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RUNIC FANTASY

SIX BIZARRE CREATURES



BY PHILIP REED



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Introduction

Strange and unusual monstrosities are a part of almost any fantasy setting and it is a rare moment when a gamemaster cannot find a use for a new, unusual monster. *Runic Fantasy: Six Bizarre Creatures* provides gamemasters with foul beasts that suit the sensibilities of the warped and twisted minds that embrace alien-like, non-human monsters. From the kacer – a winged beast that consumes the power of runes – to the wizard's shell – the melding of an evil spirit and the corpse of a deceased wizard – the six monsters hidden within these pages definitely qualify as bizarre. (If not in appearance then they are at least bizarre in their actions and beliefs.)

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About the Author

Philip Reed has been working professionally in the roleplaying game industry since 1995. In that time he has worked for such companies as West End Games, Privateer Press, and Steve Jackson Games. Today Philip spends his days at home running Ronin Arts, writing and designing new games, and reading whatever books interest him at the time. To learn more about Philip Reed – and Ronin Arts – please visit www.roninarts.com and www.philipjreed.com.



Children of Yig

A race of serpent men descended from the ancient god Yig, the Children of Yig – also known as Snake Men – live in the distant, forgotten jungles of the southern world, far from the lands of men, elves, dwarves, and others that the heroes are familiar with. In their towering, decaying temples the Children of Yig reside, living their days in prayers and devotion to their god. The creatures frequently patrol the jungle near their temples, always on watch for enemies that wish to infiltrate the temples and raid the treasure chambers within which the Snake People store their possessions so that they may be well protected and safe for Yig's return to the mortal world.

In times of crisis the priests of Yig will assemble raiding parties of Snake People and send them out of the jungle in search of slaves, treasure, and sacrifices to their serpent god. It is these bands, usually 4d10+10 Snake People strong, that are most likely to be encountered by the heroes. The Children of Yig live only to serve their god and would rather die than reveal the locations of their temples, though some of their number has been known to crack under interrogation.



Though capable of handling themselves in battle, the Children of Yig prefer to spend their time in study and worship. They are lovers of knowledge and will trade valuable objects for books to fill the libraries of their temples.

Characteristics

STR 2D6 + 6	(12)
CON 3D6	(11)
DEX 3D6	(10)
SIZ 2D6 + 6	(13)
INT 3D6	(10)
POW 2D6 + 3	(11)
CHA 3D6	(9)

Children of Yig Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	0/5
4-6	Left Leg	0/5
7-9	Abdomen	0/6
10-12	Chest	0/7
13-15	Right Arm	0/4
16-18	Left Arm	0/4
19-20	Head	0/5

Weapons

Type	Weapon skill	Damage / AP
Shortsword	58%	1D6 / 3
Dagger	46%	1D4 + 1 / 4

Special Rules

<i>Combat Actions:</i>	2
<i>Strike Rank:</i>	+10
<i>Movement:</i>	6m
<i>Skills:</i>	Influence 50%, Languages (many) 85%, Lore (Yig) 75%, Persistence 45%, Resilience 45%
<i>Traits:</i>	Dark Sight, Poison Immunity
<i>Armor:</i>	None



Kacer

Rarely encountered, the kacer is a human-sized, winged creature possessing minimal intelligence and operating primarily upon instinct. A kacer is never encountered alone; the creature always collects in flocks of $3d6+6$ for protection and security. When threatened, kacers have two methods of defending themselves: slamming opponents with their hard, bone-like skulls and swarming an opponent, beating it with their tough, leathery wings. A kacer's entire body, including its wings, is covered in interlocking bony plates that are hidden beneath a layer of thick flesh, the entire package granting the bizarre creature a thick, armored hide that helps it survive the elements and unexpected attacks.

Kacers are aggressive and predatory and are drawn to runes, the magical power embedded in runes being a source of sustenance; kacers, while able to eat flesh, thrive on runes and can completely absorb a rune in less than a minute. Whenever a flock of kacers locate a rune they fight themselves for the privilege of consuming the rune's magical energy. So desperate are the creatures for the magical energy locked within runes that they will attack a creature that possesses a rune, no matter its size. Kacers can sense the location of runes, immediately able to home in on any rune within one mile of their location. Some adventurers use kacers to hunt down runes, following a flock of the creatures for miles and preparing to race in and grab any discovered rune as the beasts fight themselves for their prize.

A rune that is consumed by a kacer crumbles to dust and for one day after it has feasted on a rune the creature in question gains increased physical abilities (STR, CON,

DEX, and SIZ are all doubled for this period). A kacer, after it consumes a rune, cannot eat another until the effects of the first consumed rune have worn off.

Characteristics

STR $1D6 + 1$	(4)
CON $1D6 + 3$	(6)
DEX $2D6$	(7)
SIZ $3D6$	(12)
INT $1D6 - 2$	(2)
POW $1D6$	(3)
CHA $1D6 - 2$	(2)

Kacer Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-2	Tail	3/4
3-6	Right Wing	3/4
7-10	Left Wing	3/4
11-16	Body	3/6
17-19	Neck	3/4
20	Head	3/4

Weapons

Type	Weapon skill	Damage
Slam	50%	1D6
Wing Strike	45%	2D4

Special Rules

<i>Combat Actions:</i>	2
<i>Strike Rank:</i>	+4
<i>Movement:</i>	2m, 8m when flying
<i>Skills:</i>	Perception 75%, Resilience 55%, Stealth 60%
<i>Traits:</i>	Echolocation
<i>Armor:</i>	Tough Hide (AP 3, no Skill Penalty)





Kin'Thir

Gray, bizarre creatures from beneath the surface, the kin'thir walk about on four pointed legs, their cruel, strange, angular bodies clattering loudly across the stone caverns of the subterranean world. The creature's beak-like mouths are lined with thousands of jagged teeth which they use to attack foes and their long, mace-like tail is used to strike any that anger the monster. Kin'thir operate alone, only joining others of its kind once a year so that the creatures can mate.

The kin'thir's most frightening feature is its ability to drain the arcane energy from an opponent. Whenever the kin'thir makes a successful tail smash attack against an opponent the target of the attack must make a successful Persistence test at -20%; if the test fails then the target automatically loses 2d4 Magic Points. These lost points are regained normally.

Kin'thir move about by either walking on their strange legs or burrowing through the ground. They are so slow that, when possible, they prefer to burrow so that they are protected by the rock of their homes.

Characteristics

STR 2D6 + 6	(12)
CON 4D6	(14)
DEX 3D6	(10)
SIZ 4D6	(14)
INT 1D6	(3)
POW 1D6	(3)
CHA 1D6	(3)

Kin'Thir Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Rear Leg	2/6
4-6	Left Rear Leg	2/6
7-9	Tail	2/7
10-12	Body	2/8
13-15	Right Front Leg	2/6
16-18	Left Front Leg	2/6
19-20	Head	2/6

Weapons

Type	Weapon skill	Damage
Bite	55%	2D6
Tail Smash	50%	4D4 + 4

Special Rules

<i>Combat Actions:</i>	2
<i>Strike Rank:</i>	+6
<i>Movement:</i>	2m
<i>Skills:</i>	Perception 50%
<i>Traits:</i>	Burrower, Dark Sight, Magic Drain (see p. 9), Poison Immunity
<i>Armor:</i>	Tough Hide (AP 2, no Skill Penalty)





Megalyth

Protectors of the Circles, the megalyths are a race of ancient beings that sacrificed their form and mobility so that they could become immortal defenders of the huge stone circles that are spread across the world. Unable to move and firmly rooted into place, a megalyth was once a humanoid creature, part of a dying race that used the powers of magic to meld itself into a single standing stone.

Megalyths are neutral creatures, carrying not for the concepts of good or evil, law or chaos. They exist only to protect their chosen stone circle; no circle will have more than a single megalyth protector and many circles are completely devoid of a megalyth. A megalyth can attack with either its powerful, stone fists, striking any that come within 15 ft. of its location or it can use its killing stare: the megalyth glares at a single opponent each round. If the megalyth overcomes the target in an opposed test of its Persistence against the target's Resilience, the target instantly loses 1d4 points of POW for 4d6 minutes. Using the gaze attack costs no Magic Points, and the megalyth may attack normally in any round in which it uses the gaze attack. This attack penetrates magical defenses as if it were a Magnitude 6 Rune Magic spell. If the target successfully resists the gaze attack, he is unharmed, though he may certainly be targeted again.



Megalyths talk first and fight only when forced. They are wise, elder creatures that enjoy the company of intelligent creatures and are always hungry for a new perspective on the world in which they live.

If the standing stones a megalyth is protecting are ever destroyed the creature itself dies, its will to live dying along with the destruction of its chosen stones.

Characteristics

STR 4D6	(14)
CON 4D6	(14)
DEX 1D6	(3)
SIZ 4D6 + 12	(26)
INT 4D6	(14)
POW 6D6	(20)
CHA 2D6 + 6	(12)

Megalyth Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-10	Body	6/10
11-14	Right Arm	6/7
15-18	Left Arm	6/7
19-20	Head	6/8

Weapons

Type	Weapon skill	Damage
Stone Strike	50%	6D6 + 6

Special Rules

<i>Combat Actions:</i>	1
<i>Strike Rank:</i>	+8
<i>Movement:</i>	0m, cannot move
<i>Skills:</i>	Language (many) 75%, Lore (any) 90%, Perception 90%, Persistence 85%
<i>Traits:</i>	Disease Immunity, Gaze Attack (see text), Poison Immunity, Well of Knowledge (see p. 9)

Armor: Stony Form (AP 6, no Skill Penalty)



Stone Serpent

These large, statue-like creatures were once living serpents from the stars, alien creatures from another world. Unfortunately for the serpents, their world was destroyed in a magical cataclysm, its very core shattered by unimaginable magical energies that shook the world into pieces and sent large rocks hurtling through space. Some of the serpents survived, the magical disaster melding their bodies with stone and transforming them into powerful, intelligent beings that could survive in the harsh environment of space.

Today, dozens of these creatures dot the landscape, unable to move from the place that they landed. Any attempts to move a stone serpent ends in failure as their stone bodies are sunk hundreds of feet into the ground, their spike-like bodies driven deep by the impact when they fell from space.

Stone serpents are sources of knowledge, having collected information from those that have discovered them. The creatures enjoy speaking with other intelligent beings and are always ready to trade secret for secret and knowledge for knowledge.

If attacked, a stone serpent defends itself by lashing out with its long, powerful neck, slamming its stone head into opponents. The stone serpent can attack opponents within 10 ft. of its position with this strike.

Stone serpents regenerate damage done to them very quickly, healing one hit point in all locations every minute. Additionally, when a stone serpent is killed its body shatters, fragments of stone spreading across the area in which it stood. The creature is not really killed, though, and the stone fragments will reform after 1d6+10 days, the creature completely regenerating and returning to life. Nothing short of divine power can forever kill a stone serpent.

Characteristics

STR 4D6	(14)
CON 2D6 + 6	(12)
DEX 1D6 - 2	(2)
SIZ 6D6	(20)
INT 4D6	(14)
POW 2D6 + 6	(12)
CHA 2D6	(8)



Stone Serpent Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-10	Body	6/9
11-16	Neck	6/7
17-20	Head	6/7

Weapons

Type	Weapon skill	Damage
Strike	75%	4D6 + 6

Special Rules

<i>Combat Actions:</i>	1
<i>Strike Rank:</i>	+8
<i>Movement:</i>	0m, cannot move
<i>Skills:</i>	Language (any) 65%, Lore (any) 85%
<i>Traits:</i>	Disease Immunity, Night Sight, Poison Immunity, Regeneration (see text)
<i>Armor:</i>	Stony Form (AP 6, no Skill Penalty)



Wizard's Shell

The result of the joining of a cruel spirit and the corpse of a deceased wizard, this terrible creature can be found guarding crypts and tombs within which powerful artifacts have been hidden; the creatures are drawn to great magic. Legless, wizard's shells float about on a current of mystical energy that is visible as a blue light yet is untouchable and leaves no mark. The creatures cannot fly but, rather, float just a few feet above the surface of the ground.

A wizard's shell is highly intelligent and retains the memory of the wizard from which it was formed. Additionally, the creature retains the wizard's goals and desires though it is tethered to the artifact that it has bonded to; a wizard's shell cannot stray more than 100 ft. from its chosen artifact. Of course, this means that if the artifact is stolen the thief will be forced to contend with a monstrous creature that will always hound it.

If a wizard's shell is slain its two parts separate and continue on the path into eternity that they were traveling before they were joined into a single, monstrous creature. How any why wizard's shells are created is unknown though some speculate that the creation of the beast is punishment for actions the two halves of the creature took in a past life.

Characteristics

STR 2D6	(8)
CON 2D6	(8)
DEX 3D6	(10)
SIZ 2D6 + 6	(13)
INT 6D6	(20)
POW 3D6 + 8	(18)
CHA 2D6 + 3	(10)

Wizard's Shell Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-5	Abdomen	0/6
6-12	Chest	0/7
13-15	Right Arm	0/4
16-18	Left Arm	0/4
19-20	Head	0/5

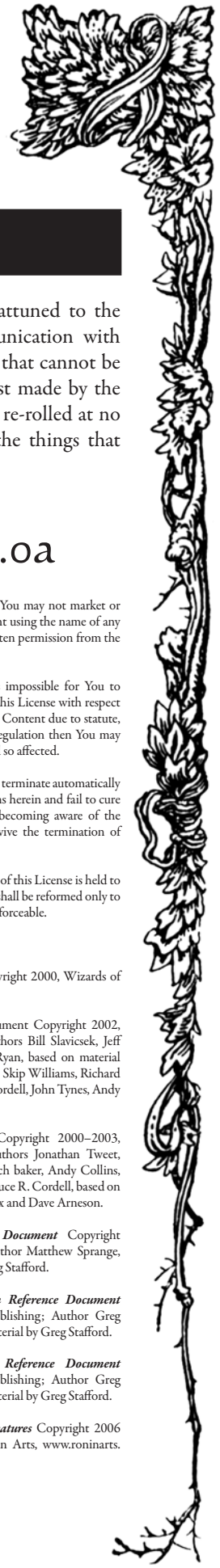
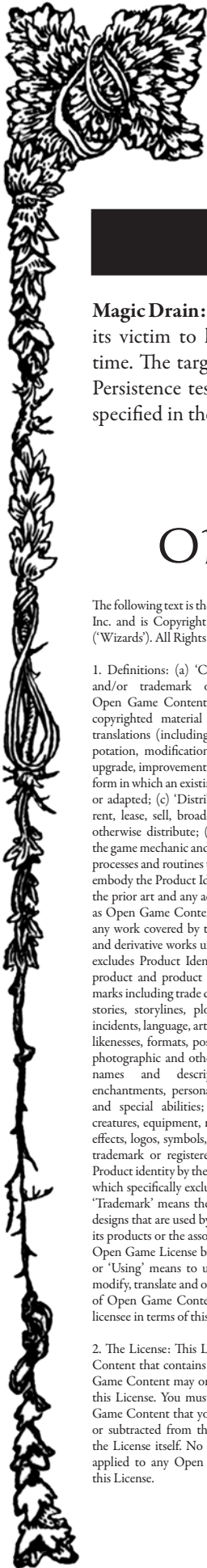
Weapons

Type	Weapon skill	Damage
Claw	65%	1D6

Special Rules

<i>Combat Actions:</i>	2
<i>Strike Rank:</i>	+15
<i>Movement:</i>	8m
<i>Skills:</i>	Perception 50%, Persistence 60%
<i>Traits:</i>	Life Sense, Night Sight
<i>Armor:</i>	Bone Shell (AP 3, no Skill Penalty)





New Creature Traits

Magic Drain: The creature drains Magic Points, causing its victim to lose access to spellcasting for a limited time. The target of this attack must make a successful Persistence test or lose a number of Magic Points (as specified in the creature's description).

Well of Knowledge: The creature is attuned to the universe, constantly in mental communication with elder, more powerful spirits and beings that cannot be seen or heard by mortals. Any Lore test made by the creature that fails may be automatically re-rolled at no penalty as the creature is assisted by the things that mortal eyes cannot see.

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