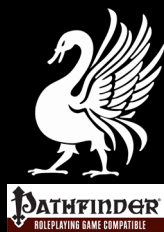


BLEACHED SKULL GNOLLS

A Pathfinder Roleplaying Game TRIBES supplement by Creighton Broadhurst



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Feral denizens of the deep woods, the Bleached Skull Gnolls are creatures of atavistic desires and sadistic lusts. Ferocious warriors and terrible foes they worship the primal, blood-soaked spirits of the woodlands, and war with their neighbours for booty and sacrifices to bury alive beneath their sacred trees.

Bleached Skull Gnolls presents six new feats, six new spells and three new magic items all useable by members of the tribe. Additionally, it contains ten stat blocks as well as the full details of the tribe's fearsome ally, the bloodspawn treant. By default, the tribe dwells deep in the Tangled Wood (an ancient woodland covering much of the Lonely Coast) but can live in any densely wooded area. *The Lonely Coast* is a free 30-page extensively bookmarked PDF available from Raging Swan's website.



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BONUS MATERIAL

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CONTACT US

Email tribes@ragingswan.com with questions and comments about this adventure.

ERRATA

We would like to think *Bleached Skull Gnolls* is completely error free and that absolutely no mistakes have crept in during design or editing. However, we are realists. So in that spirit, we shall post errata for this adventure three months after first release on ragingswan.com. We aren't going to be correcting typos and spelling errors, but we will correct any game mechanic or balance issues that come to light.

ABOUT THE DESIGNER

Creighton lives in Torquay, England where, apparently, the palm trees are plastic and the weather is warm. He shares a ramshackle old mansion with his two children (“Genghis” and “Khan”) and his very patient wife. Famed locally for his unending love affair with booze and pizza he is an enduring GREYHAWK fan.

His freelance credits include work with Wizards of the Coast, Paizo and Expeditious Retreat Press. You can check out his blog at <http://raging-swan.livejournal.com>.

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STAT BLOCKS BY CR

CR	
1/2	Bleached Skull Young (young gnoll)
1/2	Bleached Skull Non-Combatant (gnoll)
1	Bleached Skull Warrior (gnoll)
3	Bleached Skull Scout (gnoll expert 2/warrior 2)
3	Bleached Skull Sergeant (gnoll warrior 4)
4	Bleached Skull Champion (gnoll warrior 4)
4	Bleached Skull Sniper (gnoll expert 2/warrior 2)
5	Shaman (half-fiend gnoll adept 4)
7	Bleached Skull Chieftain (gnoll warrior 10)
7	Great Shaman (half-fiend gnoll adept 8)
9	Bloodspawn Treant (treant variant)

NEW ADEPT SPELLS

1ST-LEVEL ADEPT SPELLS

- Lightning Lance:** 1d4 lightning damage (max 5d4).
Obscuring Wind: Creatures in the area are blinded.

2ND-LEVEL ADEPT SPELLS

- Sickening Glare:** One creature is sickened for 1 round/level.
Skull Ward: Creates a magical ward from a skull.

3RD-LEVEL ADEPT SPELLS

- Lightning Lance, Greater:** 1d4 lightning damage (max 10d4 and target blinded).
Nauseating Glare: One creature is nauseated for 1 round/level.

NEW MAGIC ITEMS BY COST

GP	
630	<i>Guardian skull</i>
2,200	<i>Bone knife</i>
3,600	<i>Rod of curses</i>

NEW FEATS

FEAT	PREREQUISITES	BENEFIT
Dazing Blow	Str 13, Staggering Blow	Daze opponent with successful attack
Racial Enemy		+2 on Intimidate, CMB and weapon attack and damage rolls
Staggering Blow	Str 15, BAB +1	Make a free bull rush attempt on a successful melee attack
Savagery	Str 13, BAB +1	+1 on attacks and to CMB, -2 AC
Sudden Strike	BAB +1	+2 on attack rolls against flat-footed opponents
Stunning Blow	Str 17, Staggering Blow, BAB +5	Stun opponent with successful attack

IDENTIFYING TREASURE

While fighting the Bleached Skull, the PCs will find treasure that they'll want to identify. Use the notes below to facilitate their efforts.

IDENTIFYING MAGICAL TREASURE

Items can be identified with a variety of skills and spells:

Identify a magic item: When the PCs find a magic item it appears in the following format: *boots of speed* (moderate transmutation [DC 18 Knowledge {arcana}], DC 25 Spellcraft). The first part of the item's listing indicates the strength and type of magic emanating from the item and the Knowledge (arcana) check made in conjunction with *detect magic* needed to identify the magic type; the second part notes the DC required to identify the magic item using *detect magic* and a Spellcraft check. Using *detect magic* and Spellcraft to identify a magic item takes three rounds. A character can attempt to identify a magic item once per day. A PC failing to identify a magic item still determines the strength of the item's aura.

Appraising an Item: A DC 25 Appraise check made on a common

item (a ring, piece of jewellery etc.) determines its value and whether it is magical or not (but does not identify the item's magical properties.) This check takes one round. Subsequent checks reveal the same result.

Decipher a Scroll: It takes three rounds to decipher each spell. Success requires a DC 20 + spell level Spellcraft check. A character can only attempt to decipher each spell once per day.

Identify a Potion: Potions can be identified using the method for identifying any normal magic item. Alternatively, a PC sampling the potion and making a DC 15 + spell level Perception check identifies the potion.

IDENTIFYING MUNDANE TREASURE

PCs can use Appraise to identify mundane treasures:

Appraise: A PC making a DC 20 Appraise check determines the value of a common item. If the PC fails the check by five or more, the price is wildly inaccurate. Particularly rare or exotic items require an Appraise check of 25 or more. It takes one standard action to appraise an item.

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BLEACHED SKULL GNOLLS

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Feral, predatory creatures dwelling in the deepest, wildest reaches of the Tangled Forest, Bleached Skull gnolls are bloodthirsty creatures driven by atavistic and sadistic lusts. Bleached Skull gnolls guard their lairs jealously, issuing forth at night to prey on any creatures stupid or unfortunate enough to stray into their territory.

Atypically for gnolls, the Bleached Skull tribe dwells deep within the thick, twisted boughs of the primal forest. Here they seek sanctuary from their ancient enemies and sporadically burst forth to raid nearby settlements for slaves and booty. Driven here from their normal hunting ranges by some long forgotten inter-tribal warfare, the gnolls found sanctuary among the ancient trees of the forest and eventually cast aside their old gods to worship the woodland spirits of their new home.

The primal spirit of the woodlands touches a few of the warriors. Within their veins courses the savage, primal vitality of the wild. Such creatures hold positions of power and influence within the tribe through dint of their exceptional strength and boundless bloodlust.

ECOLOGY & SOCIETY

The Bleached Skull's society is a turbulent, violent place. Shifting alliances and interminable blood feuds govern life, and while a strong chieftain or shaman can control the warriors their base instincts ever lurk just below the surface.

The strongest hold positions of power within the tribe. Hereditary rule is unknown to the Bleached Skulls and personal might and the chieftain's will governs day-to-day life.

Male gnolls live with several mates – constant raiding and warfare keeps the numbers of males low – and between 2 – 6 infants. Infant mortality is high; accidents, fights, punishments and predators all taking their toll on the tribe's young. A few family groups also contain older gnolls, but this is rare as life in the Bleached Skull is normally short and brutal.

A Bleached Skull encampment has few, if any slaves. Enemies taken on the battlefield are usually only kept alive to be living sacrifices for the tribe's sacred trees (see "Religion" for more details). The young, non-combatants and a few elderly, crippled warriors carry out menial tasks, and all except the youngest child stand ready to repel interlopers.

Appearance: Tall and muscular, Bleached Skull gnolls are generally dirty creatures; their thick mottled brown fur is often splattered with mud. They have hyena-like heads upon which most wear skull-topped pot helmets. When angered or scared their hackles rise up and they bear their teeth in a terrible grimace.

Nomenclature: Tribal members have short, simple names.

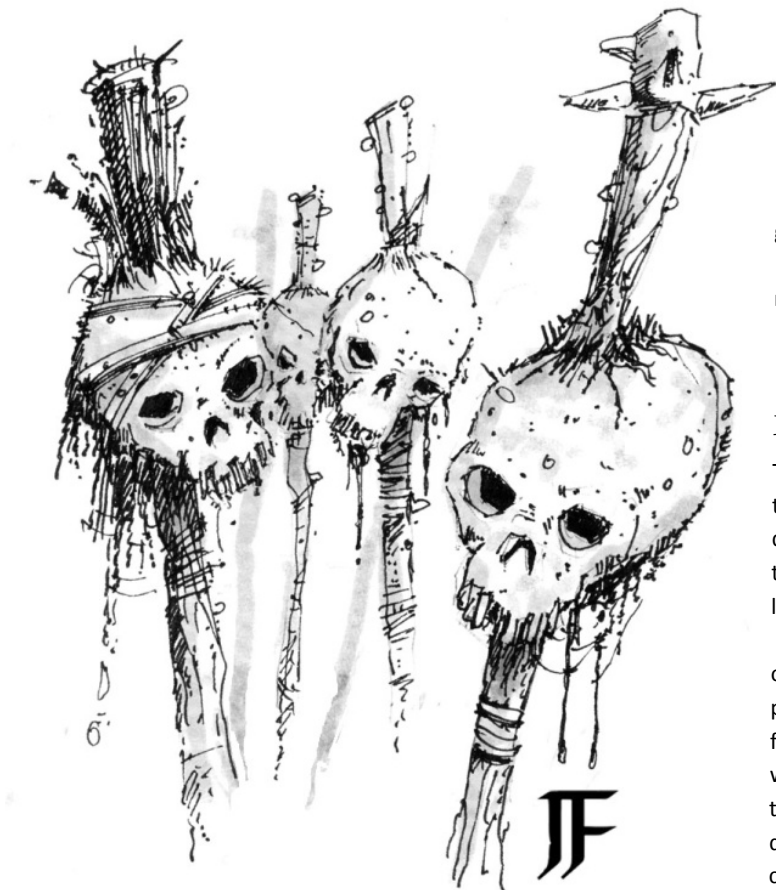
Male: Farll, Gart, Helral, Irr, Larg, Prely, Strar, Urel.

Female: Ary, Cerll, Jerl, Kerl, Popir, Rayr, Yelt.

LAIR

The severed heads of slain enemies mark the approaches to a Bleached Skull camp. Set upon wooden stakes driven deeply into the forest floor or set high up in the boughs of the surrounding trees, these battle trophies mark their lairs as macabre, pitiless places.

Normally protected by thick walls of gorse and bramble or dense stands of ancient trees, Bleached Skull gnolls prefer deep valleys, hidden combs and steep-sided gorges for their lairs. Chieftains build great wooden halls deep within these valleys and there warriors feast and indulge their orgiastic desires for blood sports. Normal tribesfolk dwell in rude wattle and daub huts surrounding the chieftain's hall. Huts closest to the hall belong to the tribe's war leaders, champions and other favoured folk.



RELIGION

The Bleached Skull's shamans dwell apart from the main tribe, living in sacred groves protected by near-impenetrable mazes of gorse and thorns. There they commune with the ancient, blood-soaked spirits of the trees whom they venerate with living sacrifices buried in death pits carved from the thick earth beneath the trees' roots. As the creature dies, the trees drink their lifeblood and become stronger. Such practices corrupt the trees, which take on fell, twisted aspects. Sometimes, the shamans manage to awaken and corrupt a tree with such practices, creating a bloodspawn treant. The bones and suppurating corpses of sacrifices choke the grove's ground.

In contrast, the skulls of their honoured dead are placed among the boughs of the grove's great trees to watch over their fellows. During storms, the wind moans through the skulls' gaping eye sockets and open jaws creating a terrible, high-pitched whistling sound, which drives the gnolls wild. They believe that young conceived at such times possess the powers of the dead. Adventurers daring their lair during storms are often confronted by nothing more than the writhing bodies of gnolls locked in an orgiastic frenzy of procreation. Gnolls conceived during this time are often gifted with fell powers and as a result become great shaman or war leaders.

COMBAT & TACTICS

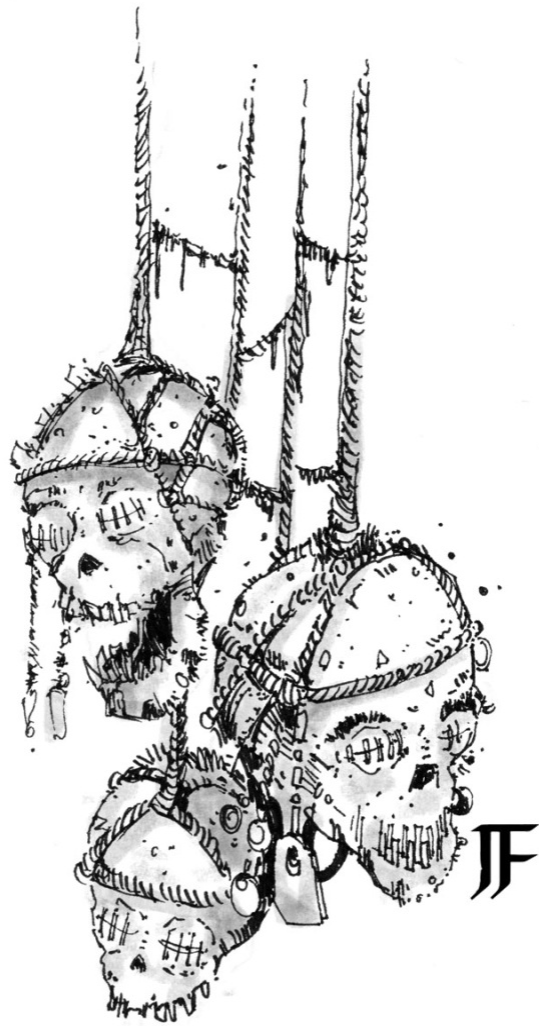
Bleached Skull gnolls overwhelm their enemies through weight of numbers and their terrible, primal savagery. In battle, they strike from ambush hurling volleys of javelins into their enemies' flanks before bursting from cover in a screaming wave of flesh, steel and hatred.

Their battle tactics are unsubtle and brutal. They mob opponents, surrounding and cut down enemy warriors. Chieftains and champions lead from the front and vie for glory by seeking out and slaying the most dangerous enemies.

Bleached Skull gnolls ask for, and grant, no mercy in battle. They take prisoners only when their shaman demand sacrifices for their sacred trees or when a chieftain desires entertainment. Those unlucky enough to fall into the tribe's hands can expect nothing but a painful, drawn-out death.

RELIGION: A SPECIAL NOTE

The Bleached Skulls believe they venerate the nameless, primal spirits of the woodlands. While this may be true in some campaigns, it is also possible that another power – perhaps a powerful demon or death god – grants the shaman their powers. The exact truth of the matter is likely unimportant in many encounters and as such remains for the individual GM to adjudicate.



TRIBAL LORE

Character with ranks in Knowledge (local) can learn more about the Bleached Skull Gnolls with a successful skill check. A successful check reveals all information revealed by a lesser check.

DC 6: This creature is a gnoll.

DC 11: The gnoll belongs to the tribe of the Bleached Skull. The tribe is renowned for its battle savagery and dwells in the deepest thickets and hidden valleys of the Tangled Wood.

DC 16: Bleached Skull gnolls are physically strong. They know a number of combat manoeuvres that can push back or daze their opponents.

DC 21: Bleached Skull shamans venerate primal nature spirits that demand blood sacrifices. They bury captives alive below their sacred trees that feed on the sacrifices' blood and body. In particular ancient groves, this practise invests the trees with a malevolent sentience akin to that of a treant.

NEW FEATS

Bleached Skull Gnolls introduces a number of new feats utilised by the tribe's warriors. Each feat is presented as follows:

Prerequisites: This entry is absent if the feat has no prerequisites. Otherwise, it lists the qualifying features a character must have to select the feat.

Benefit: This section details what the feat enables the character to do or lists the bonuses it provides.

Special: If the feat has additional benefits (or synergistic qualities with another feat), they are listed here.

Normal: This listing is absent if not having the feat causes no particular drawback or penalty. Otherwise, it presents the limitations or drawbacks faced by a character without this feat.

BATTLE FEATS

Battle feats are a new kind of combat-focused feat designed to add flavour to combats featuring warriors of a given tribe. Such feats represent the warriors' battle training and tribal fighting style. Most require a base attack bonus of at least +1.

DAZING BLOW [BATTLE]

A swift blow to the head momentarily dazes your opponent.

Prerequisite: Str 13, Staggering Blow.

Benefit: If you hit your opponent using the attack or full-attack option, the target is dazed for 1 round. The target can attempt a Fortitude saving throw (DC = 10 + 1/2 the attacking character's HD + Strength modifier) to negate this effect. You can attempt a dazing blow once per day for every four hit dice you have attained.

Special: If you have Improved Bull Rush, you can attempt a dazing blow twice per day for every four hit dice you have attained.

RACIAL ENEMY

You loath members of a certain race or species.

Benefit: You gain a +2 morale bonus on weapon attack and damage rolls, combat manoeuvres checks and Intimidate checks made against a certain race of enemy.

STAGGERING BLOW [BATTLE]

The strength of your blows forces your enemy to give ground.

Prerequisites: Str 15, base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: If you hit an opponent with a melee attack and deal damage, you can immediately make a bull rush attack as a free action. (If you used Staggering Blow as part of a charge action, you gain a +2 bonus on this check.) Resolve this action as if you had made a normal bull rush attack. You can attempt a staggering blow once per day for every four hit dice you have attained.

Special: If you have Improved Bull Rush, you can attempt a staggering blow twice per day for every four hit dice you have attained.

Normal: If you make a bull rush attempt, you do not damage your target with the same attack. Without Improved Bull Rush, your bull rushes provoke attacks of opportunity.

SAVAGERY

In battle, you care little for your own protection, instead focusing on the destruction of your enemies.

Prerequisites: Str 13, base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You gain a +1 morale bonus on all attack rolls and combat manoeuvre checks, when using this feat as part of an attack or full-attack action. Such recklessness in battle, however, bestows a -2 penalty to your armour class. You must choose to use this feat before making an attack roll, and its effects last until the start of your next turn.

SUDDEN STRIKE

Before your enemy can react, you launch a devastating attack.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You gain a +2 circumstance bonus on attack rolls against flat-footed opponents. An injured opponent is dazed for 1 round.

STUNNING BLOW [BATTLE]

The savagery of your attack momentarily stuns your opponent.

Prerequisites: Str 17, Dazing Blow, Staggering Blow, base attack bonus +5.

Benefit: If you hit your opponent using the attack or full-attack option, the target is stunned for 1 round. The target can attempt a Fortitude saving throw (DC = 10 + 1/2 the attacking character's HD + Strength modifier) to negate this effect. You can attempt a stunning blow once per day for every four hit dice you have attained.

Special: If you have Improved Bull Rush, you can attempt a stunning blow twice per day for every four hit dice you have attained.

NEW ADEPT SPELLS

Adepts of the Bleached Skull have developed several spells with which to awe their congregation and defeat their enemies. They enjoy access to a different spell list to that of normal adepts.

0—*create water, detect magic, ghost sound, guidance, know direction, mending, purify food and drink, read magic, stabilise, touch of fatigue.*

1st—*bless, burning hands, cause fear, command, cure light wounds, endure elements, entangle, faerie fire, lightning lance, magic fang, obscuring wind, sleep.*

2nd—*aid, barkskin, bear's endurance, bull's strength, cure moderate wounds, darkness, delay poison, owl's wisdom, resist energy, scorching ray, see invisibility, sickening glare, skull ward, tree shape.*

3rd—*animate dead, bestow curse, contagion, cure serious wounds, deeper darkness, greater lightning lance, nauseating glare, neutralize poison, poison, remove curse, remove disease, tongues.*

4th—*command plants, cure critical wounds, flame strike, restoration, stonewall, wall of fire.*

5th—*awaken, commune, control winds, heal, tree stride, true seeing, wall of thorns.*

LIGHTNING LANCE

Level Adept 1 (evocation [lightning])

Casting Time 1 standard action; **Components** V, S

Range 30 ft.; **Area** 30 ft. line; **Duration** instantaneous

Saving Throw Reflex half; **Spell Resistance** yes

A lance of scintillating lightning bursts from your fingertips, dealing 1d4 lightning damage per caster level (maximum 5d4).

LIGHTNING LANCE, GREATER

Level Adept 3 (evocation [lightning])

Casting Time 1 standard action; **Components** V, S, M (scrap of bark or twig from a tree struck by lightning)

Range 30 ft.; **Area** 30 ft. line; **Duration** instantaneous and see text

Saving Throw Reflex half; **Spell Resistance** yes

A lance of scintillating lightning bursts from your fingertips dealing 1d4 lightning damage per caster level (maximum 10d4). Creatures failing the Reflex saving throw are blind for 1 round per caster level.

NAUSEATING GLARE

Level Adept 3 (necromancy)

Casting Time 1 standard action; **Components** V, S

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels); **Target** one living creature; **Duration** 1 round./level

Saving Throw Fortitude partial; **Spell Resistance** yes

This spell causes the target to become nauseated (target unable to attack, cast spells, concentrate on spells, or do anything else requiring attention except take one move action per turn). If the target succeeds on a Fortitude save, it is sickened for the duration of the spell instead of being nauseated.

OBSCURING WIND

Level Adept 1 (evocation [air])

Casting Time 1 standard action; **Components** V, S

Range 30 ft.; **Area** cone-shaped burst; **Duration** instantaneous; see text

Saving Throw Fortitude negates; **Spell Resistance** no

A blast of wind emanates from your hand, whipping up whatever is on the ground (twigs, leaves and so forth) and casts it into the eyes of creatures within the area blinding them. Blinded creatures cannot see for 1 round per caster level, but can attempt a new saving throw every round (full-round action, does not provoke attacks of opportunity) to negate this effect.

SICKENING GLARE

Level Adept 2 (necromancy)

Casting Time 1 standard action; **Components** V, S

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels); **Target** one living creature; **Duration** 1 round./level

Saving Throw Fortitude partial; **Spell Resistance** yes

This spell causes the target to become sickened (-2 penalty on attack rolls, weapon damage rolls, saving throws, skill checks and ability checks). If the target succeeds on a Fortitude save, it is only mildly sickened (taking a -1 penalty instead of a -2 penalty).

SKULL WARD

Level Adept 2 (necromancy)

Casting Time 1 standard action; **Components** V, S, M (a skull)

Range touch; **Target** 1 skull; **Duration** permanent until discharged and then 1 round./level

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** No

An adept casts *skull ward* on a fallen warrior's skull and can key the effect to ignore specific individuals or an entire race of creature (such as gnomes). Specific individuals to be ignored must be present when *skull ward* is cast. If an unkeyed individual moves within 30 ft., the *skull ward* activates. (The *skull ward* must have line of sight to the intruder and cannot see invisible or ethereal creatures). Once activated, the skull shrieks and cackles until the spell ends or it is destroyed (AC 12, hardness 5, hp 5, DC 15 Break). A rogue can disarm a *skull ward* with DC 27 Disable Device. A skull can only have one *skull ward* placed upon it at a time.

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

The shamans of the Bleached Skull have created a number of magical items. All are of unsavoury provenance and possess fell abilities.

To distract and confuse their foes, the shaman often activates *guardian skulls* from range. Great shaman carry a *rod of curses* as a badge of rank and as a tool to cow their fellow tribe members. Powerful chieftains, favoured champions and lesser shaman carry *bone knives*.

They also use *skull wards* (page 9) to protect their lairs, placing them to protect obvious approaches to their sacred groves.

BONE KNIFE

Hewn from the severed leg bone of a man-sized creature, this bone knife ends in a wickedly jagged point. The inside of the hollowed out bone is crusted with dried blood and gore.

Aura faint (necromancy; DC 18 Knowledge [arcana]) **Identify** DC 20 Spellcraft

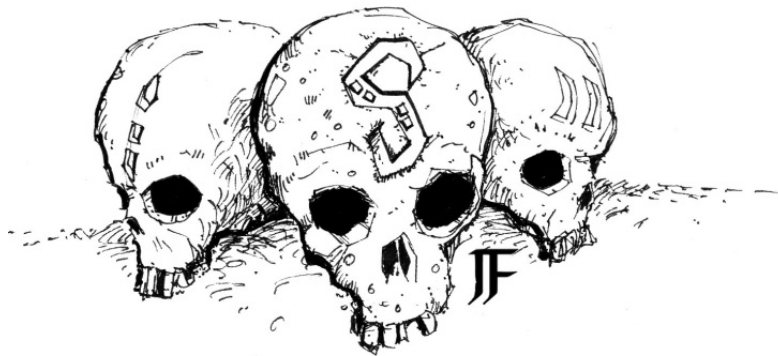
Lore (DC 15 Heal) The bone has been crudely hollowed out.

Lore (DC 15 Perception and DC 20 Linguistics) Tiny Abyssal runes carved inside the bone venerate death.

Abilities A terrible necromantic weapon, a *bone knife* drinks the blood of those it hits. Once per day, on a critical hit, the knife casts *vampiric touch* (2d6 damage) on the target and bestows the drained hit points upon the wielder. Other than its ability to cast *vampiric touch*, a *bone knife* functions as a masterwork dagger and can be enchanted as a normal magic weapon. Characters proficient with daggers can wield it without penalty.

Activation use activated; **CL** 5th

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *vampiric touch*;
Cost 2,200 gp



GUARDIAN SKULL

This bleached white skull is missing its jawbone and has strange, fell symbols carved into its forehead.

Aura faint (conjunction and necromancy; DC 16 Knowledge [arcana]) **Identify** DC 16 Spellcraft

Lore (DC 20 Linguistics or character able to understand Abyssal): The carved symbols are ancient symbols of protection.

Lore (DC 15 Heal or Knowledge [local]) This is the skull of a gnoll.

Lore (DC 26 Knowledge [local]) Bleached Skull shamans use the skulls of their fallen warriors as protective wards for their sacred groves and other important places.

Abilities A skull ward can cast *cause fear* (DC 11) and *obscuring mist* once per day. Both effects are centred on the skull, and the skull does not have to be carried for the magic to activate. The user must be within 50 ft. to activate the skull's powers.

Activation command word; **CL** 1st

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *cause fear*, *obscuring mist*;
Cost 630 gp

ROD OF CURSES

Blackened claws top the horribly twisted leg bone of a dog or similar creature. Here and there, tufts of hair still cling to small patches of decomposing flesh.

Aura moderate (necromancy; DC 18 Knowledge [arcana]) **Identify** DC 23 Spellcraft

Lore (DC 15 Knowledge [nature]) The bone came from a wolf.

Abilities This weapon can cast *bestow curse* once per day. To activate the curse, the wielder must strike the target with a melee touch attack. In other regards, this item functions as a masterwork light mace, except that it deals slashing damage. Any character proficient with a light mace can use it without penalty.

Activation use activated; **CL** 8th

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *bestow curse*; **Cost** 3,600 gp

STAT BLOCKS, ALLIES & ENCOUNTERS

ENCOUNTERS WITH THE BLEACHED SKULL

PCs can meet members of the Bleached Skull in many ways. Given the tribe's proclivities, however, almost all encounters quickly degenerate into violence. The encounters can be used as essentially random events or can be tied together to depict the PCs' growing entanglement with the tribe.

AMBUSH (EL 6, XP 2,400)

In this encounter, a small group of Bleached Skull warriors ambush the PCs as they travel through the forest. Alternatively, the warriors could be watching a road or track with the intention of waylaying travellers (indeed, the PCs may be investigating the disappearance of several such groups).

4 Bleached Skull warriors: page 14

1 Bleached Skull sergeant: page 14

1 Bleached Skull scout: page 16

Striking from ambush, they target the most physically powerful foes first, hoping to force the other party members to flee.

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

EL 5 (XP 1,600): Remove the Bleached Skull scout.

EL 7 (XP 3,200): Add one Bleached Skull scout.

SCOUTS (EL 8, XP 4,800)

In this encounter, the PCs come upon a group of Bleached Skull scouts watching a settlement in preparation for a raid (perhaps by a warband [page 13]).

3 Bleached Skull scouts: page 16

2 Bleached Skull snipers: page 16

The scouts try to disengage from their assailants as quickly as possible so that they can report the settlement's defences.

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

EL 7 (XP 3,200): Remove two Bleached Skull scouts.

EL 9 (XP 6,400): Add two Bleached Skull scouts.



WARBAND (EL 10, XP 9,600)

In this encounter, the PCs discover a large group of Bleached Skull warriors. The band is big enough to attack a small or isolated settlement or could even be serving as (unpredictable) mercenaries to a powerful evil lord or creature. If they are serving as mercenaries, they will not be encountered in a guard role. They are savage warriors and chafe at such duties. Wise employers use them for the tasks they are best suited; namely killing and slaughtering their enemies.

11 Bleached Skull warriors: page 14

2 Bleached Skull sergeants: page 14

2 Bleached Skull snipers: page 16

1 Bleached Skull champion: page 14

Discipline within the warband is chaotic at best, but the warriors fight well together. They loosely follow any orders they have been given, and fight savagely.

If fighting alongside allies, they are not above looting the bodies of the fallen.

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

EL 9 (XP 6,400): Remove four Bleached Skull warriors, one Bleached Skull sergeant and one Bleached Skull sniper.

EL 11 (XP 12,800): Add two Bleached Skull warriors, one Bleached Skull sniper and one Bleached Skull champion.

SACRED GROVE (EL 11, XP 12,800)

In this encounter, the PCs discover an isolated sacred grove of the tribe tended by a trio of shaman. (Alternatively, the shaman may be the remnants of a smaller branch of the tribe). The shamans have just succeeded in awakening a bloodspawn treant and are preparing to return to the tribe with their new ally. The grove is protected by many *skulls wards* and lies at the centre of a great maze of bramble bushes.

1 bloodspawn treant: page 18

2 shamans: page 15

1 great shaman: page 15

If the PCs encounter the group in the sacred grove, the bloodspawn treant immediately raises the bodies of those sacrificed to it and orders them to attack. The shamans hang back from combat only entering melee to protect their new charge.

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

EL 10 (XP 9,600): Remove the two shamans.

EL 12 (XP 19,200): Add one bloodspawn treant.

Special Note: If this encounter does not take place in the shamans' sacred grove, reduce the EL by 1 to account for the lack of blood zombies.

FIGHTING IN WOODLANDS

When designing a fight with Bleached Skull warriors, GMs should pay attention to the area in which the battle takes place. Terrain features can make fights exciting and give advantages to clever combatants. Consider adding several of the following terrain features to any such fights you orchestrate. (Do not forget, also, that some squares can contain more than one terrain feature. For example, a normal tree may be surrounded by heavy undergrowth.)

Illumination: Enough light filters through the tree canopy to brightly illuminate trails and clearings. Under the trees, dim light (20% miss chance) cloaks the forest floor.

Woodland Sounds: Background noise increases the DC of sound-based Perception checks by 2 per 10 ft., not 1.

Trail: A muddy, rutted 10 ft. wide trail winds its way through the trees. Movement on the trail is uninhibited.

Game Trail: A narrow trail winds its way through the trees. Tracks and droppings of various animals cover the ground.

Light Undergrowth: Vines and roots cover many non-trail squares, increasing the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2. It costs two squares of movement to enter such squares.

Heavy Undergrowth: Dense thorn bushes and other tangled growths make movement through these areas extremely difficult. It costs 4 squares of movement to enter such a square. It is impossible to run and charge through a square containing heavy undergrowth. Characters in heavy undergrowth gain concealment (30% miss chance) and a +5 circumstance bonus on Stealth checks.

Normal Trees: A creature standing in the same square as a tree (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 150, DC 15 Climb check) gains partial cover (+2 to AC, +1 on Reflex saves).

Massive Trees: Huge trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb check) fill an entire square. They provide cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves).

Fallen Tree: A fallen tree trunk provides cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves). Characters can clamber over it with a DC 5 Climb check or leap atop it with a DC 12 Acrobatics check. Characters on a fallen tree gain the benefits of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) but are considered balancing. Treat the fallen tree's canopy as heavy undergrowth.

Boggy Ground: Filled with mud or standing water about 1 ft. deep, it costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing boggy ground. Boggy ground increases the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

Stream: Normally no more than 2 ft. deep, it costs 2 squares of movement to enter any square containing a stream. If the stream has raised banks, those in the stream have cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves). Characters on the banks gain the benefits of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) against anyone in the stream.

WARRIORS OF THE BLEACHED SKULL

A variety of warriors, scouts and so on serve within the Bleached Skull's ranks. The stat blocks below depict those most commonly encountered. Refer to pages 12 - 13 for suggested encounters featuring these warriors.

BLEACHED SKULL WARRIOR CR 1 (XP 400)

Male gnoll
CE Medium humanoid (gnoll)
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2, Sense Motive +0
Speed 30 ft.
ACP -2
AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 13
(+2 armour [leather], +2 shield [heavy wooden], +1 natural)
Fort +4, **Ref** +0, **Will** +0
hp 11 (2 HD)
Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +3
Melee morningstar +3 (1d8+2)
Ranged javelin (range 30 ft.) +1 (1d6+2)
Atk Options Savagery
Abilities Str 15, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8
Feats Savagery
Skills as above
Languages Gnoll
Gear as above 3 gp, 6 sp

BLEACHED SKULL SERGEANT CR 3 (XP 800)

Male gnoll warrior 4
CE Medium humanoid (gnoll)
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2, Sense Motive +0
Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.
ACP -5; Acrobatics -5 (-9 jumping), Climb +3, Swim +3
AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18; **CMD** 18
(+5 armour [mwk scale mail], +2 shield [heavy wooden], +1 natural)
Fort +8, **Ref** +1, **Will** +1
hp 41 (6 HD)
Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +8
Melee mwk morningstar +9 (1d8+3)
Ranged javelin (range 30 ft.) +5 (1d6+3)
Atk Options Dazing Blow 1/day, Savagery, Staggering Blow 1/day
Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*
Abilities Str 16, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8
Feats Dazing Blow, Savagery, Staggering Blow
Skills as above
Languages Gnoll
Gear as above plus 12 gp, 31 sp

WARRIOR GARB

The tribe's warriors often wear simple pot helmets to which they affix the bleached skulls of vanquished enemies. This makes them look taller and adds to their fearsome reputation as terrifying warriors.

BLEACHED SKULL CHAMPION CR 4 (XP 1,200)

Male gnoll warrior 6
CE Medium humanoid (gnoll)
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +3, Sense Motive +0
Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.
ACP -7; Acrobatics -7 (-11 jumping), Climb +2, Swim +1
AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 20
(+8 armour [mwk half-plate], +2 shield [mwk heavy wooden], +1 natural)
Fort +10, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2
hp 64 (8 HD)
Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +7/+2; **CMB** +10
Melee mwk morningstar +11/+6 (1d8+3)
Ranged mwk javelin (range 30 ft.) +8/+3 (1d6+3)
Atk Options Dazing Blow 2/day, Savagery, Staggering Blow 2/day, Stunning Blow 2/day
Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*
Abilities Str 16, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8
Feats Dazing Blow, Savagery, Staggering Blow, Stunning Blow
Skills as above
Languages Gnoll
Gear as above plus 27 gp, 14 sp

BLEACHED SKULL CHIEFTAIN CR 7 (XP 3,200)

Male gnoll warrior 10
CE Large humanoid (gnoll)
Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5, Sense Motive +0
Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.
ACP -6; Acrobatics -7 (-11 jumping), Climb +4, Swim +3
AC 21, touch 8, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 26
(-1 size, -1 Dex, +9 armour [mwk full plate], +2 shield [mwk steel wooden], +2 natural)
Fort +14, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3
hp 122 (12 HD)
Space 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +11/+6; **CMB** +17
Melee +1 morningstar (reach 10 ft.) +16/+11 (2d6+6)
Ranged mwk javelin (range 30 ft.) +10/+5 (1d8+5)
Atk Options Dazing Blow 3/day, Savagery, Staggering Blow 3/day, Stunning Blow 3/day
Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2)
Abilities Str 20, Dex 8, Con 19, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8
Feats Dazing Blow, Improved Natural Armour, Savagery, Staggering Blow, Stunning Blow, Weapon Focus (morningstar)
Skills as above
Languages Gnoll
Gear as above plus 120 gp, 14 sp

SHAMAN GARB

Shaman fashion elaborate headgear from skulls and hang battered skulls to their belts. These clack together, making silent movement difficult (-2 penalty to Stealth checks).

SHAMANS OF THE BLEACHED SKULL

SHAMAN CR 5 (XP 1,600)

Male half-fiend gnoll adept 4
 CE Medium outsider
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5 (+7 familiar in arm's reach), Sense Motive +3 (+5 familiar in arm's reach)
Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)
ACP 0; Fly +13

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 17
 (+1 Dex, +3 natural, +1 deflection [*ring of protection* +1])
Immune poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10
Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +7; **SR** 16
hp 39 (6 HD); **DR** magic/5

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +6
Melee 2 claw +6 each (1d4+3) and bite +4 (1d6+1)
Atk Options Savagery, smite good 1/day (+6 damage)
Adept Spells Prepared (CL 4th; concentration +7)
 2nd—*sickening glare* (DC 15)
 1st—*cure light wounds*, *lightning lance* (DC 14), *obscuring wind* (DC 14)
 0—*detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *touch of fatigue* (DC 13)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th, concentration +9)
 3/day—*darkness*
 1/day—*deseccate*, *unholy blight* (DC 17)
Combat Gear *bone knife*

Abilities Str 17, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 12
SQ share spells (bat familiar), summon familiar (bat)
Feats Alertness^B, Improved Natural Armour, Multiattack, Savagery
Skills as above plus Handle Animal +6, Heal +12, Knowledge (nature) +7, Survival +11
Languages Common, Gnoll, empathic link (bat familiar)
Gear as above plus spell component pouch, holy symbol, 12 gp

GREAT SHAMAN CR 7 (XP 3,200)

Male half-fiend gnoll adept 8
 CE Medium outsider
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9 (+11 familiar in arm's reach), Sense Motive +3 (+5 familiar in arm's reach)
Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)
ACP 0; Fly +13

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 18
 (+1 Dex, +3 natural, +1 deflection [*ring of protection* +1])
Immune poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10
Fort +8, **Ref** +6, **Will** +10; **SR** 18
hp 63 (10 HD); **DR** magic/5

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +7
Melee 2 claw +7 each (1d6+3) and bite +5 (1d6+1)
Atk Options Savagery, smite good 1/day (+10 damage)
Adept Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +11)
 3rd—*greater lightning lance* (DC 16)
 2nd—*barkskin*, *sickening glare* (2; DC 15)
 1st—*bless*, *lightning lance* (2) (DC 14), *obscuring wind* (DC 14)
 0—*detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *touch of fatigue* (DC 13)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th, concentration +13)
 3/day—*darkness*, *poison* (DC 17)
 1/day—*contagion* (DC 16), *deseccate*, *unholy blight* (DC 17)
Combat Gear *rod of curses*, *potion of blur*, *potion of cure serious wounds*

Abilities Str 17, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 12
SQ share spells (bat familiar), summon familiar (bat)
Feats Alertness^B, Improved Natural Armour, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack, Savagery
Skills as above plus Handle Animal +10, Heal +12, Knowledge (nature) +9, Survival +13
Languages Common, Gnoll, empathic link (bat familiar)
Gear as above plus *cloak of resistance* +1, spell component pouch, holy symbol, 33 gp

BAT FAMILIAR CR – (XP 0)

N Diminutive animal
Init +2; **Senses** blindsense 20 ft., low-light vision; Perception +8, Sense Motive +2
Speed 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)
ACP 0; Fly +17

AC 18, touch 16, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 6
 (+4 size, +2 Dex, +2 natural)
Fort +2, **Ref** +4 (improved evasion), **Will** +6
hp 19 (6 HD)

Space 1 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +1
Melee bite (reach 0 ft.) +9 (1d3-4)
Atk Options deliver touch spells

Abilities Str 1, Dex 15, Con 6, Int 7, Wis 14, Cha 5
Feats Weapon Finesse
Skills as above plus Handle Animal -1, Heal +8, Knowledge (nature) +4, Survival +8
Languages Common, empathic link

BAT FAMILIAR CR – (XP 0)

N Diminutive animal
Init +2; **Senses** blindsense 20 ft., low-light vision; Perception +12, Sense Motive +2
Speed 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)
ACP 0; Fly +17

AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 18; **CMD** 8
 (+4 size, +2 Dex, +4 natural)
Fort +3, **Ref** +4 (improved evasion), **Will** +8
hp 31 (10 HD)

Space 1 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +3
Melee bite (reach 0 ft.) +11 (1d3-4)
Atk Options deliver touch spells

Abilities Str 1, Dex 15, Con 6, Int 9, Wis 14, Cha 5
Feats Weapon Finesse
Skills as above plus Handle Animal +3, Heal +8, Knowledge (nature) +6, Survival +10
Languages Common, empathic link, speak with master and bats

SCOUTS & SPECIALISTS OF THE BLEACHED SKULL

BLEACHED SKULL SCOUT CR 3 (XP 800)

Male gnoll expert 2/warrior 2

CE Medium humanoid (gnoll)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7, Sense Motive +0

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Climb +7, Stealth +7, Swim +7

AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 17

(+3 armour [mwk studded leather], +1 shield [mwk light wooden], +1 natural)

Fort +7, **Ref** +0, **Will** +3

hp 37 (6 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +7

Melee mwk morningstar +8 (1d8+3)

Ranged javelin (range 30 ft.) +4 (1d6+3)

Atk Options Racial Enemy (human), Savagery, Sudden Strike

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds* (2)

Abilities Str 16, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8

Feats Racial Enemy (human), Savagery, Sudden Strike

Skills as above plus Knowledge (geography) +3, Knowledge (nature) +3, Survival +5

Languages Gnoll

Gear as above plus belt pouch, flint and steel, 12 sp

BLEACHED SKULL SNIPER CR 4 (XP 1,200)

Male advanced gnoll expert 2/warrior 2

CE Medium humanoid (gnoll)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9, Sense Motive +2

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Climb +11, Stealth +9, Swim +11

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 21

(+2 Dex, +3 armour [+1 studded leather], +1 shield [mwk light wooden], +3 natural)

Fort +9, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5

hp 49 (6 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +9

Melee morningstar +9 (1d8+5)

Ranged mwk heavy crossbow (range 120 ft.) +7 (1d10/19-20)
bolts □□□□□ □□□□□

Atk Options Racial Enemy (human), Savagery, Sudden Strike

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds* (2)

Abilities Str 20, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 12

Feats Racial Enemy (human), Savagery, Sudden Strike

Skills as above plus Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (nature) +6, Survival +9

Languages Common, Gnoll

Gear as above plus belt pouch, flint and steel, 12 sp

SCOUT GARB

Scouts dress similarly to warriors, except they often festoon their bodies with foliage to aid concealment (+2 circumstance bonus to Stealth checks).

Ahead of the warbands, the Bleached Skull despatch scouts to discover their enemies' weaknesses and snipers to sow chaos and confusion in their ranks.

NON-COMBATANT TRIBAL MEMBERS

Not all members of a tribe are warriors. Any tribal lair contains numerous non-combatants including females as well as young gnolls. Elderly gnolls (with the exception of shaman) are extremely rare. Use these stats to simulate such non-combatants.

BLEACHED SKULL YOUNG CR 1/2 (XP200)

Male or female gnoll

CE Small humanoid (gnoll)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2, Sense Motive +0

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Stealth +6

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 12

(+1 size, +2 Dex, +2 armour [leather])

Fort +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0

hp 7 (2 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +1

Melee unarmed strike +2 (1d2, nonlethal)

Abilities Str 11, Dex 14, Con 9, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8

Feats Improved Initiative

Skills as above

Languages Gnoll

Gear as above

BLEACHED SKULL NON-COMBATANT CR 1/2 (XP 200)

Male or female gnoll

CE Medium humanoid (gnoll)

Init -2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +3, Sense Motive +1

Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0

AC 11, touch 8, flat-footed 11; **CMD** 10

(-2 Dex, +2 armour [leather], +1 natural)

Fort +3, **Ref** -2, **Will** +1

hp 9 (2 HD)

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2

Melee dagger +2 (1d4+1/19-20)

Ranged dagger (range 10 ft.) -1 (1d4+1/19-20)

Atk Options Sudden Strike

Abilities Str 12, Dex 7, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 10

Feats Sudden Strike

Skills as above plus Handle Animal +5

Languages Gnoll

Gear as above

TYPICAL ENCAMPMENT

The map below depicts a small encampment of Bleached Skull Gnolls. A GM can use the map as the focus for a quick adventure, perhaps as the location of an isolated group of these ferocious warriors. Use the information on pages 6 – 7 to breathe life into this place.

AREA FEATURES

The encampment has the following features of note:

Thick Gorse Bushes: Near impenetrable gorse bushes grow about the valley's bounds. Characters trying to push through them must make a CMB check (CMD 18). Success indicates that they have forced their way 5 ft. through the bush. Success by 5 or more indicates they have moved 10 ft through the bush. Failure indicates they take 1 point of damage from the bush's thick thorns and make no progress.

Palisade: The 10 ft. high palisade of sharpened tree trunks (hardness 5, hp 20, DC 23 Break) has no walkway; it simply serves to channel attackers into a narrow front. Skulls hang from the palisade in a macabre display of the tribe's might.

Guard Huts: Two wattle and daub guard huts (hardness 5, hp 5, DC 15 Break) ward the valley's approaches. Raised 10 ft.

above the ground on great tree trunks (hardness 5, hp 200, DC 20 Climb) access to each is by a steep ramp (which counts as difficult terrain). The roofed huts have a good view of the surrounds and are guarded by 1d2 warriors.

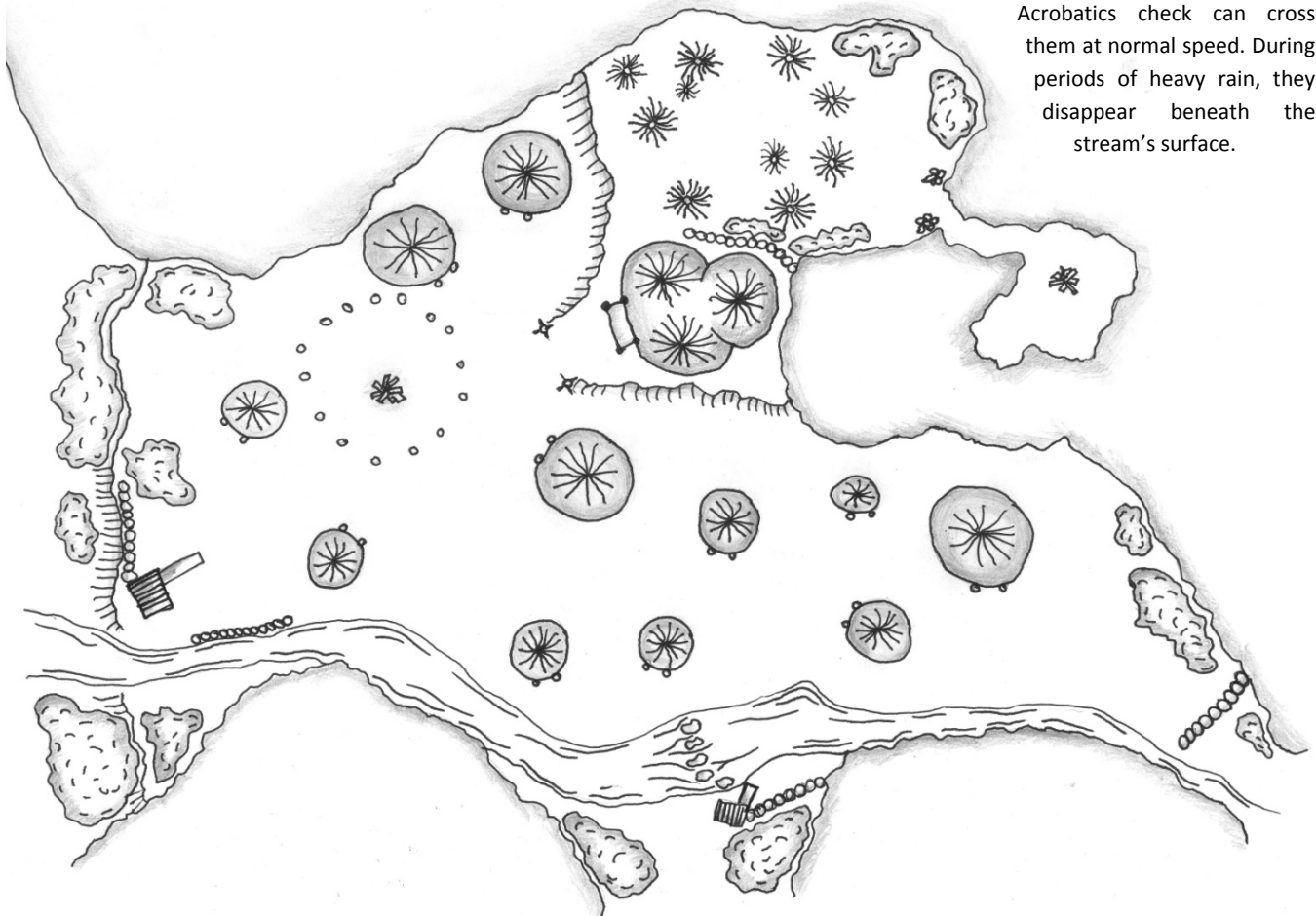
Huts: Constructed of wattle and daub (hardness 5, hp 5, DC 15 Break), the tribe's huts are partially sunken into the ground. Spacious within (most are over 20 ft radius) the interior is dank and musty. Dried and dirty bracken covers the ground.

Chieftain's Hut: The largest structure in the valley, this hut occupies a commanding position. Buried beneath its floor lies the tribe's accumulated wealth. The chieftain accompanied by his three mates dwells within.

Sacred Grove: A small grove of ancient trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb; provides cover [+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves]) fills one part of the valley. A shaman and a bloodspawn treant dwell within.

Stream: A swift stream courses through the valley. About five-foot deep it is fordable along its entire length. The gnolls, however, have manoeuvred great stones into the stream to act as stepping stones. The stepping stones count as difficult terrain,

but characters making a DC 12 Acrobatics check can cross them at normal speed. During periods of heavy rain, they disappear beneath the stream's surface.



BLOODSPAWN TREANT

A huge, gnarled tree stands at the centre of a coiled network of thick, twisted roots and broken earth. Sickly red moss cloaks the tree's trunk and hangs from its branches.

BLOODSPAWN TREANT

CR 9 (XP 6,400)

NE Huge plant

Init -1; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +20, Sense Motive +3
Speed 30 ft.

ACP 0; Stealth +8 (+16 in forests)

AC 21, touch 7, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 30
(-2 size, -1 Dex, +14 natural)

Immune mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, morale effects, patterns, and phantasms), paralysis, poison, polymorph, sleep effects and stunning

Fort +14, **Ref** +3, **Will** +7

hp 133 (14 HD); blood sap; **DR** slashing/10

Blood Sap (Ex) The blood of those sacrificed to it has infected the sap of a bloodspawn treant. If a slashing or piercing weapon damages a bloodspawn treant in melee, thick, partially congealed, corrosive blood spews forth from the wound. If the attacker is adjacent to the bloodspawn treant it takes 1d6+14 acid damage (DC 21 Reflex halves). The save is Constitution-based.

Space 15 ft.; **Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +21

Melee 2 slams (reach 15 ft.) +18 each (3d6+9)

Ranged rock (range 180 ft.) +7 (2d6+9)

Atk Options Awesome Blow, Power Attack, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, double damage against objects, trample (3d6+13, DC 28)

Double Damage Against Objects (Ex) A bloodspawn treant that makes a full-attack against an object or structure deals double damage.

Trample (Ex) As a full-round action, a bloodspawn treant can overrun all Large or smaller creatures in its path. Targets of a trample can make an attack of opportunity (at a -4 penalty) or make a DC 28 Reflex save to take half damage (3d6+13).

Special Actions raise the dead

Raise the Dead (Su) At will, a bloodspawn treant can command the corpses of those sacrificed to it to rise from the dead and to follow its bidding. It can command up to 2 HD of zombies per HD it possesses. The commanded undead must maintain line of sight to their master. If they do not, they de-animate.

Abilities Str 29, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 13

SQ plant traits

Feats Ability Focus (trample), Awesome Blow, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills as above plus Intimidate +11, Knowledge (nature) +11;

Racial Modifiers +8 Stealth in forests

Languages Gnoll, Sylvan, Treant

Environment any forest

Organisation solitary or grove (2-7)

Bloodspawn treants are the twisted result of the Bleached Skull shamans' sacrificial practises. Hidden in their groves, the shaman feed the ancient trees of the deep woods living sacrifices. The tribe's depraved shamans open the veins of their sacrifices before burying them alive below the roots of the sacred trees. The trees' roots greedily feed upon the sacrifices' vital fluids while the final doom-laden screams of the damned eventually infused the trees with an atavistic bloodlust driven by a malevolent, primal sentience.

Bloodspawn treants instinctively recognise the shaman tending their groves as allies and do not attack tribe members. They do not normally stray far from their groves, except in times of war or when their blood lust becomes irresistible.

ECOLOGY & SOCIETY

Unnatural creatures created by the frenzied death-screams of uncountable sacrifices, bloodspawn treants are without a natural ecological niche. Born of blood and suffering they are willing allies to the Bleached Skull. Driven by an almost unquenchable thirst for blood they are worshipped as living embodiments of the natural spirits worshipped by the tribe.

HUMAN BLOOD ZOMBIE

CR –

Thick, cloying mud clings to the partly decomposed frame of this living corpse. Ragged, deep wounds, surrounded by caked, dried blood, pierce the creature's forearms and neck.

NE Medium undead

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

Speed 30 ft.

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 14
(+2 natural)

Immune mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless)

Fort +0, **Ref** +0, **Will** +3

hp 12 (2 HD); maddening blood

Maddening Blood (Ex) An adjacent opponent damaging a blood zombie is splattered with the creature's blood and must make a DC 11 Will save or be affected as if targeted by *lesser confusion*.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +4

Melee slam +4 (1d6+4)

Atk Options staggered

Staggered (Ex) Slow and ungainly, a blood zombie can only take a single move or standard action each round. A blood zombie can move its speed and attack as a charge action.

Abilities Str 17, Dex 10, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 10

SQ undead traits

Feats Toughness^B

COMBAT & TACTICS

In battle, a bloodspawn treant use a mix of sheer brutality and cunning to defeat its foes. If fighting within its sacred grove, a bloodspawn treant uses *raise the dead* to summon those buried below its roots while it hangs back and hurls rocks, branches ripped from other trees and so on at intruders.

If an intruder engages a bloodspawn treant in melee, it delights in crushing its enemy with its prodigious strength. It uses Improved Bull Rush or Awesome Blow to force attackers back into the midst of its blood zombie servants or Power Attack to pulverise anyone resisting such attempts. If groups of enemies bunch up, it uses *trample* repeatedly to crush and disperse them.

BLOODSPAWN TREANT LORE

A character making a Knowledge (nature) check may know some information about bloodspawn treants. A successful check reveals all information gained by a lesser check.

DC 19: This is a bloodspawn treant, a foul abomination of nature. Bloodspawn treants are created by bloody sacrifice to ancient nature spirits.

DC 24: Bloodspawn treants lack many of a treant's normal abilities but can raise the dead to do their bidding. Those striking a bloodspawn treant with slashing or piercing weapons are often sprayed with the corrosive sap coursing through its trunk.

BLOOD ZOMBIE

Blood zombies are variant zombies created by bloodspawn treants. They differ from normal zombies in several ways.

Defensive: A blood zombie does not gain DR slashing/5.

Offensive: A blood zombie gains the following special attack.

Maddening Blood (Ex): An adjacent opponent damaging a blood zombie is splattered with the creature's blood and must make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 blood zombie's

HD + Cha modifier) or be affected by *lesser confusion*.

Special Note: Always encountered with their "parent" bloodspawn treant, blood zombies do not grant XP when slain.

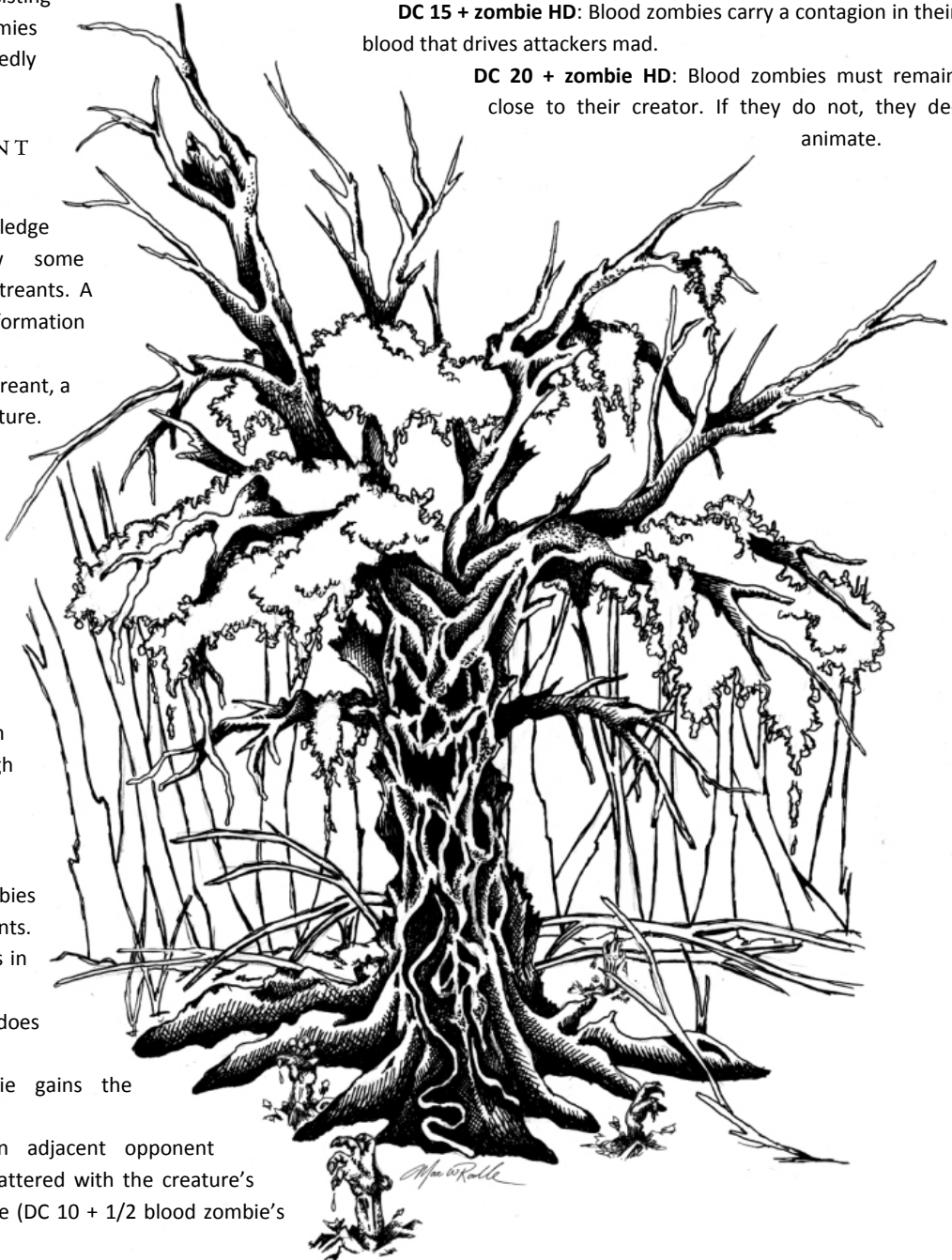
BLOOD ZOMBIE LORE

A character making a Knowledge (religion) check may know some information about blood zombies. A character previously identifying a bloodspawn treant, gets a +2 bonus to this check. A successful check reveals all information gained by a lesser check.

DC 10 + zombie HD: This is a blood zombie, a variant zombie type created by bloodspawn treants.

DC 15 + zombie HD: Blood zombies carry a contagion in their blood that drives attackers mad.

DC 20 + zombie HD: Blood zombies must remain close to their creator. If they do not, they de-animate.



READING STAT BLOCKS

Bleached Skull Gnolls includes all necessary stat blocks; these notes explain how to read them. Unless otherwise noted, all listed scores include all the creature's normal modifiers. Stat blocks appear in four sections: basic, defensive, offensive and supplemental.

BASIC

Name, CR and XP: The monster's name appears first followed by its CR and how many experience points it is worth. If more than one creature is encountered, a bracketed number lists how many appear.

Appearance: The GM can read aloud or paraphrase this section. If a picture depicts the creature, this section may be omitted.

Sex, Race, Class and Level: If the monster has class levels these appear here along with its race and sex. The first noted class is the creature's favoured class.

Alignment and Type: The creature's abbreviated alignment and its type (including applicable subtypes).

Init and Senses: This creature's initiative modifier appears before any special senses (such as scent or darkvision) and the creature's Perception and Sense Motive scores. If the creature has special Perception-based abilities, such as trapfinding or stonecunning, these appear here.

Speed: The creature's modified land speed appears first along with any other relevant speeds (such as climb or fly). If the creature's base land speed is different to its modified speed this is also listed.

ACP and Movement Skills: ACP presents the creature's normal armour check penalty modifier. If the creature's Acrobatics, Climb, Escape Artist, Fly, Ride, Stealth or Swim modifier differs from the relevant ability modifier minus its armour check penalty, these skills appear here.

DEFENSIVE

AC: The creature's normal, touch and flat-footed AC along with its CMD; additionally this section lists any defensive powers or abilities that affects the creature's AC.

Immune, Resist and Weaknesses: If the creature has immunity, resistance or a vulnerability to an effect or condition it appears here.

Fort, Ref and Will: The creature's saving throw modifiers along with any conditional modifiers and defensive powers (such as evasion) and spell resistance appear here.

HP: The creature's full, normal hit points along with the number of hit dice it possesses. A bracketed hit point total indicates that the creature is injured. If the creature has damage reduction or hardness it appears here.

OFFENSIVE

Space, Base Atk and CMB: The creature's space, base attack bonus and CMB.

Melee: This section lists a creature's melee attacks. If the attack has a reach that is not 5 ft. it is listed here. Each attack includes attack bonus and damage information. If the attack has the default critical hit characteristics (20/x2) this information is omitted.

Ranged: This section lists the creature's ranged attacks. It always includes the attack's range. Each attack includes attack bonus and damage information. If the attack has the default critical hit characteristics (20/x2) this information is omitted.

Atk Options: This section lists any abilities or feats that can affect the creature's attacks. Subsequent listings describe all but the most basic abilities in more depth.

Special Actions: This section lists any useful abilities that a creature could use in battle. Subsequent listings describe all but the most basic abilities in more depth.

Spells and Spell-Like Abilities: The creature's caster level, along with its concentration modifier and domains appears in brackets before the main spell listing. If one or more of the creature's spells require a touch attack, the relevant attack bonus is included. Spells available appear in reverse order from highest to lowest level. Spells denoted ^D are domain spells. If applicable, a spell's DC is also provided.

Combat Gear: This section lists any combat-related equipment the creature possesses.

SUPPLEMENTAL

Abilities and Special Qualities: These sections list the creature's ability scores and any special qualities that do not appear anywhere else in its stat block.

Feats: An alphabetical listing of all the creature's feats.

Skills and Languages: These sections list any skills the creature possesses that have not already appeared in the stat block and all languages spoken or understood. Any language-based special abilities also appear here.

Gear: This section lists any gear not already listed in the creature's stat block. This section hardly ever contains weapons or armour as they usually appear in the relevant sections above.

Spellbook: The contents of the creature's spellbook and its barred schools.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Special abilities appear in the section to which they are best suited. Thus, offensive abilities appear with a creature's attacks while defensive ones appear with its other defences. Full write-ups of irrelevant powers (such as those that could not affect combat) are omitted. The effects of abilities that factor into a creature's normal attacks or defences have already been included in the relevant calculations.

Feral denizens of the deep woods, the Bleached Skull Gnolls are creatures of atavistic desires and sadistic lusts. Ferocious warriors and terrible foes they worship the primal, blood soaked spirits of the woodlands, and war with their neighbours for booty and sacrifices to bury alive beneath their sacred trees.

Bleached Skull Gnolls presents six new feats, six new spells and three new magic items all useable by members of the tribe. Additionally, it contains ten stat blocks as well as the full details of the tribe's fearsome ally, the bloodspawn treant. By default, the tribe dwells deep in the Tangled Wood (an ancient woodland covering much of the Lonely Coast) but can live in any densely wooded area. *The Lonely Coast* is a free 30 page extensively bookmarked PDF available from Raging Swan's website.

Visit us at ragingswan.com to learn more.

