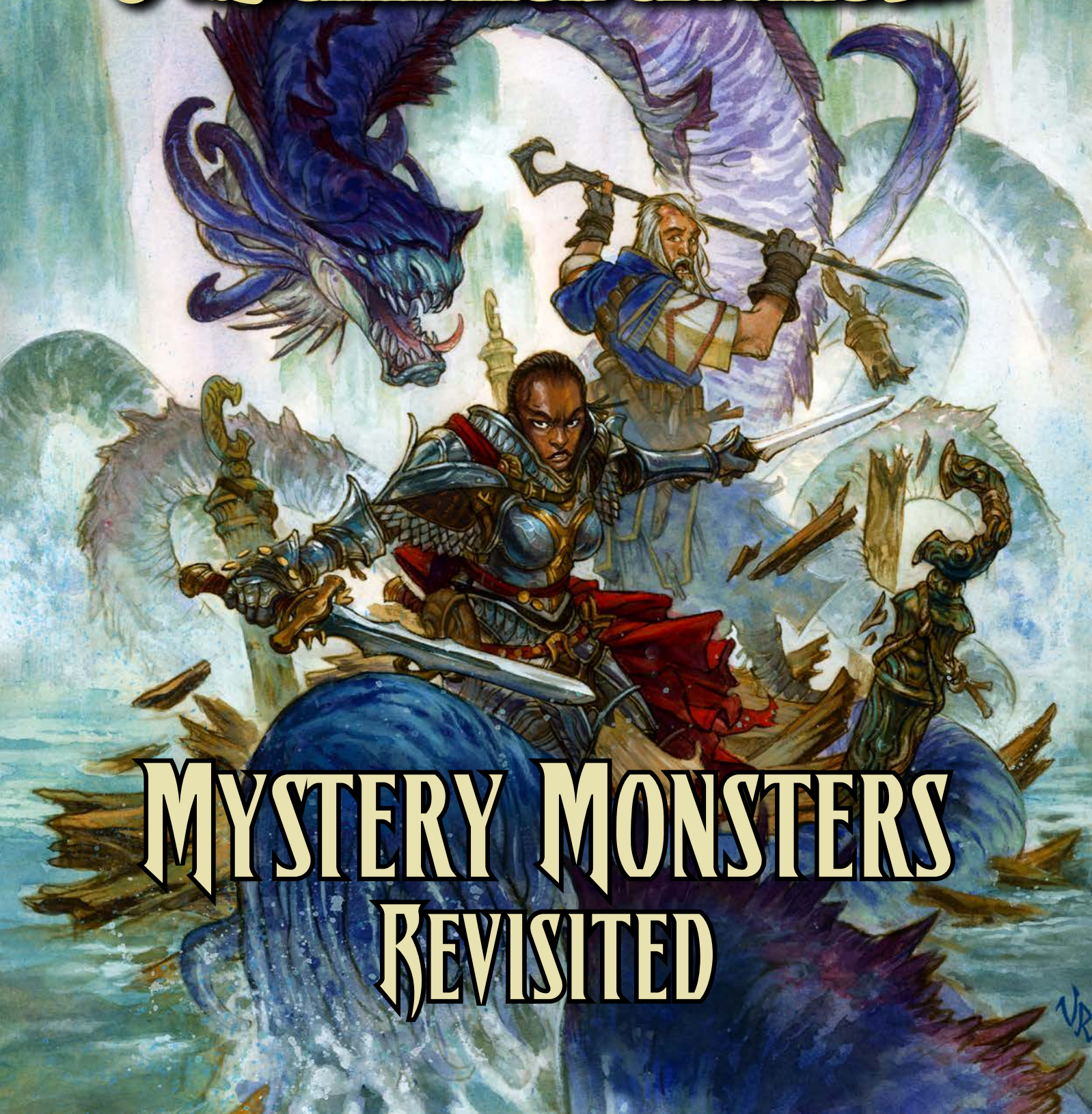


# PATHFINDER<sup>®</sup>

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## MYSTERY MONSTERS REVISITED

# The Beasts Behind the Tales



## Bunyip

Seal-like beast that hunts coasts and waterways, with sharp fangs and a terrifying roar.

**Source:** Australian aboriginal folklore



## Sandpoint Devil

Winged and fanged equine beast that stands upright and breathes fire.

**Source:** American folklore (inspired by the Jersey Devil)



## Chupacabra

Spine-backed vampiric monster that sucks the blood from livestock, particularly goats.

**Source:** Latin American folklore



## Sasquatch

Primitive but gentle ape-like humanoid that lives in the remote depths of coniferous forests.

**Source:** Native American folklore



## Death Worm

Huge and hideous desert worm that oozes poison and spits acid to kill its prey at a distance.

**Source:** Mongolian folklore



## Sea Serpent

Gigantic serpentine predator that slithers through the ocean and can capsize entire ships, devouring the sailors.

**Source:** Multiple myths



## Mokele-Mbembe

Enormous, long-necked dinosaur-like creature that hunts jungle swamps and rivers.

**Source:** Congo River basin folklore



## Water Orm

Deep-dwelling lake monster that rises from the depths to snatch prey with its long neck.

**Source:** European folklore



## Mothman

Moth-winged humanoid with glowing eyes, believed to affect its victims' destinies and bear dire portents.

**Source:** American folklore



## Yeti

The Wild Man of the Snows, a bestial humanoid that dwells on icy mountaintops.

**Source:** Himalayan folklore

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### On the Cover



Vinod Rams depicts Seelah and Ezren struggling to stay afloat while being assailed by a sea serpent not keen on intruders traversing its prized fjords.

## Reference

This book refers to several other Pathfinder Roleplaying Game products using the following abbreviations, yet these additional supplements are not required to make use of this book. Readers interested in references to Pathfinder RPG hardcovers can find the complete rules of these books available online for free at [paizo.com/prd](http://paizo.com/prd).

<i>Bestiary</i>	B1	<i>The Inner Sea World Guide</i>	ISWG
<i>Bestiary 2</i>	B2	<i>Ultimate Combat</i>	UC
<i>Bestiary 3</i>	B3		



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# A MYSTERY'S AFOOT

**B**igfoot. Chupacabra. Mothman. More plausible than purely mythological beings, yet also far from accepted by the scientific community, the monsters known as cryptids hold a special place in the imaginations of their native societies. Some, like the yeti or the bunyip, have been around for generations, their stories passed down within the cultures that first conceived of (or discovered) them, while others are astonishingly recent—the dread chupacabra, for instance, didn't exist in popular culture before a series of mysterious animal attacks in Puerto Rico in 1995. Yet regardless of their many differences, the cryptids in this book all have one thing in common that differentiates them from the many other monsters we've pulled from mythology and folklore over the years: an uncertainty as to whether these monsters are truly make-believe, or rather—like giant squids—simply rare and elusive creatures still waiting to be discovered and documented by biologists.

It's no secret that many Paizo staffers have a deep and abiding love for the enigmatic and oft-controversial cryptids that may or may not stalk the very Earth on which we reside. (Ask anyone in the office what their favorite cryptid is, and they can all probably tell you off the tops of their heads.) So naturally, over the years we've done everything we can to bring some of these mysterious and misunderstood monsters into the public eye. After all, if we can't live in a world where yetis are a fact of life, at least we can play in one!

The bunyip appeared in the first-ever Pathfinder Adventure Path, and after that the floodgates were open for more of these mysterious real-world monsters to enter our game world as well. Whether they act as mighty antagonists that take the forefront of an encounter (see the deadly Sandpoint Devil) or lurk in the background and manipulate events from afar (à la the mothman), these legendary creatures make for fantastic foes and unforgettable adventures.

## In This Book

The following is a brief overview of the various cryptids described in this book. For those monsters that have appeared in previous Pathfinder RPG hardcover books, the stat blocks for the “standard” versions of these creatures can be found in their original write-ups. The sea serpent and yeti come from the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*; the bunyip, chupacabra, death worm, mothman, and water orm come from *Bestiary 2*; and the sasquatch comes from *Bestiary 3*. The stat blocks for the Sandpoint Devil

(*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide*) and mokele-mbembe (*Pathfinder Adventure Path #39*) have been reprinted in this book for your convenience.

**Bunyip:** Ravenous seal-shark monsters that possess a terrible thirst for blood and a terrifying roar, bunyips are coastal predators that fear virtually nothing (and for good reason). Anthony Pryor writes of how these amphibious menaces terrorize nearby settlements and deplete local animal populations.

**Chupacabra:** The notorious, predatory chupacabra is a frustrating threat to the goat herders and ranchers of arid hills and inland plains, and Amber E. Scott goes into extensive detail on how these feral bloodsuckers continue to evade capture.

**Death Worm:** One method of killing is enough for most desert-dwelling beasts, but the death worm takes predation to the next level with its corrosive flesh, acidic spit, and lightning breath. Ray Vallese dives headfirst into death worm tunnels to investigate these elusive burrowing stalkers.

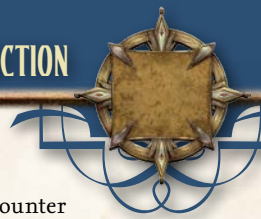
**Mokele-Mbembe:** This giant, river-dwelling beast is a harbinger of both fear and awe for the jungle tribes near its hunting grounds. Anthony Pryor describes how the number of natives who honor the mokele-mbembe rivals the number who would rather see it extinct.

**Mothman:** Alien harbingers of fate and envoys of the future, mothmen ensure that their indecipherable prophecies are fulfilled by acting through their subtly manipulated intermediaries. Anthony Pryor explores the myriad calamities these heralds of doom presage, as well as the various means by which they influence their chosen human emissaries.

**Sandpoint Devil:** The Sandpoint Devil has long been a source of fear and gossip for the farmers who eke out their livings in the hinterlands surrounding the sleepy town of Sandpoint. Ray Vallese's tribute to this equine horror reveals why so many of Sandpoint's residents have trouble sleeping at night.

**Sasquatch:** Towering over even the tallest of humans, the sasquatches of the distant continent to the west serve as reclusive protectors of the ancient forests they dwell in. Amber E. Scott's foray into the world of the elusive “Bigfoot” reveals its methods of hiding and foraging—plus details on how it interacts with both native fey creatures and intruding humanoids.

**Sea Serpent:** Writhing terrors of the deep, sea serpents have long pervaded the yarns of well-traveled sailors in salt-blasted taprooms. Richard Pett explains what



makes these dreaded destroyers tick, as well as how their humanoid foes track down such elusive quarry.

**Water Orm:** The water orm is known by dozens of names throughout just as many cultures, though this does not mean its nature is any better understood. Richard Pett's thorough examination of these lake-dwelling monsters sheds light on their secretive habits and the legends they inspire among their humanoid neighbors.

**Yeti:** Abominable snowmen that prefer the isolation of their lonely mountaintops to the scornful villages of civilized peoples, yetis prove far less savage than lowland-dwelling humanoids think. Ray Vallese uncovers how the most dangerous threat to these insightful denizens of the cold might be the strange extraplanar gateways they so fiercely guard.

## Cryptids in fantasy Games

In the real world, the line between mythology and cryptozoology is easily defined—we know, for instance, that flying, fire-breathing dragons do not exist on this world, but many people remain less certain about fiends such as the chupacabra. The thought of sighting or even capturing an entirely new species of animal drives many people to take up exploring and real-life adventuring across the globe.

Generating this same level of wonder and fervor in a fantasy roleplaying game can be a challenge, as most of the inhabitants of a fantasy world already encounter unique and dangerous creatures on a day-to-day basis. Each of the 10 entries in this book gives specific advice for how to integrate a given cryptid into your campaign, but you can also use the following general guidelines for creating mystique in your games and making sure your mystery monsters live up to that title.

**Foreshadowing:** Unexplained, even seemingly nonsensical events can speak louder than words, and the plight of a village being attacked by a bunyip becomes all the more dire if the PCs come across a slew of riverside corpses a few days beforehand. If you plan on making a cryptid a prominent foe in your game, inject plenty of foreshadowing into your adventures. Each article in this book discusses specific evidence of cryptid activity, which can be used to show the PCs the aftermath

of a stalking monster long before they actually encounter the thing.

**Rumors:** Word of mouth is the best way to get a name out there, and this is doubly true for monsters that terrorize settlements or the wilds around their lairs. After enough time and activity, a creature that plagues a group of people eventually receives at least one local moniker, and the combination of this nickname and the jumbled details of its reported sightings and attacks can remain in a community for years. Widespread fear and gossip go a long way to add flavor to an elusive beast, as do contradictory stories or legends (some say it only comes out at dusk, but others claim to hear its calls across the village green at high noon). These details can lend further mystery to a cryptid like “the Woundwalker of Salune,” creating a much different atmosphere than if the locals simply referred to it as a chupacabra.

**Satisfying Conclusion:** Just like with great movies, the end to a good adventure doesn't necessarily need to spell out everything and tie up all the loose threads. Though you should certainly reward PCs who manage to hunt down and slay a mystery monster with a satisfying conclusion (possibly including the dead body of the monster in question), don't feel forced into revealing all of the details of the creature once it's been adequately dealt with. A dead chupacabra is still a chupacabra, and if the PCs bring back the monster's body, superstitious villagers might want to bury the corpse in consecrated land, or scholars might enlist the PCs to help further scientific knowledge with a grotesque autopsy.





## BUNYIP

Our guides warned us not to cross the river, but we foolishly insisted on venturing into the muddy water, thinking that surely our numbers were sufficient to dissuade any of the fabled river beasts. We had made it halfway across when a terrifying roar ripped through our bones and shook us to the core. It's hard to say what came first after that—the flashing white teeth, the crashing dorsal fins, or the gore erupting from the churning water. By the time the mist cleared and I regained my senses, the beast had claimed Gbalana and young Maret, and our guides were rushing the survivors to the other side of the river. We spent the rest of the day scrubbing our clothes clean of our lost comrades' blood.

—Excerpt from the journal of Carmella Gallatin,  
Pathfinder Society naturalist

The deadly bunyip combines the most terrifying aspects of sharks and pinnipeds. Those who have seen it and survived claim that its hunger is at once ravenous and haphazard—it clumsily tears through flesh with jagged teeth and thrashes violently in the chaos it creates. Its roar sends fear like ripples through its foes, and any who don't flee immediately soon come to regret their decision.

Jungle natives and coastal fisherfolk know that to hunt the bunyip is futile. When it wishes to be seen, it emerges from the water, never a moment too soon and always on its own terms. The murky shallows where a bunyip resides obscure its mottled hide from view, and when a bunyip chooses keep hidden instead of using its roar, its prey only notice its presence the moment it surfaces in a flurry of violence.

A bunyip's brutality and the efficiency with which it strikes ensure that prey rarely escape the attack, making knowledge of the creature sparse. Tribes often come up with their own folklore regarding local bunyips, attributing the beasts to angry spirits or primal god-beings. Societies closer to civilization typically claim these beasts to be little more than aquatic monsters, but the carnage of their attacks and their slippery nature invoke superstition in even the most secular citizens.

## Evidence

Evidence of bunyip predation—savagely mutilated bodies; disappearances near rivers, waterfronts, estuaries, and shallow coastal waters; and the decline of animal populations—might initially appear identical to signs of attacks by similar creatures who share their environment, such as crocodiles, orcas, and leopard seals. However, closer inspection of a victim quickly reveals unusual clues: teeth marks like a serrated blade, incredible loss of blood, and a pallid complexion as though the creature had been scared to death, or died while in a state of extreme fear.

Where a bunyip lurks, other creatures face extinction. Bunyips have insatiable appetites, and it is not uncommon for a single bunyip to extinguish all of the aquatic fauna in the area. Their favored prey are simply any aquatic or coastal creatures smaller than themselves. For local peoples, dark times follow in the wake of a bunyip's emergence—once-plentiful schools of fish disappear, crustaceans scurry to find safer beaches, and seals start showing up only in pieces.

A bunyip's jaws are much smaller than a crocodile's yet only slightly less powerful. Rather than smashing bones and clamping onto targets, bunyips concentrate on tearing away large strips of flesh and letting their victims bleed out in a short span of time. When not actively hunting, bunyips sharpen their jagged teeth (and tusks, in the case of some bunyips) on nearby rocks and thick

## BUNYIP VARIETIES

The bunyip is a highly adaptable and elusive species that has largely defied attempts to study or categorize it. The bunyip described in *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* is the most typical variety, but numerous other types exist as well.

**Arctic Bunyip (CR +0):** Adapted to cold and icy climes, arctic bunyips have thick hides that protect them from the harsh elements of the northlands they dwell in. An arctic bunyip's extra body fat gives it cold resistance 10, as well as an additional +2 natural armor bonus to its AC.

**Muck Bunyip (CR +2):** The large bunyips that dwell in stinking, rotting parts of the world—such as ancient swamps, festering bogs, and stagnant rivers—are known as muck bunyips. These formidable individuals have powerful tusks that they use to dig through silt and to attack foes. A muck bunyip is Large, has 3 additional Hit Dice, gains a +2 natural armor bonus to its AC, and in place of its bite has a gore attack that deals 2d6 points of damage and has a chance of inflicting a potent disease upon its victims (see the example bunyip at the end of this chapter). A muck bunyip's Improved Critical and Weapon Focus feats apply to its gore attack, rather than its bite.

**Oceanic Bunyip (CR +1):** The bunyips that live along coasts and more remote oceanic bays are particularly tough, since they must compete for food with other deadly predators, such as sharks and orcas. Oceanic bunyips have large, shark-like dorsal fins, a swim speed of 60 feet, and a tail slap attack that deals 1d8 points of damage. An oceanic bunyip can, as a full-round action, swim up to four times its swim speed (240 feet for most oceanic bunyips).

logs, leaving revealing gashes and scrapes. Since they are amphibious, bunyips leave evidence both above and below water. When a bunyip crawls onto shore, its long body and flippers leave a trail similar to that of a seal, albeit much larger and often in territory where no seal should roam.

The telltale sign of a nearby bunyip is the beast's fearsome roar. The cry of a bunyip can echo for miles, and though only nearby creatures experience the supernatural dread instilled by this ravenous call, it is nonetheless a chilling sound for those who hear it in the dark of night and know the terrible monster is about to claim yet another victim.

## Ecology

The bunyip shares characteristics with both seals and sharks, leading some to speculate that the species is the result of malign magical interbreeding. This would certainly explain the creature's heavy, cylindrical body,

## BUNYIP FEATS

The following feats are available to bunyips.

### Breach

Using its powerful tail to charge at an incredible speed, a bunyip can explode through the water's surface and get the jump on terrestrial prey.

**Prerequisites:** Str 15, bunyip.

**Benefit:** While underwater, the bunyip can make a special charge attack against a creature on land. As long as the target is no farther away than half the bunyip's swim speed (25 feet for most bunyips) from the body of water the bunyip is attacking from, the bunyip can break through the surface of the water and continue its charge as it soars through the air and toward the target of its attack. The bunyip can still only move up to twice its swim speed while making a breach attack. This attack otherwise follows all the normal rules for a charge attack.

### Improved Roar

Particularly old or powerful bunyips have ear-piercing cries that instill terror into those near and far.

**Prerequisites:** Con 17, bunyip, roar special attack.

**Benefit:** The bunyip's roar ability is enhanced so that it affects all hearing creatures with 8 or fewer Hit Dice within a 200-foot spread. The ability is otherwise unchanged. A bunyip is immune to the effects of its own roar.

**Normal:** A bunyip's roar ability affects all hearing creatures with 4 or fewer Hit Dice within a 100-foot spread.

pinniped-like flippers, and shark-like jaws and teeth. Some breeds, particularly those found in the colder northern climes, also possess large dorsal fins that jut from the water as they search for their next meal.

Most bunyips are dark brown or gray in color, though some have spotted hides and lighter undersides. Bunyips swim quickly, propelling themselves through the water with powerful strokes of their flippers and their heavy, muscular tails. Though they avoid larger bodies of water such as big lakes or the open ocean, bunyips are more than capable of traversing long expanses in a short amount of time, and can do so if they need to chase prey or escape larger predators.

Despite their piscine features, bunyips are mammals, and require considerably more nourishment than fish or reptiles. In order for a bunyip to maintain its fast metabolism, it must consume an amount of food equal to its own weight every week or begin to feed off its stores of fat, draining its strength and making it all the more rapacious. To avoid this fate, bunyips remain constantly on the hunt. They consume large quantities of fish, but

also hunt land-dwelling creatures by hiding in shallow water, waiting for the sound or scent of prey. Bunyips are particularly adept at concealment, and their cunning becomes startlingly apparent when they use their natural terrain to stay out of sight. Many mask themselves in muddy or murky water during the hunt, relying on their enhanced sense of smell to alert them to the presence of prey. Some subspecies, such as the tropical variety, also have mottled hides that help them blend in with local flora.

Though bunyips normally hunt only animals smaller than themselves—fish, birds, and small mammals—overwhelming hunger and scarcity of such prey might cause them to seek larger victims such as elk, dolphins, or even humanoids. They rely heavily on their terrible roar to neutralize a larger target's defenses, and an especially keen bunyip might wait to let out its cry in the midst of an entire herd of creatures, causing the group to scatter in panic, blunder into unseen obstacles, and trap themselves in mud or shallows where the bunyip can devour them at its leisure.

Most of the year, bunyips hunt in solitude and keep to themselves. In spring, however, females leave their hunting grounds to pursue males, using their heightened sense of smell to detect a possible mate several miles away. Female bunyips become single-minded in their pursuit of a mate, and during their search they attack any and all creatures that pose threats or obstruct their quest. Males are not exempt from feeling these violent urges. Those who have yet to secure viable mating dens search high and low for shelters to impress females, and males who have already obtained lairs must constantly fight off rivals. The sound of a battle between rival bunyips is a truly unsettling experience; their low growls progressively become more and more strained until their calls are more akin to high-pitched shrieks than roars. Since they are so much more vocal and active during the spring, scholars and hunters often find this season the easiest time to pursue bunyips, though those who encounter the frenzied beasts during this time think twice before engaging one.

Bunyips give birth to litters of four to six young, and need only nurse their pups for a few days before the youths are ready to head out and hunt on their own. Most members of a litter perish during adolescence, but those who survive mature quickly. They reach full size within a matter of months, and are soon ready to challenge their elders for control of hunting and mating territory.

## Habitat & Society

Because bunyips show up in virtually every aquatic environment, scholars continue to discover new breeds and varieties. It is thought that bunyips can survive





in almost any climate, from frigid polar realms to the equatorial tropics. These subspecies display a number of physiological adaptations to various conditions—their bodies are thick with more fat storage in cold waters and leaner in warmer regions. Some are more at home in salt water, while others prefer rivers or the brackish water of deltas and coastal marshes. At least one subspecies, the oceanic bunyip (see the Bunyip Varieties sidebar), has developed a tall dorsal fin much like a shark's, and arctic varieties possess particularly sleek fur on their bellies to help them slide across the ice.

Despite their varying physical attributes, most bunyips share an aggressive demeanor. Interbreeding between different types of bunyips is possible, and often produces pups with new mutations that combine their parents' traits.

Bunyips prefer to remain hidden in shallow water near places where prey gathers, dozing lightly and awakening when suitable creatures come near. In cold regions, they lurk in inlets and near islands, hiding down amid the rocks and debris on the bottom. Those in temperate regions conceal themselves in patches of sea grass or kelp beds.

Bunyips that dwell in the tropics choose muddy rivers with little to no visibility, where they can remain entirely concealed until they attack.

Although usually the apex predators of their chosen regions, bunyips are not without natural enemies. Fights between bunyips and crocodiles have been observed, and in northern climes, leopard seals and walruses often dispute hunting grounds with bunyips. Sea-dwelling bunyips tend to stay close to land, for they are no match for ocean-going predators such as sharks and orcas. Yet it is not from other animals that bunyips face the most danger. Because bunyips often prey upon food sources humanoids also rely on, nearby people are the most likely to root out and kill a bunyip when they realize one is lurking in their midst. Residents of nearby settlements sometimes develop maps and calendars charting a known bunyip's hunting grounds and mating cycle, based on the proximity of attacks and the aggression with which they occur. (Though it is known that bunyips typically mate in spring, because of the varied nature of their species, windows for copulation might occur anytime from late winter to early summer.)

Many people seek the blood of bunyips, whether for pride or vengeance, or to renew their sense of safety, and

occasionally leaders assemble brief hunts to discover and kill these menaces. Such hunts are typically fruitless, since even those who manage to locate a bunyip can just as easily wind up as food or become too frightened to pursue the beast. Many villagers prefer to request the aid of specially trained hunters or stalwart adventurers to fix their bunyip problem, rather than risking themselves.

## Campaign Role

Because of their low CR and their tendency to lurk near small coastal villages and riverside settlements, bunyips make for excellent cryptid-hunting adventures early on in a campaign. The way they affect the ecosystem and threaten nearby people makes them a menace through and through.

Bunyips have fascinated scholars for a long time, and a great many institutions of higher learning hire young volunteers to hunt the monsters and bring back specimens, both dead and alive. The bounty for such an expedition varies from employer to employer, but rewards typically include a payment of gold and prompt updates on any developments that arise while studying the captured bunyip—developments that could easily lead to additional adventures.

Since bunyips can be found in nearly any environment, integrating one into an existing campaign is simply a matter of locating the nearest body of water and motivating the PCs to travel near it. An encounter with a bunyip can easily be the beginning of an adventure. Locals likely have their own legends regarding a known bunyip, and the severed head of the monster might be enough to prove to otherwise inhospitable natives that the adventurers are worthy of respect. As a CR 3 creature, a bunyip usually works best as a challenge for a low-level party, but older and more powerful bunyips certainly exist, and can be deadly foes for even the most experienced monster hunters.

## Treasure

Bunyips are primarily interested in feeding and reproducing, not accumulating treasure. Nevertheless, there are rewards to be had from hunting the creatures. Local inhabitants can be hard pressed by bunyip predation, and sometimes offer bounties for eliminating the threat. Decadent or scholarly rulers might want



## TERROR FROM DOWN UNDER

The bunyip originated in the tales and legends of Australia's native peoples, who variously described it as a seal-like predator or a long-necked, feathered quadruped with a birdlike head. Both varieties were considered vicious and very dangerous. No one is certain where the term "bunyip" originated; the creature goes by several names in different parts of the continent, including "kajanprati" and "tumbata" in the Victoria region, "moolgewanke" in Queensland, and "wangul" in Western Australia.

European settlers to the continent were at first skeptical about the bunyip's existence, considering it to be a local myth or exaggeration, but throughout the nineteenth century, both native and immigrant Australians reported various encounters with the creature. A skull that was found along the banks of the Murrumbidgee River in 1847 was widely reported as a true bunyip relic, but later investigation suggested it was nothing more than a calf skull.

The bunyip appears to have gone into hiding after the dawn of the twentieth century, and today is generally considered to be just another colorful piece of Australian folklore. Some researchers believe tales about the bunyip are a result of sightings of elephant or leopard seals—both large, loud, and terrifying creatures—or, even more fascinatingly, memories of ancient, extinct marsupial predators, handed down from generation to generation until the present day.

living specimens for zoos and menageries, for very rarely are bunyips taken alive. Even when someone succeeds at capturing one, transportation of such a ferocious beast can prove to be a great challenge.

A bunyip's lair often proves to be the source of myriad wonders as well as grotesque horrors. Scattered amid the gore of old meals and rotting corpses are countless possessions once held by the bunyip's victims—useful items as well as mementos that might be sorely missed by a victim's family or associates. Small trinkets or pieces of jewelry can easily slip into the hungry maw of a voracious bunyip, and such treasures might be discovered only after slaying and gutting the monster.

Bunyip fur is short but soft once properly treated, and bunyips' thick hides and bountiful blubber make valuable cold-weather clothes and a viable source of lamp oil, respectively. Though many northerners rely on seals, whales, and other more common (and less dangerous) marine animals for such resources, the added benefit of killing a menace is enough for natives in threatened areas to offer high prices for bunyip hides, and many

people consider it a sign of status to wear a bunyip coat or bunyip-hide armor.

## Bunyips on Golarion

Bunyips can be found along nearly any coastal region on Golarion, with numerous subspecies adapted to the various climates of the Inner Sea region. Ancient texts show that people have always been fascinated by the elusive beasts. Some sources say that the spellcasters of ancient Azlant were even able to tame one variety, though with the destruction of the empire the secrets to their domestication were presumably also lost.

Though stories of bunyips have existed in coastal regions for as long as the predatory beasts themselves, they are often used to frighten the children of fisherfolk and sailors, and rarely spread far inland. In 4620 AR, however, the Pathfinder Carmella Gallatin wrote of her explorations in both Garund and Avistan, including a particularly exciting report of a supposed encounter with a bunyip in the Mwangi Expanse. Upon her return to Absalom and the publishing of her findings in the *Pathfinder Chronicles*, interest in the creature among scholars and explorers underwent a sudden and explosive boom, and for several years bunyips captivated the imagination of aristocratic explorers, creating a brisk trade in bunyip hides (both real and counterfeit).

Of course, less cosmopolitan ports have been menaced by bunyips for centuries, though they have not necessarily shared their knowledge with the outside world. The largest population is believed to dwell in the brackish waters along the Varisian coast. The shallow seas, river inlets, sparse human population, and rich variety of prey combine to create a highly hospitable environment for the carnivores. They are a known problem in coastal cities such as Riddleport, where they periodically snatch unwary victims from the city's waterfront. Bunyip Bay in northwestern Varisia is named for the creatures, which sometimes swim up the Steam River in search of prey. The Mushfens of southern Varisia are also particularly good hunting grounds for bunyips, with numerous secure hiding places and prey available year-round.

Countless Zenj tribes in the Mwangi Expanse have their own legends about bunyips. Riverside villages in particular know to fear their unpredictable attacks, and some attribute a known bunyip's existence to the angry spirit of a fallen tribe member, or claim the monster to be the destructive herald of a powerful wendo spirit. To make matters worse for the Mwangi people, malicious conjurers or necromancers sometimes enchant captured bunyips, creating fiendish beasts more true to the Zenj's legends than they would perhaps hope. Such bunyips gain the fiendish template, and some even gain a modicum of intelligence thanks to the warped magic.

## Old Wulunga

*This bloated, pinniped-like mammal is covered in salty grime, and its sturdy, blunt tusks promise an agonizing death.*

### OLD WULUNGA

**CR 6**
**XP 2,400**

Male advanced muck bunyip

N Large magical beast (aquatic)

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., keen scent 180 ft., low-light vision; Perception +11

**DEFENSE**
**AC** 20, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+5 Dex, +6 natural, –1 size)

**hp** 68 (8d10+24)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +11, **Will** +4

**OFFENSE**
**Speed** 10 ft., swim 50 ft.

**Melee** gore +11 (2d6+4/19–20 plus disease)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

**Special Attacks** blood rage, disease, roar (DC 17)

**STATISTICS**
**Str** 17, **Dex** 20, **Con** 17, **Int** 2, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 11

**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 27

**Feats** Improved Critical (gore)<sup>B</sup>, Improved Roar, Skill Focus (Perception), Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Focus (gore)

**Skills** Escape Artist +7, Perception +11, Stealth +10, Swim +11

**SPECIAL ABILITIES**
**Blood Rage (Ex)** See page 50 of *Bestiary* 2.

**Disease (Su)** Gore—injury; *save* Fort DC 17; *onset* 1 day; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d4 Con and 1d4 Str damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

**Roar (Su)** Old Wulunga can emit a roar at will as a standard action. This ability is modified by his Improved Roar feat (see the Bunyip Feats sidebar). All hearing creatures with 8 or fewer HD within a 200-foot spread must succeed at a DC 17 Will save or become panicked for 2d4 rounds. This ability is otherwise identical to the bunyip's roar ability (*Bestiary* 2 50).

Infamous among the unfortunates who live in the storm-wracked Sodden Lands, the bunyip called Old Wulunga is an especially large and ferocious member of his species. He follows a route up and down the coast, seeking out new hunting grounds every few months and terrorizing the surrounding region before moving on.

Most recently, Old Wulunga has moved to the river mouths and swamps between Kokutang and Jula, preying on bandits and opportunists raiding the abandoned settlements of old Yamasa, as well as on the Koboto tribespeople. Several Koboto hunting parties have gone in search of the creature; those that have returned have done so empty-handed, and the other expeditions have vanished altogether.

No one is sure of Wulunga's true age—some legends claim he was born in the arcane disaster that created the terrible Eye of Abendego. Most people aren't quite so superstitious, and believe that Old Wulunga is just an especially large and successful bunyip. A few doomsayers claim he is a harbinger of death—an agent of destruction sent to totally obliterate any attempts at building a civilization in the wasted region.

The son of the Koboto spirit-talker Harisha was supposedly slain by Old Wulunga while swimming in the Terwa River. Filled with anger, Harisha swore that she will see the creature dead, and promises to mount his thick, tusked skull on her son's grave. The old oracle has offered a rich reward to anyone who kills Wulunga and returns his body intact, but few trust that Harisha will keep her word.





## CHUPACABRA

Locals speak of a creature they call a chupacabra that comes in the night to feed on their herds. I saw its work this morning—a dead goat with no marks of violence on it save for two puncture marks at its throat. Our guide, Jamu, cut open the body to reveal veins completely drained of blood. Were it a human who'd been killed, one would immediately think of vampires, but who can imagine one of the children of the night drinking from a filthy goat? Hardly a romantic image.

The locals disagree on what this chupacabra looks like, but it's killed seven animals over the last three nights. I think perhaps, instead of taking a watch, the halfling should sleep inside tonight.

—Journal entry of Noretha Neta,  
during an expedition to the ruins of Kho

**F**ew people get a clear look at a chupacabra. The creature hunts from the shadows, usually targeting farm animals, watching its prey for hours or even days before striking quickly and fleeing back into the darkness. Accounts of the chupacabra vary by region, based on brief glimpses of a spiked and scaled form fleeing from a site of slaughter. Most of these descriptions include leathery or scaly skin, spines running along the creature's length, and a whiplike tail, which can spark rumors of attacking kobolds, lizardfolk, or even dinosaurs. Because chupacabras are stealthy as well as vicious, they often scurry away from an area once a hunting party has assembled, leaving communities relieved but still in the dark about what caused such destruction.

Occasionally, traveling heroes or well-prepared villagers kill a chupacabra and bring its hideous features into the light. A chupacabra walks on two powerfully muscled legs, but the rest of its frame is slender and slight. A mane of quivering spines runs from its crest to the base of its tail, and its skinny arms end in three-taloned claws. A shimmering scaled hide, usually brown, gray, or dark green, covers its body. Most chupacabras are less than 4 feet tall, but old ones may grow to 5 or 6 feet. On rare occasion, a chupacabra is born with wide reptilian wings strong enough to bear it aloft.

A chupacabra can wreak havoc on small settlements. Not only does its midnight feasting rob farmers of their livelihood by slaughtering dairy cows, chickens, and juvenile animals, but the terror the creature inflicts with its patient, vicious attacks can throw people into a panic. Families refuse to let their children work in the fields—a sensible precaution, as a chupacabra is as likely to attack a solitary child as it is an animal—leaving fields to lie fallow or corn to rot on the stalk. In regions where chupacabras are known to hunt, families bar their doors at night and keep watch over their barns with crossbows at the ready. Farmers whose herds remain intact are targets of suspicion and blame from their neighbors. In such instances, the chupacabra is merely the fuse in what often becomes a full-blown explosion of hysteria and paranoia.

## Evidence

The most obvious sign of a chupacabra in the area is the blood-drained corpses of small animals, usually domesticated or farm animals such as pigs, goats, chickens, geese, cats, and dogs. After locating a viable hunting ground, a chupacabra typically attacks any guard dogs on the premises during the first night, leaving the area easier to prey upon over the next few days. The bodies a chupacabra leaves behind are remarkably tidy, with only small puncture wounds on the body and perhaps a few drops of blood scattered on the ground. These puncture wounds can leave the impression that a vampire stalks the area, often causing further panic and sometimes

even witch hunts among locals. Desperately hungry chupacabras in lean seasons may attack larger prey such as cows, children, or even lone adults.

A chupacabra leaves little physical evidence of its passing, and its clawed feet leave tracks easily mistaken for those of a large dog, wolf, or coyote. A successful DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check is enough for a character to realize that the tracks are from a bipedal creature, definitely not a dog or similar animal, while a successful DC 18 Knowledge (arcana) check reveals the tracks are those of a chupacabra. A chupacabra kills livestock quickly and precisely, often without a struggle that might dislodge a scale or spine. Because its bite allows the chupacabra to drain the blood it craves, it prefers not to use its claws unless overpowered, leaving no trace of violence on animal corpses other than puncture marks.

If some animals are left drained of blood and others have disappeared entirely, it can signal a female chupacabra in the area. A female chupacabra waiting for her egg to hatch snatches small animals instead of killing them. She leaves the animals helpless by breaking their legs or pinning them under rocks near the egg for her child to devour when it hatches. Chupacabras mate in the hottest months of the year, and evidence of their activity is more visible in the peak of summer.

One of the more subtle signs of a chupacabra's territory is a reduction in natural predators in the area. Coyotes, wild dogs, mongooses, bobcats, and similar creatures find their food source reduced when a chupacabra starts feeding, and may move on; the chupacabra is usually able to defeat any rival predators that remain. Farmers used to seeing packs of wild dogs or killing the occasional coyote may become uneasy when these natural animals stop coming around.

## Ecology

A chupacabra begins life as a tiny, desiccated monster no bigger than a weasel. It has no spines or talons at this stage. Its only defense is the thick, shiny hide stretched over its fragile bones, its only method of attack a row of sharp teeth. A chupacabra whelp tears its way out of its brittle eggshell with its fangs, possessed of a dreadful hunger. If helpless prey lies nearby, as is often the case, the whelp rips into the animals immediately. By instinct, it uses its fangs to puncture the animals and suck out their blood, feeling the first invigorating rush that comes from the chupar. A chupacabra female lays a single egg at a time, leaving the whelp with no competition for food.

In a week to 10 days, the whelp's eyes are fully open and it is able to lurch about on its two hind legs. Within another week, spines poke through its back and talons lengthen from its digits. Until this point, the chupacabra whelp can easily be mistaken for a young—albeit deformed—lizardfolk or



## CHUPACABRA FANG

Though the exact nature of a chupacabra's bloodletting abilities is all but unknown even to those who study such creatures, scholars have been able to detect magical properties in the beast's fangs. Skilled blacksmiths and enchanters who manage to acquire a chupacabra fang might be able to make a variety of weapons from the thing, including the following.

### CHUPAR PICK

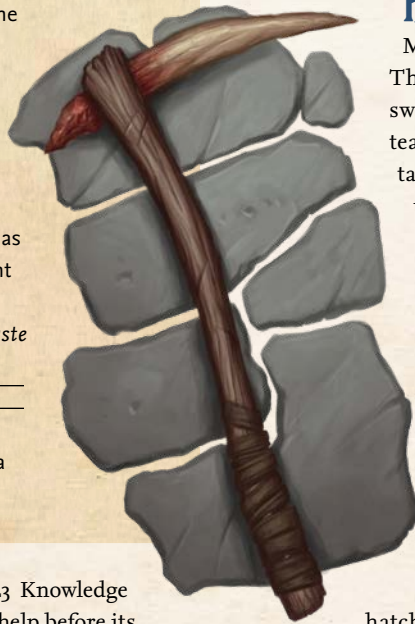
**Aura** moderate evocation and transmutation; **CL** 7th  
**Slot** none; **Price** 24,304 gp; **Weight** 3 lbs.

#### DESCRIPTION

A curved yellow fang juts from the wooden haft of this light pick in place of a metal tip. Though the fang seems fragile, the enchantments on the weapon render it as hard as steel, and the fang evokes some of the powers of the beast from which it came. A *chupar pick* functions as a *+1 light pick of wounding*. When the *chupar pick* scores a critical hit, its wielder is affected by a *haste* effect for 7 rounds as if targeted by a *haste* spell. Subsequent critical hits made while the wielder is affected extend the duration of the *haste* effect but have no additional effect.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bleed*, *haste*, one chupacabra fang; **Cost** 12,304 gp



kobold. A PC who succeeds at a DC 23 Knowledge (nature) check correctly identifies the whelp before its spines begin to grow. After a month, the whelp is able to leave the cave. If the whelp's mother has brought in prey regularly, the whelp has grown to about a foot tall by this point. It can hunt birds, squirrels, rats, and other tiny prey. Young chupacabras show an instinctive delight in stalking prey and draining blood, and need not learn the skill from their parent or peers.

A chupacabra whelp attains maturity 6 months after hatching. A young adult chupacabra quickly becomes aggressive around its mother, claiming the cave and surrounding area as its territory. The chupacabra's mother usually flees rather than defend herself against her own kin, resuming a transitory life until the next time she mates. A newly mature chupacabra may remain in its whelping grounds for another 6 months to a year before it too leaves for better hunting—or to escape humanoid predators.

Adult chupacabras measure 5 to 6 feet in length and stand up to 4 feet tall. Females are slightly smaller than males, but the two sexes are otherwise virtually indistinguishable. Chupacabras' light bones and slim upper bodies mean that mature specimens weigh only about 100 pounds. Roughly 10% of chupacabras have fully functioning wings that allow them to hunt from the air. Chupacabras can live around 30 years, though many are killed by larger predators, including humanoid ones, before they reach 15 years of age. Chupacabras that live past age 15 often undergo a secondary puberty. After several weeks of intense hunger that drive it to attack frequently and sometimes carelessly, such chupacabras endure a growth spurt that adds another foot to their length and 20 pounds to their weight.

## Habitat & Society

Most chupacabras are solitary creatures. Their hunting relies on stealth and swiftness, not strength of numbers or teamwork. A chupacabra doesn't usually target others of its kind, but is nonetheless usually a territorial creature that prefers living and hunting alone.

Chupacabras mate rarely, typically doing so only during the hottest months of summer if they happen to encounter another of their kind. Because of its transitory nature and tendency to deplete regions' animal populations, a chupacabra may mate only a handful of times over the course of its life. The male chupacabra usually remains with its mate for 4 to 6 months, until she lays her egg. A chupacabra egg hatches only a few weeks after being laid; once the whelp emerges, the male chupacabra usually moves on and leaves the female to tend to her young.

From time to time in particularly lush hunting grounds, chupacabras form gangs. These gangs are haphazardly assembled and last only as long as prey remains abundant. A gang can be formed exclusively of males or females, or can be a mix of sexes. The largest, most aggressive chupacabra serves as the leader of the gang, but otherwise no strict hierarchy exists. Once available prey thins out, the chupacabras fall to scrapping among themselves until the weakest peel off the gang and leave for richer territory.

Chupacabras prefer warm, dry climates and make their lairs in caves or burrows abandoned by larger creatures, such as empty bear or wolf dens. Chupacabras sometimes excavate shallow caves into deeper ones by digging with their back claws, and abandoned buildings or ruins also

make acceptable lairs. A chupacabra often uses dead foliage and rocks to camouflage its lair's entrance.

A chupacabra distrusts humanoid and keeps away from settlements unless it is hunting. While it is not overly intelligent, its mild cleverness allows it to evade pursuers who want to catch or kill it. On occasion, a chupacabra might be captured and imprisoned, to be either experimented on or shown off as a curiosity. If the chupacabra is well treated, it may develop a bond with its captor. Most chupacabras are driven by instinct and prefer a solitary life, though; even if one bonds with a humanoid, it may still try to escape when given the right opportunity, potentially even turning on its "master."

Chupacabras don't willingly ally with other creatures, but their preference for blood over meat can attract scavengers. Crows, wild dogs, raccoons, dire rats, snakes, or even small exotic beasts such as goblin snakes or gryphs sometimes clean up after a chupacabra attack by eating the remaining animal carcass. Such scavenging activity often obscures the true cause of the animal's death—though the scenes remain curiously bloodless—and makes it difficult for investigators to realize a chupacabra is in the area.

## Campaign Role

Chupacabras are ideal for low-level adventures requiring investigation, tracking, and uncertainty, where the villain is a threatening creature but is never fully seen until it is confronted in its lair. Thanks to its racial Stealth bonus, its hasted movement after feeding, and its natural cunning, a chupacabra can flee the scene before anyone gets a good look at it. A chupacabra with wings is even harder to track, and the relative rarity of the creatures means few adventurers would have encountered one before.

If the player characters enter an area plagued by chupacabra attacks, the true nature of the responsible creature is easy to disguise. Carrion feeders may have disturbed the corpses, and because the targets are animals, spells such as *Speak with Dead* lend no help to the investigation. Locals will have differing opinions about what, or who, is behind the attacks. Some may blame an unpopular neighbor, claiming dark magic or bargains with foul beings are behind the attacks. Perhaps there is even truth behind these claims—desperate circumstances may have driven a farmer to make a deal with an evil power, not realizing the result would be a chupacabra that plagues every farm but his own.

Chupacabras can also displace larger predators in an area, upsetting the local ecosystem. When bears, lynxes, or coyotes start attacking settlements out of desperation, an investigation can lead to a chupacabra's lair. Adventurers may believe they have brought peace to

an area after killing the attacking animal, only to find later that the attacks were but a secondary effect of the chupacabra's presence.

Normally harmless animals that are unusually aggressive because of the sudden decline in available prey may present additional challenges on the way to a chupacabra's lair. Chupacabras make their homes in caves, some of which may have been abandoned when the original owners were forced out by the chupacabras themselves. Old kobold or goblin warrens can hold left-behind traps the chupacabra has so far avoided, or side passages and chambers occupied by darkmantles, cloaklers, giant insects, or other suitable creatures too wary to challenge the chupacabra.

A female chupacabra with an egg in its lair steals rather than kills animals. While PCs may not be moved to action by the theft of a farmer's prize goat, they may leap at the chance to rescue a kidnapped child.

The wild empathy ability and Handle Animal skill are of no use when dealing with a chupacabra; the creature is just a little too bright to be influenced the same way an animal would. However, a *charm monster* spell can recruit a chupacabra's aid for a few days, and characters who speak Aklo might even be able to acquire some basic information from the beast. High-level bards or wizards might charm a chupacabra for use as a stealthy guardian, and a vampire with bard or wizard levels (or the Use Magic Device skill) might manipulate a chupacabra to cover up its own attacks on a settlement.

Because body parts can be useful in crafting certain magic items, spellcasters sometimes hire adventurers to hunt down chupacabras. Researchers interested in the rare beasts also pay to have specimens captured alive, and the owners of many traveling menageries could make good coin by displaying such a terror. Rumor has it that there are even secret blood-drinking cults that try to attract chupacabras with gifts of live prey, enticing the creatures into guarding their villages.

## Treasure

A chupacabra has no use for gold or treasure. Its lairs, if previously inhabited, might contain odd bits of treasure left behind by the previous residents, but other than these abandoned valuables, a chupacabra has nothing of worth in its cave.

The chupacabra's body, however, can be worth a lot to the right collector. The reflective scales of the chupacabra's hide are perfect for creating armor with the shadow enhancement. The hide from a single chupacabra can be used as a component for magic leather, studded leather, or hide armor, and thus reduces the total cost of enchanting such magic armors with the *shadow* armor special ability by 750 gp.

### THE GOAT-SUCKER OF CANOVANAS

The chupacabra may be the most modern of the well-known cryptids. Though the first possible attacks occurred as early as 1975, the chupacabra only came to popular attention in 1995, after a series of strange attacks on farms in Puerto Rico by an unknown predator, wherein dozens of animals were drained of their blood. A few months after the attacks, a woman in the town of Canovanas claimed to have seen the mysterious creature—a small, spiked biped with spindly limbs and markings across its abdomen. The eyewitness account sparked media frenzy, and soon reports of “El Chupacabra” surfaced from Florida and Texas down through Chile and Brazil. The reports varied widely, with little continuity between them save for the exsanguinated animal victims.

Reports of chupacabra attacks continue to surface to this day in Puerto Rico as well as in other regions. Alleged chupacabras have been captured and examined by scientists on multiple occasions, but results have been inconclusive at best. As possible chupacabra attacks and investigations continue, the mystery of this famous cryptid proves to be one that might well continue for decades to come.

Chupacabra blood is also valuable to potion-brewers for its invigorating properties. A single draught of chupacabra blood reduces the total cost of crafting a *potion of haste* by 250 gp (only 1 draught can be used per potion). A typical chupacabra has 10 draughts of blood in its body, but if the chupacabra died in melee combat involving piercing or slashing weapons, reduce the number of draughts in its body by 1d4.

Villages plagued by chupacabra attacks often offer a reward for dealing with the menace. This reward might be a sum of gold, free room and board from the villagers for the next 6 months, an heirloom enchanted weapon a villager has agreed to give away, or one of the finest animals the farms have to offer, including horses. As proof of death, the villagers might require the chupacabra’s head or the strip of spines running down its back.

### Chupacabras on Golarion

Chupacabras are most common in south-central Garund, Katapesh, the Mwangi Expanse, and Sargava, though even in these places sightings of the beasts remain rare. Chupacabras find the hot climates of these regions appealing, though they prefer hilly areas over dense jungle or open desert. In Katapesh, chupacabras prefer the central plains and eastern hills toward the Brazen Peaks. A few are rumored to make their lairs on Stonespine Island, though how the creatures reached

the island remains a mystery. In recent months, reports have surfaced that groups of reptilian creatures, possibly chupacabras, have attacked slave caravans on their way to Okeno. Some slaves have died from injuries to their throats. Witnesses to these attacks give conflicting testimonials—whether the creatures are chupacabras, lizardfolk, or even mutated gnolls remains to be seen.

In the Mwangi Expanse, chupacabras live on the fringes of the jungle, in the foothills beneath the Shattered Range and the Barrier Wall. Several months ago, a group of adventurers set out to explore the abandoned mines of the Bandu Hills. Only one member of the party, a local Zenj guide named Kabanzi, returned. Kabanzi recounted that the moment they entered the Bandu Hills, the party’s horses began to sicken and die in the night. Then the explorers themselves began to disappear. By the time they turned back, it was too late. One by one, all but Kabanzi vanished into the darkness, their bloodless corpses left on the trail for her to find. Kabanzi claims that on the last night, she finally spotted a squat, shadowy shape with a saurian appearance. The creature glared at her with glowing red eyes before flying off into the darkness.

In Sargava, the M’neri Plains and the foothills north of Freehold make suitable territory for chupacabras. The cattle ranches of Freehold in particular attract their share of predators. Reports of chupacabras surface from time to time, but one old-timer, a Chelaxian named Lucovus, remains adamant that a powerful chupacabra considers Freehold its personal feeding ground. Years ago, Lucovus lost his entire ranch to a strange wasting plague. To this day, Lucovus tells anyone who will listen that it was a chupacabra that targeted his herd “because it knew I was coming for it.” Despite his frequent hunting expeditions, Lucovus has never tracked down the mysterious chupacabra.

In small settlements, villagers often have tales of mysterious predators in the area, including chupacabras. These tales vary by region, though, with each village putting its own spin on local legends. In large cities, few give heed to “peasant superstition” save for bards, scholars, Pathfinders, and other such interested parties.

### Papa Chupar

*Black spines run down the length of this lanky, reptilian creature’s back, and short wings protrude from its hunched shoulders.*

**PAPA CHUPAR**

**CR 7**

**XP 3,200**

Male unique winged chupacabra

N Medium magical beast

**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +9

**DEFENSE**

**AC** 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)



**hp** 93 (11d10+33)

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6

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**OFFENSE**

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**Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

**Melee** bite +15 (1d6+3 plus grab), 2 claws +14 (1d4+3)

**Special Attacks** chupar, pounce

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**STATISTICS**

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**Str** 17, **Dex** 14, **Con** 16, **Int** 3, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 6

**Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +14 (+18 grapple); **CMD** 27

**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (bite)

**Skills** Acrobatics +7, Fly +7, Perception +9, Stealth +13 (+17 in undergrowth or rocky areas); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth (+8 in undergrowth or rocky areas)

**Languages** Aklo

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**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

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**Chupar (Ex)** This ability is identical to the chupar ability described on page 57 of *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*, except Papa Chupar deals 2 points of Constitution damage whenever he successfully sucks blood from his opponent.

Along the western border of the Mwangi Expanse, across Rechiend's Plains, rumors abound of an especially old chupacabra with wings that sprout from his back. Years have added swiftness and cunning to the beast the locals call "Papa Chupar."

Elders remember tales of Papa Chupar as far as 30 years back, an unusually long time for a chupacabra to live. Some tell a folk tale about a lazy, greedy youth who preferred begging off his neighbors rather than working for an honest living. One day, the youth reluctantly agreed to herd goats in exchange for food when no one would give him a meal for free. Rather than drive the goats to the pasture, the youth let them graze in a nearby graveyard. Outraged at this insolent act, the spirits of the buried ancestors cursed the youth. He took the form of a chupacabra, doomed to forever prey on animals for sustenance, shunned and feared by his former neighbors. The locals say that only death will free the boy's spirit, but Papa Chupar is far too quick and clever to be easily slain.

Those who have spotted Papa Chupar describe a creature almost 7 feet from nose to tail, standing 5-1/2 feet tall. Gray-green hide thicker

than an ordinary chupacabra's seems to draw shadows around it, and two leathery, scaled wings stretch out from the beast's spine. Papa Chupar's eyes glow crimson, and his talons and spines are a deep burgundy. The hilly terrain affords cover that Papa Chupar takes full advantage of.

Unlike most chupacabras, Papa Chupar is willing to attack adult humanoids and often targets lone travelers, or even travelers in pairs. The chupacabra is particularly clever and vicious, and studies prey for at least an hour before striking. If possible, Papa Chupar prefers to sneak into camps at night and drain blood from sleeping victims. Though a victim's panicked screams wake the whole camp, Papa Chupar easily takes to the sky, invigorated, and flies off. If a watch is set, Papa Chupar has learned to flush small animals from their nests to create a distraction, hoping to lure the guard away and leave sleeping travelers vulnerable to his attack.

Papa Chupar has a wide territory, and homesteads from Bloodcove to Nantambu take extra care guarding their herds at night.





## DEATH WORM

“I seen it with my own eyes! Burst out’ve the dunes like a geyser, right into them gnolls that was chasing us, scattering the pack of ‘em like twigs. Fifty feet long and thick as the oak out behind this tavern, but let me tell you, boy, it was quick! Them dog-headed bastards started screamin’ and dyin’ and we rode hard for town, and then passed one or two towns more just in case. A worm that size, who knows how hungry it might be?”

“Anyway, right about then was when the slave we rescued grabbed my knife and said—damn, my mug’s empty. Buy another round to steel us for the rest of the tale, eh?”

—Old Man Dolgyar,  
regaling new patrons of the Goblin’s Knuckle

Many adventurers think that they've seen it all, but chances are they've never seen a death worm. Even among the most experienced vagabonds, death worms exist mainly in stories that get attributed to a friend of a friend when passed around quiet campfires or noisy taverns. Most people dismiss the creature as a wild tale the storyteller made up to scare, impress, or intrigue listeners. Part of the problem is that such tales get wilder in the telling. It's hard enough for common folks to believe that a worm could poison you with a touch, shoot lightning bolts from its maw, spit acid out its throat, and kill you with its blood—so much destructive power concentrated into one creature seems excessive. But then people go on to attribute other abilities to the beast. "It can spray fire from its tail! It can paralyze you with a glance! It can split in two!" Fortunately, as far as anyone knows, these latter embellishments aren't true. But then again, when it comes to a monster as mysterious as the death worm, no one is really sure where the boundary between fact and fiction lies.

Some even claim death worms can talk, too—just a little and only in Terran, the language of creatures that burrow through the earth. Since few tavern-goers and traveling gossips speak the elemental tongue, this characteristic is as difficult to verify as any other facts about the monster. Cynics smirk that it was chosen for just that reason.

Although stories about death worms vary according to the teller, most accounts agree that the creatures roam the deserts and plains. They burrow through sand and soil with ease and lurk among rocks and brush, cunningly stalking surface prey. Their skill at the hunt might explain why so few explorers have reported seeing a death worm in person—the creatures size up their prey and attack only what they can kill, leaving no survivors to carry the tale back to civilization.

## Evidence

Few can say with certainty what strange things might lie beneath the burning sands of the world's deserts and other barren places. Many nomads in their shaded yurts and herders in small villages along the riverbanks claim to have seen a death worm burrowing through the ground or attacking their sheep—or at least claim to know someone who has.

Travelers might be able to convince a native to guide them to corpses that seem to have been scarred by acid, burned by lightning, or ravaged by poison. However, such corpses are usually burned or bleached by the sun and half eaten by scavengers, making it hard to pinpoint the exact cause of death. Sometimes sturdier evidence exists, such as ruined buildings and caravans marred by acid and lightning and abandoned in the

dunes. Merchants and bandits alike share tales of whole villages that were deserted because of death worm activity nearby.

Burrows are another type of proof. Many creatures tunnel through the deserts and plains, but rarely are the holes left by these creatures as large as those left by a death worm's passing. In addition, death worm passages keep their shape longer because of the hard, waxy substance the creature secretes as it pushes through sand or soil. Called sheen, this mildly poisonous substance coats the walls and keeps the burrows open for several days. The sulfur in the coating makes the ground above more fertile, and unexpected plant life growing around a mound of otherwise barren dirt could be a sign that a death worm lives nearby.

Perhaps the surest signs of a death worm's existence are the old skins that remain when a young worm molts. Each worm sheds its skin three or four times as it grows to adulthood. The creature always molts aboveground on a rocky outcropping or in another protected spot. An abandoned skin can be scavenged for rare spell components or the ingredients in vile toxins, but these prized skins are rarely found. Like the burrow coating, shed skins disintegrate within a few days.

Finally, traders and slavers who cross the deserts say that when the winds are quiet, they sometimes hear mutterings from beneath the sands—alien words that are too deep and muffled to be understood. Whether these whispers are curses in the elemental language spoken by death worms or hallucinations brought on by sunstroke, few can say.

## Ecology

A southern folktale called "The Three Foolish Sisters" tells of a trio of goatherds who fell to fighting in the desert. During the brawl, the sisters accidentally unearthed a bottle from the sands and released an imprisoned genie, who in turn offered them three wishes. The first sister wished for the genie to kill the other two with lightning. The second asked the genie to burn her sisters with acid. The third ordered the genie to destroy her kin with poison. Instead, the genie created a beast that could deal death in all three forms, and this creation slew each sister before burrowing away.

While this is almost certainly a myth, most scholars of magical monsters are forced to admit that their own theories about the death worm are no more convincing. Not only can the beast kill with lightning, acid breath, and a venomous bite, but its blood corrodes metal, and the waxy sheen of its skin poisons any creatures foolish enough to touch it. The origins of these strange powers are entirely unknown, and for every possible explanation at least two more questions arise.

## DEATH WORM TUNNELS

Perhaps the easiest way to track down and eliminate a death worm is to climb into its home and fight the beast on its own turf. Death worm tunnels are narrow for most humanoids—often having diameters of no more than 3 feet—causing all but the shortest creatures to crawl through on their hands and knees. Brave adventurers might discover paths leading to buried tombs or even cities, as well as numerous other wonders (and dangers) if they delve into a death worm's lair.

**Death Worm Tunnels:** Left unattended, a typical death worm tunnel stays intact for 1d4 days, after which time the waxy film holding up the walls deteriorates and the tunnel collapses under its own weight (see page 415 of the *Core Rulebook* for rules on collapsing tunnels).

A creature traveling through a death worm tunnel must take great care to cover its entire body with protective gear that can withstand the toxic residue—creatures and objects (including clothing) that make direct contact with a tunnel take 1 point of acid damage per round they maintain contact. Unlike with a death worm's corrosive blood, metal items are not subject to this acid damage.

**Death Worm Eggs (CR 3):** An expectant death worm lays its eggs within a large burrow made deep underground, the begins to bring back the corpses of its victims to insulate the unhatched young. Though other creatures can touch intact death worm eggs without risk of injury, prematurely breaking open a death worm egg releases noxious fumes in a 10-foot-cube area, potentially poisoning creatures in the vicinity. If the egg is broken in a death worm den, the fumes linger for an additional round. A death worm egg has a hardness of 2 and 6 hit points.

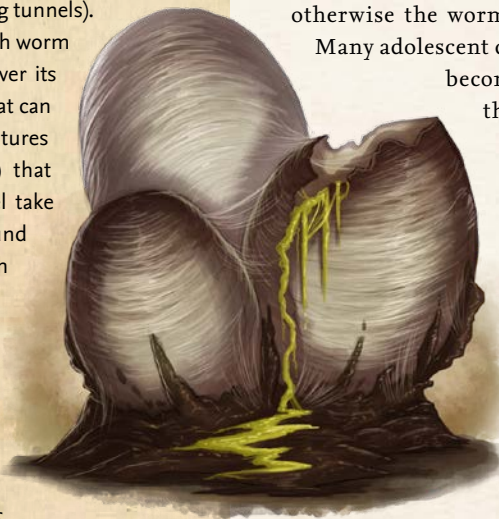
**Death Worm Egg Fumes:** Inhaled; *save* Fortitude DC 15; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *initial effect* 3d6 hit point damage; *secondary effect* 1 Con damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Death worms prefer to avoid the harsh desert sun, which is as brutal and oppressive to the writhing beasts as to any other living creature. They typically move underground during the day, devouring grubs, foxes, and other small burrowing animals that happen to be in their path, and surface in the cool night to hunt for larger prey. Because they are sensitive to the vibrations of the

earth they tunnel through, death worms can often detect potential meals roaming on the desert's surface above even as they burrow. Using this heightened sense, a death worm might stalk a caravan or herd of animals for hours, waiting patiently until the cool of dusk to emerge from the sands and strike. However, strong hunger can drive a worm to burst out of a dune in midday if it requires more immediate sustenance.

Death worms are hermaphroditic, so any two can mate and fertilize each other's eggs. A parent hides its cluster of eggs deep in an underground den, where it stockpiles the carcasses of fresh victims on top of the hard shells to keep them warm and provide a quick meal for when the young emerge after a few weeks. Instinct prevents them from eating their own kind, but otherwise the worms attack nearly anything in sight.

Many adolescent death worms die before their senses become keen enough to detect prey on the surface. Survivors grow quickly and molt every few months, leaving behind piles of toxic skin. A typical adult death worm is 15 feet long, has a diameter of 2-1/2 feet, and weighs 1,200 pounds, although freakishly large specimens have been known to exist. These death worm leviathans are detailed at the end of this chapter.



## Habitat & Society

Reclusive predators, death worms are adept at hiding underground (or among rocks or scrub brush) until they burst out and surprise their prey. A worm fearlessly attacks a lone target and tries to divide groups of creatures, tunneling just below the surface and snatching one meal at a time so quickly that the victims barely have a chance to scream before being pulled underground. Adult death worms can reach a dozen feet into the air to grab low-flying creatures—the sight of a death worm exploding upward to strike a low-flying yrthak or desert drake is both breathtaking and terrifying. Targets out of reach of the worm's poisonous jaws still face danger from its electrical jolts and acid breath.

Almost anything is a potential meal for death worms, and they often clear large swaths of the desert of jackalweres, lamias, and other violent inhabitants while trying to sate their ravenous hunger. They go after smaller prey when there is a promise of a satisfying meal—woe be to a colony of ratfolk if a death worm accidentally burrows into its warrens. However, the worms avoid picking fights with foes that appear too formidable, and most are intelligent enough to figure

out which creatures are safe for eating and which aren't. A death worm might trail along behind an enormous scorpion to eat the scraps it leaves in its wake, or build a den near the trap of a dust digger or giant ant lion to poach excess prey, but death worms form no alliances in the usual sense of the word. The solitary creatures don't even seek each other's company, gathering together only as long as it takes to mate.

Those remote villagers and desert nomads who find themselves in death worm territory walk a fine line between fear and reverence of the formidable beasts. Superstitious tribespeople stake criminals and other undesirables out in the desert as sacrifices to their earthbound lords, hoping that their tributes will keep them safe for another season. Oracles of the sands whisper prayers to keep the worms at bay, and some shamans supposedly have the power to command the creatures. Riverside herders speak reverently of the occasion the warrior-shaman Ellsret, clad in protective garments, rode a giant death worm into battle against a small army of gnolls and giant scorpions, though this story too is largely regarded as a folktale.

## Campaign Role

Even in a world where the strangest monsters imaginable are real, death worms remain mysterious because so little is known about them. Many desert and plains dwellers are afraid to talk about the creatures. Others give conflicting stories about their size, appearance, abilities, and habits. Some natives claim to have seen a worm up close, but their only proof is their word or something just as dubious, such as a broken fang, a lump of molted skin, or scars on their bodies (though it's hard to believe that an ordinary person could survive such an attack).

A death worm is best used when it is true to its name—the carnage left by a death worm should be nothing short of gruesome, and the PCs should begin to feel much of the terror shared among townsfolk who are affected by the death worm attacks. Since a death worm can sense movement aboveground via vibrations in the soil, it would be easy for the monster to track and stalk a group of traveling adventurers. The PCs might be exploring the desert in search of ruins buried under shifting sands or crossing the plains to reach their next destination when they hear occasional murmurs that seem to come from below the ground. Perhaps they see ripples in the surface or catch the barest glimpse of something before it disappears under the sand. They should feel frightened and paranoid, like mice tormented by a cat. Depending on the monster's patience and your campaign needs, a death worm might either try to pick off one adventurer at a time or lay

## VITREOUS GOGGLES

Death worm hunters and desert nomads who know to watch out for such burrowing creatures sometimes make use of the following magic item.

### VITREOUS GOGGLES

**Aura** moderate divination and evocation; **CL** 7th  
**Slot** eyes; **Price** 11,200 gp; **Weight** —

#### DESCRIPTION

This pair of clear crystal lenses allows the wearer to see the indistinct shapes of living creatures moving below the surface of the earth. The wearer can see any Medium or larger creatures within 60 feet as long as they are moving underground. The wearer must have seen the creature aboveground within the past minute while wearing the goggles to gain this benefit. Each subsequent round after the first that the goggles are worn, the wearer has a cumulative 5% chance of immediately going blind for 1d4 rounds. Once the goggles are removed, the wearer's eyes need 1 hour to adjust before he or she can wear the goggles again.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *faerie fire*, *locate creature*; **Cost** 5,600 gp

waste to the entire group at once. In either case, a death worm that finds it can't kill its prey immediately leaves its victims poisoned and suffocating while it goes back belowground to safety.

A death worm's tunnels make for unique and perilous encounter areas. The cramped quarters and myriad hazards that lie below the surface of the earth make for a tense adventure. The party might need to follow a death worm belowground to rescue a captured friend or to kill the elusive beast once and for all. The tunnels of a death worm could wind about for a couple hundred yards or several miles, either terminating in the death worm's burrow—where it sleeps, eats captured prey, and lays its eggs—or some other location near or far, underground or on the surface. The surrounding terrain can make traveling the tunnels more fascinating, since death worms occasionally burrow into underground caves, buried crypts, or even subterranean cities, allowing for a thrilling journey beneath the planet's surface that could spark any number of auxiliary adventures. For more information on death worm tunnels and the dangers and opportunities they present, see the Death Worm Tunnels sidebar.

If the PCs are not strong enough to face a death worm itself, the fatalistic cultists who sometimes worship these creatures can also become foes or open

### THE OLGOI-KHORKHOI

In the real world, the Mongolian death worm is said to live in the Gobi Desert. Running 2 to 5 feet in length, the thick red worm is rumored to spit acidic venom and discharge electrical shocks. According to some stories, merely touching the creature is fatal. Natives of Mongolia call it the Olgoi-khorkhoi (“intestine worm”), and say that while it won’t bite, it can spit a stream of deadly venom to defend itself. The creature first became known to the Western world in the 1926 book *On the Trail of Ancient Man*, written by paleontologist Roy Chapman Andrews, who explored Asia for the American Museum of Natural History. Andrews never encountered the creature, but he heard many detailed accounts from Mongolian citizens and officials. Numerous expeditions in the 1990s and 2000s hunted in vain for proof of the creature’s existence, and skeptics believe the creature might be nothing more than a giant earthworm or an unknown type of venomous snake, though movies such as *Mongolian Death Worm* prove that there is still notable interest in the cryptid.

up possible adventures. Death worm cultists can be as menacing and wrathful as the creatures they worship, and their members revel in destruction and perform grisly rites in secret shrines deep in wastelands. They show devotion by scarring themselves (and others) with acid, poison, and lightning. Some put out their eyes and magically graft the largest specimens of regular worms they can find into the sockets. Priests of the cult are expert poisoners and use exotic venom they claim to have milked directly from the jaws of death worms.

### Treasure

No one gets rich raiding a death worm’s hoard. The creatures don’t keep valuables of any kind, and their lives consist solely of burrowing and hunting. At most, a worm’s den contains remnants of half-eaten victims and a few pieces of destroyed equipment, as any ordinary items swallowed by a death worm are quickly corroded beyond use by the creature’s internal acids. The caustic juices destroy organic and metal objects, but leave stone with a polished look, thus complicating the tried-and-true party tactic of cutting open a slain monster to see what lies in its gullet. The worm excretes items it can’t digest, but its droppings are just as toxic as the noxious substance secreted by its skin, and creatures must be careful while picking through piles of death worm dung if they hope to survive the search.

Fortunately for treasure hunters, killing a death worm out in the desert or on the plains can net them a sizeable reward if they bring proof of its existence back to the

academics in cities. Chunks cut off a worm’s corpse don’t look like much, but presenting a whole head might do the trick. Once dead, though, the creature decomposes quickly, so PCs must hurry to deliver the evidence while it is still recognizable, or else preserve the corpse via magic or more complicated mundane means. This difficulty sometimes leads parties to attempt to capture live death worms, but the less said about such folly, the better. Adventurers might have better luck catching a young worm or stealing eggs from a clutch before they hatch, though even these are likely to be more trouble than they’re worth, as few buyers are truly equipped to deal with domesticating or housing a death worm.

### Death Worms on Solarion

Death worms are most common in the windswept lands of northern Garund, especially in the sandy deserts of Osirion and Thuvia and the craggy foothills of Rahadoum’s Napsune mountains. In Avistan the beasts primarily populate the rolling hills of Qadira, but some smaller number burrow under the Cinderlands of Varisia, and foul rumors passed down the River Road speak of demon-warped death worms tainted by the foul energies of the Worldwound.

Scholars and other learned types in desert cities often take a great interest in death worms, and recruit adventurers to track down and investigate these rare creatures. The wizards of the Occularium in the Rahadoumi city of Manaket are particularly intrigued by the creatures, abundant as they are in the sprawling deserts whose sands the wizards hope to push back. Some of the more eccentric professors at the college hope to harness the death worm’s unique powers in order to drive back the desert sand, and a few even speak of plans for a strange arcane engine built for just this purpose.

The tale of Orshok the Red gives credence to the idea that death worms might serve those strong enough to tame the beasts. The famed enchanter is said to have befriended a death worm while traveling the Underdunes of Osirion, saving his companions in the process. Once Orshok made the worm his monstrous steed and acquired a dragonhide riding saddle for it—or so the story goes—his legend spread rapidly. None so far have been able to emulate his heroic (some say foolish) feat.

While death worms are considered curious spectacles in the learning centers of the Inner Sea, certain fringe groups on the outskirts of civilization view them with fierce reverence. Several camps of Rovagug cultists in Osirion’s western badlands attribute the creation of death worms to the Rough Beast himself, believing that the first worms sloughed off a spawn of Rovagug—perhaps Chemnosit, the Monarch Worm—as it crawled out of the Pit of Gormuz in Casmaron.

## Death Worm Leviathan

This enormous worm has stony hide and acid-dripping jaws.

### DEATH WORM LEVIATHAN

CR 11

XP 12,800

N Gargantuan magical beast

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +13

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 23, touch 9, flat-footed 20 (+3 Dex, +14 natural, -4 size)

**hp** 157 (15d10+75)

**Fort** +14, **Ref** +12, **Will** +5

**Defensive Abilities** corrosive blood (DC 22), venomous skin;

**Immune** acid, electricity, poison

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., burrow 30 ft.

**Melee** bite +20 (4d6+12/19-20 plus grab and poison)

**Ranged** electrical jolt +14 (touch 8d6 electricity)

**Space** 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.

**Special Attacks** breath weapon (60-ft. line, 15d6 acid damage, Reflex DC 22 for half, usable every 1d4 rounds), fast swallow, swallow whole (2d6+18 acid damage, AC 17, 15 hp)

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 26, **Dex** 16, **Con** 21, **Int** 3, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 6

**Base Atk** +15; **CMB** +27 (+29 bull rush, +31 grapple, +29 overrun); **CMD** 40 (42 vs. bull rush, 42 vs. overrun)

**Feats** Awesome Blow, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Power Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bite)

**Skills** Perception +13, Stealth -1 (+15 in deserts or rocky areas); **Racial Modifiers** +16 Stealth in deserts or rocky areas

**Languages** Terran

#### ECOLOGY

**Environment** warm deserts, hills, or plains

**Organization** solitary

**Treasure** none

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Corrosive Blood (Ex)** See page 76 of *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*.

**Electrical Jolt (Su)** See page 76 of *Bestiary 2*.

**Poison (Ex)** Bite—injury or skin—contact; *save* Fort DC 22; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Con; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

**Venomous Skin (Ex)** See page 76 of *Bestiary 2*.

Sometimes a pregnant death worm lays an especially promising egg among her brood, about twice as large as the others and with a nigh-impenetrable, brown-speckled shell. This egg requires even more warmth than the others in its clutch, and upon emerging the worm would rather devour its brethren than the meal left by its parent. Such rare specimens grow up to become death worm leviathans, and those few who have heard of the fell beasts know to fear them as well as to hold them in awe. Death worm leviathans possess powers nearly identical to those of their smaller kin, albeit at a much deadlier scale. In addition, their massive girth makes it even easier for them to consume prey both large and small, and a single leviathan might consume an entire desert village before its terrible hunger is sated.





## MOKELE-MBEMBE

He is the one called Water Lion, the One Who Stops the flow of Rivers, Who Makes the Earth Shake, Whose Tail Shouts Like Thunder. He dwells in our land, near places of moving water, and lurks unseen in his caves, emerging to hunt and kill and thrash in the rivers with the birthers of his kind. He feeds as he wishes, taking many fish and small animals. He is the One Who Hunts the Honored Hippo, and in their battles and blood our shamans can see portents of the future. His wrath knows no bounds, for even our villages suffer at the jaws of He Who Hungers. Great is the Mokele-Mbembe. Greater is the hunter who slays the Mokele-Mbembe.

—Inscription accompanying pictures of the mokele-mbembe  
in a hunter's lodge on the banks of the River Still



The mokele-mbembe is a predatory saurian that measures up to 40 feet in length and weighs up to 10 tons. Inhabitants of the deep tropics, mokele-mbembe dwell in lakes, rivers, swamps and other aquatic regions where they feed on fish, birds, small mammals, and even reptiles. When food runs short and mokele-mbembe grow hungry, they have been known to seek prey from local tribes and villages.

Despite being an aggressive hunter, a mokele-mbembe shares some traits with nonpredatory sauropods. Its body is massive and elephantine, with four long legs that end in webbed feet. Its neck is long and flexible like that of herbivorous dinosaurs or giraffes, but its head is triangular, with strong jaws and sharp teeth like a carnivore. A mokele-mbembe's hide is mottled greenish-brown and has the texture of tree bark. Large, defensive spines grow from its back.

The mokele-mbembe's natural habitat normally lies far from populous regions. For this reason, they are rarely glimpsed by outsiders, though they are well known to locals who hunt in such lands. Many stories are told about the creatures' size, strength, and ferocity, and some groups even believe them to have a special sacred status as messengers of the gods—or agents of their wrath.

## Evidence

One might assume that it's difficult for a 40-foot-long dinosaur to conceal itself amid rivers and lakes, but the fact remains that the mokele-mbembe has been seen by only a handful of individuals outside of those who dwell in the jungle. A few hardy travelers have braved the dangers of the jungle interior and brought back reports of the creature and its biology, but many more have ventured into the tropics never to return.

Most information about mokele-mbembe has been learned indirectly, namely from the signs of its passage—gigantic webbed footprints, long drag marks left by the creature's tail, uprooted trees, and crushed vegetation. Less common but much more disturbing is evidence of the mokele-mbembe's hunting activities. The savaged corpses of its victims often litter places near the beast's lair, and sometimes include creatures that are deadly predators in their own right, such as leopards and crocodiles. Even hippopotamuses, normally some of the more dangerous creatures in their region, fall prey to the mokele-mbembe, and those few that survive bear fearsome scars from these clashes.

The mokele-mbembe frequently appears in local folklore and legend, sometimes described as a fearsome and unstoppable predator, other times as a sacred personification of nature or the power of the gods. Some native peoples maintain elite hunting societies whose memberships are open only to those who have

battled a mokele-mbembe firsthand. Such hunters do not typically see the mokele-mbembe as merely a beast worth mounting on the wall as a trophy, however; many of these groups hold the beasts in high regard, often performing rituals in their honor and creating sacred objects from the bodies of slain mokele-mbembe. Images of ferocious, long-necked predators can be found in some hunters' lodges, as can sculptures and ritual items such as masks and costumes used in the ceremonies associated with them.

## Ecology

Despite their huge size and seemingly ungainly bodies, mokele-mbembe are predators through and through, with powerful jaws, daggerlike teeth, and long, flexible necks that can move with alarming speed to descend on an unfortunate victim or rush up suddenly from the depths of a lake or river.

When not resting in their lairs, mokele-mbembe prefer to remain in deep water, where they move freely and almost gracefully, propelled by their huge, webbed feet. Individuals remain submerged as long as possible, coming up for air only when they can do so without their prey's notice. When a potential meal has settled into an unfounded sense of security on the water they prowl beneath, a mokele-mbembe emerges with terrifying swiftness. Its serpentine neck unfurls, jaws snapping and dragging the unfortunate victim down to its doom.

Mokele-mbembe are large predators with a relatively quick metabolism, and require significant amounts of food to sustain their bulk. They normally subsist on fish, amphibians, small mammals, and careless water birds. When such prey is depleted, the mokele-mbembe begins stalking larger prey, up to and including the hippopotamus. Battles between hippos and mokele-mbembe can be huge, epic affairs, audible for miles, and sometimes tribal priests and shamans observe them for divinatory purposes.

Livestock, pets, and even local tribesfolk could be at risk when the mokele-mbembe grows desperate for food, since these fearsome creatures are also dangerous on land. They emerge from the water to raid villages—bashing down walls, tearing apart corrals, and destroying huts to obtain food. It is at these times that the mokele-mbembe are the most violent, and local settlements sometimes form hunting parties to track down and slay the creatures. Hunters who successfully take down mokele-mbembe are acclaimed as heroes by their tribes and memorialized in song and story.

Resembling tree bark, the mokele-mbembe's mottled hide actually consists of thousands of tiny plates, or osteoderms, embedded in its skin, which provide both camouflage and protection. As a mokele-mbembe spends

much of its time in the water, algae and other organic growths adhere to these osteoderms, adding further to the creature's ability to camouflage itself in its swampy habitat. Some water-dwelling prey only realize they are swimming into the waiting maw of a mokele-mbembe when the monster's jaws close around them.

Perhaps the mokele-mbembe's most intriguing feature is its long, whiplike tail. Two large, bony structures atop its thighbones provide strong tendon attachment points, and the tail itself narrows down from a thick, powerful mass of muscle to a slender and almost delicate tip. The mokele-mbembe can move its tail with lightning speed, rapidly whipping it up and down to produce a sonic report loud enough to be heard from miles away. This tail whip serves a variety of functions, from stunning prey to long-range communication that allows the creature to summon others to a particularly large kill, or to draw assistance to defend threatened lairs and young.



## Habitat & Society

Mokele-mbembe are normally solitary, dwelling in waterside caves where possible, or in heavy thickets or isolated spots near lakes and rivers. When not hunting, mokele-mbembe rest in their caves or sun themselves on river banks and lake shores, further embedding themselves in their environment by caking thick layers of mud onto their hides.

In most cases, there is only enough prey in a region to sustain a single mokele-mbembe, but in areas of abundant fauna, groups of three or four males and one or two females might join together to form a pack. Pack members cooperate in their hunts, seeking out prey together and sharing all kills. Mokele-mbembe packs can devastate entire local ecosystems, consuming huge numbers of animals and even wiping out local populations of hippos, water buffaloes, and other large creatures.

When a pack's females prepare to lay eggs, the males respond by bringing kills to them and defending them against enemies. Females choose the largest and strongest of their suitors as their mates, after which the new couples leave the pack to build a nest and lay eggs. The unattached males might remain together for a time in a bachelor pack, but eventually drift off to hunt on their own.

Solitary females alert males that they are ready to breed by repeatedly sounding their whiplike tails in a distinctive pattern. Audible for miles, this call summons any available

males, which make their way to join the female. The female picks the first male to strike her fancy (typically the one that brings her the most food, especially fatty and nutritious hippos), and unsuccessful suitors return to their hunting grounds thereafter. Male mokele-mbembe compete with each other for females during hunts, but rarely if ever attack one another, instead venting their ferocity on prey animals to show dominance.

Mokele-mbembe join in mated pairs every 3 years. Females lay clutches of five to six eggs, which hatch in 90 days. Hatchlings are almost helpless in the first few weeks of life, and their mortality rate is high—more than half of all young mokele-mbembe are lost to other jungle predators.

Though better known as deadly predators, mokele-mbembe are also surprisingly caring parents, and work together to protect and feed their offspring. Females guard their nests and try to keep predators at bay, while males seek out food for the hatchlings. As their young grow, males do not feed when they take prey but instead bring carcasses back to the nest, claiming their portion only after the females and hatchlings have eaten their fill.

After a month or so, males stop bringing food to the nest, and instead signal their families with loud cracks of their tails. The females and young make their way to the male, familiarizing the hatchlings with the surrounding territory. Within 2 months, both parents hunt and the young follow along, eventually taking their own prey. After 3 or 4 months, young mokele-mbembe are largely independent, returning to the nest only infrequently. They grow at an extremely fast rate, reaching full adult size within a year and reproductive maturity within 2 years. As might be expected, this swift growth rate isn't without a price—growing mokele-mbembe are even more ravenous than adults, and often go rogue, attacking villages and farms. In fact, adolescents trying to sustain their growth perpetrate most mokele-mbembe attacks on humanoid settlements.

The rivalry between mokele-mbembe and hippos is legendary among the people of the jungle. The source of the rivalry is clear, since both are large, voracious creatures that compete for the same territory, and when one manages to kill another, the resulting meal might last the victor several days. During breeding season, female mokele-mbembe require even more sustenance than normal, and it is at this time that battles between hippos and mokele-mbembe are the most frequent and fierce.

Local inhabitants sometimes observe these fights from a safe distance, and their shamans and oracles often read prophetic signs in the outcomes of these battles as well as the patterns of blood spilled during such brawls.

The folk of the jungle are fully aware of mokele-mbembe's strength and ferocity, and generally avoid regions where they are known to dwell. However, mokele-mbembe are also seen as great jungle predators, and even revered for their power and the thunderous sound of their tails, the latter often being said to portend great events or warn of oncoming disaster. Only when hungry mokele-mbembe begin actively seeking out livestock and villagers do jungle natives begin to hunt them in earnest.

Cold-blooded humanoids have a special relationship with the mokele-mbembe. Lizardfolk see the animals as literal divine servants that carry out vengeance against those who have angered the gods. This reverence hasn't kept some tribes of lizardfolk from domesticating mokele-mbembe, however, using them as pack animals, hunting beasts, or even mounts for warriors.

Some tribal stories tell of even more frightening creatures harnessing the power of the mokele-mbembe. Crafty, dangerous, and intelligent, black dragons have been known to enslave mokele-mbembe, using them as terrible guardians for their lairs and sometimes agents in their nefarious plots.

## Campaign Role

The deep jungle is a prime place for adventure, filled with thick vegetation, deadly swamps, fierce predators, lost civilizations, and hostile foes of all kinds. Among these, the mokele-mbembe is a particularly dangerous foe, especially since its kind is unfamiliar to most players.

As an encounter for an adventuring party, a mokele-mbembe presents a substantial challenge for mid- to high-level characters. The mokele-mbembe's favored style of hunting—lurking beneath the water and attacking from below—is vexing and confusing for unwary river travelers, for the bulk of the creature lies hidden and only its toothy head and serpentine neck are revealed. These attacks may leave players thinking that they're facing some kind of predatory river snake or plesiosaur, only to be alarmed when the creature heaves its elephantine bulk out of the water to pursue runners that have made for safety on land.

As with many of the other creatures in this book, the mokele-mbembe is largely unknown to researchers, especially since its habitat is mostly inaccessible and far from urban power centers. The discovery of a living mokele-mbembe might make the PCs celebrities among scholarly communities (or possibly cause them to be condemned as frauds), though real evidence of the creature's existence—hide, bones, a skull, or even a living

## MOKELE-MBEMBE WEAPONS

Though mokele-mbembe don't care about collecting treasure, and instead spend most of their time seeking prey, they themselves are sometimes the source of useful items, particularly those made by the jungle cults that respect or even revere them. The hunters of the River Still region and the lizardfolk of the Screaming Jungle both have adapted parts of slain mokele-mbembe into their rituals and culture. Because of the respect that both groups have for the creatures, these items are taken only from ones that died of natural causes or in battle with hippos, or that were killed by ritually sanctioned hunters.

In addition to these ritualistic items, those who revere mokele-mbembe fashion weapons to mimic some of the creatures' special abilities. For example, some hunters in the Mwangi Expanse create whips that honor the booming tail of the mokele-mbembe.

### MOKELE-MBEMBE TAIL WHIP

**Aura** moderate evocation; **CL** 9th  
**Slot** none; **Price** 32,301 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

#### DESCRIPTION

This item is crafted from tightly braided rawhide from a water buffalo skin, and is usually awarded to a prominent member of a tribe. The *mokele-mbembe tail whip* functions as a +2 *whip*, but deals an additional 1d6 points of sonic damage on a successful hit. In addition, anyone hit by a critical hit with the whip must succeed at a DC 21 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1 round. A successful critical hit with the whip does not multiply the weapon's sonic damage.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *shout*;  
**Cost** 16,301 gp

specimen—could gain them great favor among academic NPCs and institutions.

While traveling in tropical regions, characters will probably hear tales of the mokele-mbembe and receive advice on how to deal with or avoid the creature. A particularly exciting possibility is to have your players visit a region inhabited by a mokele-mbembe while it's on a rampage seeking out prey in villages and corrals. Cattle, goats, and other important livestock might perish, leaving communities devastated by the mokele-mbembe's attacks. The PCs can help defend a village against a mokele-mbembe, then aid in the hunt for the destructive creature. More powerful parties can help fight an entire pack of ravenous mokele-mbembe.

The special relationship between mokele-mbembe and reptiles can complicate or increase the challenge of

## ONE WHO STOPS THE FLOW OF RIVERS

For almost two and a half centuries, since it was first described by a French missionary in 1776, the notion of a living dinosaur hiding in the depths of the Congo has fascinated western scientists, explorers, and cryptozoologists around the world. Many tales from the region tell of a huge, long-necked creature that fiercely defends its territory from any and all intruders—swamping canoes, killing swimmers, and engaging in epic battles with hippopotamuses. Unlike the carnivorous mokele-mbembe portrayed here, local tales of the creature usually claimed it was herbivorous and killed only to defend its territory.

The exact nature of the creature, variously called mokele-mbembe, nsanga, n'yamala, and coye ya menia, is uncertain, but most descriptions seem to correspond to that of a sauropod-like dinosaur, similar to the apatosaurus or diplodocus. Intrigued by these stories and eager to discover evidence of the creature's existence, many individuals have ventured into the Congo basin. A few investigators reported actual encounters with an unknown dinosaur-like creature, including a 1932 expedition in which two cryptozoologists claimed to have been attacked by the beast, and two 1992 investigations that produced photographs and video, though this supposed evidence was of poor quality and not convincing.

Other explorers have brought back secondhand tales and little else. A group of local inhabitants supposedly trapped and killed a mokele-mbembe on the Congolese Lake Tele in 1950, but no samples were preserved, and all those who consumed the creature's meat are said to have perished. Sightings have been reported into the twenty-first century, but any real evidence of mokele-mbembe's existence remains entirely absent.

So far, like many other cryptids, the mokele-mbembe remains a phantom. In the absence of a real, living dinosaur, scientists have suggested that the creature might be something more mundane—a giant turtle or an unknown species of lizard or crocodile—or perhaps based on poor sightings of other large animals, such as the rhinoceros or elephant, that have evolved and grown in the telling of stories. Such explanations, however, don't satisfy cryptozoology enthusiasts, who continue to seek evidence that the jungles, lakes, and rivers of the Congo basin hide a real, surviving dinosaur.

encounters with swamp- or jungle-dwelling lizardfolk. In addition to domesticating mokele-mbembe for use as pack or even war beasts, the lizardfolk revere mokele-mbembe as divine manifestations of nature's power in the physical world. Killing or injuring a mokele-mbembe is a sure way to earn a lizardfolk tribe's undying enmity, and

battles with the lizardfolk will be even more dangerous if their warriors ride mokele-mbembe mounts.

An unusually high number of mokele-mbembe working together could be more than a mere pack of bachelor males and young females, however. If a black dragon is in the area, it may decide that the humanoids of the region are annoyances that need to be disposed of, or it could feel that outsiders are encroaching on its territory and treasure. As powerful predators, mokele-mbembe make excellent guards or minions for stronger monsters, and a group of these creatures sent against local tribes could present a nearly invincible force without exposing the dragon to risk. In this manner, attacks by mokele-mbembe can lead to even greater challenges down the line.

## Treasure

As with most animals, the accumulation of treasure holds little interest for a mokele-mbembe, which is normally far more preoccupied with eating and defending itself. Though these creatures do not accumulate treasure as such, other rewards are available to those brave enough to face them in battle.

Those tribes and villages who live in harmony with the jungle around them see the mokele-mbembe as another manifestation of nature's power, but if one of these creatures exhausts its normal prey and grows hungry, the local folk are in danger. Travelers, farmers, herders, livestock, and even whole villages could be threatened, and locals offer rewards to those who can hunt down and defeat the violent mokele-mbembe. These rewards might be tribal treasures, assistance and future friendship, or even information about the location of greater treasures, lost cities, and the like.

Tribal shamans, artists, and ritualists also create costumes, masks, cloaks, and sculptures from the remains of mokele-mbembe. Unfortunately, those who revere and respect the mokele-mbembe may take a dim view of those who would sell their sacred items for profit.

## Mokele-Mbembe on Golarion

Mokele-mbembe inhabit jungles and swamps in the southern continent of Garund, including the deep waters of Lake Ocota. The folk who dwell along this lake have many different stories about the creatures, and call them by various names, such as "nsanga," "coye ya menia," "jago-nini," and "amali." Since the mokele-mbembe tend to remain in deep water and rarely show themselves in inhabited areas, many different tales about the creatures circulate, some claiming that they are giant serpents, and others describing them as enormous, long-necked fish.

Mokele-mbembe are better known in the jungle interior, where they lurk in deep rivers and swamps. The tribespeople who dwell along the River Still are among



the most knowledgeable about the mokele-mbembe. Here, the Zenj warriors of the Julanga tribe hold a longstanding tradition of both revering and hunting the mighty beasts, and the names of those hunters who have slain mokele-mbembe are repeated throughout the region in tales of heroism. At the same time, the River Still folk hold the creatures in great esteem, even offering prayers to their spirits and preserving their hides and skulls as sacred objects. Outsiders who hunt the mokele-mbembe without reason are considered enemies and slain by the tribesfolk, who do not wish to offend their honored wendo spirits by killing mokele-mbembe needlessly.

Rumors of a mokele-mbembe pack along the Buunta Flow have reached the ears of the Aspis Consortium agents at Nightfall Station, and several foreign big game hunters have arrived, hoping to track down the beasts and bring evidence of a largely unknown species back to the northern lands. Unfortunately for these would-be adventurers, the pack is under the protection of the Shell-Bearers, a powerful tribe of lizardfolk who do not take kindly to seeing their sacred war animals slain for sport. If the hunters succeed, the Shell-Bearers might declare open war on the Consortium, and Nightfall Station could find itself under attack.

Other lone mokele-mbembe can be found throughout the region, as far south as the Screaming Jungle, where they hunt along the banks of the Korir River. An especially prominent individual dwells in the depths of Lake Hirilaka at the heart of the lost city Saventh-Yhi, and occasionally preys upon that city's denizens. So far, no one has been able to catch or slay the beast, and most of the city's inhabitants simply see it as a natural hazard.

## Mokele-Mbembe

*This massive saurian creature sports a triangular head with a mouth full of curved teeth, stretching forth from a long, snaking neck. Long spines run down its neck, back, and whiplike tail.*

<b>MOKELE-MBEMBE</b>	<b>CR 9</b>
<b>XP 6,400</b>	
N Huge animal	
<b>Init</b> +5; <b>Senses</b> low-light vision, scent; Perception +15	
<b>DEFENSE</b>	
<b>AC</b> 23, touch 9, flat-footed 22 (+1 Dex, +14 natural, -2 size)	
<b>hp</b> 119 (14d8+56)	

**Fort** +13, **Ref** +12, **Will** +8

### OFFENSE

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

**Melee** bite +17 (2d6+9), tail slap +12 (2d6+4)

**Space** 15 ft., **Reach** 15 ft. (20 ft. with tail)

**Special Attacks** trample (1d8+13, DC 26), whip tail

### STATISTICS

**Str** 28, **Dex** 13, **Con** 18, **Int** 2, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 11

**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 32 (36 vs. trip)

**Feats** Awesome Blow, Improved Bull Rush, Improved

Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception)

**Skills** Perception +15, Stealth +3, Swim +17

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** tropical lakes and rivers

**Organization** solitary, pair, or pack (3-6)

**Treasure** none

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Whip Tail (Ex)** When not submerged, a mokele-mbembe can crack its tail as a standard action, creating a sonic boom in a 5-foot burst, up to 20 feet away. Any creature in the burst's area must succeed at a DC 21 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1 round. The save DC is Constitution-based. Other mokele-mbembe are immune to this effect.





## MOTHPMAN

The case of Bronze Bridge was certainly the most notable instance of the mothman, but it is far from the only occurrence involving this strange harbinger of fates. One Berlbur Drogstout, a known inebriate residing in Kozan, abruptly quit drinking shortly before the legendary contamination of the distillery there and subsequent epidemic, citing some kind of “alien angel” as his savior. Even the esteemed Lady Eiredor spoke of an encounter with a “red-eyed insectoid” one evening in Memorial Park shortly before her mysterious and regrettable assassination. Any explanation for how and why these individuals were chosen by the mothmen—if indeed mothmen they were—continues to elude me.

—Pathfinder Reeve Vaterhal,  
*In Search of Prophecy*

A traveler in a lonely place sees strange lights in the sky, and unfamiliar voices whisper in her ear. She tries to ignore them, to focus on the path and the way home, but ahead on the moonlit road she sees a tall figure with two huge red eyes. Her hand wanders to the hilt of her sword as her heart pounds in her throat, but before she can act the figure unfurls its enormous wings and takes to the sky, its dark shadow falling across her.

One who falls under a mothman's shadow never truly emerges from it. She is haunted by the brief encounter—tormented by voices in the wind and unidentified noises from the darkness, and inflicted with confused dreams of disaster, mayhem, and glowing red eyes. Descriptions of the being vary depending on the witnesses, as if their very memories may have been warped by the event. Some claim that a mothman is silent, but others say that it communicates only in whispers that continue to be heard for years after the meeting, the creature's sibilant words always echoing in dark places. Even those who have heard the voice of a mothman cannot clearly remember what it said, but know that it compelled them to do things they cannot explain.

The portentous nightmares caused by a mothman encounter are typically followed by catastrophes. Bridges collapse, plagues break out, rivers dry up—the disasters are never the same, but they are always of epic proportions. In the aftermath of such tragedies, survivors emerge from the shambles, crying of ominous dreams and the alien creature that inflicted these prognostic night terrors upon them. Sometimes victims don't remember an encounter with a mothman until after disaster has struck, while other times those who have glimpsed a mothman are themselves involved in the ensuing calamity, often to the extent that they inadvertently contribute to it.

## Evidence

Sightings of mothmen are often accompanied by other strange phenomena—odd weather patterns, lights in the sky, inexplicable sounds, and even such exotica as crop circles and cattle mutilations. Often these events precede reports of mothman sightings and continue on for several days afterward. Residents of areas visited by mothmen often report headaches, memory loss, and hallucinations. Time sometimes passes strangely, even among those who never saw the mothman—individuals might lose whole days, and tasks that normally take hours may feel like they occupy only a few seconds.

Encounters with mothmen are invariably traumatic to observers, who tend to be alone, lost, or traveling in isolated regions. A mothman might appear only once before vanishing in a rush of wings, float across the moon leaving only a lingering sense of dread, or even take flight and pursue fleeing witnesses—always just a few paces

behind its victims, but never quite catching up. The story of the mothman travels farther and even faster than the creature itself, and an entire settlement might be alerted to its presence by the morning after a witness's initial sighting. Even if the mothman is not seen by everyone in a town, the eerie sense of dread that follows in the mysterious being's wake hangs so thick in the air that it is nearly palpable. At night, drunkards stumbling to the tavern or loom spinners on their way home from the late shift sometimes claim to hear terrible songs and voices sweep through city streets and down alleyways—hair-raising noises that sound all too much like a cat's hiss, a child's sobs, or a woman's scream.

As frightening as encountering a mothman can be, what comes after an appearance is often more alarming, and sometimes tragic. Disasters, mass hysteria, madness, and murder follow in a mothman's wake, though no one is ever certain whether these terrible events were caused by the creature or the being was simply drawn to their vicinity. Odder still is the fact that a mothman often all but disappears once the catastrophe it foreshadowed has struck, leading many to believe that the monstrous creature is a harbinger of death.

Though mysterious events invariably follow reports of a mothman, such incidents are not always calamitous in nature. Drought-quenching rains, population booms, and sudden resurrections have all been known to occur in the aftermath of a mothman sighting. Any rationale people perceive for the curse or boon a mothman bestows is dubious at best, and witnesses have gone mad trying to figure out why they were chosen to see the creature, why their friends and families were touched by its inconceivable whims, or what they could have done differently to alter the course of fate. In most instances, the answer to this last question is... absolutely nothing.

## Ecology

Only a handful of scholars acknowledge that mothmen are real. Most dismiss them as a myths, fantasies, or hallucinations—it typically takes an encounter with one of the beings to convince a skeptic of the creatures' unnerving but undeniable existence. Accounts vary widely, but some details remain consistent among witnesses. A mothman is always a 6- to 7-foot-tall humanoid with insectoid features, and boasts a wingspan upward of 10 feet. Mothmen's lean bodies look both muscled and emaciated, and most would guess that the creatures weigh little more than 100 pounds each.

A mothman's wings are of particular interest to those who see the being, and range in appearance from tattered moth wings to the immaculate and brilliant wings of a butterfly. Few can say whether these imposing organs are real or merely manifestations of power or energy, since

## UNEXPLAINABLE POWERS

Though few have ever even touched a mothman—let alone killed one—rumors surface every now and then of someone slaying one of the creatures. Depending on the needs of your game, a PC encounter with a mothman might end in any number of ways, though in general the mystique of a mothman can be preserved by allowing it to die in a unique way. Below are two optional mothman special abilities that can enhance the inherent mystery of these strange beings and make for unique challenges or additional adventures. You can also create your own customized special abilities that reflect a mothman's elusive and otherworldly nature.

**Dissipate (Su):** Upon being reduced to fewer than 0 hit points, the mothman immediately dies, even if its negative hit point total does not equal its Constitution score. It does not leave behind a corpse or any corporeal evidence of its existence, and instead its body becomes an insubstantial mass of shadows and smoke that dissipates after 1d4 rounds.

**Metamorphosis (Su):** When the mothman is killed by the direct actions of another Large or smaller humanoid or monstrous humanoid (such as by a melee attack, spell, or trap), its wings immediately snap around its body and conceal it completely. The wings can be pulled apart as a full-round action with a successful DC 25 Strength check, but otherwise they harden into a stiff, 3-inch-thick cocoon with the hardness of stone over the course of 1d4+1 rounds. Thereafter, the cocoon can only be penetrated by breaking through the hardened wings. If unbroken for 1 hour, the cocoon swiftly begins to deteriorate over the course of a few minutes, revealing no mothman corpse inside the shell, but instead an inert but otherwise impeccable duplicate of the creature that killed the mothman. The duplicate is dead and soulless, and smells, feels, and decays like a normal corpse. It can be used as the primary component in a *clone* spell (obviating both the laboratory and growth time normally necessary for the spell), but when the original creature's soul enters the duplicate, it has a 50% chance of immediately and irrevocably turning into a mothman with no memories of its previous life.

when a mothman flies it does so without the scarcest hint of exertion, and its wings remain stationary as it effortlessly floats forward at frightening speed. Regardless of shape and size, a mothman's wings shift constantly in color, most commonly from crimson to violet to indigo, though some witnesses report other colors, including bronze, emerald, and even golden hues.

Some eccentrics claim that mothmen gain sustenance from the suffering of others or the disasters that follow

in their wakes, much like will-o'-wisps, but there is little evidence to support this theory. Instead, most believe mothmen regard themselves as architects or engineers of events that steer the flow of fate toward its proper course, and that it is the alignment of this kismet that fuels a mothman's powers, creating a sort of cyclical source of energy. A mothman gains its strength by fulfilling a predetermined destiny, and it uses the strength so acquired to perform actions that further cement the course of fate.

It remains unknown how these agents of destiny know exactly what the proper course of fate is and how their actions can cause it to come to fruition. Those whose dreams are plagued by the whispers of a mothman speak of foul, ancient gods who guide the mothmen, but such individuals are typically regarded as lunatics. Those who claim to have been abducted by mothmen say the beings are in fact visitors from an alternate dimension or plane of existence whose future has already occurred and mirrors our own, and that the mothmen are here to ensure we don't make the same mistakes as their kind. World-weary cynics claim the mothmen are nothing more than malicious spirits or elaborate con artists, though most such skeptics have never met a mothman themselves. The reality of the mothmen and their origins may never be known, but it is probably an even more unsettling truth than anyone could possibly imagine.

A mothman uses its powers to subtly influence those around it, often causing victims to become unwitting allies in its complicated schemes, regardless of whether the victims in question have seen the mothman or even know of its existence. By examining the minutest details of a mothman's appearances and the subsequent strange events in the nearby region, one might be able to decipher how exactly the mysterious creature altered destiny: a watchman, troubled by strange dreams and visions, fails to pay attention when a fire breaks out; an innocent traveler delays a messenger who brings warning of imminent peril; a worker sleeps late, disappears for days, or is careless, leaving out a vital piece of a bridge or tower before a minor earth tremor causes the structure to collapse. Mothmen care not for the petty emotions of the people whose lives they directly affect—to them, fulfilling fate is all that matters, regardless of what exactly that fate entails for others or even themselves.

## Habitat & Society

Mothmen appear to be capable of dwelling in any environment, but are typically seen in temperate, rural areas. This might be because such areas are more heavily populated than wilderness—and thus have more potential witnesses—or because mothmen give preferential treatment to humanoids, who are most affected by the alien creatures' volatile plots.



Regardless of how many people live within a mothman's current region of interest, the being rarely, if ever, shows itself to more than half a dozen witnesses at a single time. Individual minds are far easier to influence than groups, and so mothmen strongly prefer appearing to lone observers. Their preference for showing up at night can be attributed to the eerie sounds and false images they are capable of conjuring—illusions that prompt targets to action faster than the commands of any monstrous stranger. Mothmen know that their elusiveness and mystique are their strongest weapons, and that if these tools fail to coax and sway victims, they must instead take more drastic measure and infect the minds of their targets or even alter their very memories.

It is unknown whether mothmen act with a collective goal in mind or their machinations are entirely their own. Indeed, no one has ever seen large groups of mothmen together, leaving many to question whether these harbingers are really just incredibly solitary beings or if there are in fact only a few mothmen. Of course, the variety of appearances they take and the myriad regions in which they are spotted lend credence to the former theory. Though a flock of mothmen would surely be able to more easily influence the flow of fate than a lone agent, it would seem that acting in groups is contrary to their complex agendas, and most work alone.

## Campaign Role

The very essence of a mothman—a creepy harbinger of doom with alien motivations and inexplicable agendas—makes it an ideal candidate for a lengthy adventure arc that takes place in a single settlement or region. Since the creature is often seen several days or weeks before the strange event implicit in its appearance, player characters should have plenty of time to investigate the creature and its potential intentions before calamity strikes. Characters might hear rumors of strange occurrences—lights in the sky, whispering voices in the night, great “birds” or other flying creatures silhouetted against the moon, and so on—only to finally catch a glimpse of red eyes and great wings.

The arrival of a mothman may itself cue the PCs that something is awry, but they'll likely need more clues in order to figure out the mothman's target and prevent the creature from fulfilling its possibly disastrous goals. Perhaps the mayor has just recently unveiled a monument precariously positioned on a steep cliff side, or villagers start noticing that the water from their well has a strangely metallic taste. The inclusion of multiple developments



## DORMANT DISASTERS

Those who encounter a mothman sometimes stumble upon a strange memento of their meeting shortly thereafter, and often feel inexplicably compelled to carry or wear the item. Few realize the true nature of such tokens until their fates have already been sealed by the mothmen lurking inside.

### MOTHMAN MEMENTO

**Aura** strong enchantment, illusion, and necromancy; **CL** 12th

**Slot** neck; **Price** 28,800 gp; **Weight** —

#### DESCRIPTION

Mothmen sometimes create these tokens when they know their powers won't be needed for a long period of time or they are close to death and wish to preserve their legacies. A *mothman memento* can be any item that is worn around the neck, such as an amulet or pendant. As a full-round action while wearing a *mothman memento*, a mothman can simultaneously kill itself and inject its soul into the item. A *mothman memento* can lie untouched for years or even decades before it winds up in the hands of another creature. Any humanoid or monstrous humanoid that wears the memento gains the ability to cast *modify memory* as a spell-like ability three times per day (caster level 12th).

If a creature goes to sleep or falls unconscious while wearing a *mothman memento*, the wearer must succeed at a DC 19 Will save or be affected as though by a *nightmare* spell (no modifiers due to knowledge or physical connection; caster level 12th). A creature can be affected by this *nightmare* effect only once every 24 hours. After the first time the wearer is affected by the *nightmare* effect, the memento can only be removed by means of a *remove curse* spell. A creature that dies from the *nightmare* effect rises as a mothman the next morning.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *modify memory*, *nightmare*, *soul bind*; **Cost** 14,400 gp

within the area creates further complication, as PCs try to figure out which one the mothman plans to target. A mothman's selection of victims and witnesses is also critical to any PC investigation, since these people are often somehow tied to the future event in question.

An urban investigation and the potential prevention of some imminent disaster can be motivating to some

## THE HARBINGER OF DOOM

In the real world, beginning in late 1966 and continuing through the end of 1967, individuals in and around Point Pleasant, West Virginia reported seeing a tall, winged creature with glowing red eyes on the outskirts of town. Dubbed “Mothman” by the media, the creature was popularized by writers and filmmakers, who claimed that numerous other psychic and extraterrestrial phenomena accompanied the sightings, which some believe culminated in the tragic collapse of the Silver Bridge in December of 1967.

The Mothman incident was also marked by appearances of the so-called “men in black”: mysterious strangers who exhibited an intense interest in UFO sightings and warned witnesses not to talk about what they’d seen.

Whether Mothman was truly an extraterrestrial or—as some claim—extradimensional creature, this terrifying, red-eyed, winged creature has taken up permanent residence in American cryptozoology and folklore, as evidenced by the Annual Mothman Festival held in Point Pleasant, as well as the 12-foot-tall metal sculpture of the monster unveiled at the second such celebration in 2003.

parties. Others might enjoy a more direct relationship with the monster they are trying to stop. PCs who encounter a mothman themselves are destined to play some role in the creature’s indecipherable schemes. They begin to experience unnerving phenomena in the wake of their brief encounter—strange, possibly prophetic nightmares of disaster, whispered voices in their rooms at night, echoes in their heads that only they can hear, or hallucinations of alien worlds.

These kinds of adventures work best if the PCs are already caught up in some greater scheme within the area, and their dealings with the mothman take place after they’ve already established their primary objectives. For instance, they might have been tasked earlier on with clearing out a kobold-infested mine. In their fevered dreams, the PCs see themselves go down one branch of the mine’s forked passageways to find helpful treasures, but when the PCs follow the same path the next day, they are inadvertently responsible for the valuable mine’s total collapse, and perhaps miners’ deaths.

## Treasure

The items a mothman carries on its person are often enigmatic and seemingly nonsensical. When they interact with charmed or crazed mortal intermediaries, they typically give them incongruous trinkets such as pendants, pieces of ornate cloth, or broken pieces of pottery. The tattered map of a distant region, a stranger’s

journal entries, wood carvings from a nonindigenous tree—these and other out-of-place tokens all make their way into the hands of those touched by a mothman. The meaning of such gifts is initially indecipherable; only when a mothman’s victim is already unknowingly playing into the dread visitor’s scheme does it become apparent what these items were meant for. The useless map sops up a spilled glass of poisoned wine, the stranger’s journal entries cause a devoted priest’s faith to waiver, and the wood carving blocks an errant, fatal arrow from a nearby archery range. To a mothman that sees everything at once and yet remains blind to all but its current objective, these mundane objects can mean the difference between failure and success.

Mothmen carry their own otherworldly belongings—items whose functions only they can comprehend. Witnesses who investigate a place where they saw a mothman the night before often report finding alien devices, such as lenses that make brand-new buildings look like rubble and render creatures completely invisible, manacles that seem to lock and unlock of their own accord, and amulets that randomly seep ink. Those who use or wear such items typically find themselves caught up in one of the mothman’s far-reaching plots later on.

## Mothmen on Golarion

Mothmen may have been on Golarion for a very long time. Ancient writings of the elves that date back to the time before Earthfall speak of a race of red-eyed “Heralds of Doom,” whose appearance invariably preceded great tragedy. The ancient heroine Phadarael is said to have seen one of these creatures and divined its fell intent, tracking it to its lair and slaying both it and its progenitor—possibly the first reference to the fabled elder mothmen.

Despite mothmen’s role in ancient history, most mothman sightings reported on Golarion have occurred only very recently, in the years leading up to the Age of Lost Omens. A notable number of curious incidents took place throughout eastern Avistan, notably in the backcountry regions of Taldor and Andoran, though incidents as far north as Ustalav have been reported. The most complete reports come from Pathfinders, including one Reeve Vaterhal, whose semi-famous historical work, *In Search of Prophecy*, has sparked significant interest in the creature throughout the literate populace of Absalom. Unfortunately, it has also led to a rise in false sightings.

After the dawn of the Age of Lost Omens, reports of the mothman became fewer and fewer, though every now and then a lonely herder or far-traveling trader claims to have sighted a mysterious, red-eyed humanoid in the middle of the night. Whether these beings are indeed mothmen having come back from their long dormancy or some strange offshoot of the creatures remains unknown.

## Mothman Elder

Two colorful membranous wings rise behind this large insectlike humanoid, forming and reforming into complex patterns.

### MOTHMAN ELDER

CR 12

XP 19,200

CN Large monstrous humanoid

**Init** +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *see invisibility*; Perception +23

**Aura** warp elements (120 ft., DC 22)

### DEFENSE

**AC** 26, touch 14, flat-footed 21 (+5 Dex, +12 natural, -1 size)

**hp** 142 (15d10+60)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +14, **Will** +16

**Defensive Abilities** *blur*; **DR** 10/magic; **Resist** cold 20, fire 20; **SR** 23

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

**Melee** 2 claws +20 (2d6+3/19-20)

**Ranged** obliteration ray +19 touch (8d6 energy)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

**Special Attacks** mind-warping gaze (DC 22)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 15th; concentration +20)

Constant—*blur*, *see invisibility*

At will—*control weather*, *greater dispel magic*

3/day—*cloudkill* (DC 20),

*hold monster* (DC 20),

*phantasmal killer* (DC 19),

*screaming* (DC 19)

1/day—*earthquake* (DC 23),

*incendiary cloud* (DC 23)

### STATISTICS

**Str** 17, **Dex** 20, **Con** 18, **Int** 17,

**Wis** 21, **Cha** 20

**Base Atk** +15; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 34

**Feats** Agile Maneuvers,

Blind-Fight, Improved

Critical (claw), Improved

Initiative, Improved Iron

Will, Iron Will, Weapon

Finesse, Weapon Focus (claw)

**Skills** Fly +25, Knowledge

(arcana) +21, Knowledge

(dungeoneering) +21,

Perception +23, Sense

Motive +20, Spellcraft +18,

Stealth +19

**Languages** Common, Sylvan,

Undercommon (can't speak);

telepathy 100 ft.

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Mind-Warping Gaze (Su)** See page 194 of *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2.

**Obliteration Ray (Su)** As a swift action, a mothman elder can fire a ray of devastating energy as a ranged touch attack that deals 8d6 points of damage (or 8d8 points of damage against an object, automatically bypassing hardness). This attack deals either acid, cold, electricity, or fire damage, as chosen by the mothman elder at the start of its turn. This attack has a range of 180 feet with no range increment.

**Warp Elements (Su)** A mothman elder's presence distorts the perceptions of those around it, to the point that they believe it is either suddenly swelteringly hot or numbingly cold. Any creature that starts its turn within 120 feet of a mothman elder must succeed at a DC 22 Will save or immediately succumb to the effects of extreme heat (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 444) or extreme cold (*Core Rulebook* 442). A mothman elder can switch between emitting a hot or cold aura as a move action. This effect lasts as long as the target remains within the area of effect and for 1d6 minutes afterward. A target may attempt a new Will save every minute to prematurely end the effect. This is a mind-affecting effect—the heat and cold are not real, and thus energy resistance and spells like *endure elements* have no effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Mothmen that are captured or fail to accomplish their goals answer to greater beings. Called elders by their kin, these cataclysmic creatures are taskmasters in charge of disciplining renegade mothmen and disposing of damning evidence that might bring knowledge of the mothmen to public light. This means hunting down and destroying individuals that reveal themselves to too many or fail in fulfilling destiny.

A mothman elder is 8 feet tall and weighs 150 pounds.





## SANDPOINT DEVIL

“See that row of gravestones? They belong to the wives, children, brothers, and sisters of the last bunch of fools to go chasing the devil. They sharpened their steel and readied their spells and prayed to their gods and went to Devil’s Platter. Had some clever plan to reach the bottom of the Pit and kill the beast. Well, three days after they left Sandpoint, all their family members—rest their souls—dropped where they stood, all at the same instant. father Zantus said they died of fright, though he couldn’t say what exactly caused their hairs to stand up so. The heroes never returned, neither. That was the last time anyone went to the devil’s lair, but I reckon there’ll be yet another crop of heroes trying their luck in just a matter of time.”

—Naffer Vosk to a new gravedigger in the Sandpoint Boneyard

When residents of the small town of Sandpoint on the southwestern coast of Varisia speak in low voices about “the devil,” they mean the dreadful creature that has menaced the community and its hinterlands for over a decade. Then again, most people don’t speak of the Sandpoint Devil if they can help it. They say the monster knows when someone is talking about it, and a poor soul who can’t hold his tongue is likely to glimpse the creature’s grotesque silhouette in the sky on the next moonless night—an ill omen indeed. According to legend, sightings of the Sandpoint Devil presage times of great woe, whether for a single person or the entire town. Sometimes, those who see the creature or speak of it too freely vanish in the night, never to be seen again.

Precise descriptions of the Sandpoint Devil vary depending on whom you ask, but most people agree that it resembles a large horse standing upright on its hind legs with leathery, ragged wings; a reptilian tail; red eyes that burn through the gloom; and a fanged muzzle that gives the creature a perpetual evil grin. Some say the devil commands fog and wind, others say it breathes goutts of flame or can literally frighten you to death, and still others say it can do all this and more.

Whenever livestock are slaughtered in their pens or children disappear from their beds, townsfolk are quick to blame the Sandpoint Devil. The beast is also denounced (quietly) when a building burns to the ground or a farmer’s crops wither. In short, the locals hang nearly all their ills on the devil. But not all residents consider it to be evil. Some believe that the creature is an ancient guardian of the Lost Coast, and its actions in service of that goal, however terrible they might seem, are not for mortals to understand.

Of course, hearsay and rumors only go so far, and most people outside the region consider the Sandpoint Devil a tall tale at best. At worst, they say it’s a hoax perpetrated by simple folk looking for attention or hoping to draw travelers and adventurers with coin to spend.

## Evidence

Part of the problem with documenting evidence of the Sandpoint Devil is that people in the region make their own proof. The devil is known as an omen of bad luck, so if a farmer’s crops fail to thrive, he’s likely to blame the creature—and perhaps swear to have seen it flying over his fields or standing on the roof of his barn. He’s not so much lying as convincing himself that he encountered the devil; it’s easy to pin the blame for your woes on an external force that’s out of your control.

Another complication is that physical evidence of the Sandpoint Devil rarely lasts long, because of both the natural elements and the misfortune and dread that always seem to follow in the devil’s wake. Deep hoofprints in the

mud of a field vanish overnight. The mangled corpse of a cow disappears without a trace, even when the body is being guarded. Written accounts of run-ins with the beast and paintings of the creature catch fire spontaneously. (The most superstitious locals blame the devil anytime a home goes up in flames.) And, of course, some brave souls who set out to kill the monster never return, or they vanish mysteriously a few weeks after returning to town empty-handed. Cynics scoff that the evidence is being manipulated by hoaxers who manufacture and erase clues to suit their own agenda, and indeed, some people have been caught making false tracks or setting fire to buildings. Still, fabrications and hysteria can’t account for a decade’s worth of sightings.

One of the most common signs of the devil’s presence is large hoofprints that reek of brimstone, made by a heavy creature walking upright, in an unusual location such as on a roof, through a tangled wood, or inside a locked barn. Travelers caught outside on a misty, moonless night might hear the sound of large, leathery wings flapping or glimpse the creature’s shadow as it flies overhead. Nearly everyone in the hinterlands claims to have heard the Sandpoint Devil’s terrifying screech, which sounds almost human. Livestock go missing or are found slaughtered and half burned. And, of course, whenever someone disappears while traveling a road at night, people know where to point the finger.

Anyone who sees or encounters the Sandpoint Devil is supposedly marked, and a few seers in the region claim to be able to identify those who are so branded. In some areas, residents avoid people with the devil’s mark, deny them service, or send them away. In this way and others, the myth of the Sandpoint Devil often becomes even more pervasive than the monster itself, as even when locals’ fear of the beast has temporarily subsided, they still live as though constantly beneath the fiend’s damnable gaze.

## Ecology

One of the most prevalent legends in the hinterlands is that the Sandpoint Devil was born long ago to a woman named Agatha Leeds, who was cursed by some fiendish being to bring a terrible beast into the world. But you can take your pick of origin stories. Another tale claims that the devil is the freakish result of wizardly experiments—if they can make an owlbear, why not a horsebat? The winged creature is also thought by some to be a native of the Abyss or some other terrible plane, evidenced by the demonic words one can occasionally make out in its rasping neighs. The term “devil” is merely a nickname, though its widespread use furthers the monster’s notoriety as some otherworldly entity.

Those who have seen the Sandpoint Devil and lived to tell the tale believe that the beast is made of flesh and

## RED GUTS

The residents of Sandpoint who believe in the devil have come to accept the creature as a part of life, almost a force of nature. They'll never be rid of it; the best they can do is avoid it or find some way to ease the burden of living under its threat. The bartender at the notorious tavern Fatman's Feedbag has concocted an oily scarlet drink he calls red guts to help steel the nerves, though he won't reveal its ingredients. Anyone who drinks a tankard of the sweet stuff gains an alchemical bonus equal to half her Wisdom bonus (minimum 1) on saving throws against mind-affecting fear effects, such as the Sandpoint Devil's bay and *phantasmal killer* abilities. This bonus lasts for a number of hours equal to half her Constitution score. There is no benefit to drinking multiple servings of red guts. There is, however, a side effect to red guts—while the bonus is in effect, the drinker takes a penalty on all Intelligence-based checks equal to the alchemical bonus against fear effects. Across town, the owner of the Pillbug's Pantry (a source of medicine, potions, and—if the rumors are true—poisons) sells flasks of red guts for those who want to bottle their courage for later use. One glass of red guts costs 25 gp from the Fatman's Feedbag and 50 gp in a flask from the Pillbug's Pantry.

blood and needs to eat and sleep like any other animal, but such reassurances do little to dissuade firmly rooted beliefs in most locals. During the day, the devil slumbers in its den deep in the Pit, the vertical cave that runs through the desolate Devil's Platter. On murky nights, it terrorizes the hinterlands, searching for prey. When hunting, the monster prefers victims that are easy pickings, such as livestock in farmers' pens or lone travelers. If the creature is particularly famished and the area is isolated, it might stop to eat its kill on the spot, but most of the time it returns to its lair to feed in peace, holding its unconscious or dead prey in its enormous jaws as it flies back to the Pit. Hinterlands gossip says that when several weeks pass without a sighting of the Sandpoint Devil, that usually means it is briefly hibernating after digesting a large meal.

In flight, the Sandpoint Devil moves like a typical winged horse—if such a thing can be said to be typical—though its bulk and its ragged wings do not allow for precise maneuvers. When it lands, the creature walks upright on its powerful hind legs, standing about 8 feet tall at the head and 10 feet tall at the crest of its wings. The pose looks awkward and disturbing, but the sure-footed beast moves with surprising speed, only crashing down on all fours to kick or trample foes. Even when it runs, it does so as though it were a bipedal creature, and witnesses rarely recover from the sight of the thing as it

trotting upright after them, gaining ground even as they ran with all their might.

The Sandpoint Devil is considered by most to be a unique creature, and thankfully only one of its kind is known to exist. However, explorers have witnessed similar beasts elsewhere in the world, creatures that might be somehow related to the devil or are possibly the strange progeny of unions between a fiend and the hapless creatures that it chooses to fertilize. Sometimes, locals report spotting the Sandpoint Devil in the company of a white stag, the ghost of a young girl, or one of the other lesser-known mystery monsters of the region, though whether it is allied with these equally secretive creatures or considers them rivals is unknown.

## Habitat & Society

The Sandpoint Devil menaces the hinterlands from its home in the Devil's Platter, the massive limestone escarpment in the northern portion of the region. The platter's sides are almost sheer, and somewhere on top is a 100-foot-wide hole called the Pit. Ledges and rope ladders allow climbers to descend into the gloomy depths, though no one knows how far down the devil lairs. A gnome named Krolneck, a regular at Cracktooth's Tavern in Sandpoint, claims to have reached the bottom once but refuses all requests to return to the Pit—though perhaps the right incentive could change his mind.

The devil is not the platter's only inhabitant. Caves along the western edge are home to the Birdcruncher goblin tribe, whose tunnels wind through the depths of the escarpment. The goblins live in fear of the Sandpoint Devil and throw sacrifices and tribute into the Pit. A tribal rite of passage requires young goblins to creep down to the bottom and bring back proof of their visit.

The other residents of the Pit typically give the Sandpoint Devil a wide berth, most at least recognizing the monster's immense power and many going so far as to revere the devil. The gremlins, derros, and dark folk that reside in the massive cave complex are more or less a disorganized mass of fiendish beings, and in the Sandpoint Devil many of these brutes see a promise that one day they too might achieve greater power and perhaps even notoriety.

Tavern gossip in Sandpoint speaks of an alliance between the monster and the ghouls that haunt the graveyards along the hinterlands' northern coastline. Supposedly, warrens under the graves extend into catacombs below the Devil's Platter, where the ghouls worship the demon lord Kabriri. The dark rites to Him Who Gnaws are led by a ghast said to possess a means of controlling the Sandpoint Devil, which could mean its attacks are not as random as people think. The acolytes in Sandpoint Cathedral fear that the ghast is trying to unite

the goblins, troglodytes, and other monster races under one banner for a terrible purpose.

Outside of barroom tales, most residents of the region don't talk much about the Sandpoint Devil save in muttered curses. They fear drawing its attention or the possibility that they might vanish one day, as so many others have. However, less superstitious locals try to make some coin off the legends by selling statues, maps, protective wards, and the like to visitors. The proprietor of the Hagfish tavern offers a prize to anyone brave enough (or drunk enough) to belt out all the verses of a song that mocks the Sandpoint Devil. Farmers' children who have wandered too far from their homes sometimes dare one another to touch the side of Devil's Platter, though most chicken out before they come within 30 paces of the escarpment.

## Campaign Role

In Sandpoint and the hinterlands, the devil is a legendary creature of doom. Most locals live in fear of the beast and perform all sorts of superstitious rituals to ward it off. This reputation perfectly serves the creature's agenda. It does not hunt merely to fill its belly—the monster loves to terrorize people regardless of whether or not it intends to eat them. It should frighten the player characters and build an atmosphere of dread long before it attacks. You can make sure of this by entrenching the PCs in the local lore of the beast and making its dominative influence on the nearby populace readily apparent. This can be accomplished through interactions with NPCs as well as through physical evidence of its impact on the people of Sandpoint, such as wood carvings depicting its visage, art pieces of heroes battling the devil, and unusual customs, such as prayers at the local church or special rules for otherwise well-known card games.

Low-level PCs who aren't ready to face the Sandpoint Devil see its silhouette in the distance, flying through a moonless night or standing high on a hill or cliff. They hear its leathery wings flapping in the mist overhead and listen in terror to its fearsome baying. They find hoofprints on the roof of their inn and are shunned by villagers and farmers who see the mark of the devil on them. They wake sweating from vivid nightmares about the monster. Plant these seeds early in the campaign to build mystery and tension.

Later, when the PCs have more experience, the Sandpoint Devil may confront them directly. The creature stalks them on dark nights and toys with them, letting them catch glimpses as it flies near, creating banks of fog around them, and causing their torches to flare up into fireworks or clouds of smoke. It uses *dimension door* to vanish within its fog and *phantasmal killer* to conjure the heroes' worst nightmares. When the adventurers are full of dread, the devil attacks—and that's when their troubles really begin.

The PCs can end up in the Sandpoint Devil's sights for any number of reasons. Regional scholars and folklorists might send them to Sandpoint to look into the rumors that a strange creature haunts the area. Once the PCs are in the hinterlands, where most people believe in the devil, more specific adventures are possible. Local farmers, tired of losing livestock to goblins and bugbears, can hire the heroes to track the raiders back to the Devil's Platter and end their aggression. The acolytes of Sandpoint Cathedral might pressure the mayor to have the PCs investigate the link between the devil and the ghouls of the Paupers' Graves—they fear an alliance between Kabriri

and Pazuzu, demon lord of temptation. Such rumors are typically insubstantial, however, and whatever resolution the PCs have regarding the Sandpoint Devil, there should never be a clear-cut explanation for its existence; part of the devil's novelty is in its obscurity.

Quests of recovery also make for good Sandpoint Devil-focused adventures. The PCs can descend into the Pit to find a valuable object that was stolen by goblins, rescue a Sandpoint resident who was kidnapped by bugbears, or search for the remains of a missing person thought to have been a victim of the devil. And don't forget that not everyone in the region is a believer. Perhaps someone is planting hoofprints and other phony evidence for his own financial gain, and the heroes can expose the scheme before tracking down the real menace.

## Treasure

The Sandpoint Devil's treasures are the terrified screams of its quarry, the wide eyes of a victim rooted in fear, and the taste of flesh seasoned with fright. The creature has no use for the gold or gear of its prey. However, since the devil often brings its meals back to its lair in the Pit, a



### THE JERSEY DEVIL

The Sandpoint Devil is inspired by the Jersey Devil, a mysterious creature said to have roamed the Pine Barrens in New Jersey for hundreds of years. According to the legend, the creature was born in the 1700s to a Mrs. Leeds, who already had 12 children and cursed her latest offspring while it was still in the womb, wishing that the devil would take it—and so the devil did. The child was born a monster, with a horse's head, bat wings, and cloven hooves. It wrecked the house, disappeared up the chimney, and has haunted the Pine Barrens ever since.

Over the years, more than 2,000 witnesses (including police officers, park rangers, city officials, and ministers) have reported seeing the Jersey Devil. After a famous rash of sightings in January 1909, the Philadelphia Zoo offered a \$10,000 reward for its capture. The creature has been blamed for slaughtered livestock and dogs, destroyed crops, and missing persons.

Skeptics have dismissed the Jersey Devil as a hoax (and indeed, some sightings have been exposed as pranks) or a misidentification of another animal, possibly a deer or giant bird. But don't tell the state's professional hockey team—since 1982, they've called themselves the New Jersey Devils.

mound of debris and remains from victims steadily grows at the bottom of the shaft. And because the legendary monster has haunted the hinterlands for at least a decade, the heap contains all sorts of objects and corpses (some that have decayed beyond recognition, and others that could still be identified by villagers mourning their lost family members). Mixed in with the remnants of the devil's meals are the baubles and trinkets thrown into the Pit by the fawning Birdcruncher goblins. Their tributes become more valuable during times when the Sandpoint Devil is more active and occasionally include captured humanoids, trussed and tossed into the shaft. Rewards might be given for the victims' safe return or for the retrieval of items they carried.

Proving the existence of the devil to those beyond the hinterlands would bring its own rewards, but solid proof is hard to find when evidence of the creature spontaneously ignites. Recently, a band of mercenaries in Riddleport claimed to have cut off and kept one of its wings, but all they had to back up their tale was a bag of ashes (and gruesome injuries).

### Sandpoint Devil on Golarion

The creature known as the Sandpoint Devil was named for its reputed stomping grounds, so by definition only one such beast could exist. Indeed, despite their fear,

some residents of the region take a small measure of perverse pride in the fact that their tiny patch of Golarion is home to a singularly legendary monster whose name is known to scholars across the continent. Not all locals agree on the "singular" part, though—some swear that more than one devil haunts the area. A pair of lovers, braving the cliffs of Hag's Plummet at the western tip of the hinterlands, were chilled by the creature's baying at about the same time that a farmer tending his crops outside Egan's Wood said the devil swooped low over his head, nearly trampling him from above. Of course, tales of the monster are thick in the hinterlands, and if all sightings are true, there must be an army of devils.

A more direct encounter was reported by a halfling named Lirra who made a habit of scaling the Ashen Rise, a smaller limestone escarpment south of Devil's Platter, to go dragon watching. She hoped to catch sight of the black dragon said to live in the stony hills east of the plateau. One moonless night, she did spy a dark shape in the sky, but as it flapped closer, she saw that it was the Sandpoint Devil, its fiery red eyes flaring. The devil bayed at her, and the terrified halfling scampered down the rise almost as quickly as if she had jumped. She says she's never leaving the safety of Sandpoint again.

To the locals, the Sandpoint Devil is a harbinger of bad tidings. When it chooses to be seen in the skies over the town, something bad is going to happen, and a rash of sightings is thought to portend a major disaster. The devil was seen frequently just before a dark time that residents call the "Late Unpleasantness," when a beloved citizen was revealed to be a serial killer and a raging fire destroyed part of the town. In truth, these and other violent acts were spurred by the reactivation of an ancient relic below Sandpoint, but people were quick to blame the legendary beast.

There seem to be as many traditions to ward off the devil's curse as there are residents of Sandpoint. One person may swear that if you see the creature, your only chance to avoid misfortune is to turn in a counter-clockwise circle three times while murmuring a prayer to Desna. Another might say that only blood satisfies the devil, so you must slaughter a chicken before the next moon. Children sometimes chant rhymes about the Sandpoint Devil while skipping rope, mainly because they are expressly forbidden from doing so by superstitious parents.

Creatures that resemble the Sandpoint Devil have been spotted in other parts of Golarion. A witch in the ancient, fey-haunted wilderness of Darkmoon Vale is said to command a winged horse with a grinning mouth of fangs. Similarly, life-sized statues of bat-winged horses standing upright have been found in the jungle ruins of Wat Krypt deep in the Mwangi Expanse.



## Sandpoint Devil

*This mangy, horse-like beast walks perversely upright. Ragged wings, a dragon's lengthy tail, and a wide mouth full of jagged teeth complete its vile appearance.*

### SANDPOINT DEVIL

CR 8

XP 4,800

NE Large outsider (native)

**Init** +3; **Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +18

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 22, touch 13, flat-footed 18 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +9 natural, -1 size)

**hp** 114 (12d10+48)

**Fort** +12, **Ref** +7, **Will** +11

**DR** 5/cold iron; **Immune** fire, fear effects; **SR** 19

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (poor)

**Melee** bite +17 (2d6+6/19-20), 2 hooves +17 (1d8+6)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

**Special Attacks** bay, hellfire breath, kick, trample (2d6+9, DC 22)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 10th; concentration +13)

At will—*fog cloud*, *gust of wind*,  
*pyrotechnics* (DC 15)

3/day—*dimension door*, *phantasmal  
killer* (DC 17)

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 22, **Dex** 17, **Con** 19, **Int** 8, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 16

**Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +19; **CMD** 33 (37 vs. trip)

**Feats** Dodge, Hover, Improved Vital Strike,  
Mobility, Spring Attack, Vital Strike

**Skills** Fly +12, Intimidate +12, Knowledge  
(geography) +5, Perception +18,  
Stealth +14, Survival +18

**Languages** Abyssal, Varisian

#### ECOLOGY

**Environment** any (Varisia)

**Organization** solitary

**Treasure** incidental

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Bay (Su)** When the

Sandpoint Devil screams as a standard action, all creatures within a 300-foot-radius spread must succeed at a DC 19 Will save or become panicked for 2d4 rounds. This is a sonic, mind-affecting fear effect. Whether or not their saves are successful, creatures within the effect are immune to the Sandpoint Devil's bay for 24 hours thereafter. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Hellfire Breath (Su)** Once every 1d4 rounds, the Sandpoint Devil can unleash a blast of infernal flame from its mouth as a standard action. This hellfire fills a 30-foot cone and deals 10d6 points of fire damage (Reflex DC 20 half).

Anyone who takes damage from this breath weapon must also succeed at a DC 20 Will save to avoid becoming cursed by the infernal flames. Those who become cursed take a -4 penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks for a number of days equal to the damage taken, and during this time, the victim's skin appears to be horribly burned in places regardless of any healing applied. This curse effect functions at caster level 12th. The save DC for both saves is Constitution-based.

**Kick (Ex)** The Sandpoint Devil's hoof attacks are primary attacks that deal bludgeoning and slashing damage.





## SASQUATCH

“I never paid any heed to the stories, not until one night when I was camped out in the woods on my way to Galduria. A hair-raising howl like nothing of this realm woke me from a dead sleep at about midnight, and as I tried to tame my wildly thrumming heart, I could feel its eyes on me. I can’t explain the feeling—of being watched, but also knowing that whatever was watching me was so full of rage, yet also great sadness. I couldn’t see anything past the firelight as I strained my eyes, but then I saw something move in the shadows—something big. I saw the light flash in its eyes, and then it was gone like it’d never even been there. In the morning, all I found were those huge footprints circling my camp and then gradually vanishing into the trees.”

—Cerinda Trundle, traveling peddler

The legendary sasquatch is a creature of incredible mystery. It stalks the wildest forests yet leaves no trace of its passing. While many have claimed to see such a being, there are no known reports of sasquatch corpses being brought back to civilization. The similarities in eyewitness accounts, however, create a vivid picture of the creature. All agree that the sasquatch stands between 7 and 9 feet tall and appears proportionally more massive than a human. A sasquatch's limbs are thick as tree trunks, particularly near its calves, which widen into enormous, flat feet. Its body is heavysset, with a wide chest and shoulders. The creature's head, which is set forward on its chest, hides its short neck. Thick, coarse hair ranging from auburn to black covers its body from head to foot, and only its face, toes, palms, and soles remain hairless.

Stories indicate that sasquatches are sentient beings, and many claim they are only slightly less intelligent than the average human. Sasquatches are peaceful creatures, steering clear of settlements and concealing themselves and their families in the depths of temperate forests. A handful of tales, however, claim they carry off smaller humanoids for unknown purposes.

Despite their bulk, sasquatches move with silent grace. Those who have seen sasquatches say they move through the trees like water, and fade back into the forest just as swiftly. Travelers wandering through sasquatch-inhabited forests report hearing knocking sounds and low howls unlike those of any common forest animal. These strange calls in the dark and the distinctive, pungent odor of an unknown beast are the closest most travelers ever get to a sasquatch.

## Evidence

Evidence of sasquatches is unusually abundant given how rarely anyone sees the creatures. The most common signs of a sasquatch are its overlarge footprints. Not only are the tracks many times larger than a human's bare foot, but the imprints sink several inches into the earth, a testament to the creature's bulk. The impressions of juvenile sasquatches are closer in size to adult human footprints, but their depth shows that even these youths weigh much more than humans of a similar size. Sasquatch footprints can appear similar to those of an ettin or hill giant, but are smaller, broader, and shallower. A successful DC 17 Knowledge (nature) check correctly identifies sasquatch tracks.

Visible evidence of sasquatches in the area includes mats of hair caught on brambles and undergrowth as well as broken tree branches 7 or 8 feet up off the ground. Sasquatches shed hair in the same manner as humans, but occasionally snag large tangles of coarse, foul-smelling hair on low-hanging branches or thorny bushes. A PC who succeeds at a DC 17 Knowledge (nature) check can identify the fur as sasquatch hair. Broken branches are less definitive evidence, but skilled trackers recognize

the pattern of breaks and disturbed foliage as typical of a big creature forcing its way past. With a successful DC 17 Survival check, a PC can identify the broken branches as the trail of an unusually tall creature, such as a sasquatch or giant, rather than the marks of a smaller animal traveling through the treetops.

A classic sign of sasquatch activity is the persistent, musky odor the creatures give off. Scholars of the sasquatch legend theorize that this scent serves as a method for marking sasquatches' territory or somehow aids in sasquatch communication. Trackers and hunters keep alert for the trademark odor, since the potent musk is discernible even when the sasquatch remains unseen and quiet.

When a sasquatch's fierce howls pierce the still air of the deep woods, passersby are left with little doubt that there is something big nearby. Untrained listeners often mistake sasquatch calls for those of aurumvoraxes, bears, hodags, megaloceroses, or giant owls. With a successful DC 17 Knowledge (nature) check, a character can correctly identify a sasquatch howl; the DC drops to 15 if the listener has identified a sasquatch call before.

Travelers in sasquatch territory often report a sensation of being observed, as if something were monitoring their progress through the area. Whether sasquatches are indeed watching or these reports are the products of overactive imaginations remains undetermined.

## Ecology

Sasquatches prefer to live in the cool hearts of temperate forests. Like many large mammals, sasquatches are primarily herbivores, and forests provide abundant sources of food for their large appetites—they must spend up to 10 hours per day eating to fuel their muscular bodies. Sasquatches' advanced gastrointestinal tracts can digest and extract nutrients from unappetizing, fibrous plant matter such as tree bark and thick roots, and the creatures supplement this diet with insects, eggs, and fungi. Because they absorb most of the water they need from the moist vegetation they consume, sasquatches have less need for further hydration than most forest creatures, and can thus live a fair distance from fresh water sources, making their lairs all the more difficult to find.

Most sasquatch families make their homes in natural formations such as deadfalls, caves, or remote glades. Each family keeps its distance from other families and respects territorial boundaries. They use their scents and vocalizations—especially the distinctive “knocking” they create by striking a solid surface—to mark these boundaries. While sasquatches are generally peaceful and tolerate travelers moving through their domain, those intruders who stray too close to the heart of a sasquatch lair may find out how aggressive these creatures can be, especially if they have infants nearby.

Female sasquatches have fertility cycles of 5–7 years, lasting from age 12 to around age 35, so most sasquatch families have a maximum of five children. Female sasquatches give birth to live infants after a gestation period of 8 months. Most deliver a single child at a time, but rarely one might have twins.

Sasquatch infants are covered with a coat of fine, silky hair. At around 1 year of age, a sasquatch infant sheds its birth-coat and begins to grow its first mature coat of hair. This is also the time when a sasquatch infant begins to walk on its own and its mother can wean it off nursing. Sasquatch young stay close to their parents for protection, and to learn how to forage and survive in the forest.

Once a sasquatch child reaches puberty at around age 12, it often develops a strong impulse to explore the territory outside its family home. Adolescent sasquatches roam farther and farther from their parents, eventually encountering other sasquatches looking for new territory. These young sasquatches pair off, mate, and form new families. Sasquatches typically live for 50–70 years, though rumors mention ancient sasquatches living for 100 years or even longer.

## Habitat & Society

Sasquatches feel strong emotional bonds with their family members. A sasquatch family usually includes a mother, father, and two or more children. Sasquatch family members enjoy foraging and preparing meals together, grooming each other, and “singing” in the evenings by making low vocalizations interspersed with knocking.

Sasquatches most commonly die from predator attacks or accidents. When this happens, the remaining family

members enter a period of mourning. They bury their lost member with great care, hiding all traces of the gravesite to keep the body safe from predators. Sasquatch mourners keep vigil at the grave for 24 hours, howling and knocking loudly at sunrise and sunset. For several weeks thereafter, the sasquatches leave their home only to gather the minimum amount of food required to carry on.

Once the mourning period is over, if the deceased sasquatch was one of the parents, the family typically expands its territory. Its members roam further abroad, craving companionship and hoping to find another family with which to join. Usually a lone female sasquatch with children seeks out a single male and vice versa, but two lone females with children sometimes partner to raise their brood, as do pairs of lone males.

Sasquatches coexist peacefully with most native creatures in the area. A sasquatch knows how to read other species’ territorial markers and stays away from large predators when they are mating or raising young and are most likely to attack. Likewise, most predators in a forest steer clear of sasquatches, whose large frames intimidate all but the boldest, hungriest hunters. A sasquatch’s ability to move quickly and easily through heavy undergrowth allows it to retreat when threatened by other creatures. Forest fey get along well with sasquatches, and some even consider themselves guardians of sasquatch territory. The exception is plantlike fey such as twigjacks, who stay out of sasquatch territory lest they be accidentally eaten.

Sasquatches give humans and other civilized humanoids a wide berth, observing them cautiously to ensure the interlopers are passing through, not settling in the area. A sasquatch can easily hide in the thick foliage of its home, but if by chance a human does see it, the sasquatch retreats immediately. Reports surface from time to time of sasquatches carrying off travelers to keep as pets or even as mates, but so far none of these reports have ever been confirmed.

## Campaign Role

Sasquatches are ideal for adventures in which the villain is largely misunderstood or in fact the victim rather than the assailant. Sasquatches are normally peaceful, reserved creatures unless their territory is encroached upon, and logging camps, settlements, and other incursions can quickly spur them into action.

Sasquatches try to drive interlopers out of the area before resorting to violence. They might let animals out of pens, knock over outbuildings, or steal and scatter building materials, always leaving behind their trademark giant footprints. Unfortunately, intruders, rather than finding a new region, usually retaliate by leading hunting parties against sasquatches, which can provoke the sasquatches to true violence. Adventurers coming upon the



scene might be told only that the sasquatches have attacked, without the details leading up to the conflict.

Sasquatches prefer the most remote, isolated sections of forest to make their homes, and could easily have lairs near ancient monuments, hidden dungeons, or lost artifacts sought after by others. Adventurers looking for any of these hidden treasures could inadvertently enter sasquatch territory and come into conflict with the creatures, though those who manage to befriend the wary beings might be aided in their cause.

Groups of sasquatches usually leave at least one member of the family at their lair while the rest are foraging. Adventurers could, out of fear or surprise, kill what appears to be a lone sasquatch only to find themselves targeted by the slain creature's family. Fey creatures such as brownies, fauns, grigs, nymphs, and sprites get along well with sasquatches and might voluntarily protect sasquatch lairs. Druids, particularly elves or gnomes, who live near sasquatch territory might see sasquatches as rare, natural creatures that should be protected rather than hunted. Though sasquatches generally do not build fortifications around their lairs, druids wishing to protect sasquatches might use spells such as *plant growth* or *snares* to defend sasquatch territory.

Because sasquatches are intelligent humanoids, they are vulnerable to mind-affecting spells like *charm person* and *dominate person*. Evil forest-dwellers, including druids and rangers as well as monsters such as araneas or rusalkas, can influence sasquatches through magic and use the powerful creatures to cause mischief in human villages or to act as their first line of defense. High-level enchanters with charmed sasquatch minions might provide the sasquatches with armor and magic items to make them more powerful and deadly. Old, experienced sasquatches might even have class levels in druid or ranger, making them formidable threats on their own.

It's easy to tell when sasquatches were involved in a conflict thanks to the distinctive footprints they leave behind. These footprints might easily be mistaken for giant footprints, though, especially if hill giants or forest giants also live nearby. If a druid or ranger is allied with or controlling the sasquatches, judicious use of *pass without trace* ensures the creatures leave no tracks at all. It then becomes difficult to identify the creature causing a disturbance, particularly since sasquatches are relatively stealthy and can move with ease through forest growth. Alternatively, dastardly criminals trying to deflect suspicion from their own wrongdoings might create fake sasquatch footprints in an attempt to rile and distract locals. While the people struggle to track down and drive away the sasquatches, whom they fear to be the cause of their woes, the true enemy can conduct her dastardly plans in peace.

## SASQUATCH SKULL

The nature spirits that favor sasquatches over avaricious intruders occasionally touch the corpse of a murdered sasquatch, and those hunters who seek to claim a decapitated trophy often receive more than they bargained for.

### SASQUATCH SKULL (CURSED ITEM)

**Aura** moderate transmutation; **CL** 7th

**Slot** none; **Weight** 5 lbs.

#### DESCRIPTION

Divination reveals this large humanoid skull to be that of a gorilla or giant, although it is actually an accursed *sasquatch skull*. The item seems to grant its bearer a +5 bonus on Stealth checks in wooded areas.

If an individual takes possession of the *sasquatch skull* for more than 24 hours, it quickly begins to stink. The smell is undetectable by the skull's bearer, but companions and creatures within 30 feet find the pungent smell extremely noticeable. The smell imposes a –2 penalty on Charisma checks and Charisma-based skill checks made by the skull's owner. In addition, aggressive wild animals always target the skull's owner first during combat. The skull need not be on the owner's person for the curse to manifest, so long as ownership has not been transferred through sale, gift, or theft.

A *remove curse* spell suppresses the stench for 1d4 days. Transferring ownership of the skull transfers the curse to its new owner, but the curse remains on the last owner if the skull is abandoned. The only way to remove the curse permanently other than giving away the skull is to use a *miracle* or *wish* spell, or to bury the skull in a forested area and keep watch for 24 hours. The skull's owner must be part of this graveside vigil, and must howl and knock on a nearby log or rock at sunset and sundown. A PC can discover the details of this ritual with a successful DC 25 Knowledge (nature) check.

#### CREATION

**Magic Items** darkskull

## Treasure

Sasquatches do not value currency, but they do collect small objects with which to decorate their homes. Unpolished gemstones, wooden carvings, polished bits of bone, and river-smoothed pebbles grace the natural nooks and crannies in sasquatch lairs. Travelers in sasquatch territory sometimes run afoul of other predators or stumble into a sasquatch lair and perish, and their scavenged equipment might be found in sasquatch homes (though sasquatches leave coins on the body, having no use for them). Sasquatches can use humanoid equipment and tools, though they don't always use such items the way they were intended. They might

## THE LEGEND OF BIGFOOT

Real-life tales of sasquatch-like creatures, including Mapinguari and Yowie, have existed in many cultures for hundreds of years. Stories of a North American “bigfoot” surfaced from time to time over the last century, but Bigfoot first gained national attention after an incident in 1958 in California. A road construction crew was plagued by a mysterious nighttime visitor who disturbed the camp, knocking over 50-gallon oil drums and leaving enormous footprints. Jerry Crew, a bulldozer operator, called a friend to take plaster casts of the footprints. Pictures of the casts were published in a local paper and soon major media outlets were reporting on the story.

Thereafter, individuals throughout the Pacific Northwest began reporting sightings of Bigfoot. Expeditions formed to track down the elusive sasquatch, but none met with success. In 1967, Roger Patterson and Robert Gimlin caught images of a hairy, female humanoid figure while shooting a Bigfoot documentary. The Patterson tape is still considered some of the most compelling Bigfoot evidence we have. Though excitement over Bigfoot has since died down, the Bigfoot Research Center still operates out of Washington State, and Bigfoot has become an enduring piece of North American culture.

use daggers to make wood or bone carvings, fishing line to string wind chimes, and torn blankets to tie bundles of foraged greens.

In areas where curiosity about sasquatches is high, collectors pay greatly for sasquatch evidence. Common sorts of evidence, such as hunks of hair or footprint casts, fetch low prices ranging from 5 sp to 10 gp, depending on the quality and the interest of the collector. Rarer—and more ethically questionable—trophies tend to fetch higher prices. A sasquatch finger or tooth could be worth 100 gp to the right collector. The most coveted evidence collectors crave is a body; an intact sasquatch corpse could be worth up to 1,000 gp. A live sasquatch, particularly an infant, is likely to spark a bidding war between collectors and could be worth thousands to the seller, or even more if taken to a large slave market.

## Sasquatches on Golarion

On the distant continent of Arcadia, the native peoples recount stories of the reclusive sasquatch. Arcadian artwork depicts these massive creatures, 8-foot-tall humanoids covered with thick hair. Ulfen and Andoren settlers carried tales of the sasquatch back across the ocean, and now reports of sasquatch sightings occasionally surface in Avistan from Varisia to Andoran. If the tales are true,

sasquatches somehow found their way across the sea to Avistan. An unlikely feat, but what else could explain the infrequent but uncannily similar sightings?

In the Inner Sea, it is in the temperate forests of Avistan that sasquatches typically make their homes. Those seeking a glimpse of the reclusive beings look to the deepest forests of the continent: Arthfell Forest in Andoran, Fierani Forest in Kyonin, Backar Forest in Molthune, Southern Fangwood in Nirmathas, Verduran Forest in Taldor, and Churlwood in Varisia. Sasquatches fit well into these ecosystems; their height allows them to forage leaves and branches from higher up than most grazers, and they are unimpeded by the thick and lush undergrowth. Such terrain provides more food for the sasquatches, and also makes passage through sasquatch territory more difficult for would-be hunters. When a sasquatch moves into a new territory, it causes little interruption to the local wildlife, blending in seamlessly with the other natural creatures of the forest.

In wooded regions throughout Arcadia, villagers tell stories of rough, half-wild humanoids, the fabled offspring of sasquatches and humans. These reclusive beings dwell in sasquatch territory, and little is known of their society or motivations. In Avistan, no such tales have developed. However, equally strange stories pop up from time to time. In Molthune, villagers along the edge of the Backar Forest warn travelers not to react if they see a sasquatch peering at them through the trees. They claim the mischievous fey of the forest conjure illusions of sasquatches to lure curious travelers into the thick woods, where they inevitably fall victim to elaborate pranks. Though most sasquatch-seekers return with bruised pride and perhaps some lost time, at least one—Pathfinder Verrod Ormon, a halfling agent whose two published tomes of sasquatch legends and eyewitness reports are widely regarded as some of the most informative works of their kind—never emerged from the forest again.

Nirmathi storytellers have a dozen sasquatch tales to trot out whenever they pass through forested areas. Those who live at the forest’s edge seem to have an insatiable appetite for such tales, and always pay generously to hear them from traveling rangers. Privately, some Nirmathi believe the stories to be utter fabrications, though others are convinced the tales are true. More than one caravan has its own personal story of shapes seen in the trees at the edge of the firelight and strange howls and knockings deep in the woods. One Nirmathi matriarch, Nyseza Nysvinya, claims her family is under a curse: Once every generation, a sasquatch carries off a child of the Nysvinya line. Last year, Nyseza’s grand-niece disappeared from the group’s camp one night. Her family, however, believes the child wandered off or was conjured away by evil spirits, giving no credence to Nyseza’s paranoid tales of sasquatch kidnapping.

## Paakis-Si

*A wicked scar runs the length of this blue-eyed, apish humanoid's face, and he wields a dislodged tree trunk as a club.*

### PAAKIS-SI

**CR 5**
**XP 1,600**

 Male sasquatch ranger (warden<sup>UC</sup>) 3

LN Medium humanoid (sasquatch)

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +15

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**DEFENSE**
**AC** 16, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+4 Dex, +2 natural)

**hp** 56 (6 HD; 3d8+3d10+27)

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +4

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**OFFENSE**
**Speed** 40 ft.

**Melee** +1 *greatclub* +13 (1d10+10) or slam +11 (1d4+9)

**Ranged** rock +10 (1d6+6)

**Special Attacks** rock throwing (120 ft.)

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**STATISTICS**
**Str** 22, **Dex** 19, **Con** 18, **Int** 11, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 9

**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 25

**Feats** Endurance, Self-Sufficient, Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Focus (greatclub)

**Skills** Heal +10, Knowledge (nature) +6, Perception +15, Stealth +20 (+24 in forests), Survival +17; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception, +4 Stealth (+8 in forests), +4 Survival

**Languages** Sasquatch

**SQ** favored terrain (forest +4, mountain +2), live in comfort<sup>UC</sup>, pungency, track +1, wild empathy +2, woodland stride

**Gear** +1 *greatclub*


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**SPECIAL ABILITIES**
**Pungency (Ex)** See page 236 of *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3*.

**Woodland Stride (Ex)** See page 236 of *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3*.

Travelers passing by the Churlwood in Varisia might hear tales of a long-lived sasquatch who has inhabited the woods for almost 50 years now. Trackers recognize the sasquatch's unique trail thanks to a birth defect that left the sasquatch with a distinctive gait. Locals in the area refer to the sasquatch by nicknames such as "Old Limpy," but the Shoanti call the honored being Paakis-si.

Many among the Shoanti claim that Paakis-si has lived for thousands of years. They poetically describe Paakis-si as more nature spirit than living creature, a guardian of the woods who protects the natural creatures and punishes

those who would seek to despoil the sacred land. The scar that runs across his face and the soul-piercing gaze of his cerulean eyes lends evidence to the Shoanti's fables, and those who encounter the legendary sasquatch know he is no ordinary member of his elusive species. The magical tree branch he wields as a deadly club lends further evidence to such claims, and many believe the ancient being found his weapon at the same time he received his characteristic scar.

Those who have caught a glimpse of Paakis-si report that the sasquatch appears extremely healthy and vital for a semicentennial, and whether he is actually a thousand-year-old nature spirit or just an unusually long-lived and wise sasquatch is left up to debate. Travelers passing near to or through the Churlwood often consider it a lucky omen to spot Paakis-si's signature footprints.





## SEA SERPENT

“Aye, once I seen one. And let me tell you, once was enough in my sixty years of sailing. The seas were high that night, we was working like dogs to keep the ship afloat... then, as the towering walls of water raged around us, it came from below. The Serpent. It was huge, rising and rising like a tidal stack into the lightning above. It stared down at us, judging us, and I thought we were done for. A second later it was gone.

“Go not go casually onto the wide sea, child, nor for adventure. Go because you must. for if you don’t love her like your own wife, the sea’s guardians will smell your false heart, sure as the wind blows.”

—Captain Japestei to Young Orsolya,  
*The Chronicles of Captain Orsolya Wintergripe (Act 3, Scene 2)*



The most infamous sea creatures—great whales, krakens, and giant octopuses—are dwarfed by the largest of sea serpents. In terms of sheer scale, all are small compared with such legendary monstrosities. Witnesses have repeatedly reported specimens running 60 feet long and weighing 2 tons, but larger monsters still are said to prowl the ocean deeps. The sea serpent excites, delights, and terrifies the imagination in a way few other creatures of the ocean do, and the rumor of one is enough to bring hunters and admirers from across the world hoping to catch a glimpse.

Sea serpents star in fabulous tales told on the decks of barnacle-ridden ships and in salty seaside taverns. Their likenesses are often used in seaside folktales to explain natural phenomena and geographic features—earthquakes and tidal waves might be attributed to a restless slumbering sea serpent, or an archipelago that runs in a straight line could be the remains of a petrified, many-humped sea serpent rising from the waters. In this way, the legend of the sea serpent permeates many modern cultures, even if actual sightings of such beings are rare or completely nonexistent.

Depending on whom one talks to, one might or might not be rebuked for referring to sea serpents as “monsters,” as these creatures often have contradictory reputations among those who sail the high seas. Some tales speak of serpents guiding vessels through terrible storms or pushing ships clear of windless doldrums; others tell of a terrible wrath within the serpents’ eyes as they capsize galleys and swallow victims whole in their ravenous maws.

## Evidence

The oral history of weathered sailors is, while mostly conjecture, often the best way to learn about sea serpents. If there’s anything to keep the storm from the door on a terrible night at sea, it’s a tale, and few tales compare to those of sea serpents. All the great serpents of legend bear fantastic, unique names—like Old Sline, the Serpent of Two Mouths, and the Black Void—that enlarge their stories and aggrandize the beasts’ already fearsome reputations.

The truth behind the telling is harder to come by, though those who hunt sea serpents have ways of finding them and evidence of their passing. The sea gives up its secrets eventually, and even meager traces of the elusive beasts become important beacons and clues for dedicated hunters. Perhaps the most common signs of a sea serpent’s presence are the strange carcasses that wash ashore after the beast feeds or defends its territory. The marks on these mutilated bodies are telltale, for a creature killed by a sea serpent is crushed as well as devoured. A whale with broken bones and scarred by great bite marks is a sign that a sea serpent may well be lurking in the depths, and deep bruises twining around the victim’s body are also sure indicators.

Ship captains occasionally dock at large ports carrying with them an enormous blanket of scales found at sea. When sea serpents shed their outermost skin during ecdysis, these enormous epidermal layers bob to the surface of the ocean and remain there as they are fed upon by small aquatic scavengers. While a recovered sea serpent hide doesn’t last long without careful preservation, those who manage to display the sloughed skin to onshore spectators hardly need to further corroborate any sea serpent stories they tell in the tavern later that night.

Sea serpents have been known to attack ships seemingly at random, and a lookout that spots a trail of undulating creature parts out at sea is sure to warn his captain of impending danger. Those oceanic scholars who know the most about sea serpents suggest they only attack surface structures or creatures when defending their territory and young, since they feed primarily on other underwater beings. Still, none doubt that the various sea serpents that populate the oceans wield widely varying demeanors, and it would be foolish to claim that because one ocean’s mythologized serpent is a benevolent being that such a creature found in another region would be of similar bent. Despite their predilection for aquatic prey, retired old sailors sometimes tell tales of a sea serpent attacking their ship and picking crew members out of the hull like grub worms out of a log.

It is a brave sailor (or a mad one) who sets sail in search of such quarry, and most sea serpent-hunters have their own reasons for tracking down such legendary beings—whether for glory, vengeance, or even simply peace of mind. Of course, shipping companies and other agencies hindered by the prospect of a nearby sea serpent offer fabulous rewards for the heads of these pesky brutes, but few bounty hunters live to claim their prizes.

## Ecology

Few have truly seen more than one sea serpent in their entire lives, let alone more than one at a time. Sea serpents are loners by nature, sometimes never even encountering another of their kind before their deaths. Such a solitary life makes coupling an incredibly rare event, and one that happens entirely by chance when a passing female in season enters the territory of a male. After a successful copulation, a single sea serpent egg grows inside the female serpent’s body for upward of a year, and is born alive after gestation. Because the length of time between copulation and birth is so great, mated sea serpent pairs have usually diverged long before the female is once again ready for fertilization, and so multiple births by the same pair are highly uncommon.

Sea serpents are born typically no shorter than 10 feet long, and grow rapidly as they progress through adolescence. Most leave their mother after only a

couple years, having learned how to fend for themselves and being instinctually driven to seek a mate. A sea serpent reaches a length of 60 feet by the time it is 20 years old; sea serpents stay this size for more than a century, though their girth and overall strength continue to increase considerably during this time. Upon reaching its sesquicentennial year, a sea serpent begins an indefinite series of intermittent growth spurts, growing an additional 10 feet in length every decade. Lore keepers and scholars debate how long a sea serpent might live, but reports of specimens upward of 300 feet in length lead many to believe that these beings might possess incredible lifespans.

Although descriptions of sea serpents vary greatly, the most common accounts regard their appearance as that of a snakelike creature that, unlike the possibly related water ormlinnorm, has a single gargantuan snakelike form. Most possess a large neck frill similar to that of some lizards or dinosaurs, and their backs are occasionally lined with rows of long, spiny protrusions that are important for various sensory functions, including detecting temperature and peripheral objects or creatures. Encounters with supposed sea serpents that vary too far from this accepted norm are dismissed as sightings of giant eels, whales, or other huge marine creatures, but it is difficult to say how many varieties of these legendary beings there might be throughout the vast oceans.

## Habitat & Society

Enormously powerful beasts whose great hungers and hermitic natures drive them away from one another, sea serpents rarely have dealings with their own kind, let alone the societies of any other creatures. The tale of the lonely sea serpent is a song sung by many bards, and the solitary creature inspires many poems and songs of sadness in royal courts and around tribal circles alike. In many places, the sea serpent is considered an omen of dark times to be driven away. The creature is often a symbol of either terror or honor in coastal lands, with local couples swimming across the nearby Serpent's Bay to symbolize the strength of their union and town festivals held regularly in a legendary sea serpent's honor—or to keep the beast warded away. Many coastal lords' banners depict the form of a sea serpent meant to strike fear into enemies' hearts, and the sight of a serpent is often regarded as an omen of war.

Though they have few natural predators, sea serpents have nonetheless been witnessed fighting various other

mammoth aquatic beings, most likely in attempts to destroy rival predators or protect viable breeding grounds. Whales especially know the depredations of sea serpents, and their barnacle-encrusted bodies are easy for the serpentine monsters to entwine, strangulate, and crush.

An encounter with a sea serpent is often due to hunger or intrusion upon its breeding grounds. The oceans are filled with life and food is plentiful even for these vast creatures. Whales, sharks, giant squids, and walrus often make up the staple diet of sea serpents, depending on which waters they swim in. Some develop darker tastes, however, and the flesh of land-dwelling peoples or aquatic humanoids is a rich draw for particular sea serpents. Sea serpents typically prefer smaller prey, but few give up the opportunity to feast on a giant squid or even a kraken, drawn as they are to the protein-rich delicacy. Only the oldest sea serpents stand a chance against the highly advanced krakens, but this doesn't stop most from trying their luck, and the dismembered and rotting hulks of flesh that occasionally wash upon far shores tell of the outcome between these two goliaths.

Storm tamers, wind callers, and other sages of the sea recognize the value of a charmed or loyal sea serpent as a guardian, and various legends tell of those chosen seers, prophets, and messiahs who acquire the aid of a sea serpent, whether through virtue of self or as some divine gift. While only the most powerful druids and wizards might hope to acquire sea serpent companions, the power associated with these allies is a temptation few might resist. Worshipers of natural forces and followers of gods of the sea frequently adorn their temples with sea serpent imagery in hopes of luring one into their midst—such devotees regard the potential dangers of such an encounter as risks worth taking.

## Campaign Role

Since they are typically found far from port, sea serpents make for excellent additions to nautical campaigns and adventures that take place on the high seas. Sea charts typically indicate dangerous waters where sea serpent sightings are more common, and whether or not adventurers traverse such regions with the intention of encountering such an elusive monster, the appearance of one is nonetheless an event to be remembered. Crewmates might warn the PCs of the doom implicit in facing off against the beast of legend, especially in frequented



waters where the sea serpent might possess its own local name, storied history, and speculated disposition. While a run-in with a nameless, unprecedented sea serpent might provide a challenging fight at best, the same battle with Olgera, destroyer of a thousand of the king's finest ships, would doubtless be an altogether more epic and memorable experience. In this way, much of the excitement surrounding a sea serpent is found onshore in dingy taverns or tattered marinas, long before the PCs have even struck water.

While a sea serpent encounter or sighting might well serve as the basis for but a single adventure, the flighty creature could also form the backbone of an entire story arc. Its legendary stature among the residents of port cities and seaside towns can make it a prevalent background feature while the PCs are still lower level, but as they ascend in power, the prospect of actually encountering such a creature could become an exciting reality. Perhaps the PCs are preparing to board a vessel headed for another port when the town's docks are indefinitely shut down. Cause for the delay might remain garbled or convoluted as the PCs figure out their lot in the town they're stranded in, and only once they've become strong enough to tackle the troublesome sea serpent preying on shipping lanes can they continue their journey.

For PCs who would thrill at the opportunity to capture or slay a legendary monster of their own, joining a local hunter's guild or scholarly organization could be a viable means of introducing a sea serpent enemy. Groups such as the Serpentine Lodge (see the sidebar) specialize in tracking down sea serpents and their ilk, and any number of adventures could arise as PCs find themselves in cahoots or at odds with the controversial faction.

## Treasure

Lacking any desire for or indeed comprehension of valuables, sea serpents don't collect treasure, but are often found in the same regions as downed ships (some likely sunk by the sea serpents themselves) that brim with lost gold, treasured relics, and magic equipment. Because it often swallows entire victims whole, a serpent's gizzard is also sometimes fraught with gobbled wealth.

Where a sea serpent becomes a menace to shipping, treasure hunters not only seek the cargoes of lost vessels, but also the reward of anxious merchants and their noble patrons. Hardy thrill-seekers would pay good coin to have a group of seaworthy adventurers accompany them on a hunt, and many would shower a foolhardy captain with gold for merely a glimpse of the monster.

Though much of sea serpent physiology remains unknown, wizards, alchemists, and other scholarly crafters know the incredible value of a sea serpent's body

## THE SERPENTINE LODGE

The Serpentine Lodge is a loose affiliation of seafarers devoted to capturing or slaying sea serpents, with several chapters around the Inner Sea. The lodge regards battle between hunter and serpent as the greatest sport one can experience, and many brag of facing the beasts alone. Those hunters who do find a sea serpent and live to tell the tale bear terrible scars that they wear like medals.

Some give up on the hunt after many fruitless years. For others, however, the search for the sea serpent is as important as life itself, and the boundary between hobby and obsession quickly blurs. The present leader of the Serpentine Lodge, Captain Ahrana Mullorn, bears terrible battle scars suffered when she faced the Ashen Worm a decade ago, and has vowed not to rest until it is slain.

The Serpentine Lodge has a base in the Varisian port city of Riddleport that acts as a repository for knowledge about sea serpents, and the members there use time away from sea to show off parts of their kills, glorify themselves and their fellow hunters, and craft special magic items. One such item is a *serpentseeker bow*, made specifically to slay and track sea serpents.

### SERPENTSEEKER BOW

**Aura** moderate conjuration and divination; **CL** 7th  
**Slot** none; **Price** 15,330 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

#### DESCRIPTION

This +1 *shortbow* is crafted from one of the long spines that bristle along the body of a sea serpent. When used against a magical beast with the aquatic subtype, a *serpentseeker bow* gains the benefit of the *bane* weapon special ability. If such a creature is hit by an arrow fired from this weapon, anyone who touches the bow senses the location of that creature as though by *locate creature* as long as the arrow remains imbedded in the creature. If the creature is protected by *nondetection* or a similar effect, anyone holding the bow gains a +10 competence bonus on the caster level check to overcome it, but a failed check means the arrow's magic burns out. The locating magic on an arrow fired from this bow automatically ends after 1d6 days.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *locate creature*, *summon monster I*; **Cost** 7,830 gp

as a source of magical components. A sea serpent's scales hold special properties that allow them to be ossified to form a substance harder than steel, its glands greatly enhance certain powerful spells, and its eyes can be used to create powerful *crystal balls* that can see into hidden dimensions. For these reasons and more, influential

## HERE BE SERPENTS

Ever since people first ventured out to sea there have been monster sightings, and medieval nautical maps often demarked regions thought to be the domain of great sea creatures. The vast and cruel oceans have spawned countless tales of sea serpents, and these can serve as inspiration for many of your adventures. Norse and Biblical references to sea serpents are among the oldest, but reports of sightings are common throughout history both ancient and recent. Numerous cryptozoological classifications exist for these creatures, with the term “sea serpent” applying to everything from long-necked mammals to giant, otterlike animals. Those who believe in such creatures cite the size and depth of the ocean for the lack of firm evidence, and indeed, marine biologists agree that the vast majority of ocean life remains unexplored. Some scientists suggest sea serpents could be surviving dinosaurs or close descendants of such beings, and indeed, the likes of halisauruses, liopleurodons, or nothosaurs do closely resemble the classic images of sea monsters and serpents.

From the Midgard Serpent to Leviathan, the sea, it seems, is teeming with incredible monsters. As a GM, you can use many of these myths as inspirations for how sea serpents are depicted in the various cultures of your game world as well as the basis for tales from old salts, haughty captains, and terrified crew members.

smiths and sages frequently fund expeditions to waters where sea serpents are thought to lair.

## Sea Serpents on Golarion

From the darkest subterranean trenches where the sun is just a legend to the heat-soaked shores of the Shackles, sea serpents may be encountered in any of Golarion’s oceans and seas. Many cold-water sightings occur in the Arcadian Ocean and Steaming Sea, where the serpents sometimes attack Ulfen traders and Erutaki natives making their way down toward the Ironbound Archipelago. The Obari Ocean, however, also has its fair share of sightings, and sea serpents are often well regarded by sailors there, with deepwater anglers out of Jalmeray considering the appearance of a sea serpent to be a sign of great luck. Such fisherfolk sometimes go so far as to dump portions of their catch overboard in tribute (though whether this placates the serpents or merely chums the waters is a matter of some debate in seaside taverns). Regardless, every serpent is a legend in itself, and some notable serpents have turned up over the centuries.

The slithering behemoth known as Old Sline allegedly clings to the feet of the great sea cliffs of Varisia, and his

song is said to cause madness in those who hear it. Farther south, Chelish sailors revere a dark beast referred to only by a symbol, for to speak its name is to invite death. The carnage caused by this unnamed serpent litters bardic tales told in the ports of Cheliox, particularly around Hellmouth Gulf, where the creature is said to control amphibious minions that come onto land and steal children for it to eat.

The legendary Ashen Worm is said to lurk beneath the seas off Sargava. Tales claim the creature, with skin like a festering corpse, has never been touched by the sun, and that it rises from the dark water like a ghost in the night. The Serpentine Lodge in Eleder has sworn an oath to hunt this legend so they can claim the ultimate sailor’s glory, and many are the old sea captains who seek the creature to claim vengeance for a destroyed ship and drowned crew.

The Mourning One (see below) is the stuff of legend—an obsession for some, a nightmare for others. It is said to be a sea serpent of incredible size, 300 feet in length from tail to head, touched by the fell energies of the deepest layer of the Darklands from which it originally hailed.

Various cults worship or revere sea serpents, and clerics of Gozreh in particular regard the appearance of a sea serpent as a powerful omen. Clerics of Erastil regard the hunting of a sea serpent as noble act, provided the bountiful harvest of sea serpent flesh is consumed and all its parts used for crafting and house-building. Conversely, clerics and followers of Lamashtu worship the sea serpent as a herald of war and calamity, a goliath of terror and hunger the sight of which brings portends great glory.

## The Mourning One

*This colossal serpent’s skin is like that of decayed, bruised corpses. Cancers rupture from its flesh, and a terrible sickening flow of black blood oozes from each break and sores.*

### THE MOURNING ONE

CR 19

XP 204,800

Unique black-blooded sea serpent (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 244, *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #18 82)

CE Colossal aberration (aquatic)

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +8

**Aura** blood rain (30 ft., 9 cold damage)

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 29, touch 5, flat-footed 26 (+3 Dex, +24 natural, –8 size)

**hp** 387 (25d10+250)

**Fort** +23, **Ref** +19, **Will** +10

**Defensive Abilities** elusive; **Immune** ability drain, cold, energy drain, poison; **Resist** fire 30

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 60 ft.

**Melee** bite +38 (6d6+17/19–20 plus 1d6 cold and grab), tail slap +33 (4d6+8 plus 1d6 cold and grab)

**Space** 30 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.

**Special Attacks** breath weapon (30-ft. cone, 6d6 cold damage, Reflex DC 31 for half, usable every 1d4 rounds), capsize, constrict (3d6+18), swallow whole (4d8+18 bludgeoning damage, AC 21, 38 hp)

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#### STATISTICS

**Str** 44, **Dex** 16, **Con** 29, **Int** 2, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 13

**Base Atk** +25; **CMB** +46 (+48 bull rush, +50 grapple); **CMD** 59 (61 vs. bull rush, can't be tripped)

**Feats** Critical Focus, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Sickening Critical, Skill Focus (Stealth), Stealthy, Toughness

**Skills** Escape Artist +5, Perception +9, Stealth +19, Swim +25

**SQ** amphibious

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#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Blood Rain (Su)** Black-blooded creatures constantly leak and spray bursts of freezing black blood. Any creature within 15 feet of a black-blooded creature takes an amount of cold damage equal to the black-blooded creature's Constitution modifier.

**Evasive (Su)** See page 244 of the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*.

**Tainted Life (Ex)** The blood of a black-blooded creature is antithetical to all life and consumes all but the heartiest hosts. Any creature with the black-blooded template must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save every day or take 1d4 points of Constitution damage.

The oldest Darklands sages speak in hushed tones of a creature called the Mourning One—a thing created, they say, in the Land of Black Blood, one of Orv's vast and terrible Vaults. The Mourning One only recently escaped its Darklands prison, winding its way through the perilous tunnels of Orv up into Sekamina, and now dwells in Lake Nirthran—the Dying Sea.

The ghouls of Nemret Noktoria have seen the Mourning One slide through the waters of Lake Nirthran, and avaricious necromancers among their kind occasionally undertake voyages to try to capture the beast for the valuable black blood that seeps from its pores. The skum

of Cold Momugado, on the other hand, do not seek the creature for its strange properties—most merely wish the nuisance dead and gone, as it has proven a menace to skum scavengers and raiders since its first sighting. Still other inhabitants of the Darklands would like to see the Mourning One put to different uses—in Delvingulf, drow fleshwarpers view the monstrous sea serpent as a figure of great awe as well as potential. If it were to be captured, they could perhaps learn how to further utilize the strange substance known as black blood in subsequent experiments.



2012  
CERAN



## WATER ORM

“There’s plenty who say they haven’t seen ‘em. They’ll say it’s just something we spread about to bring fools down to the lake to fill our coffers. But those lookin’ straight ahead’re lookin’ the wrong way to see the beasts of this water.

“Settle down by the shore, mister, but be careful not to sleep—they sense when you’re not lookin’ and come for you. The loch is deep and dark and cold, like the things that hide within it, but we’ve seen ‘em, caught ‘em unawares—it’s the only way. Let ‘em see you, or smell you, or even think of you, and you’ll not set eyes upon ‘em.

“Not until it’s too late, that is...”

—Piri Calihazsci, Varisian fish-trapper,  
advice to a wandering treasure-hunter

The elusive water orm is the legend of countless inland lakes. The Lake Creature of the Grim Mire, the Thing in the Loch, the Hrasfyeld Serpent of the Ironbound Fjords—wherever a mysterious lake creature has a name and a legend, a water orm is likely to be behind the tale. Many claim to have seen one, and nearly every sailor has heard tell of one, but few people ever actually encounter this most elusive magical beast. Water orms' considerable lifespans and ability to seemingly vanish when in danger make them almost seem to be features of the lake they inhabit, rather than mere animals, and nearby land-dwellers propagate the lore of water orms to legendary status. From commoners to nobles, people from all over the land might journey to a given body of water if only to catch a glimpse of these massive yet subtle creatures.

“Water orm”—or the far more general “lake monster”—is a title given to a host of freshwater beasts that conform to a similar type and behavior. They are almost always huge, extremely long-lived monsters that dwell in lakes, but they may have a number of physical variations. Many water orms resemble large serpents or snake-necked dinosaurs, similar in appearance to sea serpents or linnorms, with which they share a common ancestry. The familiar image of a coiled, elongated reptile rising from the lake is carved into many a lych-gate or temple as a warning to travelers that a legendary beast is nearby. Yet other water orms resembling dragon turtles, great whales, and even vast sea horses have also been spotted in the wild or found in historical iconography. Whether this heterogeneity is due to a large number of different creatures being erroneously assigned the same label, extreme morphic diversity within the race, or the ability of certain types of water orms to transform their bodies to better suit their environments is a question many scholars would love to answer.

Regardless of their type, all orms are elusive as well as insatiably curious. This inquisitiveness, however, can have tragic consequences: less cautious water orms who swim too close to the docks and waterside homes of nearby residents may startle superstitious townsfolk into raising pitchforks and torches in retaliation for this perceived intrusion. Most water orms flee in these situations, but more audacious locals occasionally dare to track the beasts back to their lairs. If a water orm feels its home is threatened, it does not hesitate to attack, and many encounters in an orm lair result from the surprise appearance of the orm, soon followed by a deadly battle. More peaceful fisherfolk and locals have grown accustomed to potential appearances by their resident lake creature, and have concocted a variety of nonviolent ways to drive it away, using holy symbols and chants as well as bells, calls, and songs to ensure that people and beast do not terminally collide.

## Evidence

Given their long lifespans and tendency to lair in the same place for decades or even centuries, water orms are almost always known by specific names and associated with particular places. Most live off fish and other small aquatic prey, but only rarely do water orms leave evidence of such meals on the shore. Sometimes, however, a startled orm may attack a group of unfortunate sailors or anglers after an accidental lakeside encounter and leave their wrecked bodies on the shore. Crofters living at loch sides have occasionally been slain and their homes destroyed by a raging orm, and the disappearance of the occasional traveler, the odd sheep, or other livestock often goes unnoticed for some time.

Though water orms are not amphibious, particularly bold individuals occasionally cross narrow spits or brief spans of swampy muck to relocate their aquatic dwellings. These orms are careful never to leave water for so long that they risk suffocation, and ensure that water is never out of eyesight when making their daring treks. When an orm crosses land, the evidence is obvious—such a huge beast leaves more than tracks in its wake, and fallen trees, wrecked hedges, and flattened countryside are often telltale signs of an orm crossing.

When in water, water orms are usually able to escape unseen if they spot any observers, and generally they do their level best to be as invisible as possible. Numerous are the stories of dock workers and stumbling tavern patrons spotting a mysterious lake creature in the dead of night, however, and strange wakes on calm lochs, curious currents, and the odd behavior of other animals can all be indications that a water orm lurks nearby.

## Ecology

Water orms typically pick the deepest part of bodies of water for their lairs, and develop a powerful bond with their homes. A water orm knows its lake better than its own fins, and knows where it can avoid danger, where to find the tastiest morsels, and where not to swim.

Water orms associate humanoids with easy food and show a remarkable tendency to live on the edges of civilized lands. Although generally happy to live off fish, they have a fondness for sheep, and are not impartial to the occasional humanoid dainty, providing it is safe to sample such rare fair. Very rarely, water orms develop an insatiable desire for such meat, and become the scourge of the area they lair in.

Water orms spend a lot of their time in torpor, as they require large quantities of fish to sustain their huge bodies when active, and their lake homes possess limited stocks. They overcome this need by spending the vast majority of their time in a slumbering state to preserve their energy and stores of fat. In such instances, they

### FANCIFUL TALES

Not all adventures with water orms end with even a chance of an encounter with a living creature; certain unscrupulous lords and peasants cook up the legend of a water orm to lure wealthy adventurers and travelers to the local loch or lake so they can make a healthy profit off these visitors. An elusive monster lends itself magnificently to the tale, and if the wealthy adventurers go away downhearted and a little lighter in the purse, the legend merely continues. This group was simply not made up of the right hunters; perhaps the next heroes will fare better...

In general, such a ruse is concocted by a small group of individuals who disseminate the tall tale throughout the common folk and allow the legend to grow. Seemingly reputable folk in on the scam claim sightings of the beast, lending the story credence. As the rumor develops, many people become convinced the tale is true, and the occasional pieces of “evidence”—a gnawed tree, a half-seen limb, or the occasional mutilated sheep—all add to the telling.

Such an adventure might form the backbone of an entire arc having to do with the nefarious townfolk who started the lie. Villains such as this have stolen countless silvers from naive adventurers, and the unmasking of a false tale’s perpetrators could even lead to the freedom of an oppressed or embittered people. If the group has yet to encounter an orm, the excitement created by this ruse and the subsequent revelation of its falsity might carry over to an adventure where a legendary orm is real.

may surface at night only very occasionally, expending as little energy as possible in the pursuit of prey, and often reports of sightings dry up for many years before a suddenly reawakened orm hungers for new food.

Water orms are solitary creatures who are territorial about their lairs and loath to leave them, so mating is a challenge for them. The urge to mate comes only a handful of times in a water orm’s extensive life, and it is almost always the males who seek out the females upon such occasions. The longing for a mate lasts up to a dozen years, and drives males to travel great distances to find females. They use high-pitched calls in the dark depths of enormous lakes to signal their intent. That female water orms are as elusive as males can make the courtship a difficult one, and it can take a male several years to finally secure a mate. After mating, the orms separate once more and return to their own lairs.

A pregnant female develops a ravenous hunger—a need so great it can virtually deplete an entire lake’s fish stores, causing the hungry female to seek other food, either on the lake’s shores or in boats treading the water’s surface. Although rare, such an expectant mother

can become a menace to local inhabitants as the orm rampages the countryside near her lair for food to feed her unborn child.

In the vast majority of cases, only one water orm is ever born to a mother, and tales of large broods are the stuff of legends and songs. After giving birth, the mother is driven by the need to continue to feed her newborn, and this need—as well as her desire to protect her young—makes her an even more dangerous foe to cross. For female water orms dwelling near civilized lands, this voraciousness usually results in the most vulnerable point in their lives; locals do not stand idly by while their livelihoods and families are taken, and subsequent hunts can leave a newborn orm an orphan and premature inheritor of its aquatic domain. Regardless of whether a water orm’s mother survives the gestation and nurturing of her young, the orm matures about a dozen years after birth and leaves its home to seek out a lair of its own.

Scholars have speculated that water orms share ancestry with sea serpents, no doubt because of the many characteristics they share with these saurian creatures. It is possible that water orms are directly descended from their sea serpent ancestors, though there is much debate regarding this theory.

### Habitat & Society

As they are habitual loners who only keep company to breed or when a mother is raising her young, interaction between water orms is rarely witnessed and even more rarely understood. Their relationship with humanoids is far better understood, with local people often fearing and sometimes honoring their resident beasts—more primitive cultures have been known to offer sacrifices to the elusive creatures they come to revere, and since this provides orms with easy meals, the creatures rarely contend the issue.

In most civilized lands near water orm lairs, people develop intricate and popular local legends about the creature, frequently drawing the attention of brave adventurers to otherwise sleepy hamlets. In such cases, the locals tend to agree that the beast is a bad thing but nonetheless a part of their local history, and most fear it may be more trouble to rid themselves of the unpredictable brute than to simply live with it. Fisherfolk know it is easiest to scare off a water orm with great numbers of people, loud noises, and bright lights, but sometimes townspeople sacrifice a goat or sheep to sate an especially violent orm’s hunger. Such tributes are typically placed on a solitary boat that the locals push out to the middle of the lake on a moonless night, allowing the water orm to feast in private far from the homes of the fearful locals.



At the other extreme, land-dwelling locals sometimes go out of their way to nurture their lake beast, as a creature of worship or a guardian, or because of some more convoluted local legend. Ceremonies are regularly held, and the innocuous public worship that takes place is typically a mask for a much more sinister cult. Some sacrifice humanoid flesh to their beast, and the occasional lone traveler fits the bill nicely for such a gift of blood. High-ranking cultists learn Aquan so that they can communicate with their object of worship, though only the cruellest orms perpetuate their worshipers' ill-conceived beliefs.

Intelligent aquatic creatures such as skum, scrag, and hags have more complex relationships with water orms, and are better able to communicate with them in a shared environment. In such cases, a water orm may become a guardian, servant, or even god for such water-dwelling creatures.

## Campaign Role

A water orm works best when it is intricately tied to the folklore of a town the PCs reside in or are visiting. Half of the excitement of tracking down a lakeside beast is solving the mystery behind it or finding a way to lure the monster out of hiding, and building intrigue through NPC interactions and discarded evidence can lead to multiple side quests before the PCs encounter the water orm itself.

Locals may regard the creature as a herald of good or bad luck, believing sightings to portend some incredible event. The ruler lordling over a small fishing settlement may regard the beast as an omen of war, or he might charge a band of local knights to slay or even capture the creature to show their fealty. A water orm can be a great backdrop for any campaign featuring a waterside city, and because of its relatively high CR, low-level adventurers will likely hear of the beast well in advance of their ever encountering it. Even if they do manage to sight the creature, its elusive nature makes for an adequate excuse should the powerful beast run away before the PCs are ready to face it.

## Treasure

Water orms are not acquisitive in any way, having little to no use for most material goods. However, the lake bottoms where they dwell may hide treasures accidentally sunk by orms or devoured and regurgitated onto the water's floor. Where water orms are worshiped or honored, valuable offerings are often made to them,

riches that usually wind up discarded and left to rust beneath the crashing waves.

A water orm would make an incredible addition to any menagerie, and displaying such a creature, even dead, would bring a decent income to those able to keep or show such a huge creature. The reward for hunting one varies, depending upon the funder of such an expedition. Legendary hunters are likely to pay high fees to those who assist in bagging such difficult prey (provided the hunters get to land the killing blow), while collectors of aquatic curios would pay a high price for a head or significant body part to display or study.



## Water Orms on Golarion

Water orms may be encountered across Golarion, and can be found in virtually any large freshwater lake. Following are some notable examples of individual orms found in diverse parts of the Inner Sea region.

### The Fetid God

Natives of the Mwangi Jungle know to fear and respect the mysterious powers that dwell within the immense Lake Ocota. The Zenj and Bonuwat peoples who dwell near the lake warn travelers of the snake-necked, crocodile-headed monstrosities that often hunt within and around the water, but few have actually seen the dread beasts up close. Fewer still realize that these legendary creatures—which frequently snatch up victims from both boat and shore with incredible reach and lightning speed—are merely the brood of an even larger terror, a water orm whose influence is as far-reaching as his loyal children. To those shamans and hunters who have divined or seen this monstrous force, they know it by only one name: the Fetid God.

Sailors in the Shackles have heard the tales too, and scoffed, although explorers take every story they hear of the Mwangi Expanse as having a grain of truth. The Fetid God is vast—a dark, verdant thing that lurks at the bottom of the lake—and on the rare nights that it breaches the lake's surface to survey its domain, the silhouette of its long, winding neck is said to graze the moon and the stars.

Hints of the Fetid God can be heard from the Zenj tribespeople of the jungle, although many such tales are contained within oral history only, so rarely is the God spoken of to outsiders. Some say the beast slumbers on the

## THE LAKE MONSTER

The word “orm” comes from the Norse word for “worm” or “dragon,” but surely the most famous real-world water orm is the Loch Ness Monster (or “Nessie”), the legendary beast said to dwell within the highlands of Scotland in its longest loch. Sightings of the monster have been taking place for centuries, with the first detailed sighting occurring sometime in the 6th century AD, when Saint Columba saved a swimmer from a “water monster” and used God’s name to ward the creature away. Since then, there have been dozens of sightings, and numerous photographs and videos have been taken of Nessie, including the famous and much-disputed Surgeon’s Photograph, which depicts a long-necked creature lifting its head out of the water.

The Ogopogo monster that allegedly lives in Okanagan Lake in Canada is another legendary serpent that fits the water orm category, this one a many-humped serpent creature that has allegedly been seen by First Nations people since the 19th century, and more recently by others visiting the lake as well.

An Internet search on lake monsters brings up hundreds of examples that you could use to enhance or develop your adventures, from the Nahuelito of Patagonia to the Lake Van Monster of eastern Turkey. Regardless of climate and terrain, cultures all over the world have their own lake monster myths, making the lake monster one of the most famous cryptids in the world.

edges of the Dimension of Dreams, awaiting wakefulness at the hands of an artifact, while others claim he is trapped within his lair by his size, and only those who find their way into the dead heart of Lake Ocota are ever going to set eyes on him.

## The Stjallberg Serpent

The icy realm just northwest of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings has only been explored by the Varki locals, and then only lightly, in large part because of the treacherous terrain of these reaches, including the numerous deep fjords that gouge the neighboring Stormspear Mountains. One particularly deep and dark fjord lies beneath a brooding peak simply called the Spear by the Snowcaster elves who occasionally visit the place, and is home to a huge water orm known as the Stjallberg Serpent.

The Stjallberg Serpent is the daughter of a water orm whose eggs were incubated by an old white dragon known in local legends as Thysfregnn the Pale Queen, and as a result she possesses numerous amazing abilities and powers, including flight. The serpent terrorizes

the borders of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings and is worshiped by a nearby tribe of frost giants who frequently offer gifts of stolen livestock and expertly crafted weapons to the monster. She dwells in the icy waters below an abandoned ice palace overlooking the fjord, and spends much of her time relishing her power and enthralled minions.

## The Wild Bore Shepherd

Near the southern border of the River Kingdoms, the cultists of the river god Hanspur who dwell in Riverton speak of an unfathomable creature that dwells in the depths of Kallas Lake. Some believe the rumors to be nothing more than tall tales, but the most zealous among Hanspur’s worshipers claim this ancient being is a messenger of the river god himself, sent to inspire the faithful and condemn nonbelievers to watery graves.

The Wild Bore Shepherd, as locals have taken to calling it, shows itself only once every 20 years. During this time, an unnatural tidal bore surges up the Sellen River, causing great erosion and devouring watercraft. It is said that a shadow of the Bore Shepherd is seen at certain points along the river, driving the great wave ahead of itself in an attempt to reach Kallas Lake.

Once every 2 decades, the Wild Bore Shepherd returns to the lake where it was spawned to seek its mate, a female orm who left the lake centuries ago. Although the water orm is elusive to the point of being practically invisible, its presence causes chaos during the entire lunar cycle during which it lingers there. Boats sink, livestock vanishes, some fisherfolk never return home from a day on the water, and yet most of the villagers still revere this harbinger of destruction. The cult’s leaders hold a great festival when the tidal bore appears, reveling in orgiastic celebrations that last for several weeks, until a great rush of water pours out of the lake, signaling the revered orm’s departure.

## The Mistress of the Fen

*This arching, reptilian creature has an elongated neck and short fins. Its jagged teeth hint at its primordial nature, and the abundant plant growth covering its body suggests both fertility and rot.*

### MISTRESS OF THE FEN

CR 12

XP 19,200

Female unique water orm

N Huge magical beast (aquatic)

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +13

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 26, touch 12, flat-footed 22 (+4 Dex, +14 natural, –2 size)

**hp** 157 (15d10+75); swamp healing 5

**Fort** +14, **Ref** +13, **Will** +8

**Defensive Abilities** elusive; **Immune** cold, poison; **Resist** electricity 20, fire 20

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**OFFENSE**


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**Speed** 20 ft., swim 50 ft.

**Melee** bite +21 (4d6+8/19–20 plus grab and poison), tail slap +16 (2d8+4)

**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft. (20 ft. with bite)

**Special Attacks** swallow whole (3d6+12 bludgeoning damage, AC 17, 15 hp)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 15th; concentration +15)

At will—*control water*, *freedom of movement*

5/day—*diminish plants*, *plant growth*

3/day—*command plants*, *thorn body*<sup>APG</sup>, *wall of thorns*

1/day—*hydraulic torrent*<sup>APG</sup>

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**STATISTICS**


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**Str** 26, **Dex** 18, **Con** 21, **Int** 4, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 11

**Base Atk** +15; **CMB** +25 (+27 bull rush, +29 grapple); **CMD** 39 (41 vs. bull rush, 43 vs. trip)

**Feats** Awesome Blow, Critical Focus, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Power Attack, Sickening Critical

**Skills** Perception +13, Stealth +9 (+17 in swamps), Swim +16;

**Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception, +8 Stealth in swamps

**Languages** Aquan (can't speak)

**SQ** amphibious, water travel

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**SPECIAL ABILITIES**


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**Elusive (Su)** See page 280 of *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*.

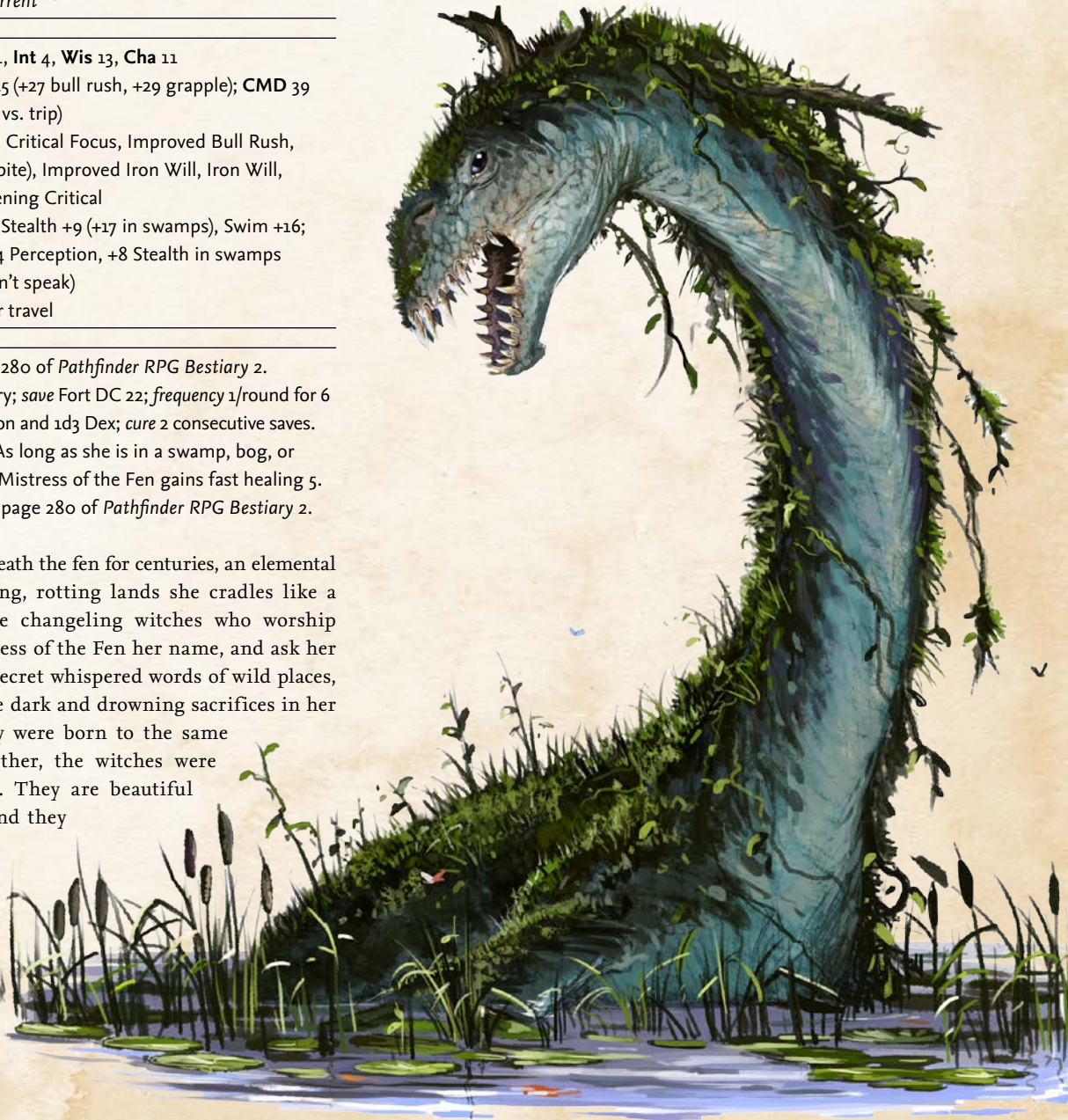
**Poison (Ex)** Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 22; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

**Swamp Healing (Su)** As long as she is in a swamp, bog, or other wetland, the Mistress of the Fen gains fast healing 5.

**Water Travel (Su)** See page 280 of *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*.

She has dwelled beneath the fen for centuries, an elemental thing of the choking, rotting lands she cradles like a newborn babe. The changeling witches who worship here gave the Mistress of the Fen her name, and ask her to teach them the secret whispered words of wild places, calling to her in the dark and drowning sacrifices in her name. Though they were born to the same despicable hag mother, the witches were raised by the orm. They are beautiful beyond compare, and they use their allure and wiles to draw travelers to their swampy home. Invariably, such victims end up in the waiting jaws of the Mistress of the Fen.

Those who live on the edges of the fen avoid the place despite the lure of easy fishing and lost funeral barges said to be crammed with treasure. They know of the Mistress, her followers, and her sacrifices. Many suspect it was the changelings who gave the orm her powers over rot and fecundity, but the witches deny this, claiming that the Mistress has always possessed such gifts. Their chants can be heard at all times across the murky waters of the swamp, and on moonless nights, one can catch a glimpse of the changelings as they take turns kissing the fetid jaws of their revered mother and drinking in her pestilence.





## YETI

“I must stress again that we did everything right. The team was outfitted properly, all climbers had been acclimated to the altitude, and our guide kept us out of the avalanche zones. When we approached the chasms, she insisted that we rope ourselves together. Unfortunately, that was our mistake. When the snowmen came out of the flurries, the rope only hampered us. We panicked. They grabbed Chensler first and pulled in the rest like fish on a line, dragging us down into the crevasse. I could see the eyes of the man in front of me as he went over the edge—he didn’t even struggle, as if he already knew he was dead. If I hadn’t cut myself free in time—well, the less said, the better.”

—Talina Peren,  
sole survivor of an expedition in the Tusks

The shaggy, ferocious, enigmatic creatures that rule the coldest mountain peaks of Golarion are known by many names, but their most common moniker is the yeti. Those civilized people who dwell in cities or towns in the northlands say that yetis are tremendously muscular beneath their thick white fur, and they claim a single yeti can kill a yak with one punch, bite off a man's head in its enormous maw, and raze a settlement overnight, leaving only smoking ruins and broken corpses in its wake. The savage creatures are like living ice, and they embody the killing essence of winter, ripping with the raw power of cold in every slash of their razor talons. They tower over humans, their powerful arms hanging to their knees and orange eyes forever ablaze with hatred and bloodlust. Yetis stink of death—their mere presence is enough to make the frail faint and the hardy retch.

Of course, such details are purported by people who have never actually seen a yeti, much less encountered one up close. In truth, most civilized folk don't even believe the snowmen are real, though that doesn't stop them from spreading their frightening stories. In truth, they believe reports of yetis in the mountains are just hallucinations brought on by altitude sickness, sightings of longhaired bears or gorillas, or the ravings of explorers whose minds have been addled from hypothermia.

Far removed from the noise of civilization, native villagers who dwell in the foothills and valleys of the mountains tell a different story. They know yetis are real, and they also know these white beasts are intelligent and largely misunderstood. Mountain guides often speak of yetis as brave, perhaps even noble, people. Yetis are to be respected—feared, on occasion—and viewed in their proper role as the stewards of Golarion's beautiful and terrifying peaks. Indeed, unbeknownst to many, yetis might be all that stand between the people of the Inner Sea and baleful invaders from other worlds.

## Evidence

Yetis prefer to move at night, and so evidence of their passing can most often be found at first light. Their unusually large footprints can be found in the snow of the high peaks or the mud of the lowlands, and herders take special care to keep their flocks far from these ominous tracks.

In lower mountain valleys, sharp-eyed explorers might note deep claw marks left in tree trunks and amid broken branches, signs left by a yeti climbing to forage for pine nuts or cornered game. Their thick, white fur snags easily on trees and prickly bushes. They shed their coats with the seasons, leaving oily clumps of hair in abandoned cave dwellings or along hidden mountain trails. These coarse clumps are often matted with viscera, dung, and other sticky substances left over from hunting or feasting.

It doesn't take a heightened sense of smell to detect a pile of yeti droppings—the feces give off a sour stench that brings tears to humanoid eyes and warns natural animals away.

The shattered carcasses of unfinished meals are also an obvious indicator of a yeti's presence, though most individuals take care to drag stolen herd animals far from their owners before devouring them. The skeletons of goats and sheep litter high mountain passes, especially on the peaks, where their bloody corpses stand out against the snow. Mountaineers sometimes encounter the bodies of large animals that look like they were beaten to death, and indeed, an adult yeti is strong enough to tear a yak's head in half merely by grabbing its horns and pulling in opposite directions.

Yetis rely largely on the natural elements to cover up their tracks—freshly fallen snow makes for a valuable stealth device, and in particularly wintry regions, a single night's snowfall can cover all evidence of a yeti's movements and deeds.

Yetis' white-gray fur helps them blend into the environment as they trek across snowy ridges in the dead of night. On cloudless evenings when the moon is full, mountain travelers might be able to pick out shaggy figures moving in the distance. Regardless of whether the creatures can be seen, their shrill cries echo through the still night air long after their passage, reverberating off of icy cliff walls and lending nightmares to hunters making camp along the snowy hills.

Those residents of lowland settlements possess no shortage of yeti stories and sightings to share with visitors. Some tell wild tales of yeti raids on their village, while others claim to have been rescued by one such abominable snowman. Skilled guides and porters might be convinced to lead adventurers to known yeti tribal sites, though the cost for such expeditions is steep, and there's often no telling beforehand whether the suspected area has long been abandoned by its tribespeople or whether its snowy guardians yet protect it from lowland intruders.

## Ecology

Adult male yetis average 10 feet tall and weigh nearly 1,000 pounds with their winter coats. Females are the same size but can be distinguished by their huge, hairy breasts and the sparse fur on their faces. Yetis prefer to live in small tribes, knowing that strength lies in numbers. Yetis that select each other as mates dwell in the same cavern until they produce offspring. A female's gestation period is similar to that of other humanoids, with newborns exiting the womb after about a year. Birth is a noisy event that results in a single child or, rarely, twins. Mated pairs typically raise their young communally, sharing the responsibilities of providing food and protecting their offspring from danger. Surprisingly gentle when caring

## YETI VISION QUESTS

The eerie humanoids known as the denizens of Leng sometimes creep from their alien realm into the Material Plane through eldritch portals hidden in the highest mountain peaks. The yetis know that these invaders are unimaginably evil, yet also understand that a great, supernatural power courses through the foul beings.

Those yetis who manage to defeat these extraplanar foes often decorate their icy lairs with the shattered remains of their defeated invaders. The broken teeth of a slain denizen of Leng maintain a connection to that eldritch dimension. Yeti oracles discovered long ago that after grinding the teeth and bones of one of these denizens into a fine powder and mixing the dust with hot tea and rare herbs, one could experience powerful hallucinations and visions by consuming the denizen's essence.

### LENG TEA

**Aura** moderate illusion (phantasm); **CL** 9th  
**Slot** none; **Price** 2,250 gp; **Weight** —

#### DESCRIPTION

By imbibing this potent concoction, a creature gains the ability to see as well as walk through the mysterious mountaintop portals that lead to the nightmare dimension of Leng. This effect lasts for 1d6 hours, during which time the drinker experiences phantasmagoric hallucinations in addition to the very real effect of seeing Leng's secret doorways. While in Leng, a creature under the effects of *Leng tea* can see the portal back to the Material Plane on the other side. As soon as the tea's effects end, the creature loses the ability to see gateways into or out of Leng, regardless of where the creature is. In addition, a creature coming down from the effects of *Leng tea* takes 1d4 points of Dexterity damage and is fatigued.

#### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *dream*; **Cost** 1,125 gp

for their young, yetis are ferociously violent against perceived threats to their offspring. A yeti child is never left totally alone, so explorers who see one while hiking a mountain trail can be sure that at least one parent is nearby, if not already watching from just out of sight and planning a terrifying attack.

Occasionally yetis make nighttime journeys into the lowlands below the snowline, where food is more abundant. They typically kill a few wild goats and deer or forage for bamboo, fruit, and moss to bring back to the den, but more audacious or savage yetis are unafraid to hunt for domesticated animals or even humanoid meat. Some mountainside villagers leave haunches of meat and kettles

of beer along their settlement's borders to appease the yetis and prevent the beasts from raiding their crops and wells. Regardless of how much food there is to be had amid the dales and forests below the mountains, yetis hate staying in low-lying areas for long; their bodies are acclimated to the thin atmosphere and frigid temperatures of the mountains, and prolonged exposure to warmer climates causes them considerable discomfort, if not outright pain.

Yetis rarely live long enough to reach old age, but even the feeblest yeti could live for over a century if starvation and predators weren't such imminent realities. Yet it isn't violent native humanoids or even their natural predators that pose the greatest threat to yetis. Tribal tales tell of otherwise noble and calm yetis that one day went mad with rage, and who were exiled or put down for their wildness. These violent individuals are the source of the fearsome tales told in civilized regions, where they are believed to be the norm, but the yetis know the true cause of their brethren's insanity—in the heights where the yetis make their mountain homes, extradimensional rifts in reality sew madness into the dreams of those who dwell nearby. Terrible, otherworldly monsters occasionally crawl through these portals, and the wisest yetis among their tribes are chosen to watch over the doorways that lead into the nightmare realm of Leng. The portals are usually invisible to those on the Material Plane, but yeti seers have concocted various ways to aid guardians in their endeavor to locate and ward these gateways.

## Habitat & Society

Yetis dwell in some of the least hospitable valleys and peaks in the world. Their resilient bodies have long acclimated to the punishing cold and extreme altitude of their preferred environs, and indeed, the beasts radiate an icy aura all their own. Their cave networks snake through entire mountain ranges, full of dark, icy tunnels that cross and twist. Yetis further carve out these glacial warrens to serve as their tribal homes; the lightless, frigid halls and chambers of these mountain lairs are easy for yetis to navigate, and offer multiple hidden exits and lookout points so the creatures can watch the mountainsides for trouble. Wandering game and members of rival tribes are pelted with arrows and big rocks from afar; if a more serious threat approaches, the entrenched yetis can trigger small avalanches that collapse their cave's entrances, then dig themselves free after the danger has passed.

Outsider knowledge of yetis and their traditions is sparse, in large part because of their reclusive nature and well-hidden lairs. Texts speak of an ancient time when yetis lived freely in foothills and valleys, but at some point, they moved up into the mountains. Some say they migrated to escape the encroaching violence of fire-wielding humanoids. The oldest residents of valley towns, however,

tell a different story—they say the hairy men were driven away because they were caught mating with humans and producing misshapen offspring with fearsome abilities. Many of these hybrid children were drowned, but others are said to have been spirited to distant lands, and might survive to this day.

Although most yetis stay near the safety of their warrens, those that exhibit cruel or brutal behavior are exiled from their tribes. These outcasts cannot survive in the peaks without support from their peers, so they frequently descend to the foothills to hunt and forage. Some pariahs raid lowland settlements for their meals, snatching livestock or people in the night. These attacks (and the exaggerated stories and rumors they spawn) reinforce yetis' reputation as bestial marauders.

The tears in reality at the top of their mountain homes are the source of madness and cruelty among the yetis. Rumors speak of secret mountaintop monasteries near these terrible portals, where yeti tribes send the wisest and strongest of their kind to further hone their skills in preparation of an extradimensional attack.

## Campaign Role

Yetis work best as antagonists when the PCs encounter evidence of their doings long before running into the yetis themselves. Mountainside communities and small valley towns are prime targets for renegade yetis that seek to raid cattle and despoil crops. Slaughtered animals, unusual footprints, and bloody trails all provide ample evidence that something brutal lurks in the nearby mountains, and if there's a band of heroes at the ready, townsfolk would certainly rather send these strangers to investigate the strange goings-on than risk their own lives.

If one or two outcast yetis have been troubling a village in the foothills, the PCs might be asked to drive the monsters away—possibly without harming them, since many locals harbor a degree of superstitious reverence for the creatures. If the yetis are desperate for food, chasing them off will be a difficult task. In rare cases, a settlement might suffer attacks by an entire tribe of yetis under the influence of some malignant, otherworldly force. In such instances, a vile denizen of Leng is typically to blame, having slipped through an interdimensional portal high in the mountains and tricked a tribe of yetis into subservience. A denizen of Leng can serve as an interesting

final boss for mid-level PCs who have fought their way through several yeti encounters trying to find the cause behind the tribe's madness.

Yetis are masters of their terrain, and so they are usually well aware of an advancing party of PCs long before the adventurers even realize they're in yeti territory. If the yetis are particularly violent or hungry and have no intention of parleying with the heroes, they often initiate battle by rolling boulders down icy hills or evoking avalanches with their bestial cries. Yetis use the element of surprise perhaps more often and more effectively than any other battle tactic.

Lone, crazed yetis that spy on villages can become obsessed with a particular humanoid and might kidnap someone to serve not as a meal, but as a mate. Similarly, a smaller humanoid or creature such as a dwarf, gnome, or halfling might be captured and treated as a pet. Rescuers must ascend the peaks to find the icy cave where the victim is being held, guarded by a tenacious yeti that won't surrender its companion without a fight.

Adventures involving yetis don't always begin with yeti attacks.

The PCs might have any number of reasons to journey into yeti-inhabited mountains. A caravan might hire the party to see it safely through a mountain pass before spring floods make the crossing impossible. A research expedition may need porters for an attempt to summit the highest peak in the region. Wealthy friends of a famous climber could be desperate to learn the fate of their colleague, who never returned from his most recent trek. An adlet shaman might seek mountaineers to protect her during her pilgrimage to commune with the yeti monks. A big game hunter who wants to add a yeti to his collection of exotic trophy heads might invite the party along. No matter the details, a short yeti encounter makes a fine addition to any adventure set in the mountains or valleys.

## Treasure

While gold holds little value among yetis, the icy hominids do see the value of rare gems and sturdy ornaments or relics. They often use these goods to trade with orcs, giants, and other mountain dwellers, and especially peaceable yetis sometimes barter with lowland-dwelling natives for supplies or food.



## THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN

The yeti, or abominable snowman, traces its roots to Himalayan folklore from Central Asia, and is well known in both cryptozoology and popular culture, including movies, books, and TV shows. Its name is a combination of the Sherpa words *yeh* (“snowy mountain”) and *teh* (“animal”). The first Western accounts of the creature were published by 1832 by Brian Hodgson, the British minister to Nepal. Over the years, many explorers and mountaineers reported finding large footprints and claimed to have spotted a yeti or two. In 1951, climber Eric Shipton took a famous photograph of a yeti print, and throughout the 1950s, millionaire adventurer Tom Slick led several Himalayan expeditions to track down the cryptid. (In 1959, his group enlisted the help of actor Jimmy Stewart to smuggle pieces of a supposed yeti hand out of a Nepal monastery for study in England.) Dozens of tracks and sightings were reported over the next several decades, but analyses of photos, pelts, bones, and claw marks have had mixed results. In 2001, DNA tests performed on alleged yeti hairs revealed that they did not come from any known creature, but to this day most skeptics continue to attribute yeti claims to hoaxes, bears, or unknown primate species.

Yeti warrens are far from barren, and may contain numerous treasures stolen from victims, as well as tools and valuable decorations made by the yetis themselves. Scattered about the caves are various items dropped by explorers who fled in fear, picked off the corpses of fallen opponents, or collected in tribute from villagers of lowland settlements. Smaller objects such as coins, pieces of jewelry, figurines, and the like sometimes get lost in the snowy cave floor or frozen onto the walls and crevices. Such treasures must be delicately removed in order to prevent breaking them, and hopeful treasure hunters must waste precious minutes to chip or melt the treasures free—time enough for lurking yetis to close in.

More valuable still, perhaps, are the mundane goods that travelers might find in a yeti lair. After days of treacherous ascent in a harsh blizzard, what could be more welcoming than discovering a refuge from the stinging wind provisioned with fresh food, clean water, and warm animal pelts (albeit with some still dripping gore)? The yetis will not give up their supplies easily, but they might be willing to share with visitors who prove their worth or their good intentions. Those who show themselves to be particularly noble listeners might even be able to coax yeti elders into sharing their wisdom and stories—fables that could prove invaluable for travelers not yet done with their mountain journeys.

## Yetis on Golarion

The hardy traders who trek across the Crown of the World claim that yetis are widespread in that glacial landmass, and legends from Tian Xia say that yetis thrive in the forbidding range known as the Wall of Heaven. In the Inner Sea region, the creatures live primarily in the towering peaks of Avistan’s northernmost nations. To a lesser degree, they also inhabit the soaring ranges in the southern parts of the continent.

In the declining kingdom of Taldor, the World’s Edge Mountains separate the eastern area of the country from the nearby Padishah Empire of Kelesh. The Taldan side of the peaks is littered with dying frontier towns, and unscrupulous Keleshite nomads occasionally cross the mountains through the Porthmos Gap to steal horses. Reports of yetis in the hills have led the Taldans to blame the thefts on the snowmen, and they are massing to take the fight to the monsters. The tribe of yetis that dwell here—the Ogtuk—seek no strife with the lowlanders, but are ready to fight back if necessary. With each passing day the possibility of all-out war becomes ever more apparent, and both sides are as nervous about the prospect as they are unwilling to back down. It would take the help of a silver-tongued intermediary to resolve this dispute and ensure the safety of the countless innocents who lie in danger.

Farther north, the Kodar Mountains wind through several countries, including Irrisen, the magically cold realm of Baba Yaga and her witch daughters. In one branch of the Kodars lie the frozen mines of Hope Lost, where ice trolls force humans to dig for the rare quartz crystals known as ice diamonds. Recently, a few lucky slaves were able to use a secret tunnel to escape, fleeing to a large yeti warren deep in the mountains and from there to freedom, gifting stolen ice diamonds to the yetis in thanks. The benevolent yetis hope to help free more enslaved miners, but how long their secretive rescue operation will go undiscovered is anyone’s guess.

In the Realm of the Mammoth Lords, not far from the small trading town of Hillcross, the Kellid natives speak of a strange, blue-skinned beast that dwells among the peaks of the Tusk Mountains. Called the Azure Scream thanks to its hair-rising calls in the wee hours of the morning, the mysterious creature is both feared and respected by the more permanent residents of Hillcross, who suspect the beast might be an unusually massive yeti with coarse gray hair, perhaps cast out from its tribe years ago for some unforgivable misdeed. Its regular feedings on the encampment’s sheep herds go unpunished, largely because the battered corpses of frost giant youths have also been spotted in the Azure Scream’s stomping grounds, and for most Kellids, an enemy of frost giants is as good as a friend.



## Qaishan Yeti

*This furry hominid's orange eyes blaze not with fury but with wisdom, and the white hair around its face is streaked with gray.*

### QAISHAN YETI

CR 7

XP 3,200

Yeti monk 5

LN Large monstrous humanoid (cold)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +12

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 22, touch 15, flat-footed 20 (+2 Dex, +1 monk, +3 Wis, +7 natural, -1 size)**hp** 93 (11 HD; 6d10+5d8+38)**Fort** +11, **Ref** +11, **Will** +12; +2 vs. enchantments**Defensive Abilities** evasion; **Immune** cold, disease**Weaknesses** vulnerable to fire

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 50 ft., climb 30 ft.**Melee** 2 +1 claws +17 (1d6+8/19-20 plus 1d6 cold) or +1 flurry of blows +16/+16/+11/+6 (1d6+8/19-20 plus 1d6 cold)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Special Attacks** flurry of blows, frightful gaze (DC 14), rend (2 claws, 1d6+10), stunning fist (6/day, DC 15)

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 24, **Dex** 14, **Con** 17, **Int** 9, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +19; **CMD** 33**Feats** Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows, Feral Combat Training<sup>UC</sup>, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack, Stunning Fist, Weapon Focus (claw)**Skills** Acrobatics +10 (+23 when jumping), Climb +24, Intimidate +8, Perception +12, Stealth +10 (+18 in snow), Survival +11; **Racial Modifiers** +13 Acrobatics when jumping, +4 Stealth (+12 in snow)**Languages** Aklo**SQ** fast movement, high jump, ki pool (5 points, magic), maneuver training, purity of body, slow fall 20 ft.**Gear** amulet of mighty fists +1

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

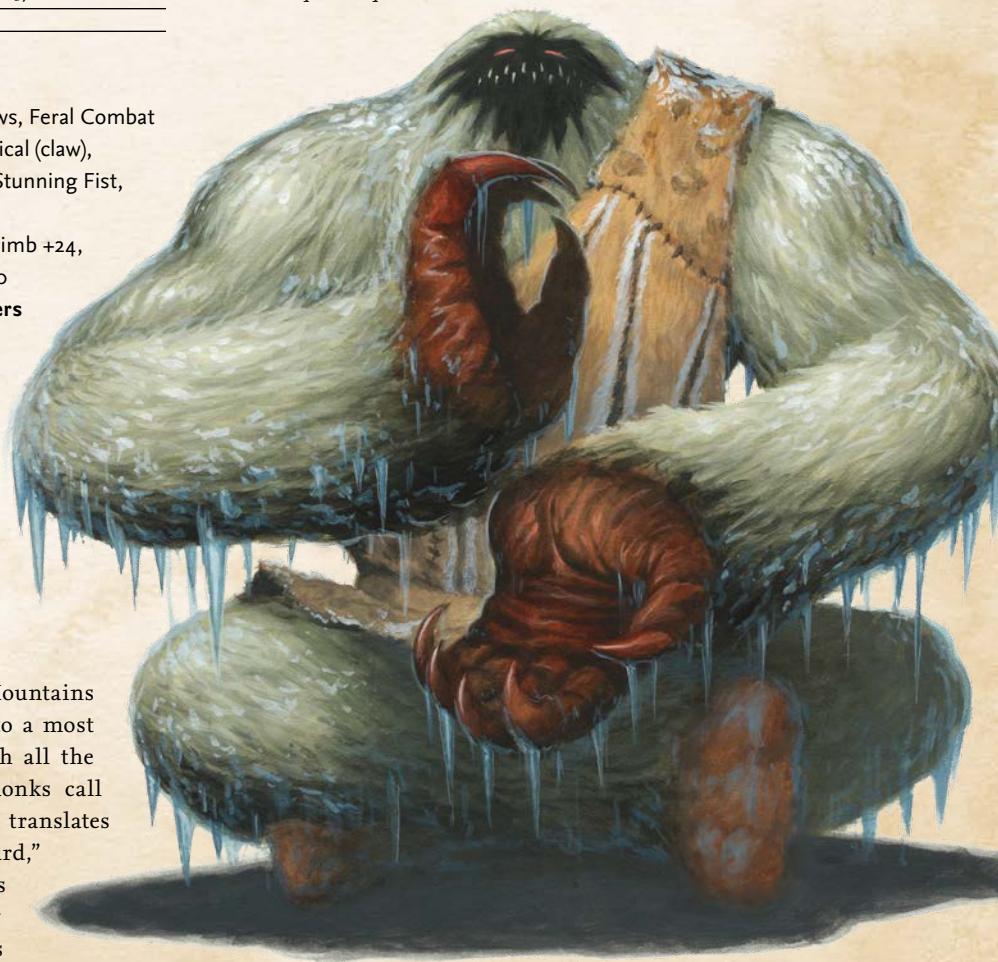
**Cold (Su)** See page 287 of the *Bestiary*.**Frightful Gaze (Su)** See page 287 of the *Bestiary*.

High in the peaks of the World's Edge Mountains lies a remote monastery that is home to a most unusual order of monks—one in which all the brothers and sisters are yetis. The monks call themselves the *Qaishan*, which roughly translates to “Warriors of the White” or “Snow Guard,” and while most Taldans assume the yetis raided the monastery long ago and now act as poor imitations of its previous

tenants, the local yetis tribes know the truth: that the Qaishan have inhabited such monasteries and carried out their sacred duty since times immemorial.

The Qaishan are responsible for guarding their brethren and other residents of the mountain from the monsters that slip through the cracks in reality near the mountain peaks. Scholars would know to identify these creatures as scarlet walkers and denizens hailing from the nightmare realm of Leng; the yeti monks care not for such trivial distinctions—to them, these invaders are simply an unnatural evil force that requires swift and brutal extermination.

Qaishan monks train their minds and bodies so they can protect the peaks as required by their sacred oaths. They use a unique combination of feral combat and hardened discipline to ward off interplanar invaders as well as foes who would seek to hinder or distract their order. Instead of landing successive strikes with their fists, they rely on their deadly claws to inflict horrendous gashes that blaze with pain thanks to the supernaturally cold energy that infuses their blows. Those seeking to learn the secret techniques of the Qaishan are politely ushered away, and those who press their luck experience the swift and brutal wrath of the normally staid yetis.



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# Stalk the Legends!

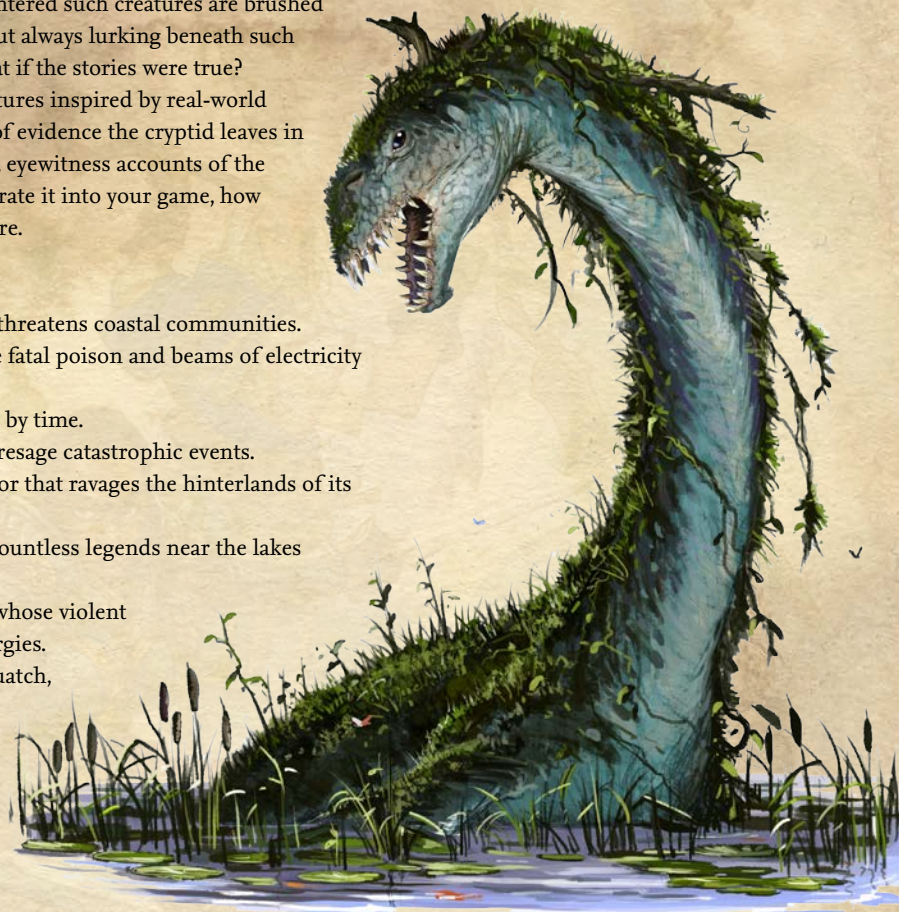
Every culture tells stories of strange beasts that haunt the edges of civilization. Seldom corroborated, the accounts of those who have encountered such creatures are brushed aside, or at best turned into colorful local legends. But always lurking beneath such myths are more than a few shreds of doubt—for what if the stories were true?

*Mystery Monsters Revisited* presents 10 elusive creatures inspired by real-world folklore. Each monster entry investigates the types of evidence the cryptid leaves in its wake, the creature's bizarre and secretive ecology, eyewitness accounts of the beast and its strange powers, advice on how to integrate it into your game, how the monster fits into the world of Golarion, and more.

Inside this book, you'll find:

- ▶ Bunyips, ravenous seal-like beasts whose hunger threatens coastal communities.
- ▶ Death worms, acid-spitting desert dwellers whose fatal poison and beams of electricity spell the end for unwary travelers.
- ▶ Mokele-mbembe, long-necked saurians forgotten by time.
- ▶ Mothmen, unfathomable agents of destiny that presage catastrophic events.
- ▶ The Sandpoint Devil, a fire-breathing equine terror that ravages the hinterlands of its namesake community.
- ▶ Water orms, whose myriad forms have spawned countless legends near the lakes they inhabit.
- ▶ Yetis, misunderstood natives of mountain peaks whose violent urges can be traced back to fell, otherworldly energies.
- ▶ Other enigmatic creatures like the towering sasquatch, destructive sea serpent, and of course, the notorious, blood-sucking chupacabra!

*Mystery Monsters Revisited* is intended for use with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game and Pathfinder campaign setting, but can easily be used in any fantasy game setting.



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