and deceit.

*Here There Be Dragons* presents familiar and unfamiliar fantasy creatures in accordance to their commonly accepted depictions in Middle Ages bestiaries. Thus, while you might know basilisks, crocodiles, dragons, manticores, and unicorns by name, you might not know their medieval nature.

## What's in This Book

*Here There Be Dragons* is divided into five sections. This Introduction presents the basic ideas and design concepts for *Here There Be Dragons*, as well as a short history of the medieval bestiary and the geographical world view of the European Middle Ages.

The second section—Beasts and Monsters of the Middle Ages—presents individual entries for numerous classic bestiary denizens, and includes such well-known creatures as dragons and unicorns, as well as more obscure animals, such as the caladrius and yale. These creatures have been designed and developed in accordance to the monster creation rules found in the official game master's rules.

The third section consists of short descriptions of the habits of many mundane animals, including dogs, horses, goats, and so on. Some of these include variant power sets.

The fourth section presents several unique monsters from European folklore and legend. Each is more than enough to challenge an adventuring party!

The fifth section is a short bibliography of the books used to prepare this volume.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Before we begin, a word of caution: *Here There Be Dragons* contains creatures adapted from period resources of the Middle Ages, whose writers were not concerned with such ideas as play balance. Game masters should use creatures from this book with care, as some of them, such as the basilisk, can kill an entire adventuring party (if not an entire army!) with ease. Others possess powers that, while not as lethal as the basilisk's, can still incapacitate an entire party of heroes. Thus, GMs should carefully consider the use of any of the creatures listed in this book, comparing them against the capabilities of the characters before selecting them for play.

Also, in keeping with the medieval moral viewpoint, many creatures of low intelligence and instinct have been assigned alignments, rather than being listed as unaligned. The lion, for example, is depicted as lawful good in keeping with its symbolism as king of the beasts. These alignments may aid players in making moral choices within the context of the setting, even if they alter a creature's behavior very little.

That said, using the creatures in this book is no different than using the ones from the official fifth edition bestiary. You can create anything from singular encounters to entire campaigns based on the entries in this book. Or, you could substitute the monsters in *this* book for similarly-named creatures in the official bestiary, providing a surprise for those players (and their characters) who think they 'know it all' when it comes to the various worlds of fantasy gaming.

# A SHORT HISTORY

## OF MEDIEVAL BESTIARIES

The first known written account of the natural world and its various inhabitants was *The Histories*, penned by the Greek Herodotus in the fifth-century BCE. A collection of personal experiences, eyewitness accounts, and pure hearsay, this book set the stage for what would eventually become modern historical writing. *The Histories* also presented the first, and possibly most definitive, account of the phoenix to the Western world.

In the late fifth century BCE, Ctesias of Cnidus, another Greek, wrote *Indica*, an account of the land of India. As Ctesias had never visited the Indian subcontinent, he based his text on stories heard at the Persian court. In addition, Ctesias was the first to write about the manticore, a creature that would become a staple of bestiaries and other works of natural history for the next 2000 years.

The first truly scientific work concerning the natural world was the philosopher Aristotle's *Historia Animalium* (History of Animals). Although it referenced earlier books, such as Herodotus's *The Histories*, Aristotle preferred to make his observations firsthand, which allowed him to "...give us a clear picture of the subjects with which our exposition is to be concerned and with the principles upon which it must be based."

Listing more than 500 animals, *Historia Animalium* grouped them by various common characteristics. It was also littered with mistakes and incorrect information, mostly due to poor observation or erroneous conclusions of animal behavior. Unfortunately, Aristotle's book, and the scientific methods it espoused, were virtually ignored in favor of *Naturalis Historia* (Natural History), a work by the Roman Gaius Plinius Secundus (better known as Pliny the Elder).

Written in the first century CE, *Naturalis Historia* was a 37-volume compilation of all human knowledge and learning. As Pliny believed the natural world had no bounds, and enjoyed writing about the fabulous, the work included extensive descriptions of animals of all sorts, many of which were extremely fantastical. *Naturalis Historia* became a standard reference all through the Middle Ages, and wasn't discredited as a source of scientific learning until the mid-seventeenth century.

The second century CE saw the completion of the book *Physiologus*, meaning "Book of Nature" or "The Naturalist." Initially written in Greek, it was later translated into Latin, and then a host of other languages (including Arabic and Icelandic). *Physiologus* consisted of nearly 50 stories describing such mythical creatures as the phoenix, the mermecoleon (or antlion), the unicorn, the siren, the caladrius, and the salamander. Each of the entries contained information of a religious nature and provided proper Christian morals to the reader.

By the fifth century, after the *Physiologus* had been translated into Latin, it quickly became the basis for almost every medieval bestiary to follow. In the tenth century, copies of the *Physiologus* were being amended with additional entries, and by the mid-twelfth centuries, French editions of the book had nearly doubled the number of stories. As the books grew in size, the religious content dwindled, and notes about such diverse subjects as horse breeding and the care of hawks were added.

Much of the erroneous material found in bestiaries was due to the habit of simply copying material from an older work. As there was no such concept as fact-checking, no one ever bothered to determine if what they were writing about was a factual animal or not. In addition, several outright hoaxes were written during the Middle Ages.



The most well-known hoax is *The Letter of Prester John*, thought to be written by a monk in the twelfth century. This letter described an immense Christian kingdom far to the East, thought to be located in either Asia or somewhere beyond Ethiopia. The kingdom itself was full of wonders, containing animals of all sorts, immense riches, and knew neither poverty, famine, nor war. The letter was widely circulated and the Kingdom of Prester John was eagerly sought after as an ally against the Saracens during the Crusades.

A similar work of fiction was the travel book of “Sir John Mandeville.” Simply titled *Travels*, it was a fictionalized reworking of material taken from several previous written works. The book described a 34-year journey through an assortment of kingdoms—including the aforementioned Kingdom of Prester John—and for several hundred years was considered *the* authoritative travelogue of the world.

Not everyone accepted the fabulous animals presented in bestiaries as descriptions of living creatures, and as early as the thirteenth century the popular bestiary entries began to come under close scrutiny. When Albertus Magnus, a Dominican Friar from Bavaria, wrote his *De Animalibus* (On Animals), he refuted many claims about fabulous animals, and often tried to supply some form of natural explanation for the more fantastical behaviors attributed to them. Swiss naturalist Conrad Gesner’s four volume *Historia Animalium* (History of Animals) did much the same, and is considered the starting point of modern zoological methods and observation.

The last of the classical bestiaries was published in 1607. Titled *The History of Four-Footed Beasts*, it was an 800-page volume authored by Edward Topsell. A minister of the Church of England, Topsell based much of his material on Gesner’s *Historia Animalium*, but added his own thoughts

and opinions, as well as extensive life-lessons and morals. Although reprinted in 1658 when it was combined with his *The History of Serpents*, the book was already an outdated and obsolete work, useful only as a reference into the lore of fabulous animals.

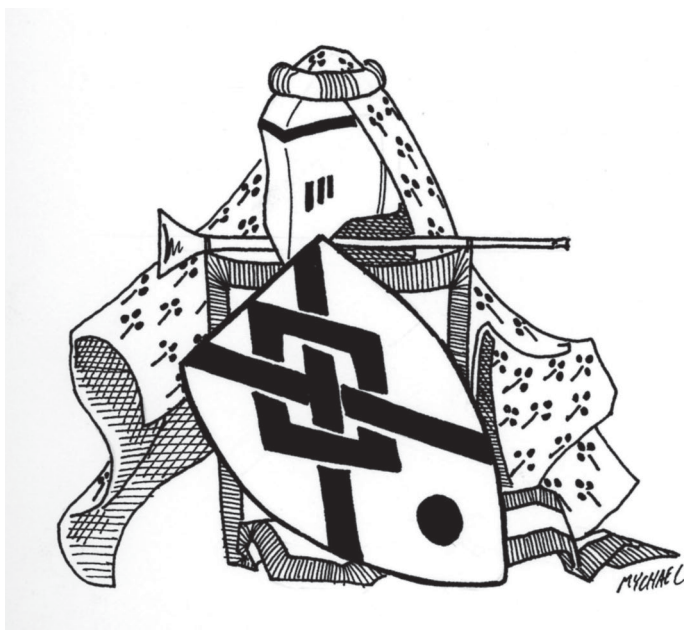
The death knell of the bestiary as a source of factual information came in 1646, with the publication of Sir Thomas Brown's *Pseudodoxia Epidemica; or, Enquiries into Very Many Received Tenets and Commonly Presumed Truths* (also known as *Vulgar Errors*). A physician, Brown examined the traditional lore about animals and found much of it to be in error or outright false. A skeptic, he challenged the existence of such creatures as the basilisk, the centaur, the griffin, and the phoenix. Although there would come later authors who would rise in defense of these creatures and their presumed existence, for all intents and purposes, the time of the bestiary had come to a close.

## THE MEDIEVAL VIEW OF THE WORLD

To the average resident of Middle Ages Europe, the known world was a very small place. Most people never traveled more than 20 miles from home, and for those that did, such journeys were beset by a host of problems—from bad weather to bandits. Maps, or more accurately, maps as we know them today, were nonexistent. There was little to no concept of perspective or scale, and much of what was drawn on a map was subject to guesswork and fallacy. For example, it was presumed Africa and Asia had to be joined *somewhere*, and many maps drew in an arcing line of land leading from the bottom of Africa (or what was known of Africa) to join Asia somewhere past India. There was also a strong belief in the need to balance the landmasses of Europe and Asia in the northern hemisphere with a similar landmass in the south. Thus, many maps showed a continent called *australis* (meaning “southern”) along the bottom.

A simple map of the world, as seen from the medieval point of view, is created by first drawing a circle. Divide the circle in half with a horizontal line, then divide the lower section in half vertically with a second line. Label the lower left section “Europe,” the lower right section “Africa,” and the upper half “Asia.” Jerusalem is the point where all three lines meet, with the lower line being the Mediterranean, the right line the Red Sea, and the left line is the Caspian Sea.

This book adopts a similarly simplistic view when it describes where its creatures are from. First, there is Europe. To the west, it is bordered by endless ocean (or, barring that, an ocean that stretches from the western coast of Europe to the eastern coast of Asia.) Far to the east is Asia. To the south is Africa, which is made up of three major regions: Libya (i.e., the Sahara Desert), Egypt, and Ethiopia (located below Egypt). Tucked below Ethiopia is the mythical Christian kingdom of Prester John. To the southeast, along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean, is the Holy Land and the holy city of Jerusalem. Beyond that is Arabia, Persia, and then India. Somewhere to the north of Persia is the land of Scythia.





# BEASTS AND MONSTERS OF THE MIDDLE AGES

## BASILISK

A tiny black snake, scarcely two to three feet in length, the basilisk has a diamond-shaped white spot (or a crown) on top of its head. It moves with its head and upper body held proudly erect, and not by slithering along the ground like a normal snake.

**Creator of Wastelands.** A solitary creature, the basilisk is found in the deserts of Libya. Due to its venomous nature, any place a basilisk dwells will become a ruined waste, as its breath and body poisons the air and land, and any nearby water will be fouled whenever the creature drinks. How such a toxic creature breeds is unknown, although naturalists say a toad or a snake can hatch a basilisk from an egg laid by a rooster (which explains the basilisk's rarity).

**King of the Snakes.** The basilisk is noted for its pride and is commonly called "the king of all serpents." As the undisputed lord of the Libyan desert, the only things the basilisk fears are its

mortal enemy the weasel and the rooster—whose crowing will send a basilisk fleeing in terror. Some say the crowing of a rooster will actually kill a basilisk, sending it into a series of lethal convulsions.

**Body of Pure Poison.** The basilisk has a well-deserved reputation as the most lethal creature in existence, and rightly so. The tiny snake's gaze is capable of withering plants and cracking stone, its breath can kill birds flying in the sky, while its body contains such virulent poisons anyone striking it with a weapon will surely die, as the venom travels up the blade and shaft (cracking and splitting the weapon as it goes) before entering the wielder's arm—killing not only the basilisk's attacker, but any animal he might be riding.

Due to its incredible lethality, the basilisk is a bold and virtually fearless combatant. The only thing the basilisk's poison can't affect is the weasel and rue, a plant used by weasels to heal themselves after fighting a basilisk. According to some stories, the basilisk can kill not only with its gaze and breath, but also with the sound of its hissing.



## A BASILISK'S LAIR

Any place a basilisk chooses to lair will slowly become a desiccated wasteland. Any plant life will die from the basilisk's poisons, leaving behind lifeless soil with only the occasional poison-shattered tree trunk to break up the monotony. Any water in the area is foul and poisonous to drink and may be littered with the corpses of birds, fish, and other animals.

## REGIONAL EFFECTS

The region containing a basilisk's lair is contaminated by the creature's presence, which creates one or more of the following effects:

- The land within 1 mile of the lair is poisoned. Spells that create plants or encourage plant growth will either fail outright or produce only stunted results (which will quickly die).
- Water sources within 1 mile of the lair are poisoned. Any creatures that drink such water must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 31 (7d8) poison damage, or half as much damage on a successful one. The creature also vomits back up the water.
- The air within 1 mile of the lair is fouled with the scent of decay. Any Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell are made at disadvantage.

If the basilisk dies, these effects fade over the course of 2d6 weeks.

**Historical Notes.** The name "basilisk" is derived from the Greek *basilicus* and means "little king." In Latin, the creature was called *regulus*, which translates to "king." The appearance of the basilisk changed slowly throughout the middle ages. Originally it was described as a tiny snake, but later was depicted as a rooster with bat-like wings and a lizard's tail. One of the more unusual depictions of the basilisk is found in Italian naturalist Ulisse Aldrovandi's *Natural History of Serpents and Dragons*, where it's shown with eight legs ending in chicken feet, a scaled body, and bearing a crown on its rooster-like head.

Although a common entry in period bestiaries, belief in the basilisk was not universal. As one writer put it, "If the basilisk kills merely by being seen, who has seen it?"

## USING THE BASILISK

Game masters should take note of the vast difference in the basilisk's offensive and defensive capabilities. Defensively it is roughly a CR 1/8 with its Armor Class and Immunities pushing it to CR 1/4. Offensively, it can inflict an average of 252-315 points of damage per round (depending on if you use the variant or not). This makes it a CR 27 to CR 30 creature. Thus, its average challenge rating of 13 can be somewhat misleading and could result in a party being killed quite quickly by something they can't see. On the other hand, a party outfitted with the proper equipment and spells might find the basilisk to be an anti-climactic foe, as 35 hit points aren't enough to withstand more than a single 3rd-level *Fireball*.

There are several solutions to this. The first is to make the adventure more about *finding* the basilisk rather than *fighting* it. The second is to make the basilisk the guardian of a magical item (or other object) that can withstand the basilisk's poison. Thus, the basilisk becomes a highly dangerous obstacle to overcome, not a campaign-ending 'boss' fight (that's what the magical object the characters are seeking is for). Third would be to increase the hit dice, hit points and/or size of the basilisk.

## OTHER NAMES

The basilisk is also known by the names basilicok, basylyscus, and bockatrice (see the cockatrice entry on page 15 for more).

# BASILISK

*Tiny monstrosity, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 35 (10d4+10)

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

**STR**   **DEX**   **CON**   **INT**   **WIS**   **CHA**

2 (-4)   16 (+3)   12 (+1)   4 (-3)   10 (-0)   16 (+3)

**Skills** Stealth +5

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** frightened

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 13 (10,000 XP)

**Lethal Breath.** Any creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of a basilisk must make a DC 22 Constitution saving throw if the basilisk isn't incapacitated. On a failed save, the creature takes 63 (14d8) poison damage, or half as much damage on a successful one. Any plant creature or magical plant that starts its turn within 30 feet of a basilisk makes the saving throw at disadvantage, and the basilisk's breath does the maximum possible damage. Any non-magical plant that isn't a creature, such as crops, grass, trees, and so on, simply blackens and dies.

If damage from a basilisk's breath reduces a creature to 0 hit points, it falls down dead, its body filled with virulent poisons.

The basilisk's breath has no effect on constructs, undead, the rue plant or weasels, including giant weasels.

**Lethal Gaze.** If a creature starts its turn within 30 feet of the basilisk and the two can see each other, the basilisk can force the creature to make a DC 22 Constitution saving throw if the basilisk isn't incapacitated. On a failed save, the creature takes 63 (14d8) poison damage, or half as much damage on a successful one. Any plant creature or magical plant that is the target of the basilisk's gaze makes the saving throw at disadvantage, and the basilisk's gaze does the maximum possible damage. Any non-magical plant that isn't a creature, such as crops, grass, trees, and so on, simply blackens and dies.

A creature that isn't surprised can avert its eyes to avoid the saving throw at the start of its turn. If it does so, it can't see the basilisk until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If it looks at the basilisk in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.

If damage from a basilisk's gaze reduces a creature to 0 hit points, it falls down dead, its body filled with virulent poisons.

The basilisk's gaze has no effect on constructs, undead, the rue plant or weasels, including giant weasels.

**Lethal Touch.** Any creature that touches a basilisk or hits with a melee weapon while within 5 feet of it must make a DC 22 Constitution saving throw if the basilisk isn't incapacitated. On a failed save, the creature takes 63 (14d8) poison damage, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the creature is in contact with another creature(s) (such as a mount), then this other creature(s) must also make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the second creature takes 58 (13d8) poison damage, or half as much damage on a successful one. Any nonmagical weapon that hits the basilisk is destroyed after dealing damage. Nonmagical ammunition that hits the basilisk is destroyed after dealing damage.

The basilisk's touch has no effect on constructs, undead, the rue plant or weasels, including giant weasels.

## ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage and the target must deal with the basilisk's **Lethal Touch**.

### VARIANT: LETHAL HISS

Some basilisks can also kill with the sound of their hiss. This raises the basilisk's challenge rating to 15 (13,000).

**Lethal Hiss.** Any creature that starts its turn within 15 feet of a basilisk must make a DC 22 Constitution saving throw if the basilisk isn't incapacitated. On a failed save, the creature takes 63 (14d8) poison damage, or half as much damage on a successful one.

If damage from a basilisk's hiss reduces a creature to 0 hit points, it falls down dead, its body filled with virulent poisons.

The basilisk's hiss has no effect on constructs, undead, the rue plant or weasels, including giant weasels.

### VARIANT: VULNERABLE TO A COCK'S CROW

It is said the sound of a rooster's crowing will kill a basilisk. If that is the case, the basilisk has the following trait:

**Death by Rooster.** A basilisk that can hear the crowing of a rooster goes into a series of uncontrollable convulsions, giving it disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws, and dies within one round.

## BONNACON

The bonnacon is a large creature the size and shape of an ox, covered in long thick hair. Its bull-like head has horns that curl in on themselves, leaving no projecting points.

**Flight Over Fight.** Found in Asia, this creature is a peaceful herbivore. A solitary animal, it tries to avoid humans (and other humanoids). Although its curled horns are of some use in combat, the bonnacon prefers to flee from its enemies. If pursued, it will excrete an acrid and volatile discharge from its hindquarters. This discharge covers three acres and is capable of burning the hair off a hunting dog and setting trees and shrubs alight.

**Historical Notes.** The origins of the bonnacon seem to be in somewhat confused descriptions of Cape Buffalo. That said, certain animals *are* known to empty their bowels if put to flight by an attacker.

## BONNACON

*Large monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 11

**Hit Points** 25 (3d10+9)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	7 (-2)	6 (-2)

**Senses** passive Perception 8

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Charge.** If a bonnacon moves at least 20 feet straight towards a target and then hits it with a ram attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

## ACTIONS

**Ram.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4+3) bludgeoning damage.

**Hooves.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one prone creature. *Hit:* 8 (2d4+3) bludgeoning damage.

**Acrid Discharge (Recharge 6).** The bonnacon excretes a fiery blast in a 550-foot cone. Each creature in the cone must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## USING THE BONNACON

Game masters who wish to make the bonnacon even *more* dangerous should consider some of the alternative accounts of its destructive power. While most writers agreed the bonnacon's discharge was capable of setting trees alight, a few went so far as to describe hunters caught in the discharge being consumed in flames. To fully simulate this effect, you may wish to increase the size or number of dice for the bonnacon's acrid discharge (for example, from d6s to d8s, or from 6d6 to 8d6). Please note this *will* increase the bonnacon's challenge rating.

## OTHER NAMES

The bonnacon is also known by the names bonachus and bonasus.



## CALADRIUS

The caladrius is approximately the size of an eagle, with a long swan-like neck, and a bright yellow beak and legs. The rest of the bird is pure white, without a spot of black anywhere.

**Can Identify Illness.** A native of Persia, the caladrius is highly sought after, as it's able to recognize illnesses in men. If presented with a sick man, the caladrius will stare at the stricken victim. If the man cannot be cured, then the bird will turn its back on him, but if aid is possible, the bird will take the man's illness into itself, then fly up towards the sun and vomit it back out. It is unknown what benefit the caladrius gains from healing the sick.

It is thought the bird determines whether a man can be saved by the presence of certain fumes coming from a sick body. If the illness is deep inside the body, then it can do nothing, but if it can scent the illness in the air, it will inhale the sickness into itself. In addition, some scholars say the meat of the bird's inner thigh can be used to cure blindness. Others claim the bird's dung should be used instead.

### USING THE CALADRIUS

No mention is made in the bestiaries as to the fate of a caladrius if it isn't allowed to vomit out the illness after absorbing it. In addition, nothing is said about the bird returning afterwards. Game masters should decide for themselves the outcome of denying a caladrius its flight up to the sun. At the very least, the bird should suffer the same disease effects as the original victim. Since the bird has far less hit points than the typical character, it's highly likely the bird will soon die. Game masters should also decide if the caladrius will return after healing someone or will fly off. In either case, these birds should be extremely rare and highly sought after.

### OTHER NAMES

The caladrius is also known as the caladre, caladriion, or charadrius.



**Historical Notes.** The caladrius, with its ability to heal and its pure white body, was a medieval symbol of Christ. It was closely associated with royalty, and thus with jaundice, which was a disease common to those used to rich living.

## CALADRIUS

*Medium monstrosity, neutral good*

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 25 (3d10+9)

**Speed** 10 ft., fly 50 ft.

**STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA**

2 (-4) 14 (+2) 8 (-1) 5 (-3) 8 (-2) 10 (+0)

**Senses** passive Perception 8

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting (1/Day).** The caladrius can innately cast *augury*, requiring no material components. The spell *must* be cast near a sick creature and can *only* be used to determine if the creature will live or die from the illness it is suffering. Its innate spellcasting ability is Charisma.

**Innate Spellcasting (1/Day).** The caladrius can innately cast *lesser restoration*, requiring no material components. The spell can *only* be used to end one disease. Its innate spellcasting ability is Charisma.

## ACTIONS

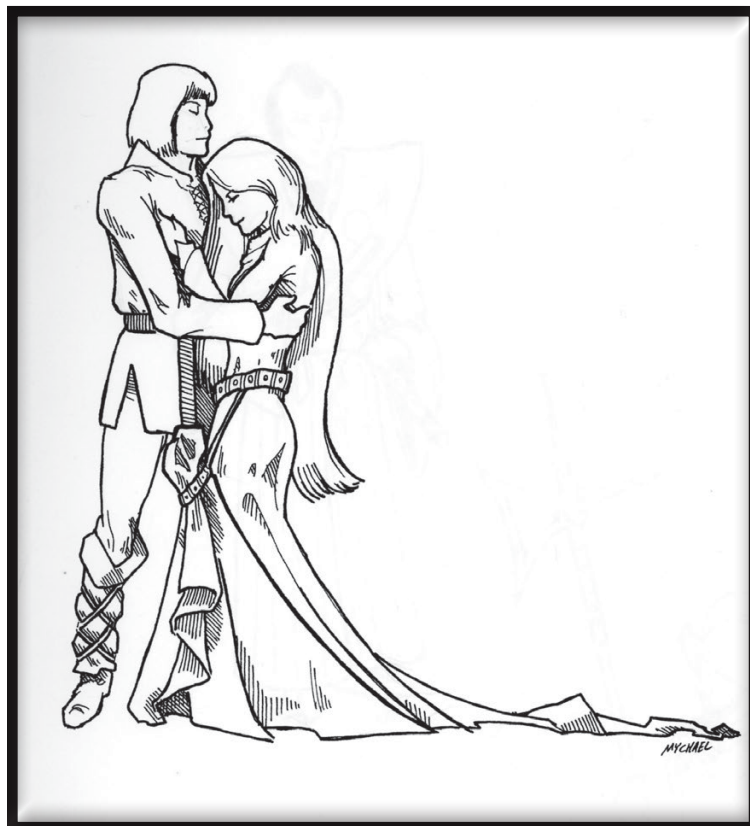
**Beak.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage.

### VARIANT: CURE BLINDNESS

According to some tales, the caladrius can cure blindness.

**Cure Blindness I.** By cooking and consuming the meat of the caladrius' inner thigh, a creature can remove the blindness condition as if they were the recipient of *lesser restoration*.

**Cure Blindness II.** By applying the caladrius' dung to their eyes, a creature can remove the blindness condition as if they were the recipient of *lesser restoration*.



## CATOBLEPAS

The catoblepas is a sluggish beast of moderate size, with a long neck. Due to its weak neck and the weight of its extremely heavy head, the catoblepas normally keeps its head near the ground.

**Dangerous Swamp Dweller.** A creature of Ethiopia, the catoblepas dwells in river-side marshes and swamps, where it forages for water plants and roots. Solitary creatures, they tend to be active early in the morning and late in the evening. If threatened, the catoblepas will defend itself with its lethal gaze, which is capable of striking dead anything that meets the animal's eyes. It will raise its head to locate the closest attacker and then try to lock eyes. Once the first attacker has been slain, the catoblepas will then repeat the process, until all its assailants have been killed or fled. If severely pressed or wounded, the catoblepas will retreat into its swampy home, trying to place deep bodies of water between itself and any foes.

**Historical Notes.** The name "catoblepas" comes from the Greek and means "that which looks downwards." The catoblepas itself is likely derived from descriptions of the gnu.

## CATOBLEPAS

*Large monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 37 (5d10+9)

**Speed** 30 ft.

**STR**   **DEX**   **CON**   **INT**   **WIS**   **CHA**

16 (+3) 9 (-1)   17 (+3) 2 (-4)   7 (-2)   5 (-3)

**Skills** Perception +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

### USING THE CATOBLEPAS

As the catoblepas has an extremely potent gaze attack, it might be more challenging to a party of adventures than its CR suggests. See the "Using the Basilisk" sidebar on page 8 for more information.

### OTHER NAMES

The catoblepas is also known by the names catoplepe and gorgon.

**Lethal Gaze.** If a creature starts its turn within 30 feet of the catoblepas and the two can see each other, the catoblepas can force the creature to make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw if the catoblepas isn't incapacitated. On a failed save, the creature takes 63 (14d8) poison damage, or half as much damage on a successful one. Any plant creature or magical plant that is the target of the catoblepas' gaze makes the saving throw at disadvantage, and the catoblepas' gaze does the maximum possible damage. Any non-magical plant that isn't a creature, such as crops, grass, trees, and so on, simply blackens and dies.

A creature that isn't surprised can avert its eyes to avoid the saving throw at the start of its turn. If it does so, it can't see the catoblepas until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If it looks at the catoblepas in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.

If damage from a catoblepas' gaze reduces a creature to 0 hit points, it falls down dead, its body filled with virulent poisons.

The catoblepas' gaze has no effect on constructs or undead.

### ACTIONS

**Hooves.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4+3) bludgeoning damage.



## COCKATRICE

The cockatrice has the head, neck, wings and body of a cock (*i.e.* rooster), with the legs and feet of a lizard. Some descriptions give it a lizard-like head and bat wings, but all accounts agree the cockatrice is a horrid cross between bird and reptile.

**Offspring of a Rooster and a Toad.** A cockatrice is born when a cock lays an egg, which is then incubated by a toad. Some descriptions go further and require the cock to be seven years old, Sirius the Dog Star to be ascendant, and for the toad to incubate the egg for upwards of nine years. Unsurprisingly, the cockatrice is a fairly rare animal. They are solitary creatures, and usually lair in caves, wells, and dank basements. Reports of cockatrices are found across Europe, especially in England and France.



The cockatrice is aggressive and will readily attack anything it perceives as prey. They fear weasels, however, and will usually flee from an encounter with one.

**Historical Notes.** The cockatrice is a later Middle Ages development of the basilisk. While highly lethal, it's not quite as destructive as the basilisk is said to be. The cockatrice was also significantly easier to defeat; the commonly agreed method was with a mirror, which was used to reflect the cockatrice's gaze back into its own eyes.

## COCKATRICE

*Small monstrosity, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 33 (6d6+12)

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 40 ft.

**STR**   **DEX**   **CON**   **INT**   **WIS**   **CHA**

4 (-3)   16 (+3)   14 (+2)   10 (-0)   5 (-3)   5 (-3)

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +5

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Lethal Gaze.** If a creature starts its turn within 30 feet of the cockatrice and the two can see each other, the cockatrice can force the creature to make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw if the cockatrice isn't incapacitated. On a failed save, the creature takes 63 (14d8) poison damage, or half as much damage on a successful one. Any plant creature or magical plant that is the target of the cockatrice's gaze makes the saving throw at disadvantage, and the cockatrice's gaze does the maximum possible damage. Any non-magical plant that isn't a creature, such as crops, grass, trees, and so on, simply blackens and dies.

## USING THE COCKATRICE

As the cockatrice has an extremely potent gaze attack, it might be more challenging to a party of adventures than its challenge rating suggests. See the “Using the Basilisk” sidebar on page 8 for more information.

A creature that isn't surprised can avert its eyes to avoid the saving throw at the start of its turn. If it does so, it can't see the cockatrice until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If it looks at the cockatrice in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.

If the cockatrice sees its reflection within 30 feet of it in bright light, it will target itself with its gaze.

If damage from a cockatrice's gaze reduces a creature to 0 hit points, it falls down dead, its body filled with virulent poisons.

The cockatrice's gaze has no effect on constructs or undead.

**Fears Weasels.** If it is ever engaged in combat with a weasel (giant or otherwise), the cockatrice suffer disadvantage on all attack rolls.

## ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d4+1) piercing damage.

## CROCODILE

The crocodile is a large yellow lizard with a tough, thick hide, and four legs armed with sharp claws. Lengths of thirty feet are common, and the crocodile's great size, along with its mouthful of sharp teeth, make it a feared predator.

**River Predators.** Crocodiles live in and around the Nile River. They remain in the water during the day, but come ashore at night to feed. They are noted for their hunger and a willingness to attack anything as a potential food source. Crocodiles prey on anything they can catch, but have a fondness for humans. Oddly enough, a crocodile will weep after eating a man. Various explanations have been offered for this behavior, ranging from showing repentance for the act, to bewailing the small size of the meal.

Crocodiles normally lie in wait in the water and will rush out onto shore to attack their prey. Once bitten the prey will be dragged back into the water to be drowned and torn apart. Crocodiles are also known to upset boats to get at the occupants, and can leap vertically out of the water to catch unaware prey on an overhanging bank.

It is said that a tooth taken from the jaw of a live crocodile and worn around the neck will cure impotence.

**Historical Notes.** The medieval crocodile is close in size and general habits to the real Nile crocodile, although the coloration is a bit off. The belief the crocodile wept after consuming a man gave rise to the phrase “to cry crocodile tears,” symbolizing a false display of sorrow, which is still in use to this day.

## CROCODILE

*Huge beast, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 96 (9d12+36)

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 50 ft.

**STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA**

22 (+6) 12(+1) 18 (+4) 8 (-2) 10 (+0) 10 (+0)

**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +5

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Hold Breath.** The crocodile can hold its breath for 30 minutes.

**Standing Leap.** If the crocodile starts in water, its long jump is up to 30 feet and its high jump is 15 feet, with or without a running start.

**False Appearance.** While a crocodile remains motionless in a body of water deep enough to contain its body, it is effectively indistinguishable from floating branches, logs, and other detritus on the water's surface.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The crocodile makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its tail.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d10+6) piercing damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the crocodile can't bite another target.

**Tail.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target not grappled by the crocodile. *Hit:* 16 (2d8+6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one prone creature. *Hit:* 13 (2d6+6) slashing damage.



## DRAGON

Dragons are immense reptiles, said to be the largest of all the living things in the world. They are often described as being snakelike, with two or four legs and two large bat-like wings. Their bodies are heavily scaled, their feet have powerful claws, and their heads are equipped with long sharp teeth. Coloration varies, with green and brown predominant.

**Hunters of Elephants.** Dragons are reputed to live in many parts of the world, including Ethiopia, Libya, greater Africa, and India. They're known to have ravenous appetites, and will greedily devour anything they can catch. The dragon's favorite prey are elephants, which are caught by encircling them with their long tails in order to

strangle them to death. However, this method of hunting has its drawbacks, as the newly slain elephant will often crush the dragon as it falls dead. Dragons can lay entire regions to waste, by a combination of devouring anything living and from poisoning the ground and water with their bodies.

**Demanders of Offerings.** Dragons will often settle in an area frequented by people and feast off local livestock. If possible, the dragon will terrorize the local population into keeping it well-fed with offerings of cattle, and once that runs out, it will demand a human sacrifice (usually of a maiden). The only thing the dragon fears is the sweet breath of the panther, and it will flee from this scent as quickly and rapidly as possible.



**Magical Body Parts.** There are many stories surrounding dragons and the magical powers that can be gained from their body parts. Bathing in dragon's blood is thought to make one invulnerable, while eating a dragon's heart is supposed to grant understanding of the speech of birds and animals. Cutting open the head of a living dragon will reveal the *dracone*, a precious pure-white jewel that has no equal in the world.

**Historical Notes.** The word "dragon" is descended from the Greek word "draco," which was used for any immense snake. Medieval dragons were often snakelike themselves, and possessed either four, two, or no legs. As for wings, the medieval dragon usually had two (meaning it looked much like the classic wyvern), but might have no wings or as many as four. Art of the Middle Ages tends to depict dragons as fairly small, usually not much bigger than a horse (if that). Literature, on the other hand, described dragons as the largest of land-dwelling creatures. The epic poem *Beowulf* gives a length of 50 feet for the dragon that kills the titular hero, while other stories describe dragons as being "...10 paces in length..." (between 25 and 48 feet in length), or stating a slain dragon required four carts to haul it away.

### A DRAGON'S LAIR

Dragons tend to lair any place they have an easy access to food. This can include the deserts of Libya to the forests of India. A long-term dragon's lair is notable for the absence of large animals in the general vicinity, a stink of draconic hide, and if the dragon can breathe fire, a smoky pall over the entire area (or an unpleasant odor if the dragon breaths poison gas).

### REGIONAL EFFECTS

The region containing a dragon's lair is contaminated by the creature's presence, which creates one or more of the following effects:

- The land within 1 mile of the lair is arid and dry. Spells that create food and/or water are only half as effective.
- Water sources within 1 mile of the lair are covered with a layer of scummy slime. The water itself tastes foul. Any creature that drinks the water will quickly spit it back out.
- The air within 1 mile of the lair is tainted with the smell of the dragon's breath and body. Any Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell are made at disadvantage.

If the dragon dies, these effects fade over the course of 1d10 days.

### OTHER NAMES

Dragons are also known by the names draco, drake, and drakon.



## DRAGON

*Huge dragon, any evil*

**Armor Class** 19 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 207 (18d12+90)

**Speed** 40 ft., fly 80 ft., swim 30 ft.

**STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA**

22 (+6) 12 (+1) 21 (+5) 8 (-2) 10 (+0) 15 (+2)

**Saving Throws** Dex +5, Con +10, Wis +4, Cha +6

**Skills** Perception +6, Stealth +5

**Senses** passive Perception 16

**Languages** understands Common, but can't speak it

**Challenge** 11 (7,200 XP)

**Legendary Resistances (3/Day).** If the dragon fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The dragon makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d10+6) piercing damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6+6) slashing damage.

**Tail.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8+6) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 16). Until this grapple ends the creature is restrained, and the dragon can't use its tail on another target.

### VARIANT: DRAGON OPTIONS

Dragons come in many forms. You can customize your dragon with selections from this list. Some of these selections will increase the dragon's challenge rating.

**Great Intelligence.** Increase INT to 18.

**Great Wisdom.** Increase WIS to 18.

**No Wings.** Remove the dragon's fly speed.

**Flaming Breath (Recharge 5-6).** The dragon exhales fire in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 56 (16d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

**Noxious Breath (Recharge 5-6).** The dragon exhales poisonous gas in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking 56 (16d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

**Immune To Fire. Damage Immunities** fire  
**Immunity to All Poisons. Damage Immunities** poison, **Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Draconic Eyes.** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.

### VARIANT: BATHING IN DRAGON BLOOD

A character that bathes in the blood of a dragon will permanently gain resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons.

### VARIANT: EATING A DRAGON'S HEART

A character that cooks and eats a portion of a dragon's heart permanently gains the ability to speak with animals, as the spell of the same name.

## FASTITOCALON

Fastitocalon is an immense whale, with a back described as being gray and rough, like a gravely beach.

**Sleeper on the Surface.** These creatures are known for their habit of sleeping at the surface of the ocean, drifting slowly with the waves and currents. As it sleeps, the fastitocalon's back lies exposed to the air and slowly becomes covered with sand, dirt, and plant growth, until it resembles an island. It is often mistaken for such by passing sailors; a potentially costly mistake. If the sailors anchor for the night and build a cookfire on the 'island,' the heat of the fire will disturb the whale and cause it to dive to the bottom of the sea, drowning all who are on its back.

**Attracts Fish with Its Breath.** Normally a lethargic animal (it can sleep for years at a time), the fastitocalon doesn't chase down schools of fish in order to feed. Instead, it simply opens its mouth, as its sweet breath will attract all manner of fish to be devoured by the island-whale's gaping maw. If angered, the fastitocalon will simply swallow most prey, or smash it with its flukes (then swallow it). The island-whale's mouth is large enough to consume a small boat (and everyone in it), while its flukes can easily smash a full-sized ship to splinters.

**Historical Notes.** Stories of a whale mistaken for an island can be found in the myths and legends of many cultures, including the Irish tale of Saint Brendan and the *Tales of the Arabian Nights*. The whale itself, with its ability to attract unsuspecting fish with its sweet breath, was considered symbolic of the Devil, who ensnares unwary men with false promises.



## FASTITOCALON

*Gargantuan monstrosity (titan), neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 20 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 819 (42d20+378)

**Speed** 0 ft., swim 30 ft.

**STR**   **DEX**   **CON**   **INT**   **WIS**   **CHA**

30(+10) 11(+1) 29(+9) 8(-2) 10(+0) 12(+1)

**Saving Throws** Str +19, Con +18, Int +7, Wis +9, Cha +11

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Damage Immunities** cold, poison

**Condition Immunities** frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 24 (62,000 XP)

**As Large as an Island.** The fastitocalon is one of the largest living creatures in existence. It is roughly 1,000 feet in length from nose to tail, and occupies a space of 120 by 120 feet. Its movement is not affected by difficult terrain (as it applies to oceans) or by Huge or smaller creatures. Other creatures can enter the fastitocalon's space, but are presumed to be walking on top of the fastitocalon's back and are not interacting with the fastitocalon in any way.

**Dislike of Fire.** If the fastitocalon is exposed to natural fire for more than an hour (such as a campfire) or magical fire for one round (such as a fireball) it will dive to the bottom of the ocean.

**False Appearance.** While the fastitocalon remains motionless on the surface of the ocean (except for drifting with natural currents) it is indistinguishable from a small island.

**Freedom of Movement.** The fastitocalon ignores difficult terrain and magical effects can't reduce its speed or cause it to be restrained. It can spend 5 feet of movement to escape from nonmagical restraints or being grappled.

**Hold Breath.** The fastitocalon can hold its breath for 12 hours.

**Siege Monster.** The fastitocalon deals double damage to objects and structures.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The fastitocalon makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its flukes.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack.* +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 29 (3d12+10) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it is grappled (escape DC 24). Until this grapple ends the target is restrained, and the fastitocalon can't bite another target.

**Flukes.** *Melee Weapon Attack.* +14 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 26 (3d10+10) bludgeoning damage and the target must succeed on a DC 24 Strength saving throw or be pushed back 10 feet away from the fastitocalon.

**Engulf.** The fastitocalon makes one bite attack against a Huge or smaller creature it is currently grappling. If the attack hits, the target takes the bite's damage, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends. While swallowed, the creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the fastitocalon, and it takes 56 (16d6) acid damage at the start of each of the fastitocalon's turns.

If the fastitocalon takes 60 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it (or any damage from magical fire), the fastitocalon must succeed on a DC 25 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which fall prone in a space within 20 feet of the fastitocalon. If the fastitocalon dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 50 feet of movement, exiting prone.



## USING THE FASTITOCALON

As the fastitocalon is roughly 1,000 feet in length, you could consider eliminating the creature's acid attack and allow characters to adventure *within* the fastitocalon's gullet. Characters could find the remains of other sea monsters, swallowed ships, and even entire societies (such as kuo-toa, merfolk, merrows, and the like) inside.

## OTHER NAMES

The fastitocalon is also known by the following names: aspidochelone, cetus, island-whale, jasconis, leviathan, and zaratan.

## VARIANT: ASPIDOCHELONE

The aspidochelone is similar to the fastitocalon, except it has the appearance of a great turtle instead of a whale. If using an aspidochelone, increase the Armor Class to 25 and change the Multiattack to a bite and two flippers (which work the same as the flukes). The aspidochelone's challenge rating is now 25 (75,000 XP).

**Sweet Breath (Recharge 5-6).** The fastitocalon exhales in a 90-foot cone. Each aquatic beast in the area must make a DC 23 Constitution saving throw or be *charmed* for 1 minute. Charmed beasts will move towards the fastitocalon's mouth to be devoured.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The fastitocalon can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The fastitocalon regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

**Move.** The fastitocalon moves up to half its speed.

**Smash.** The fastitocalon makes a fluke attack.

**Devour (2 actions).** The fastitocalon makes one bite attack or uses Engulf.



# GIANT

Giants are humanoids of great size and stature. Their exact appearance is as variable as that of man himself, although most giants are described as standing more than ten feet tall and are thickly bearded. Giants dress in whatever the local climate allows for, from a simple loincloth to thick furs.

**Varied in Dwellings.** In general, giants are solitary, and live far from men in thick untamed wilderness. The unexplored wilds of India, Africa, and Patagonia (in South America) are said to be home to whole tribes of giants, some of whom are reputed to be cannibals. Most giants seem to be simple scavengers, living off whatever they can find, although a few resort to theft and will strip a farm of its livestock, grain, and crops. Some giants, such as those of Patagonia, are active hunters and fishers.

**Varied in Habits.** There is a tendency among giants, especially those that live in England and France, to become greedy robbers, preying on passerby and stealing from them all items of value (and sometimes eating their victims.) Giants in other parts of the world may be more friendly, or may simply use the guise of friendship as a means of drawing in unsuspecting victims.

**Warriors and Wizards.** Giants usually arm themselves with great clubs, fashioned from a length of uprooted tree. Others will have long spears, massive hammers, or giant axes.

## OTHER NAMES

Giants are also called by such names as cyclops, gargantua, goliath, ogre, and titan. The term “gargantua” comes from the series of novels known as *The Life of Gargantua and of Pantagruel*, written in the 16th Century. The term “goliath” comes from the Biblical Goliath, a warrior of the Philistines who stood somewhere between 6’6” and 9’9”.

In Patagonia, giants are known to carry great bows, with which they are highly accurate. If unarmed, a giant will fight with his bare hands, or hurl great rocks.

Some giants are said to be powerful magic users. Others are reputed to possess magical items of immense power or to hold vast storehouses of knowledge.

**Historical Notes.** The medieval belief in giants can be traced to several sources, including the Bible. Within one could find several references to giants, with the most famous being David’s fight with Goliath. In addition, the book of Genesis states “There were giants in the earth in those days,” while Numbers was far more specific, stating “And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come to the giants: and we were in our own eyes grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.”



European folklore is full of giants and gigantic men, many of whom seem to be exaggerations of tall native peoples. The giants of Patagonia were witnessed by Ferdinand Magellan and Charles Darwin, although no one else has seen them since. Celtic and early European mythology mentions numerous giants, and the island of Britain was once thought to be thickly inhabited by a whole race of them, who were driven out by the Roman warrior Brutus. Many ancient structures—such as Stonehenge in England—as well as some natural rock formations—such as the aptly-named Giant’s Causeway in Ireland—were thought to be the work of giants.

The discovery of the fossil bones of elephants and other animals was often used as evidence of giants. The Greek cyclops may have been inspired by the finding of an elephant’s skull. The central nasal passage may have been mistaken for an eye socket, which led to the cyclops’ one-eyed visage.

## GIANT

*Large giant, any alignment*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 85 (9d10+36)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	9 (-1)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Perception +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 3 (7100 XP)

### VARIANT: GIANT OPTIONS

Giants of the Middle Ages could have numerous abilities beyond smashing foes with a club. Here are a few suggestions:

**Bow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d8-1) piercing damage.

**Greataxe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d12+5) slashing damage.

**Maul.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (3d6+5) bludgeoning damage.

**Spear.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6+5) piercing damage, or 14 (2d8+5) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

**Hurled Rock.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d10+5) bludgeoning damage.

### VARIANT: GIANT SPELLCASTING

Giants who can cast spells are usually wizards, although some can be sorcerers or warlocks. If you decide to make a giant a spellcaster, give it the Spellcaster trait (see page 281 of the game master’s rulebook). Such giants are usually 5th to 6th-level spellcasters.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The giant makes two greatclub attacks.

**Greatclub.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8+5) bludgeoning damage.

## GRIFFIN

A griffin is a large creature with the body of a lion and the head, breast, wings, and forelegs of an eagle. The coloration of a griffin varies. Normally the lion-like hindquarters are tawny-brown, while the feathered front can be white, brown, or even blue. However, one description states the feathers on the griffin's back are black, on its front are red, the wings are white, and its neck is blue.

**Hatred of Horses.** The griffin is usually found in Arabia and India, although some reports place them in the far north of Scythia. They prey on horses, which they hate, and are strong enough to carry one away to their lair. A griffin will also devour a human if given the chance, and are believed to take the corpses of captured men back to their nests to feed their young.

**Guardians of Gold.** Griffins line their nests with gold, which they dig up out of the ground. However, they guard their nests

jealously, and will attack and tear to pieces anyone who tries to raid their nests. Despite this valiant defense, griffins are often attacked by Arimaspians, a one-eyed race of men, who desire the gold for themselves. Aside from gold, griffin nests are also thought to be lined with agate (which has medicinal uses), emeralds, and jasper.

The griffin's defense of their nests is said to symbolize the punishment of humans who are greedy and overly love riches and material wealth.

**Historical Notes.** The griffin is one of the oldest of fantastical creatures, having originated in ancient Egypt. They were often associated with the sun, and drew the chariots of the Greek gods Apollo and Nemesis. In the Middle Ages, the griffin came to symbolize both the Devil and Christ. When used to signify Christ, the griffin was given golden feathers, representing divinity, and the lion half was colored a pinkish-red, to symbolize Christ's human nature.



## GRIFFIN

*Large monstrosity, lawful good or chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 59 (7d10+21)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 80 ft.

**STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA**

19 (+4) 16 (+3) 16 (+3) 10 (+0) 8 (-1) 12 (+1)

**Skills** Perception +5

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Keen Sight.** The griffin has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The griffin makes two attacks: one with its beak and one with its claws.

### VARIANT: DETECT POISON

Some say a griffin's claws can be used to detect poison, changing color in its presence.

**Detect Poison.** A character with the severed claw of a griffin can use it to cast *detect poison and disease* once per day, but can *only* be used to detect poisons and poisonous creatures. The claw regains this ability daily at dawn.

### OTHER NAMES

The griffin is also known by the following names: grifes, griffon, and gryphon.

**Beak.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8+4) piercing damage.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) slashing damage.



## HIPPOCAMPUS

A hippocampus has the forequarters of a horse and the tail of a fish (or serpent dragon). The tail ends in a great fin, while the horse's legs have finely webbed fins instead of hooves. The horse portion is usually white or brown, while the fish scales are blue or green.

**Leader of all the fishes.** A sea-dweller, the hippocampus is thought to be related to the horse, and like the horse is a grazer, feeding on sea grasses. It is also said to be the leader of all fishes, and periodically leads vast schools of fish to pay homage to the king of all fishes. Normally the hippocampus is nonaggressive, but if pressed or cornered it will smash foes with its strong tail. A hippocampus will also bite foes who get too close. If wounded, the hippocampus will flee, hiding in the depths.

**Historical Notes.** As the leader of all fish, the hippocampus was considered a symbol of the Biblical Moses. In addition, hippocampi are often depicted as being used as steeds by various sea gods and even drew Poseidon's seashell chariot.

The hippocampus was one of many animals thought to exist in the sea that were analogous to land animals. Aside from the sea-horse, there were sea-dogs, sea-cows, sea-pigs, and such unusual creatures as the bishop fish and monk fish. Most of these animals were pure fallacy, although a few seem to be based on actual sea life.

### OTHER NAMES

The hippocampus is also known as the hydrippus, or the sea horse.

## HIPPOCAMPUS

*Large monstrosity, neutral good*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 22 (3d10+6)

**Speed** 0 ft., swim 40 ft.

**STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA**

19 (+4) 13 (+1) 14 (+2) 10 (+0) 12 (+1) 16 (+3)

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** understands Common, but can't speak it

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Water Breathing.** The hippocampus can breathe only underwater.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The hippocampus makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its tail.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

**Tail.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10+4) bludgeoning damage.

## HIPPOGRIFF

The result of a mating between a griffin and a mare, a hippogriff combines the features of both horse and griffin. It has an eagle's head, a long feathered neck, and clawed forelegs, while the rest of the body is that of a horse. Coloration is similar to that of griffins and horses.

These creatures are said to be found in the Rhiphaean Mountains in the land of Ryfee (which is home to many griffins, as well). Hippogriffs are presumed to be meat eaters, just like their sires. They are also noted for being virtually untamable.

At home both on land and in the air, hippogriffs tend to attack by swooping down and slashing at a target with their claws. If pressed, the hippogriff also bites with its beak. If wounded the hippogriff will not hesitate to flee, flying away as fast as it can.

**Historical Notes.** While the hippogriff is a common creature in European heraldry and artistic depictions of it can be traced back to the Greco-Roman era, this particular entry is based on its appearance in Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*. Tamed with a magic bridle, the hippogriff is used as a mount by several characters in the poem, before finally being set free. It is thought that the hippogriff's creation was inspired by Virgil's comment of *lungentur iam grypes equis*, which translates as "to cross griffins with horses," a metaphor for attempting the impossible.

To create a medieval hippogriff, simply use the one found on page 184 of the official bestiary.



## LEUCROCOTTA

The leucrocotta is a strange hybrid creature, thought to result from the mating of a hyena and a lioness. It has the body, neck, and tail of a lion, the legs of a stag, cloven hooves, and the head of a badger. Its mouth extends all the way back to its ears, and instead of teeth, it has continuous strips of bone.

**Laughter Like Human Speech.** Said to be the swiftest of all animals, the leucrocotta is found in Ethiopia, although some reports place it in India as well. A carnivore, it feeds on anything it can catch, including mice, rabbits and small deer. A leucrocotta doesn't normally attack men, although it might if injured or very hungry.

The leucrocotta attacks by biting, using its large mouth to great effect. If pressed, it will strike with its hooves, fleeing if wounded. While the leucrocotta can imitate a human voice, it is unknown if the animal uses this ability in order to waylay people.

**Historical Notes.** It seems likely the leucrocotta is derived from traveler's accounts of the hyena. The word *leucrocotta* comes from the Greek and means "white wolf-dog."

## LEUCROCOTTA

*Medium monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 33 (6d8 + 6)

**Speed** 70 ft.

**STR** 16 (+3) **DEX** 13 (+1) **CON** 13 (+1) **INT** 6 (-2) **WIS** 10 (+0) **CHA** 8 (-1)

**Skills** Perception +2, Stealth +3

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

### OTHER NAMES

The leucrocotta is also known as the crocotta, krokottas, leucrota, or leukrokotta.

**Keen Hearing and Smell.** The leucrocotta has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

**Mimicry.** The leucrocotta can mimic animal sounds and humanoid voices. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage.

**Hooves.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage.





## LINDORM

A lindorm is a huge snake, measuring 20 feet (or more) in length, with black scales and a bright yellow belly. The head of a lindorm is described as being cat- or horse-like, with large protruding eyes and a thick mane of hair along the neck. The stench of a lindorm is almost unimaginable, and is readily apparent wherever these creatures dwell.

**Eater of Corpses.** Lindorms are found in northern Europe, primarily Sweden. They dwell in marshes, swamps, and caves, and prey on anything they can catch, which includes cattle, horses, and people. Upon cornering its prey, or if surprised, a lindorm will give off a loud, and very frightening, hiss. It will then coil itself up, raise its head a good six to seven feet in the air, and pounce, tearing at its prey with its great teeth. Lindorms are reputed to be very difficult to slay and they will not readily retreat from a

battle. These monstrous serpents are also known to haunt churchyards, digging up freshly interred corpses to devour them. It is thought that after a certain period, they grow too big to dwell on land, and will take to the ocean to become sea serpents.

**Historical Notes:** The lindorm (meaning “land worm”) was believed wholeheartedly by the people of Sweden for quite some time. People who encountered them rarely survived, and those that did were traumatized by the experience. Reports of encounters with lindorms continued into the mid-1700s, and some cryptozoologists have wondered if it might have been an actual animal.

Mythically, the lindorm is related to the dragon, and bears more than a passing resemblance to the Lambton Worm found on page 76.



## LINDORM

*Large dragon, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 93 (11d10 + 33)

**Speed** 40 ft., burrow 10 ft., swim 30 ft.

**STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA**

20 (+5) 15 (+3) 16 (+3) 7 (-2) 10 (+0) 8 (-1)

**Skills** Perception +4

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Keen Hearing.** The lindorm has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

**Stench.** Any creature other than a lindorm that starts its turn within 5 feet of the lindorm must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of the creature's next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the stench of all lindorms for 1 hour.

## ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (3d6 + 5) piercing damage.

**Fearful Hiss.** Each creature that is within 30 feet of the lindorm and can hear it must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the lindorm's Fearful Hiss for the next 24 hours.

## OTHER NAMES

The lindorm are also known by the following names: lindormen, lindworm, and lindwurm.

## LION

The lion is one of the largest of the great cats. It is tawny in color, and can grow to be 10 feet long and weigh more than 500 pounds. Male lions have very distinctive reddish or brownish manes.

**King of the Beasts.** As late as the Roman era lions could be found all through southern Europe, Asia and Africa, but by the time of the Middle Ages, they'd mostly vanished. Hunted as a danger to men and livestock, and captured for the Roman arenas, lions thrive only below the Sahara, in Ethiopia and points south. Lions live in prides of 10-30 animals led by an adult male. Meat eaters, they commonly prey on antelope, horse, and zebra.

The lion has three distinctive abilities that set it apart from the other animals and help make it the "king of beasts." First, the lion cannot be tracked, as it wipes away its spoor with its tail as it walks. Second, the lion's eyes are awake while the body is asleep, meaning it can't be taken by surprise. Third, the female lion gives birth to her cubs dead, but the male will breathe into their faces and give them life.

**Compassionate and Noble.** A noble beast, the lion possesses great courage, power, and resolution. Slow to anger, it is said the lion only kills when hungry, and will spare those who prostrate before him. The lion won't harm prisoners he encounters and will allow them to return home untouched. On the other hand, the lion is unable to look directly at a hunter's spear, and will flee the sound of the white cockerel, creaking wheels, or fire.

**Pack Hunters.** Lions stalk their prey as a pride, usually splitting up into smaller groups in order to drive their target into an ambush. They attack by springing forward in a sudden rush and biting. Normally a lion will try to grab its prey by the neck and suffocate it. If its quarry is large enough, it will also rake with its rear claws.

**Historical Notes.** The medieval lion was normally used as an allegory for Christ, hence its noble and compassionate nature. As a heraldic device, it was used all through Europe and eventually became the device for the Plantagenet house of England.

## LION

*Large beast, lawful good*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 52 (8d10 + 8)

**Speed** 50 ft.

**STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA**

17 (+3) 15 (+2) 13 (+1) 12 (+1) 16 (+3) 18 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Int +3, Wis +5, Cha +7

**Skills** Perception +5, Stealth +5

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** understands Common, but can't speak it

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Cannot Be Tracked.** Creatures attempting to track a lion have disadvantage on their Wisdom (Survival) checks.

**Keen Smell.** The lion has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Innate Spellcasting (3/Day).** The lion can innately cast *revivify*, requiring no material components. The spell can only be cast on a lion's newborn cub and only serves to bring the cub to life. Its innate spellcasting ability is Charisma.

## USING THE LION

As the medieval lion is a symbol of compassion and nobility, it almost certainly won't attack a party of adventures without good reason. Instead, you may want to have the PCs meet with it and ask the lion for a royal boon, such as safe passage through his realm, or to borrow an item or artifact the lion has in his possession.

**Pack Tactics.** The lion has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the lion's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Pounce.** If the lion moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the lion can make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

**Running Leap.** With a 10-foot running start, the lion can long jump up to 25 feet.

**Wakeful.** When the lion's body sleeps, its eyes remain awake.

## ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target., *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

## MANTICORE

The manticore is a creature the size of a lion, with a lion's body, a man's face and head, a scorpion's tail, and a voice often compared to a trumpet. Reddish in color, the manticore is said to have blue eyes, three rows of teeth, and a poisonous sting on the end of its tail. Other stings are located on each side of its tail.

**Eater of Men.** Native to India, the manticore is known to be a ravenous beast, preying on men and animals equally. As it's a very fast runner, the manticore will attack and kill anything it can catch, except for the elephant, which is immune to its poison. The manticore is known to prefer men over all other foods, and will ambush small groups with the intent of killing the lot and gorging itself on the remains.

Natives of India hunt the manticore from the back of elephants, bringing them down with bows, darts, and spears. Young manticores, when found, have their tails clipped or crushed to prevent the growth of its sting. This allows them to be domesticated and used as guard animals.

Manticores attack with a combination of claws, teeth, and stings. It can launch its stings from up to one hundred feet away, and it will fire stings to bring down its prey or to discourage pursuit. Although fearless, the manticore will flee if an encounter goes against it or if it is wounded.

**Historical Notes.** *Martikhora* is derived from an Old Persian word, and is usually translated to mean "man-eater." This creature was first described by Ctesias in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century BCE, and appeared in bestiaries and histories for the next two thousand years. The appearance of the manticore in Edward Topsell's 1607 book is probably the last time it was accepted as a factual animal.



## MANTICORE

*Large beast, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 68 (8d10 + 24)

**Speed** 50 ft.

**STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA**

17 (+3) 16 (+3) 17 (+3) 4 (-3) 8 (-1) 8 (-1)

**Skills** Perception +1, Stealth +5

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Tail Spike Regrowth.** The manticore has sixteen tail spikes. Used spikes regrow when the manticore finishes a long rest.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The manticore makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws or three with its tail spikes.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target., *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

**Spikes.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 50/100 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

**Sting.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

### OTHER NAMES

The manticore is also known as the mantiora, martichoras, martikhora, and martikora.

**Voice Like a Trumpet.** Each creature that is within 30 feet of the manticore and can hear it must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the manticore's Voice Like a Trumpet for the next 24 hours.



## MERMECOLEON

The mermecoleon, also known as the ant-lion, is a strange hybrid creature with the foreparts of a lion and the hindquarters of an ant. The lion half is tawny colored, while the ant body is black. It has a lion's front legs, and four rear legs of an ant.

**Eternally Hungry.** Mermecoleons are said to live in the deserts of Libya and Arabia, where they hide in the dust and steal grain from passing ants. Because of their hybrid ant-lion nature, scholars say they can't eat, as the ant body refuses any meat the lion part devours, and the lion will not eat the grain the ant desires. This means they are driven by overwhelming hunger. As they can't digest anything they eat, they are eternally hungry and seek to find something to sustain themselves with. Thus, it's highly likely that they will quickly attack anything that seems like food. However, it is also believed that the mermecoleon's lifespan is very short.

Due to their highly unusual anatomy, it's unknown how, or even if, the mermecoleon is capable of reproducing. Other details of their life are equally unknown.

**Historical Notes.** When Job 4:11 was translated from the Hebrew, the line "the old lion perisheth for lack of prey" was written using the old Arabic word *myrmex* for lion. Later, this version of the Bible was read to be "The ant-lion perisheth for lack of prey" as *myrmex* means 'ant' in Greek. Thus, the legend of the mermecoleon was born.

### OTHER NAMES

These creatures are also known by the names ant-lion, formicoleon, and mirmecoleon.

## MERMECOLEON

*Large monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 32 (5d10 + 5)

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 20 ft.

**STR**   **DEX**   **CON**   **INT**   **WIS**   **CHA**

18 (+4) 14 (+2) 13 (+1) 3 (-4) 8 (-1) 8 (-1)

**Skills** Perception +1, Stealth +4

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Keen Smell.** The mermecoleon has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Pack Tactics.** The mermecoleon has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the mermecoleon's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Pounce.** If the mermecoleon moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the mermecoleon can make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

**Running Leap.** With a 10-foot running start, the mermecoleon can long jump up to 25 feet.

**Tarsal Claws.** The mermecoleon can climb difficult surfaces—including upside down on ceilings—without requiring an ability check.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target., *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

## NORWAY SEA SERPENT

The Norway sea serpent is described as being 200 feet long and 20 feet wide. It is black in coloration, with a thick mane of hair hanging from its neck, and eyes that shine like flame. Sea serpents found in other waters are said to be nearly as large, dark in color, with horse-like heads and thick manes.

**Sign of Change.** Capable of living both on land and in the water, the Norway sea serpent usually lairs in the caves lining the rocky sea coasts of the North Sea. On clear summer nights, the serpent will crawl ashore and devour cattle, pigs, and sheep. At other times, it swims out to sea to feed on fish, giant squid and—if possible—sailors from passing ships. Popular wisdom states the appearance of the Norway sea serpent foretells a great change in the local kingdom.

**Preys on Sailors.** The Norway sea serpent attacks by biting, as its mouth is large enough to swallow a man (and some cattle) whole. When attacking a ship, its usual tactic is to rise out of the water and snatch a victim from the rigging or off the deck. If attacked, the sea serpent will smash the ship responsible (usually by wrapping around it and constricting until the ship shatters) and then nose around in the

### OTHER NAMES

These creatures are also known by the names Leviathan, sea monster, sea snake, and water horse.

wreckage for survivors. If wounded, the serpent will dive deep under the water's surface and quickly swim away.

**Historical Notes.** The Norway sea serpent was described by Olaus Magnus in his 1555 *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus* (A Description of the Northern Peoples).

## NORWAY SEA SERPENT

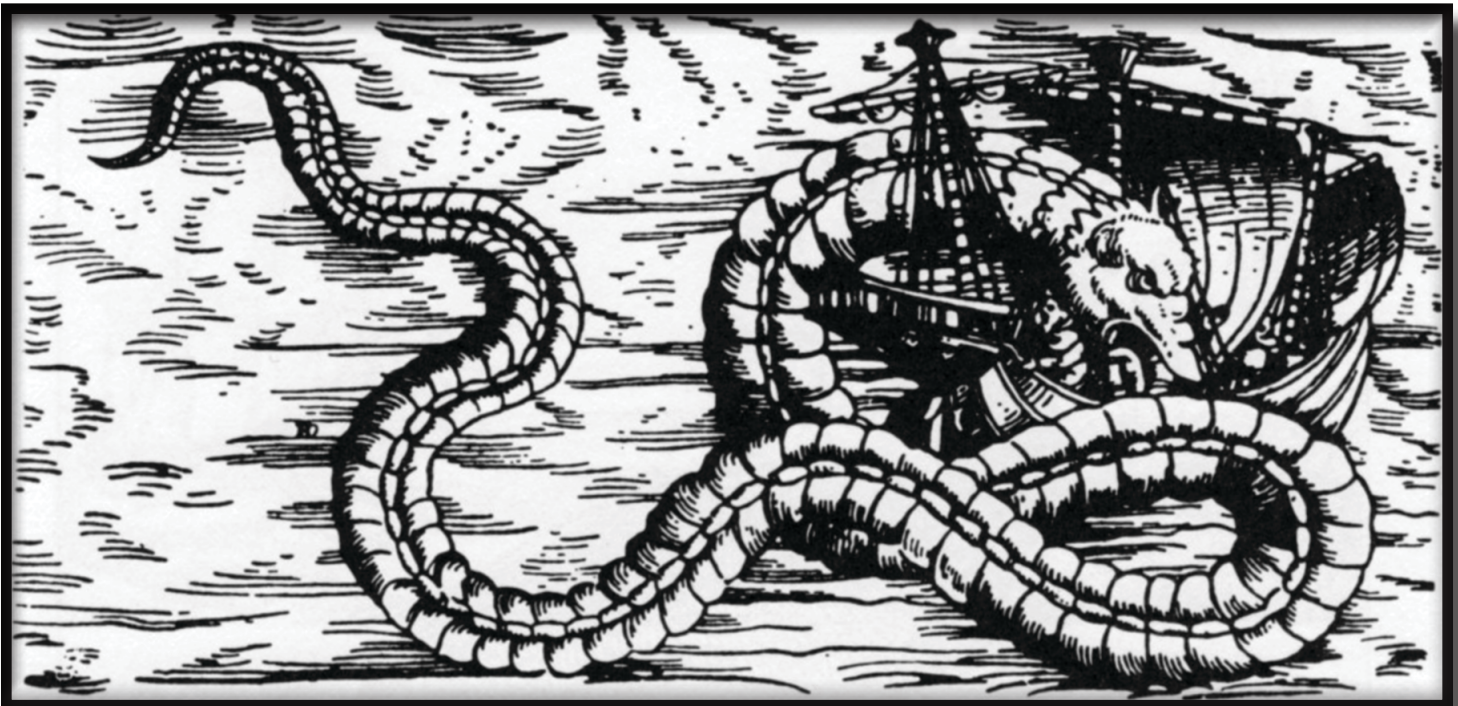
*Gargantuan monstrosity, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 315 (18d20 + 126)

**Speed** 50 ft., swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
30(+10)	12(+1)	24(+7)	6(-2)	8(-1)	6(-2)



**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

**Languages** –

**Challenge** 12 (8,400 XP)

**Hold Breath.** The Norway sea serpent can hold its breath for 8 hours.

**Siege Monster.** The Norway sea serpent deals double damage to objects and structures.

## ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (4d8 + 10) piercing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or be swallowed by the Norway sea serpent. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the Norway sea serpent, and it takes 21 (6d6) acid damage at the start of each of the Norway sea serpent's turns.

If the Norway sea serpent takes 30 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the Norway sea serpent must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which fall prone in a space within 10 feet of the Norway sea serpent. If the Norway sea serpent dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse by using 20 feet of movement, exiting prone.

**Constrict.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 32 (4d10 + 10) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 19). Until this grapple ends, the creature is restrained, and the Norway sea serpent can't constrict another target.

## PANTHER

The panther is one of the great cats, and is said to resemble the lion, but with longer legs, a slender body, and no mane. The coat of a panther is many-colored, making for a very handsome animal. Some say the panther has a white coat with black spots and a "terrible stare" no animal can abide. Conversely, the panther's voice is melodious, like a bell, while its breath is sweet and likened to the scent of allspice.

**Lures Its Prey.** Panthers dwell all throughout Asia, India, and Africa. It hunts by simply exhaling its sweet breath. Animals (and humans) are attracted by the scent and will follow it to its source if they smell it. Once the victims arrive, the panther will transfix them with its voice and beautiful coat, and then pounce, quickly devouring the unsuspecting prey. After eating, the panther sleeps for three days.

**Foe of the Dragon.** The panther is a known enemy of the dragon, and the two often fight each other. The dragon cannot stand the smell of the panther's sweet breath, however, and will quickly flee its scent.

**Historical Notes.** The medieval panther bears as much resemblance to the real-world panther as the medieval lion does to its real-world counterpart. The panther was a symbolic animal, which theologians of the Middle Ages likened to Christ. This parallel was drawn by the panther's habit of sleeping for three days after a meal, and then calling animals to it with its sweet breath. In the same way, Christ rose from the dead after three days, calling men to His side with His words. The enmity between the panther and the dragon was likened to the battle between Christ and the Devil over the fate of men's souls.



# PANTHER

Medium beast, chaotic good

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 27 (6d8)

**Speed** 50 ft., climb 40 ft.

**STR** **DEX** **CON** **INT** **WIS** **CHA**

14 (+2) 15 (+2) 10 (+0) 6 (-2) 14 (+2) 12 (+1)

**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +4

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Keen Smell.** The panther has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Pounce.** If the panther moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the panther can make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

**Voice Like a Bell and a Beautiful Coat.** Any creature that can view the panther runs the risk of being transfixed by the animal's pelt and purr. Each creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of the panther and can either see the panther's pelt or hear its purr must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be stunned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the condition on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the panther's Voice Like a Bell and Beautiful Coat for the next 24 hours.

## OTHER NAMES

The panther is also known by the names of pantheon or panthera.

## ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage.

**Sweet Breath.** The panther exhales charming gas in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be charmed for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

While charmed by the panther, a target is incapacitated and ignores the breath of other panthers. If the charmed target is more than 5 feet away from the panther, the target must move on its turn towards the panther by the most direct route. It doesn't avoid opportunity attacks, but before moving into damaging terrain, such as lava or a pit, and whenever it takes damage from a source other than the panther, a target can repeat the saving throw. A creature can also repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns. If a creature's saving throw is successful, the effect ends on it.

A target that successfully saves is immune to this panther's breath for the next 24 hours.

**Terrible Stare.** The panther targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see the panther, the target must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be magically frightened until the end of the panther's next turn. The frightened target is paralyzed.

## PARANDUS

The parandus is a large, shaggy-coated animal said to resemble either a cow or an ibex. It has the head of a stag with profusely branching horns. Normally either dark black or brown in color, it can change its color at will to assume the same shades as its surroundings.

**Shy and Retiring.** A native of Scythia, the parandus is a peaceful plains-dwelling herbivore, where they live in small herds. A timid creature, it'll quickly flee from humans. If possible, it'll assume the coloration of the background foliage and vanish from sight, not moving until the perceived threat is gone. If pressed the parandus will use its antlers to defend itself. However, some scholars say the parandus is far more aggressive than initially thought, using its protective coloration to lay in wait for intruders, then attacking as they pass.

**Historical Notes.** Some sources suggest the musk ox or reindeer as the basis for the parandus.



### OTHER NAMES

The parandus is also known as the parande and the tarandrus.

## PARANDUS

*Large beast, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 11

**Hit Points** 30 (4d10+8)

**Speed** 50 ft.

**STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA**

16 (+3) 13 (+1) 15 (+2) 4 (-3) 14 (+2) 8 (-1)

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Charge.** If the parandus moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a ram attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**False Appearance.** While the parandus remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from the surrounding foliage.

### ACTIONS

**Ram.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

**Hooves.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one prone creature. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

## PERYTON

A peryton is a bizarre cross between a deer and a bird. It has the head, body and legs of a deer and the broad wings of a bird. The entire body, both fur and feathers, is a dark green color. Odder still is the peryton's shadow, which has a human's shape.

**Enemy of Humankind.** Perytons originally inhabited the island kingdom of Atlantis, and after it sank occupied the Pillars of Hercules (*i.e.* Gibraltar.) Powerful fliers, these creatures can be found scattered about the Mediterranean. Despite having the heads of deer, perytons are meat eaters, and will readily attack men. It is not known why they do this, but they seem to be the mortal foes of humans and will attack them on sight. Interestingly enough, once a peryton has killed a man, it will wallow in the remains and then fly away. Because of the peryton's unusual man-shaped shadow and its habit of wallowing in the fresh corpse of

To create a medieval peryton, simply use the one found on page 251 of the official bestiary. However, to truly reflect the medieval peryton's nature, change the Damage Resistance to Damage Immunity. The challenge rating stays the same.

someone they have killed, it's thought perytons are the souls of travelers who have died far from home. By killing a man they regain their natural shadow, as well as the favor of the gods.

**Historical Notes:** The peryton seems to originate in Jorge Luis Borges' *Book of Imaginary Beings*, although he claims to use a conveniently lost medieval manuscript as his source of information. Within, it is stated "weapons have no effect against it..." hence the change from Resistance to Immunity.



## RUKH

The rukh is a bird of immense size, likened to a cloud as it blots out the sun while flying overhead, while its eggs are likened to the dome of a large building. A single feather from the rukh is said to be as large as a palm frond and measures a full eight paces in length. A single wing is at least 16 paces long, while the rukh's wingspan has been given at 40 to 60 paces across (100 to 288 feet). Its appearance is said to be akin to an eagle.

**Predator of Elephants.** The rukh lives on various small islands found in the Indian Ocean, and is often reported near the island of Madagascar. It requires a great deal of food to survive and feeds on elephants and cattle it finds in India and Africa. Some say the rukh preys on snakes capable of swallowing an elephant whole, while at least one portrait of the rukh shows it carrying off three elephants at once, one in each claw and a third in its beak. Fortunately, the actions of humanity are too insignificant to attract the rukh's notice, although there are reports of rukhs carrying off humans.

The egg of a rukh is said to be 50 paces (at least 125 feet) around and can feed an entire shipload of men. Sailors attempting such a meal should take care however, for if the parents return while the egg is being cooked, their wrath will be unmatched.

Normally the rukh strikes by dropping out of the sky and snatching up its target in its claws. Large prey, such as an elephant, will then be dropped to its death so that the rukh may feed upon the remains. Due to their sheer size, the rukh is relatively fearless, and will not flee from a large force of humans, unless badly wounded.

### OTHER NAMES

These creatures are also known by the names angka, pyong, roc, ruc, and simurgh.

To create a medieval rukh, simply use the roc found on page 260 of the official bestiary.

**Historical Notes.** The rukh is a creature of Arabic legend, although it was known by rumor in medieval Europe. It is related to a host of other giant birds, including the angka, pyong, and (loosely) the simurgh, and even has elements in common with the griffin. One possible origin for the rukh myth is fossil evidence of the giant flightless bird *Aepyornis*, found on the island of Madagascar, as well as the giant flightless birds of New Zealand. Finally, the rook in chess derives its name from the Arabic rukh.



## SALAMANDER

The salamander (or salamandrus) is a small dragon or lizard about a foot long. Some descriptions say it is covered with spots or star-like markings.

**Spirit of Fire and Flame.** Salamanders are reputed to be the living spirit of flame and so are immune to the effects of fire and heat. Others say this immunity is because the salamander is so incredibly cold they can extinguish a blaze by crawling through it. Thus, depending on which accounts one reads, the salamander seeks fire to either to dwell in it or put it out. The skin and fur of a salamander will resist flame after it has been removed from the animal and is often made into gloves and cloaks. Known as salamander's wool, this material can be woven into cloth and is cleaned by throwing it into a fire to burn away all dirt.

**Venomous Bite.** Due to its small size, the salamander's tiny teeth don't pose much of a threat. Since it prefers to dwell in fire, it's safe from most predators. However, the salamander has also been called one of the most lethal of serpents, second only to the basilisk. Per some accounts, its bite can kill almost instantly, and its body is so poisonous that if the salamander wraps itself around a tree, it will poison the tree and all the fruit on it. Similarly, if the salamander leaps into a well, it will poison the water, killing all who drink the water.

**Historical Note.** The exact nature of the salamander depends greatly upon what time period it is being written about in. Originally it was thought to survive heat and flame due to its cold body, but later it was said to actually live in flame. Leonardo da Vinci stated the salamander lived on flame, which renewed its skin. The letter from the Kingdom of Prester John stated salamanders spun cocoons, which were then used to weave salamander wool, a fireproof fabric.

It has been speculated the origin of the salamander lies in the amphibian of the same name. The real-world salamander does secrete a poisonous white fluid from its body, as a form of defense. In addition, salamanders are known to hibernate in lengths of wood, and it is possible the sight of a salamander crawling out of a burning log might have given rise to the belief it was a creature that dwelled in flames.

The salamander was an important animal to alchemists, who considered it a living elemental of fire. Salamander's wool, better known to modern man as asbestos, was described by many people, including Marco Polo. One writer used the existence of salamander's wool as proof the salamander wasn't real, as the asbestos fibers were obviously not from any living thing.



A creature related to the salamander and described in early texts was the pyrallis or pyrausta. This was a four-legged winged insect that lived in fires and forges on the island of Cyprus. It was so dependent on heat and flame for its existence that if it flew out of the fire for even a short period, it would die from the cold.

## SALAMANDER

*Tiny monstrosity, unaligned*

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 2 (1d4)

Speed 20 ft.

**STR**   **DEX**   **CON**   **INT**   **WIS**   **CHA**

1 (-5)   14 (+2)   13 (+1)   2 (-4)   10 (+0)   3 (-4)

**Skills** Stealth +4

**Damage Immunities** cold, fire

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

**Aura of Cold.** The salamander's body is so cold it automatically extinguishes any non-magical fire it comes in contact with. The effect fills a 5-foot cube around the salamander.

**Chilled Body.** A creature that touches the salamander or hits it with a melee weapon while within 5 feet takes 1d6 cold damage.

## ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* + to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage.

### VARIANT: VENOMOUS BITE

A salamander's venomous bite has the following effect. A salamander with this variant is challenge rating 4.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* + to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking 54 (12d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.



## SATYR

A satyr has a man's body from the waist up, while from the waist down it has goat's legs. Goat's horns and a long tail complete the image. Two similar creatures are the onocentaur, which replaces the goat's legs with those of the onager or wild ass, and the silenus, which has lower limbs like those of a horse.

**Lecherous Forest Spirits.** Satyrs are forest dwellers, and typically live far from human habitation. They are known to have a strong fondness for wine and will drink great quantities if allowed. They are also known for their violence—especially if drunk from wine—and have a reputation for lecherous behavior. They will readily assault any attractive female they come across (of almost any race), with the child of such a union being born as a satyr.

**Historical Notes.** Descended from the Greek satyr and Roman faun, the medieval satyr was a forest “wild-man” who dwelled out in the wilderness. They were considered symbols of promiscuity and drunkenness, and depictions of satyrs usually showed them with a wine cup and some sort of phallic symbol (such as a staff or club). The onocentaur was closely associated with the siren (see page 46), and the two were often said to dwell near one another.



## OTHER NAMES

Satyrs also known by the following names: faun, onocentaur, pan, silenus (plural sileni), and sylvan.

## SATYR

*Medium monstrosity, chaotic neutral*

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 35 ft.

**STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA**

13 (+1) 15 (+2) 13 (+1) 10 (+0) 8 (-1) 14 (+2)

**Skills** Perception +1, Performance +4, Stealth +4

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

## ACTIONS

**Hooves.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one prone creature. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

A satyr also carries one of the following:

**Club.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

**Shortbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

**Spear.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. and range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage, or 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

## SIREN

The appearance of a siren varies greatly, with some scholars saying it has the head and torso of a human woman from the waist up, and the body of a bird below. Others say it has a fish's tail instead of a bird's body. A third description describes the siren as having the face and figure of a woman, a bird's wings, and a fish's tail.

**Enchanters of Men.** Sirens live on islands found far out to sea. They live mainly off fish and fruit, but if they spot a passing ship, they will sing sweetly in the hopes of attracting sailors to their island. Those sailors who leave their ship and swim to the siren's island are doomed however, as the siren's song will lull their senses and put them into a deep sleep, allowing the siren to kill and devour the unlucky sailor. They strike with their talons, which are very sharp and can easily shred unprotected flesh. If assaulted by those immune to their charms, the siren will flee, taking to either the air or the sea (depending on form).

**Historical Notes.** The medieval siren is loosely descended from the Greek siren. As noted, there was no readily agreed form for the siren, although most descriptions made it part bird,

or at least, partially feathered. The moral lesson to be found in the siren's habits was that a man should not allow himself to be taken in by the evil of worldly entertainments such as the theater and music.

## SIREN, BIRD BODIED

*Medium monstrosity, chaotic evil*

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 31 (7d8)

Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

**Skills** Performance +5

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

## ACTIONS

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (2d4) slashing damage.

**Siren's Song.** The siren sings an enchanting melody. Every humanoid and giant within 300 feet of the siren that can hear the song must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or be *charmed* until the song ends. The siren must take a bonus action on its subsequent turns to continue singing. It can stop singing at any time. The song ends if the siren is incapacitated.

While charmed by the siren, a target is incapacitated and ignores the songs of other sirens. If the charmed target is more than 5 feet away from the siren, the target must move on its turn towards the siren by the most direct route. It doesn't avoid opportunity attacks, but before moving into damaging terrain—such as lava or





a pit—and whenever it takes damage from a source other than the siren, a target can repeat the saving throw. A creature can also repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns. If a creature's saving throw is successful, the effect ends on it.

A target that successfully saves is immune to this siren's song for the next 24 hours.

## SIREN, FISH BODIED

*Medium monstrosity, chaotic evil*

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 38 (7d8 + 7)

Speed 10 ft., swim 40 ft.

**STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA**

10 (+0) 13 (+1) 12 (+1) 14 (+2) 14 (+2) 16 (+3)

**Skills** Performance +5

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Amphibious.** The fish-bodied siren can breathe air and water.

## ACTIONS

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (2d4) slashing damage.

**Siren's Song.** The siren sings an enchanting melody. Every humanoid and giant within 300 feet of the siren that can hear the song must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or be *charmed* until the song ends. The siren must take a bonus action on its subsequent turns to continue singing. It can stop singing at any time. The song ends if the siren is incapacitated.

While charmed by the siren, a target is incapacitated and ignores the songs of other sirens. If the charmed target is more than 5 feet away from the siren, the target must move on its turn towards the siren by the most direct route. It doesn't avoid opportunity attacks, but before moving into damaging terrain—such as lava or a pit—and whenever it takes damage from a source other than the siren, a target can repeat the saving throw. A creature can also repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns. If a creature's saving throw is successful, the effect ends on it.

A target that successfully saves is immune to this siren's song for the next 24 hours.



## TATZELWURM

The tatzelwurm (“clawed worm”) is a lizard-like-creature about three to six feet long. It has a thick, cylindrical body, a short, stubby tail and four short legs.

**Mountain Dweller.** Tatzelwurms are found in the Austrian and Swiss Alps. They seem to dwell in caves and areas of thick brush, feeding on small mammals, lizards, and amphibians. However, some reports have tatzelwurms attacking larger animals, such as pigs.

If surprised or encountered unexpectedly, the tatzelwurm will normally flee from humans. Occasionally, however, it will stalk a person, attacking them once the tatzelwurm thinks it can make a kill. As it has a wide mouth filled with many sharp teeth, the tatzelwurm can be dangerous to a lone traveler. If wounded, the lizard will usually flee as quickly as possible.

**Historical Notes.** The tatzelwurm may be a real animal. Reported for many years as inhabiting the Swiss Alps, this unusual lizard-like creature may be an unknown species of European giant salamander, Gila Monster, otter, siren, or skink.



### OTHER NAMES

The tatzelwurm is also known as the arassas, berg stutzen (mountain stump), daazelwurm, praatzelwurm, springwurm (jumping worm), or stollenwurm (tunnel worm).

## TATZELWURM

*Small monstrosity, unaligned*

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 7 (2d6)

Speed 20 ft.

**STR**   **DEX**   **CON**   **INT**   **WIS**   **CHA**

8 (-1)   16 (+3)   10 (+0)   3 (-4)   10 (+0)   4 (-3)

**Skills** Perception +2, Stealth +5

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 (1d4 - 2) piercing damage.

## UNICORN

The unicorn is a horse-like animal with cloven hooves and a goat's beard. It is described as having a white coat, a purple head, and blue eyes. A long spiraling horn projects from the unicorn's head. This horn is three to four feet in length, with a white base, red tip and black middle.

**Enemy of Elephants and Lions.** A native of Asia, Africa, and India, the unicorn is normally a solitary herbivore, who gathers into large herds only during mating season. It has a fierce temper, and is said to be the mortal enemy of both the elephant and the lion. The unicorn is a swift creature and can out-gallop a horse, while its horn can kill an elephant in a single blow.

**Proof Against Poison.** A unicorn attacks by charging its target, seeking to impale its quarry on its long horn. Hunters have been known to take advantage of this trait by standing in front of a tree and ducking out of the way at the last minute, causing the unicorn to embed its horn into the tree and thus be unable to free itself.

As the unicorn cannot be taken alive, hunters will capitalize on the unicorn's weakness for virgins by tying a naked and exceptionally beautiful virgin female to a tree in the forest.

When the unicorn comes and lays down before her, the hunters will then spring out and quickly slay the creature. As the unicorn is normally a stealthy creature with keen senses, this is about the only way to acquire a unicorn's horn.

**Alicorn.** The unicorn's horn (known as an alicorn) possesses several wonderful powers, and has numerous medical uses. These include acting as an aphrodisiac, as well as neutralizing any poison it comes in contact with. Alicorn can also be used to purify water before drinking, and animals will often gather around a pool waiting for a unicorn to come by and cleanse the water by dipping its horn within. Since the alicorn keeps these abilities even if severed from the unicorn itself, the horn is greatly prized by men.

It is said there no sound is more horrible than a unicorn braying.

**Historical Notes.** The unicorn of the middle ages is a far cry from the noble, majestic, and highly magical unicorn of modern fantasy. It is a dangerous beast, untamable and unapproachable, living in the unexplored wilds where it kills anything that troubles it with a single thrust of its horn. The horn itself was a very valuable object, and entire armies were



financed with a single alicorn put up as collateral. The money bid for one alicorn was put at 30,000 guilders, although the alicorn's owner refused to sell. Unicorn horn was a common feature of medieval pharmacies and was listed as late as 1741 in England. Naturally, since there was no unicorn's horn to be had, the horn of the rhinoceros and the narwhal was used instead. Game masters should consider using the same tactics.

The existence of the unicorn is thought to come from misinterpretations of Indian bas-reliefs, which depicted deer in profile, and gave them the appearance of having only one horn. It is this same visual mistake which is thought to have led to the belief in the Indian three-legged ass.

## UNICORN

*Large monstrosity, chaotic neutral*

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 51 (6d10 + 18)

**Speed** 60 ft.

**STR** 18 (+4) **DEX** 14 (+2) **CON** 16(+3) **INT** 8 (-1) **WIS** 10 (+0) **CHA** 14 (+2)

**Skills** Perception +2

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** —

**Challenge** CR 2 (450 XP)

**Charge.** If the unicorn moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a horn attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 9 (2d8) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

### ALICORN WAND

A unicorn's horn can be removed from a captive or slain animal. The horn will retain its ability to neutralize poison and will allow a character to cast *purify food and drink* up to three times per day. The alicorn regains 1d3 expanded charges daily at dawn.

### OTHER NAMES

The unicorn is also known as a cartazonus, Indian ass, karkadan, or monoceros.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The unicorn can innately cast *purify food and drink* requiring no material components. Its innate spellcasting ability is Charisma.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The unicorn makes two attacks: one with its hooves and one with its horn.

**Hooves.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

**Horn.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

**Braying Voice.** Each creature within 60 feet of the unicorn that can hear it must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to the unicorn's Braying Voice for the next 24 hours.

## WINGED SERPENT

A winged serpent is a snake usually measuring between three and fifteen feet in length, and equipped with a broad set of wings. The snakes themselves vary in coloration, while their wings resemble either those of a bird or of a bat.

**Aerial Predators.** Winged serpents are found all over Europe, Africa, and Asia, although most live in Arabia. It is said the winged serpents of Arabia will occasionally mass in great numbers and then fly west into Egypt, where they are attacked and eaten by huge flocks of ibis. Other winged snakes are reported to live in Libya, where they roost in trees and fly out to strike down and kill their prey.

All winged serpents attack their prey from the air. The amphiptere tries to bite its prey, willing to let its venom do its work for it. The jaculus, on the other hand, dives at its prey like an arrow, punching through the neck region to kill its target and then flying back to feed on the remains.

**Historical Notes.** Winged snakes are one of the more widely believed creatures of the Middle Ages. The amphiptere appeared in Edward Topsell's *The History of Serpents*, where it is depicted as a large snake, about the size of a python, equipped with broad bat-like wings. Game masters should feel free to alter the size of these creatures, and can even make them as large as a dragon (see page 18), since many dragons were drawn simply as large winged snakes.

### OTHER NAMES

Winged serpents are known by the names amphiptere, iaculus, and jaculus.



## AMPHIPTERE

Medium monstrosity, unaligned

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 11 (2d8 + 2)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft., swim 30 ft.

**STR** **DEX** **CON** **INT** **WIS** **CHA**

10 (+0) 14 (+2) 13 (+1) 2 (-4) 12 (+1) 5 (-3)

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

**Flyby.** The amphiptere doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

**Keen Hearing.** The amphiptere has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

## JACULUS

Tiny monstrosity, unaligned

**Armor Class** 14

**Hit Points** 17 (2d4 + 2)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 80 ft., swim 30 ft.

**STR** **DEX** **CON** **INT** **WIS** **CHA**

3 (-4) 18 (+4) 12 (+1) 2 (-4) 12 (+1) 5 (-3)

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Flyby.** The jaculus doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

**Keen Hearing.** The jaculus has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

### ACTIONS

**Impale.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* (4) 1d8 piercing damage.



## WYVERN

The wyvern is a small dragon, about 30 feet in length, with two broad, bat-like wings, two clawed legs, and a long tail ending in a poisonous barb. Coloration is usually dark green, gray, or black.

**Cousins of Dragons.** Wyverns dwell in desolate wilderness, favoring thick forests and extensive swamps. Most are found in England and Western Europe. They will prey on any large animal, and will eat deer, horses and livestock without hesitation. Wyverns will also eat humans, and have been known to ravage villages and farms.

A wyvern attacks by biting, and will often try to hold large prey in its jaws while it lashes out with its poisonous barb. Any creature stung by the barb will quickly die, at which point the wyvern will fly off with its catch to be devoured.

**Historical Notes.** A common heraldic device, the wyvern is also considered a symbol of pestilence and war.

## WYVERN

Huge dragon, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 136 (13d12 + 52)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 80 ft.

**STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA**

20 (+5) 13 (+2) 18 (+4) 8 (-2) 10 (+0) 8 (-2)

**Skills** Perception +3

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The wyvern makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its stinger. While flying, it can use its claws in place of one other attack.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) piercing damage.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d10 + 5) slashing damage.

**Tail.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) piercing damage. The target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.



## YALE

The yale is the size of a large horse, black in color, with the jaws of a boar and extremely long horns.

**Temple Guardian.** Found in southern India, the yale is normally a relatively peaceful herbivore. However, it can have a fierce and aggressive temperament if aroused and thus can be quite dangerous to approach. This may be why the yale is used to guard certain Indian temples from the intrusion of evil spirits.

As noted, the yale isn't overly aggressive, but can be a tenacious fighter if attacked. It uses its long horns to defend itself, keeping one along its back while fending off foes with the other. If its horn is damaged or blunted, it will quickly swivel the damaged one out of the way and bring the fresh horn into play.

**Historical Notes.** The yale was first mentioned by Pliny in his *Naturalis Historia*. The animal became a regular feature of medieval bestiaries and was eventually incorporated into European heraldry. The yale is found in the arms of the English Beauforts and the Queen of England.

## YALE

*Large monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 51 (6d10 + 18)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

**Skills** Perception +3

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** —

**Challenge** CR 1 (200 XP)

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The yale makes two attacks: one with its tusks and one with its horns.

**Tusks.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

**Horns.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.





## VARIANT: EALE

Ethiopia is the home of the eale, which is virtually identical to the yale. However, the eale is the size of a hippopotamus and has an elephant's tail, in addition to a boar's jaws. Like the yale, it has immense horns it can swivel (or curl) out of the way in combat.

## EALE

*Large monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 76 (8d10 + 32)

**Speed** 35 ft.

**STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA**

20 (+5) 10 (+0) 18 (+4) 2 (-4) 12 (+1) 7 (-2)

**Skills** Perception +3

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** —

**Challenge** CR 3 (700 XP)

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The eale makes two attacks: one with its tusks and one with its horns.

**Tusks.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage.

**Horns.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) piercing damage.



# ASSORTED ANIMAL FOLKLORE

The following is a list of different animals and the common traits attributed to them by medieval scholars. Many of the animals listed are real-world creatures with decidedly unreal-world habits. Others are completely fictional, or are badly garbled accounts of actual animals seen in distant lands. Game masters should decide what characteristics—if any—from this list they will apply to the animals of their own game world. Even if you decide that none of these attributes are real, there's no reason why they can't be part of the folklore of your game world, just as they were commonly held beliefs among certain medieval philosophers.

## Amphisbaena

This snake has two heads, one at the end of its neck and one at the end of its tail. Both heads are envenomed and the amphisbaena can slither forwards and backwards with equal skill. A native of Libya, its name is Greek for “one that goes both ways.”

The modern-day amphisbaena is a species of worm whose head and tail are virtually identical.



### VARIANT: AMPHISBAENA

To create an amphisbaena, add the following power to the Poisonous Snake statistics found on page 334 of the official bestiary:

**Multiattack.** The amphisbaena makes as many bite attacks as it has heads.

## Antelope

This animal is so swift, no one can overtake and catch it. The antelope also has large saw-edged horns it uses to cut down trees. However, these same horns are the bane of the antelope, for it will often entangle them in the branches of the *herecine* tree while grazing or drinking. Unable to break free, the antelope becomes easy prey for the hunter.

### VARIANT: ANTELOPE

To create an antelope, make the following changes to the Deer stat block on page 321 of the official bestiary:

Increase **Speed** to 70 ft.

**Multiattack.** The antelope has one bite attack and one horn attack.

**Horns.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) slashing damage.

## Ape

The ape is symbolic of the devil, and there is nothing good to be said about it. Its nature is such that a female ape, if she gives birth to twins, will carry one in its arms, but force the other to ride on its back. If pursued by hunters, the ape will flee, but soon tire of carrying its child in its arms. Dropping the favored child, the mother will escape, still carrying the other child on its back.

As apes enjoy imitating man's actions, catching one is quite simple. A man simply has to mime washing his face with lime, the ape will do the same, become blinded and easily caught. Another way, is to take one's boots on and off, and then leave a tethered boot near where the ape can reach it. Once the ape puts the boot on, it's trapped.

## ASP

This serpent can be lulled into passiveness and lured into danger by the sound of music. Thus, the asp, if it hears music, will press the side of its head against the ground, and use its long tail to stop up its other ear.

## ASS

The ass is a sluggish animal and lacks intelligence. But it is also a patient animal, and a useful beast of burden.

### VARIANT: ASS

To create an ass, make the following changes to the Riding Horse on page 335 of the official bestiary:

Reduce **Speed** to 30 ft.

Reduce **DEX** to 8 and **armor class** to 9.

## Barnacle Geese

Also known as *ephemerus*, these birds are born from driftwood soaked in saltwater. Immature barnacle geese can be identified by their hard white beaks, which often speckle chunks of driftwood.

The idea of barnacle geese seems to come from both the goose-necked barnacle and attempts by medieval scholars to account for migratory birds, who were never seen to bear young.

## Barometz

Also known as the Vegetable Lamb of Tartary, this curious creature grows from a plant in India. It has the appearance of a sheep or lamb at the end of a stalk, and will eat all the surrounding vegetation until all is gone and the plant/animal will starve to death. At this point, it can be harvested for its wool.

The barometz is simply a garbled account of the cotton plant.

## BEAR

The female bear gives birth not to cubs, but to formless lumps of flesh. It is only after three months of licking and shaping the lumps with her tongue does the female bear have proper cubs. The bear does not eat during this process, and in fact spends the entire three months underground.

An injured bear will heal itself by using certain medicinal herbs, although the bear will avoid the mandrake due to its poison. Honey is a bear's favorite food.

### VARIANT: BEAR

To create a bear, add the following power to either the Black Bear, Brown Bear, or Polar Bear stat blocks found on pages 318, 319, or 334 of the official bestiary:

**Innate Spellcasting (1/Day).** The bear can innately cast *cure wounds*, requiring no material components aside from certain medicinal herbs. Its innate spellcasting ability is Wisdom.

## BEAVER

The beaver is hunted by men for its testicles, which are used for their medicinal properties. If pursued by man, the beaver will castrate itself with a sharp bite, and then stand on its hind legs to show that it no longer has anything of value.

## Bird of Paradise

A bird found in the East Indies, this brilliantly colored animal lives its entire life in the air and never touches earth. This is why the bird lacks feet.

The Bird of Paradise's unusual appearance is due to natives removing the feet from skins prepared for trade.

## Bishop/Monk Fish

These fish have the appearance of men of the cloth. The bishop fish wears a miter, while the monk fish wears a habit.

It was commonly thought every land animal had an aquatic counterpart. Hence the idea of sea dogs (*i.e.* sharks), sea cows (*i.e.* dugongs and manatees), sea horses, and so on.

## BOA

The boa is a large snake that preys on cattle. It will seek out a cow and attach itself to the udders, drinking down milk until the cow collapses and dies.

## BULL/OXEN

The bull is a strong and fierce creature. The Indian bull has great speed, a tough hide, and skillfully wielded horns. Capturing it is a dangerous task as it will fly into a destructive rage once confined. The ox, on the other hand, is patient and a hard worker. It will seek out its partner at the plow, and will bellow if the two are separated. During storms, oxen will remain in their stalls, but will come out to work as soon as it is clear.

## CAMEL/DROMEDARY

The camel is symbolic of a number of things, including: humility, for it kneels in order to carry a great weight; lust, because it has a great desire for sex; prudence, since it carefully stores its water for when it is needed the most; and temperance, as it can survive without water for a great length of time.

Camels are known to despise the presence of horses, and will fight with them if allowed. They also dislike clean water, and will muddy any pool they are led to until it is more to their liking. Camels come from Arabia and Persia, and have two humps. The strongest camels come from Bactria (modern Afghanistan). Dromedaries are a fleet form of camel and can cross over one hundred miles in a day.

## CINOMOLGUS

Also known as the "Cinnamon Bird," this Arabian bird makes its nest at the tops of tall trees using materials taken from the cinnamon bush. As these nests are quite valuable due to the cinnamon used in their construction, sling-stones and throwing-sticks are employed to bring the nests down out of the trees in order to sell them at the market.



## CRANE

Cranes are the exemplar of military order and precision. When traveling to new lands, each crane swallows some gravel to use as ballast. The leader of the flock will take the foremost position, and the rest of the birds will fall into line behind him. This leader will then give a constant set of thorough instructions, with an assistant waiting to take over if the leader's voice should fail. Any cranes that lag behind will be exhorted to do more, while exhausted cranes will be supported by other members of the flock until they can fly again. Upon landing for the night, the cranes will post sentries, who will keep watch for a set period before allowing another to take over. Each sentry carries a rock in one claw, if the sentry should fall asleep, the rock will fall, awakening the sentry with its noise.

## DIPSA

This tiny snake has venom so potent that anyone bitten by it will die instantly, their smile still on their face.

### VARIANT: DIPSA

To create a dipsa, make the following change to the Poisonous Snake statistics found on page 334 of the official bestiary:

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw, taking 20 (8d4) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## DOG

The dog is a faithful companion of man, both loyal and clever. Many stories have been told about the dependability of dogs and their devotion to their masters. There were the 200 dogs of King Garamantes, who rescued him from slavery; Jason's dog, which starved itself to death after its master was killed; the dog of King Lisimachus, that hurled itself on the King's funeral pyre; and a dog in Antioch that pulled the man who murdered its master out of a crowd.

## DOVE

A well-known symbol of Christ, the dove is a gentle and mild-mannered bird. Doves gather in great multicolored flocks, led by a red plumed bird, and will be first into any new territory.

The dragon is the mortal enemy of the dove, which is why in India the dove will nest in the branches of the *Peridexion* tree. The dragon cannot abide the *Peridexion* tree, and will avoid even its shadow.

## EAGLE

When old, an eagle's eyesight will begin to fail. To counter this, the bird will fly up near the sun, where the heat will burn clean the eagle's feathers and eyes. It will then dive three times into a spring of water, and emerge rejuvenated. The eyesight of the eagle is such that new born eagles are made to look directly into the sun. Those that do without blinking are kept, those that turn away are cast aside.

## ECHENEIS

This tiny fish can hold a ship under full sail fast in the water simply by attaching itself to the hull. In Latin, this fish is called a *remora*, meaning "to delay" or "hindrance."

### VARIANT: ECHENEIS

To create an echeneis, make the following changes to the Quipper stat block found on page 335 of the official bestiary:

Remove **Blood Frenzy** then add the following action:

**Hold in Place.** If the echeneis can make a successful to hit roll against a waterborne ship, it can then reduce the ship's speed to 0 mph. It can maintain or dispel this effect as a bonus action.

## ELEPHANT

The elephant is used as a beast of war by the Persians and Indians, who place great towers on its back. It has no joints in its legs, and must sleep by leaning against a tree. In India, hunters will cut partially through a tree, so that when the elephant leans against it to sleep, the tree will fall, bringing the elephant down with it.

Female elephants give birth only once in their lives. A female elephant brings its mate far to the east, where they both partake of the mandrake plant, a powerful aphrodisiac. Once done mating, the female conceives immediately, and carries the baby elephant for two years before giving birth. When giving birth, the female will wade out into a lake, while the male stands guard on the water's edge, watching for the dragon, the mortal enemy of the elephant.

The idea that the elephant has no joints in its legs and must sleep leaning against a tree is seen in descriptions of other, even more fantastical animals. In North America, lumberjacks spoke of a creature they called the "hodag" which had great claws on its feet and spikes running down its back. It didn't have joints in its legs either, and was captured by partially sawing through a tree that the hodag was likely to lean on while sleeping.

## ETHIOPIAN GIANT ANTS

The ants of Ethiopia are the size of a dog and dig gold from the sand. They horde this gold, and will fight fiercely to defend it.

### VARIANT: ETHIOPIAN GIANT ANTS

To create an Ethiopian giant ant, make the following change to the Giant Fire Beetle stat block found on page 325 of the official bestiary:

Remove **Illumination**.

## ERCINEE

A bird found in the Hercynian Forest, it glows so brightly a traveler can use it as a lantern.

### VARIANT: ERCINEE

To create an ercinee, make the following change to the Hawk statistics found on page 330 of the official bestiary:

**Illumination.** The ercinee sheds bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet.

## FOX

The fox is a devious animal, and its name: “*vulpis*,” comes from the word “*volupes*,” meaning “twisty-footed,” which refers to its habit of not running in a straight line. An example of the fox’s deceitful nature is the manner in which it hunts birds. A fox will roll in reddish clay so it looks bloodstained, and will then lay on the ground with its paws in the air, feigning death. After some time, a few birds will approach, land next to the fox, and start to peck. The fox will then leap up and catch them.

## GOAT

Goats come in two varieties, the wild goat (known as a *caper* or *capera*), and the domestic goat (known as a *hyrcus*). The wild goat is a symbol of Christ, while the domestic goat is a symbol of lechery.

Wild goats dwell on the tops of mountains but come down into valleys to feed. Their eyesight is such that they can tell if an approaching man is an armed hunter, or a harmless traveler while the man is still very far away. If injured, the wild goat seeks out the *dittany* plant to heal itself.

The domestic goat is known to be full of lust and will try to mate with any willing female. Such is its nature that its hot blood can dissolve diamonds.

### VARIANT: GOAT

To create a wild goat, make the following change to the Goat statistics found on page 330 of the official bestiary:

**Alignment.** Neutral good

**Keen Sight.** The wild goat has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**Innate Spellcasting (1/Day).** The wild goat can innately cast *cure wounds*, requiring no material components aside from the *dittany* plant. Its innate spellcasting ability is Wisdom.

To create a domestic goat, make the following change to the Goat stat block found on page 330 of the official bestiary:

**Alignment.** Neutral evil

**Corrosive Blood.** A creature that hits the domestic goat with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 4 (1d8) acid damage. Any nonmagical weapon made of metal or wood that hits the domestic goat corrodes. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal or wood that hits the domestic goat is destroyed after dealing damage.

## HAWK

The hawk is a fierce bird, and will attack other birds much larger than itself. This ferocity is brought about at an early age, when the father of a young hawk will beat his child, and throw the young bird from its nest. This treatment is meant to make the bird self-reliant, and keep it from a slothful and self-indulgent life-style.

## HEDGEHOG

When hungry, the hedgehog will climb into a vine or tree, shake the branches, and then roll in the fallen fruit so that they will stick to its quills. The hedgehog will then return to its burrow, to feed itself and its young.

## HOOPOE

There are two types of hoopoe bird, the *Epopus* and the *Upupa*. The *Epopus* are known to succor their aged parents and elders of the flock, giving them food and shelter. The *Upupa*, on the other hand, is a horrid bird which both eats and nests in dung. It lives near graves, and the blood of the *Upupa* will bring nightmares to those who get its blood splashed on their skin.

## HORSE

The Latin name for the horse is *equus*, which comes from the fact that a team of horses must be equal when hitched to a plow or a chariot. Horses are loyal to their masters, much like the dog, and will fight fiercely in battle if their master does so. The sounds of trumpets will excite the horse, as will the scent of the battlefield. A horse will revel in victory, just as it will show great sadness if defeated.

When selecting a horse, one must look at its physique, beauty, character and color. One should never clip a stallion's mane however, as that will ruin its prowess as a sire.



## HYDRUS

This snake lives along the Nile river and preys on crocodiles. It waits for a crocodile to fall asleep with its jaws open, at which point the hydrus will coat itself in mud and slide into the open mouth and down the throat. Once inside, the hydrus will rend the creature's stomach asunder, killing the crocodile.

## HYENA

The hyena is known to be a foul and evil animal capable of imitating a human voice, luring the unwary out into the night to be eaten. The hyena also digs up and eats corpses, and usually can be found in graveyards. In addition, the hyena is said to have several powers of a most unusual nature: it is able to change genders, switching from male to female and back again; it can cause an animal to become

### VARIANT: HYENA

To create a hyena, make the following change to the Hyena stat block found on page 331 of the official bestiary:

**Alignment.** Neutral evil

**Innate Spellcasting (1/Day).** The hyena can innately cast *hold monster*, requiring no material components, but it must have sufficient speed to circle its target three times in one round. Its innate spellcasting ability is Wisdom.

**Mimicry.** The hyena can mimic animal sounds and humanoid voices. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check.

**Hyena Eyes.** If a character removes the hyena's eyes after it has been killed, they will find them to be like small stones. Placing the eyes in the mouth allows the character to cast *augury* once per day. The eyes regain this ability daily at dawn.



immobile by walking around it three times; and its eyes are like stones, and if held in the mouth grant a person visions of the future.

## IBEX

It is said the ibex has horns so strong that it could leap from the top of a mountain and catch itself safely on the points of its horns.

## LAMB

The lamb is a symbol for Christ, and thus is known as *Agnus Dei*, the Lamb of God. The relationship between a lamb and its mother is such each can recognize the bleating of the other, even in the middle of the flock.

## LYNX

The urine of the lynx is known to solidify into a precious gemstone, which is why the lynx will bury it under the sand and out of the sight of man. The eyesight of the lynx is exceptionally keen, and some say it can see through walls.

## MEN

There are many unusual types of men to be found all around the world. Some of the more interesting tribes include:

**Androgyni:** The Androgyni combine features of both sexes, with the left half of the body male, and the right half female. They can either father or bear children according to their wishes.

**Arimaspians:** This is a one-eyed race of men that dwells in Scythia. The Arimaspians war constantly on the griffins of that country, and attempt to steal the griffin's gold whenever possible.

**Astomi:** Covered in fur, the Astomi wear clothing made from cotton and wool. They have no mouths, but live off of air and the smell of sweet fruits and flowers. It is said that foul odors are fatal to the Astomi.

**Blemyae:** These men have no heads, but their faces are upon their upper breast. They are also called Blemmyes.

**Cynocephalus:** These dog-headed men dwell in India. They number in excess of 120,000 individuals and speak though barks and growls.

The description of the Cynocephali is probably derived from accounts of the baboon. This idea is reinforced by some accounts that describe them not as dog-headed men, but dog-headed apes.

**Pandae:** This long-lived race native to India has a life-span of 200 years. Their hair is white at birth and turns black with age.

**Psylli:** Native to Africa, this race of men is immune to snake venom.

**Sciopodes:** This race has but a single leg, with ends in an enormous foot. They travel by hopping, and when exhausted in the heat of the day, lay on their backs and use their foot to shade themselves from the sun. They are also called Sciapods, Skiapodes, and the Monoscelans.

**Struthopodes:** The males of this race have feet eighteen inches long, while the females have feet much like those of a bird. Their name "Struthopodes" means "Sparrow-feet."

**Wodewose:** These savages live in the deserts of India and wear a lion's skin as clothing. They are covered in thick hair, and usually live in trees to avoid the snakes and dragons of India. They are the enemy of the centaurs.

### VARIANT: MEN

You can customize your NPCs with the following racial traits:

#### Arimasprians

**Poor Depth Perception.** The Arimasprians have disadvantage on any attack roll against a target more than 30 feet away.

#### Astomi

**Harmed by Foul Smells.** An Astomi takes 20 acid damage if it ends its turn in an area of foul odor.

#### Cynocephalus

**Keen Hearing and Smell.** The Cynocephali have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + STR Bonus) piercing damage.

#### Psylli

**Damage Immunity** poison and **Condition Immunity** poisoned.



To create a mermaid, make the following change to the Merfolk stat block found on page 218 of the official bestiary:

**Innate Spellcasting (1/Day).** The mermaid can innately cast *control weather*, requiring no material components. Its innate spellcasting ability is Charisma.

## MERMAID

A being comprised of the upper torso of a beautiful woman and the lower body of a fish. Similar in many respects to the siren (see page 46), but not as dangerous to sailors. Mermaids can often be seen at the surface of the ocean, combing out their long hair. Males are called mermen or tritons, and are thought to cause great storms if angered.

## ONAGER

The onager is the wild ass of Africa. They live in great herds, and the male of the herd will try and castrate any newborn males in order to retain his supremacy.

## OSTRICH

The ostrich is an African bird with short legs much like those of the camel. It lays its eggs in the mildness of summer, and abandons them amid the dust and sand. Some say that the ostrich likes to eat iron, and can be fed old nails and horseshoes.

## PEACOCK

The peacock is a beautiful bird, whose plumage is second to none. Its cry is a raucous screech, however, brought about by the bird's shame at its ugly and ungainly feet. It is also inedible, as the flesh of a peacock is far too tough to eat.

## PARTRIDGE

The male partridge is such a promiscuous bird that it will even mate with other males. The female partridge will hide her nest with branches, and is ready to draw off attackers by acting injured. The female partridge will also steal the eggs of other birds and raise them as her own. Once hatched, these stolen chicks will flee the nest, returning to their proper parents.

## PELICAN

The female pelican is so devoted to its children, that if needed, she will rend her own breast and feed her chicks on her lifeblood. In heraldry, this image is known as a "pelican in its piety."

## RAM

The name *aries* or ram, comes either from Ares, the god of war, or from *ara*, the sacrificial alter. The ram itself is a strong and belligerent creature and rams are known to constantly butt heads. This latter behavior is caused by the irritation of maggots in their scalps.

## RAVEN

The raven will not feed its young until the chicks produce black feathers—thus allowing the raven to make sure that these are its children. Thus, the newly-hatched birds must live off dew.

## SCITALIS

This small snake is slow-moving and normally could be easily avoided. Its scales, however, are so beautifully patterned that anyone who sees it will be transfixed, at which point the scitalis will be able to administer its lethal bite.

### VARIANT: SCITALIS

To create a scitalis, make the following change to the Poisonous Snake statistics found on page 334 of the official bestiary:

**Beautifully Patterned Scales.** Any creature that can view the scitalis runs the risk of being transfixed by the animal's scales. Each creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of the scitalis and can see the scitalis' scales must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or be stunned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the condition on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the scitalis' *Beautifully Patterned Scales* for the next 24 hours.

## SEPS

The seps is a small snake whose venom is so potent it'll destroy both the bones and the flesh of its victim.

### VARIANT: SEPS

To create a seps, make the following change to the Poisonous Snake stat block found on page 334 of the official bestiary:

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw, taking 30 (12d4) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## SERRA

Also known as the “sawfish,” this fish is thought to be a creature with huge wings that will race ships by flying through the air. Other reports give it the face of the lion and the habit of spreading its huge wings upwind of a ship, cutting off much needed wind.

Although the serra is an entirely mythical creature, it seems to be derived from accounts of the flying fish, garbled by distance and translation.

## SHEEP

The sheep is a gentle creature, and quite unable to defend itself from the predations of the wolf. It is a quite eager eater of grass, and will do so at the onset of winter to ensure it has sufficient food to last throughout the cold months.

## STAG

Stags are known to catch and eat snakes by inhaling them out of their burrows. As snakes are very poisonous, the stag would then purge itself of the venom at a nearby stream. The stag is also known to be a lover of music, but the cry of hunting hounds will send it fleeing. When crossing a lake or river, each animal will rest its head on the animal in front of it, and in that way even the weakest of the herd will be kept from drowning.

## SU

A large ferocious animal native to Patagonia, it is hunted for its hides and fur. When pursued, it will place its young on its back, cover them with its feathery tail and flee. It is captured by digging a pit, trapping the creature and finishing it off with spears and arrows.

For those players who recall the “Su Monster” from the original advanced rules bestiary, you now know where it came from.

## SWALLOW

A swallow’s skill in selecting and building its nest proves it to be an example for man to follow. The swallow builds its nest under the eaves of a house, which is well-protected from predators; it also makes nests that are safe and secure, and will not allow a chick to fall through. Finally, a swallow is wise enough to know when its nest has become old, and will abandon it before it becomes dangerous.

## SWAN

If near death, a swan will sing out in a sweet voice. This “swan song” is the most beautiful of melodies. To sight a swan is an omen of good luck.

## TIGER

The tiger is described as a very swift beast, and its name comes from “tigris,” the Greek and Persian word for arrow. Due to the tiger’s speed, hunters who desire to capture a tiger cub carry along a large glass ball or two. After capturing the cub, and while attempting to escape from the pursuing tigress, the hunter will hurl one of the glass balls to the ground. The tigress, mistaking her reflection in the ball for her cub, would stop to fondle the ball, thus allowing the man to escape. A second ball is carried along in case the first doesn’t do the trick.

## WOLF

The wolf is a cruel creature with a great hunger for both food and sex. It is said to live off of “prey, sometimes earth, occasionally the wind.” Female wolves are known to prey on sheep, and will pick a sheepfold some distance from her lair, as a way of protecting her pups. When hunting, the female wolf is known to be very single-minded, and if she steps on a twig and makes a noise in the night, she will bite the errant paw as punishment.

A man trapped by a wolf’s glowing eyes has only one means of defense. He must strip off his clothing and strike two stones together. The wolf cannot stand the sound and will be driven off. If a man fails to do so, he will be stricken dumb and become easy prey for the wolf.

### VARIANT: WOLF

To create a medieval wolf, make the following change to the wolf stat block found on page 341 of the official bestiary:

**Alignment.** Chaotic evil

**Hypnotic Gaze.** The wolf’s eyes glow as it targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see the wolf, the target must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw against this magic or be charmed until the end of the wolf’s next turn. The charmed target is stunned. If the target’s saving throw is successful, the target is immune to the wolf’s gaze for the next 24 hours.

## VIPER

The viper is a serpentine animal with two short legs and a lizard-like head. The male viper is a creature known for its extreme lust, and it will often satisfy itself by calling up a female sea-eel from the ocean. The viper will then vomit up its venom, mate with the eel, and then, satisfied, re-swallow its venom and then return to its mate. The female viper, when mating with the male, will take the male’s head in its mouth and bite it off. In turn the female will die when its young, eager to be abroad in the world, will burrow their way out from the female viper’s womb.

## VULTURE

The vulture is a slow but long-lived bird. They follow armies, and the more that gather around a camp, the more men will die in battle.



# UNIQUE CREATURES

## GARGOUILLE

The Gargouille is a tremendous water dragon, with a long swan-like neck, slender jaws, gleaming eyes, and fish-like fins instead of legs. It is pale blue in color and covered in fine scales.

**Monster of the River Seine.** A singular creature, the Gargouille inhabits the River Seine, where it floods farms, overturns boats, and readily devours anyone and anything it can catch. Unlike most other dragons, the Gargouille is primarily driven by hunger and has a ravenous and seemingly insatiable appetite. When not bringing devastation to the local area, the Gargouille dwells in a cave on the banks of the river.

**Flooder of Farms.** Although equipped with strong jaws and sharp teeth, the Gargouille's favored form of attack is to spew a great jet of water out of its throat. The Gargouille uses this water jet to knock down and scatter foes, flood farms and villages, and sink boats. Once it has sufficiently battered its foes with the water jet, the Gargouille will then snap up anything it can find in its great jaws. If hard pressed or wounded, it will retreat to the depths of the Seine.

**Historical Notes.** The Gargouille was reputed to have lived in the Sixth Century A.D. near Rouen, the capital of Normandy. It terrorized and flooded the land, and was finally defeated by Saint Romain, archbishop of Rouen. Accompanied by a condemned murderer, Saint Romain confronted the Gargouille, made the sign of the cross before the dragon, taming the creature and leading it back to town where it was promptly killed. This story is very similar to the tale of the Tarasque, another water dragon that inhabited the River Rhone. See the Tarasque on page 79 for more information.

The Gargouille's habits have been immortalized by stone carvers all over Europe. The gargoye water spout, a common feature of cathedrals in the Middle Ages, derives its name and function from the dragon.



## GARGOUILLE

*Huge dragon, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 19 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 230 (20d12+100)

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 80 ft.

**STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA**

21 (+5) 11 (+0) 21 (+5) 14 (+2) 15 (+2) 14 (+2)

**Saving Throws** Dex +6, Con +11, Wis +8, Cha +8

**Skills** Perception +6, Stealth +5

**Senses** passive Perception 16

**Languages** understands Common, but can't speak it

**Challenge** 13 (10,000 XP)

**Amphibious.** The Gargouille can breathe air and water.

**Legendary Resistances (3/Day).** If the Gargouille fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The Gargouille makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its tail.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d10+6) piercing damage.

**Tail.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8+6) bludgeoning damage.

**Water Spout (Recharge 5-6).** The Gargouille exhales water in a 60-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in the line must make a DC 18 saving throw, taking 56 (16d6) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Any creature that fails its save is also pushed 10 feet away from the Gargouille.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The Gargouille can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Gargouille regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Detect.** The Gargouille makes one Wisdom (Perception) check.

**Claw.** The Gargouille makes one tail attack.

**Move.** The Gargouille moves up to half its speed.

### VARIANT: GARGOUILLE WEAKNESS

If you wish, the Gargouille can have the following flaw:

**Powerless in the Face of Divine Power:** Good-aligned clerics may use their Channel Divinity feature to attempt to humble the Gargouille. If it fails its saving throw, it will no longer attack and can be led about by the cleric. This effect will end after 24 hours.

## GRENDEL

[King] Hrothgar spoke... "I have heard landsmen, my people, hall-counselors, say this, that they have seen two such huge walkers in the wasteland holding to the moors, alien spirits.... The other wretched shape trod the tracks of exile in the form of a man, except he was bigger than any other man." (from the translation of *Beowulf* by E. Talbot Donaldson)

*Beowulf* never actually describes Grendel to any degree. About the only idea we have of what he looks like is the passage quoted above. It is obvious from the poem that Grendel has a huge, manlike shape with eyes that burn in the darkness. At one point the poem states four men are required to carry Grendel's head upon a framework of spears. Other details are left to the reader's imagination.

**Creature of Evil.** Grendel is one of the three great monsters fought by the Geatish hero Beowulf in the Old English epic poem *Beowulf*. Described as a descendent of Cain (the Biblical first murderer), Grendel is a physical embodiment of evil—a terrifying monster who exists only to kill and ravage mankind. Making his home in a desolate moor, Grendel stalks the fens and marshes, haunting King Hrothgar's great hall of Heorot and killing (and eating) all he catches.

Grendel eventually meets his end at the hands of Beowulf, who wrestles with him and tears an arm off. Grendel then flees from Heorot back to his underwater lair, where he dies of his wounds.

**Enemy of Mankind.** The creature known as Grendel is evil personified. The poem describes him as a "fiend," a "fierce spirit," a "grim spirit," a "creature of evil," "the enemy of mankind" and so on. He is the bane of King Hrothgar, preying on the inhabitants of Heorot for 12 years or more. His motivations for doing so seem to stem from a simple desire to cause pain and suffering, as well as the idea that to Grendel, King Hrothgar's warriors are easy prey to be taken whenever he chooses.

**Devourer of Men.** By all accounts, Grendel is huge—much larger than any man, and *very* strong. The poem describes him shattering iron bound doors "with a touch," and of reducing a man to a bloody pulp in a matter of moments, devouring him totally—right down to his hands and feet. In his first raid on Heorot, Grendel kills 30 men, eating 15 of them in the hall and dragging the other 15 back with him to his lair. However, Grendel's most potent power is a spell he has cast upon all edged weapons, rendering them useless against him. This is his *blade bane*, meaning axes, swords, and daggers—anything with an edge will just bounce off his hide, doing no damage.

Because of his great size and strength as well as his *blade bane*, Grendel doesn't bother with any sort of special tactics. He prefers to simply smash and grab as many available targets as possible before retreating to his lair to feed upon his victims at his leisure. However, if given a chance, Grendel is more than willing to eat his victims on the spot.





**Historical Notes.** The name “Grendel” may be derived from certain Anglo-Saxon words such as *grennian* (to gnash the teeth) or *grindan* (to grate, scrape, gnash or grind).

## GRENDEL

*Huge monstrosity, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 250 (20d12+120)

**Speed** 40 ft., swim 20 ft.

**STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA**

25 (+7) 15 (+2) 22 (+6) 8 (-1) 10 (+0) 13 (+1)

**Saving Throws** Str +12, Con +13

**Skills** Athletics +8, Perception +2, Stealth +7

**Damage Immunities** piercing and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** understands Common, but can't speak it

**Challenge** 15 (13,000 XP)

**Amphibious.** Grendel can breathe air and water.

**Keen Smell.** Grendel has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Siege Monster.** Grendel deals double damage to objects and structures.

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** While in sunlight, Grendel has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that reply on sight.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Grendel makes a bite attack and two claw attacks.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d10+7) piercing damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d8+7) slashing damage.

**Consume.** If there is a corpse within 10 feet of Grendel, he can grab it and devour it as a bonus action. Grendel automatically succeeds with a bite and regains hit points equal to the damage of the attack.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Grendel can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Grendel regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

**Detect.** Grendel makes one Wisdom (Perception check).

**Claw.** Grendel makes one claw attack.

**Move.** Grendel moves up to his speed without provoking opportunity attacks.



## KRAKEN

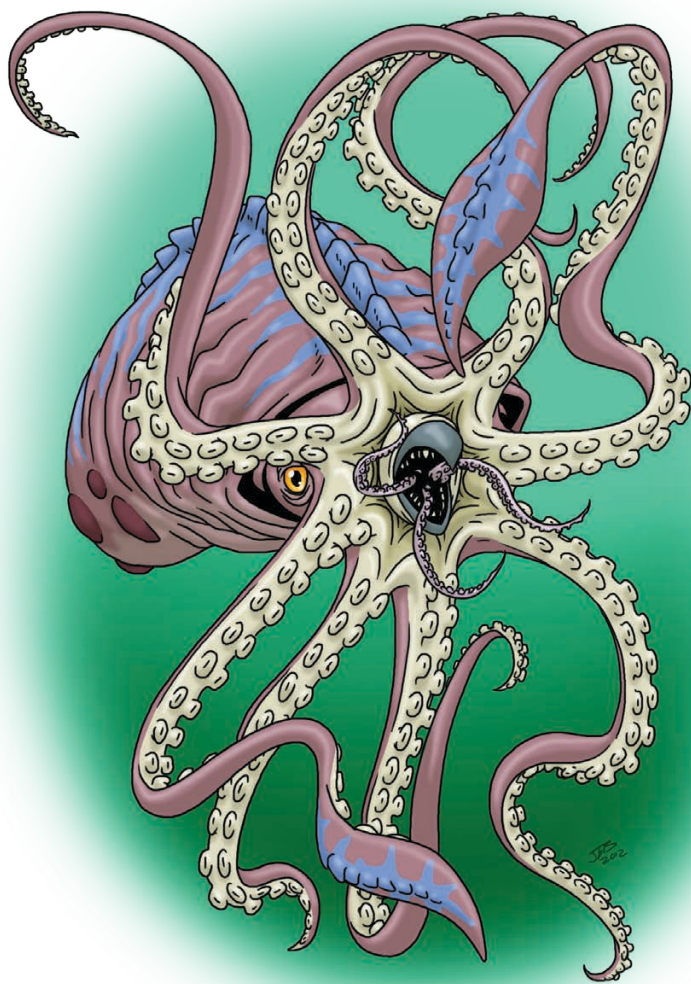
The kraken is an immense sea creature, second only in size to Leviathan (the great sea monster of the Bible). It is a mile and a half in circumference, making it the size of an island (and far larger than fastitocalon the island whale)! The kraken's exact appearance is unclear, but most scholars have likened it to a gigantic squid or octopus.

**Dweller in the Depths.** The kraken is thought to be a singular creature, dwelling in the North Sea off the coast of Norway (although others may dwell off the coast of Iceland.) Normally it sleeps at the bottom of the ocean, but if hungry it will rise to devour vast quantities of fish. Fishermen can detect the presence of the kraken by dropping a sounding line. If the water is only 5-6 fathoms deep when it should be 20 or more, and the fish are jumping frantically, then the kraken is just below the surface. If it should start to rise, then the fishermen need to row for shore as hard as they can, lest the kraken upsets their boat and swallows them and their catch whole.

**Destroyer of Ships.** Due to its colossal size, the kraken has no real predators and no real need for any special combat techniques or tactics. It simply rises to the surface, opens its gaping maw, and swallows massive quantities of sea life (and any ships unlucky enough to be in the area). Once sated, the kraken will submerge, producing a great whirlpool as it returns to the ocean floor.

**Historical Notes.** Although the sheer size of the kraken relegates it to the realm of fantasy, there may be some basis behind its appearance and habits. The giant squid, which grows upwards of 60 feet in length, is found off the coast of Norway, and specimens seen on the surface (or washed ashore) may have given rise to the story of the kraken. The kraken itself appeared in Carl Linnaeus's *Systema Naturae* (published in 1735), listed with the cephalopods. Erik Pontoppidan, the Bishop of Bergen, also wrote extensively about the kraken in his *Natural History of Norway* (published circa 1752-1753.)

While the kraken described here takes the form of an immense squid or octopus, GMs can consider some of the alternate interpretations for the creature's appearance. For example, the Norse saga *Örvar-Oddr* includes giant spider-like creatures called *hafgufa* and *lyngbakr*. In addition, early descriptions of the kraken make it more crab-like than squid-like. Game masters can also consider making the kraken act more like fastitocalon, as the kraken was often said to be responsible for the appearance of new islets off the coast of Iceland (as well as undersea volcanos, masses of bubbling water, and sudden, dangerous currents).



## KRAKEN

*Gargantuan monstrosity (titan), unaligned*

**Armor Class** 20 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 861 (42d20+420)

**Speed** 0 ft., swim 80 ft.

**STR**   **DEX**   **CON**   **INT**   **WIS**   **CHA**

30 (+10) 8 (-1)   30 (+10) 5 (-2)   10 (+0) 14 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Str +19, Con +19, Int +7, Wis +9, Cha +12

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Damage Immunities** cold, fire, poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 26 (90,000 XP)

**Amphibious.** The kraken can breathe air and water.

**Freedom of Movement.** The kraken ignores difficult terrain and magical effects can't reduce its speed or cause it to be restrained. It can spend 5 feet of movement to escape from nonmagical restraints or being grappled.

**Larger Than an Island.** The kraken is the largest living creature in the ocean. When at the surface of the ocean it occupies a space of 120 by 120 feet. Its movement is not affected by difficult terrain (as it applies to oceans) or by Huge or smaller creatures. Other creatures can enter the kraken's space.

**Siege Monster.** The kraken deals double damage to objects and structures.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The kraken makes four attacks: one with its bite and three with its tentacles.

**Bite:** *Melee Weapon Attack.* +19 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 36 (4d12+10) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it is grappled (escape DC 25). Until this grapple ends the target is restrained, and the kraken can't bite another target.

**Tentacle:** *Melee Weapon Attack.* +19 to hit, reach 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 32 (4d10+10) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 25). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained. The kraken has six tentacles, each of which can grapple one target.

**Devour.** The kraken makes one bite attack against a Huge or smaller creature it is currently grappling. If the attack hits, the target takes the bite's damage, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends. While swallowed, the creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the kraken, and it takes 56 (16d6) acid damage at the start of each of the kraken's turns.

If the kraken takes 60 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the kraken must succeed on a DC 25 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which fall prone in a space within 20 feet of the kraken. If the kraken dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 50 feet of movement, exiting prone.

**Whirlpool (Recharge 6).** The kraken inhales an immense volume of water, creating a 90-foot radius whirlpool. Each creature in that area must make a DC 25 Constitution saving throw, taking 88 (16d10) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The kraken can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The kraken regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

**Move.** The kraken moves up to half its speed.

**Smash.** The kraken makes a tentacle attack.

**Swallow (2 actions).** The kraken makes one bite attack or uses Devour.

### VARIANT: INKY DISCHARGE

The kraken has the Ink Cloud power of the kraken found on page 197 of the official bestiary. Using the Ink Cloud would be a normal action and not a legendary action.

### USING THE KRAKEN

At a mile and a half in circumference, the kraken is roughly 2,500 feet across, which is more than twice the length of fastitocalon. This is almost inconceivably huge, meaning a party of adventures could land on a kraken as it floats on the surface and never realize they are on a living creature. As with the fastitocalon you could stage an adventure *on* or *in* the kraken, with the scenario ending as a race against time to get off (or out) of the kraken before it submerges and retreats to the bottom of the ocean to return to sleep.



## LA VELUE

### THE SHAGGY BEAST OF LA FERTE-BERNARD

La Velue is as large as a bull with a rounded body covered in thick greenish fur. It has a snake's head and a tail "shaped like a serpent," while its hooved feet resemble those of a tortoise. Within La Velue's fur are long stingers (or quills) that can prove lethal to the unwary.

**River Predator.** Thought to be a survivor of the Biblical Flood, the Shaggy Beast is an amphibious creature, dwelling in the river Huisne by day and coming out at night to raid stables and villages. It prefers the tender flesh of children and young maidens, but will gladly feast on men, horses, deer and cattle. Driven primarily by hunger, it will also raid storehouses, stables and villages for its prey, catching and killing all it can eat. If it can't eat all it has killed, it will drag the rest back to its river lair and feed on the corpses later.

**Immune to Harm.** Due to its thick hide (it's said the creature is invulnerable everywhere except for its tail), La Velue is quite willing to engage in combat with heavily armed and armored humans. In general, it prefers to use its great mass as a weapon, trampling grouped foes while biting at those who are not in its direct path. Quills hidden in its fur provide an excellent defense. The Beast's tail is a rather fearsome weapon in its own right and the Shaggy Beast will use it to cripple men, topple horses, and destroy walls and fences. If sorely pressed or angry, La Velue will breathe forth a cloud of fire.

**Historical Notes.** A unique creature from French legend, La Velue was said to exist in the first century A.D.

## LA VELUE

*Large monstrosity, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 95 (10d10+40)

**Speed** 40 ft., swim 30 ft.

**STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA**

20 (+5) 12 (+1) 18 (+4) 8 (-1) 11 (+0) 12 (+1)

**Skills** Perception +4

**Damage Immunities** cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 9 (5,000 XP)

**Amphibious.** The La Velue can breathe air and water.

**Quills.** Any creature that touches the Shaggy Beast or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

**Siege Monster.** La Velue deals double damage to objects and structures.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** La Velue makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its tail.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (3d6+5) piercing damage.

**Tail.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6+5) bludgeoning damage.

**Fire Breath (Recharge 6).** The Shaggy Beast exhales fire in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 56 (16d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## LAMBTON WORM

The Lambton Worm is an immense snakelike creature, so large it is said to encircle a local hill nine times. It has a slimy body, a long narrow head, nine holes or gills located along the neck, and it breathes forth foul vapors capable of withering leaves and grass. The creature usually goes out to hunt at night and rests by day on the hill where it lairs, basking in the sun.

**Bane of John Lambton.** The Lambton Worm lives in Durham County, England, near the River Wear. It is thought the Lambton Worm was sent to punish John Lambton, heir to the Lambton estate, for his wild behavior and disrespectful attitude towards the Catholic Church. To this end, the Worm preys on anything it can catch, such as sheep, cattle, and the local villagers, but can be appeased by offerings of milk. If denied a daily offering of milk, it will go on a rampage, eating and destroying anything it can find.

Due to its great size and regenerative abilities, the Lambton Worm is fearless and will not hesitate to lash out at an attacker. Normally it tries to crush its prey in the manner of a constrictor snake, but it will bite as well. Because of its regenerative abilities, the Worm will not flee an encounter, even if greatly wounded.

**Historical Notes.** The original Lambton Worm was said to exist in the early Middle Ages, during the time of the Crusades (the exact date isn't clear, although one date, Easter Sunday 1420, is plainly wrong, as the Crusades were long over by then). It was caught in the River Wear by John Lambton, who went fishing on a Sunday instead of attending church. The young Lambton pulled up a slimy black snake, and promptly tossed the horrid creature down a well. He then left to go on Crusades, as a way of repenting for his wicked deeds. When he returned years later, it was to find that the worm had grown to immense size (it was said to be able to circle Pensher Hill anywhere from three to ten times) and was laying waste to the region. Taking the advice of a local witch, John had a suit of armor outfitted with long sharp

blades and lured the Worm into the River Wear. There he hacked at it with his sword, while the Worm tried to crush him in its coils. Cut to pieces by the blades and John's sword, the river washed the Worm away before it could rejoin its halves.

## LAMBTON WORM

*Huge monstrosity, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 225 (18d12 + 108)

**Speed** 40 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	15 (+2)	22 (+6)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 10 (5,900 XP)

**Amphibious.** The Lambton Worm can breathe air and water.

**Regeneration.** The Lambton Worm regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If the Lambton Worm takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the Lambton Worm's next turn. The Lambton Worm dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

## ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 23 (3d10 + 7) piercing damage.

**Constrict.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 26 (3d12 + 7) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 19). Until this grapple ends, the creature is restrained, and the Lambton Worm can't constrict another target.

## PHOENIX

The phoenix is a bird the size of an eagle, with glorious red and gold plumage. Some descriptions say it is red, gold and blue, while others describe it as purple with a gold collar.

**Exceedingly Long-lived.** Virtually immortal, the phoenix is a singular bird found in Arabia. Its life span is immense, with most scholars giving a length of no less than 500 years, although estimates of 1,461 and 12,944 years have been put forth. When the phoenix does eventually die, it burns up in brief flash of flame, which then die out to reveal a small worm amid the ashes. This worm rapidly grows into an adult phoenix, who gathers up the remains of its father and files to the city of Heliopolis in Egypt. There the dead phoenix is buried and the new phoenix returns to Arabia to begin the cycle anew.

It is unknown if the phoenix will attack a human. This seems doubtful, as the bird probably feeds off of small lizards and snakes, which are common in its country. However, as with all raptors, it is equipped with a sharp beak and talons and won't hesitate to use them to defend itself.

**Historical Notes.** The phoenix was first described by Herodotus, who based his information on the writings of a man named Hecataeus, a geographer. It is derived from a mythological Egyptian bird called the bennu (or benu), which shares almost all the characteristics of the phoenix (except its lifespan, which is



set at 1,461 *days*). Due to its ability to revive itself after death, the phoenix was used by medieval Christians as an allegory for Christ's resurrection, while the bird itself was used as a symbol for Christ himself.

As with the basilisk, some writers jeered at the notion of the phoenix and its existence. The word "phoenix" itself refers to a type of palm tree, and much like the mermecoleon (see page 36), this fabulous bird may owe its existence to a mistake in translation.



### VARIANT: CREATURE OF THE SUN

Some scholars state the phoenix, being born of fire, is immune to fire.

**Immune to The Sun's Heat.** The phoenix has Damage Immunity to fire.

## PHOENIX

*Small monstrosity, unaligned*

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 7 (2d6)

Speed 10 ft., fly 60 ft.

**STR** **DEX** **CON** **INT** **WIS** **CHA**

2 (-4) 18 (+4) 10 (+0) 10 (+0) 10 (+0) 16 (+3)

**Skills** Perception +4

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Keen Sight.** The phoenix has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The phoenix makes two attacks: one with its beak and one with its talons.

**Beak.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

**Talons.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage.





## TARASQUE

The Tarasque is a huge water dragon, bigger than any horse or oxen. It is covered in thick scales, with a lion-like head, a mouthful of sharp teeth, bear-like paws on its six legs, a long snaky tail ending in a venomous sting, and a thick turtle-like carapace covered with spikes on its back.

**Resident of the River Rhone.** A unique creature, the Tarasque (pronounced tar-ask) lives in the river Rhone, where it preys on travelers of all sorts. The creature eagerly devours humans, horses, cattle, and game, and will ravage the countryside, destroying buildings and bridges to get at its prey. The Tarasque cannot be reasoned with and cannot be appeased with offers of fair maidens and the like.

**Eternally Hungry.** Unlike many dragons, the Tarasque does not collect or guard treasure and seems to be driven more by hunger than anything else. It guards its territory jealously and will destroy and devour any intruders. Its usual method of attack is to lie waiting in a river, thicket, or lake, and then spring out upon an unsuspecting victim. Its great jaws and sharp teeth are usually more than sufficient to eliminate any foe, but if confronted with a large number of targets (or if heavily outnumbered) it won't hesitate to use its envenomed tail to reduce the number of opponents quickly. If sorely pressed or wounded, the Tarasque will retreat back to its river.

Some descriptions give the Tarasque two huge forward pointing tusks, used to impale opponents, while others say the Tarasque is a creature of the Devil, who warns it of traps and ambushes. It was also said to have fiery breath as well. One description of the Tarasque states it is a male, while another describes it as the daughter of Leviathan.

**Historical Notes.** The original Tarasque was said to live in France in approximately the first century A.D. (about the same time as La Velue). It inhabited the river Rhone in France, devastating the surrounding countryside and slaying all who tried to kill it. Finally, St. Martha, armed with nothing more than a jar of holy water, pacified the beast and led it back to a local village. There, the villagers set upon the now docile creature and killed it. The parallels between this story and that of the Gargouille should be readily apparent.

## TARASQUE

*Huge dragon, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 20 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 250 (20d12+120)

**Speed** 40 ft., swim 40 ft.

**STR DEX CON INT WIS CHA**

22 (+6) 10 (+0) 23 (+6) 14 (+2) 14 (+2) 13 (+1)

**Saving Throws** Dex +6, Con +12, Wis +8, Cha +9

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** understands Common, but can't speak it

**Challenge** 12 (8,400 XP)

**Amphibious.** The Tarasque can breathe air and water.

**Legendary Resistances (3/Day).** If the Tarasque fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Siege Monster.** The Tarasque deals double damage to objects and structures.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The Tarasque makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws. It can make one stinger attack in place of its two claw attacks.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) piercing damage.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) slash damage.

**Stinger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 15 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) piercing damage. The target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The Tarasque can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Tarasque regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Detect.** The Tarasque makes one Wisdom (Perception) check.

**Claw.** The Tarasque makes one stinger attack.

**Move.** The Tarasque moves up to half its speed.

## VARIANT: ADDITIONAL TARASQUE POWERS

**Fiery Breath.** The Tarasque exhales fire in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 66 (12d10) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Increase the Tarasque's challenge rating to 15 (13,00).

**The Devil's Warnings.** The Tarasque has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks.

**Tusks.** If you give the Tarasque tusks, increase its Multiattack to include one tusk attack. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) piercing damage. Increase the Tarasque's challenge rating to 14 (11,500).

## VARIANT: TARASQUE WEARNESS

If you wish, the Tarasque can have the following flaw:

**Powerless in the Face of Divine Power:** Good-aligned clerics may use their Channel Divinity feature to attempt to humble the Tarasque. If it fails its saving throw, it will no longer attack and can be led about by the cleric. This effect will end after 24 hours.



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—*From Flying Toads to Snakes with Wings*

Tabb, Doug. *HERO Bestiary*

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