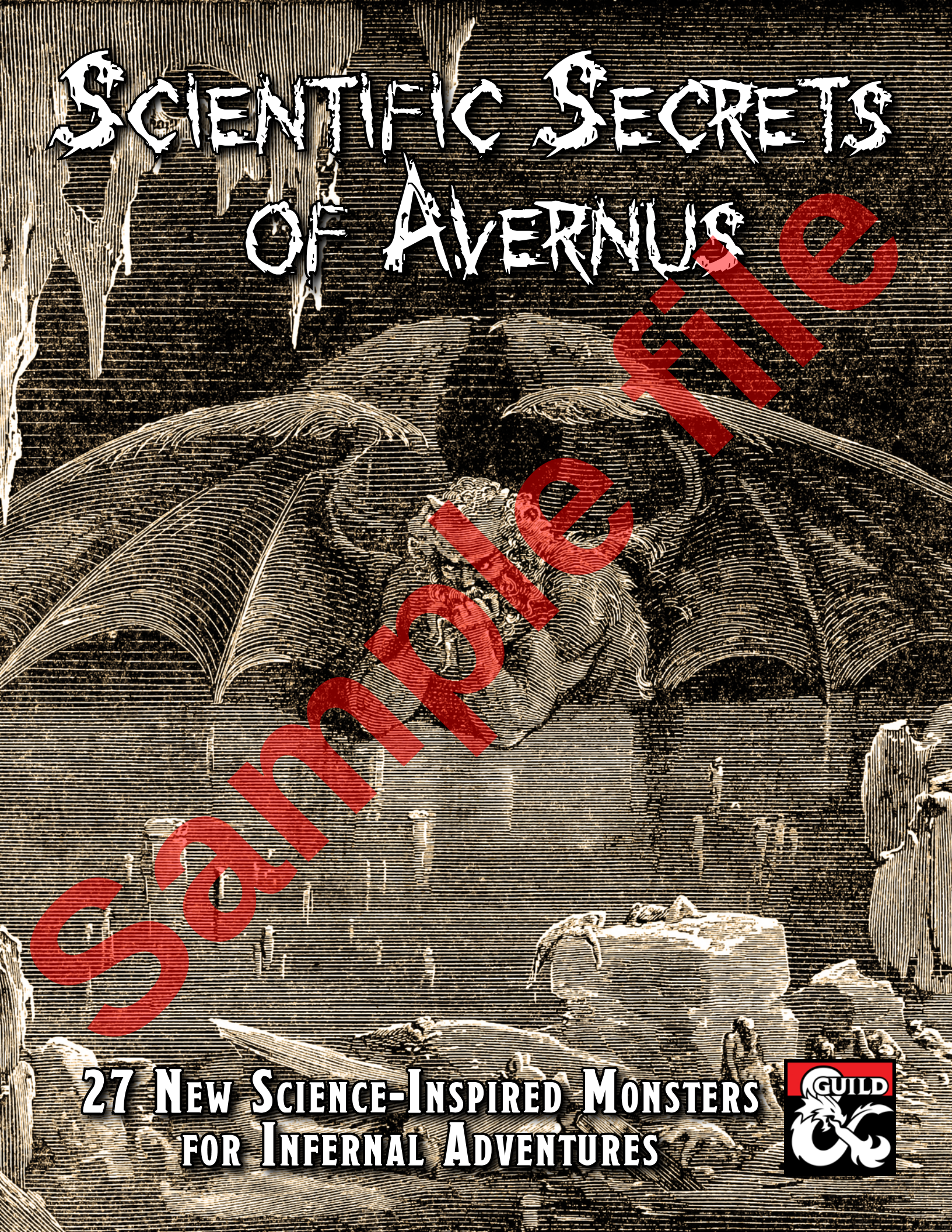
Scientific Secrets of Avernus



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27 New Science-Inspired Monsters for Infernal Adventures

GUILD

Scientific Secrets of Avernus

Credits

Authors: Chris Parsons, Christopher Harding, Daniel Scheltema,Gabrielle Bleu, Greg Quinnell, Iam Pace, Jacky Leung, Joe Raso, Kai Linder, Marco Michelutto, Maxine Henry, Teos Abadía, Willy Abeel, Wyatt Trull, Zeke Gonzalez

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Citations

The concept of *Scientific Secrets of Avernus* is a bestiary of infernal monsters inspired by scientific literature on real-world animals; each of these writers interpreted that concept in a unique way. Some of the monsters within these pages take inspiration in their form or abilities while others are a direct translation of our planet's strangest and deadliest animals into 5th Edition D&D. Regardless of the writer's approach, each of these monsters include a citation of the scientific literature which inspired them. These citations are in APA 6th Edition format and I recommend them as further reading on the strange and wondrous world of biology. It is instinctive for many people to separate science and fantasy, but when we incorporate the two together, we create richer worlds, dynamic encounters, and powerful motivations for characters, monsters, and NPCs alike. These monsters are a terrifying menagerie ripe for inclusion in your *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus* campaign and I hope you find these readings as fascinating as I do!

Cover Art



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Appendix A: Monsters by CR 40

Ah-ha! So you have discovered the secret folds in my map and uncovered notes on the beasts of Avernus! So be it! Look upon this guide and see how many ways the foul residents of Hell can rend, tear, and destroy you. Stay far from these monsters or you will find these notes to be no help as you meet your vicious end!

–The Cartographer

Introduction

Scientific Secrets of Avernus is a supplement containing 30 monsters designed for Dungeons & Dragons 5th Edition. These monsters use rules, spells, and concepts from the Wizards of the Coast's D&D 5th Edition and are intended to supplement the *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus* campaign. These creatures are perfect for inclusion in the adventures within Chapter 3 of that book or you can simply use them to replace other creatures which appear in Avernus. Spells referenced in this supplement can be found in the *Player's Handbook* and *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*. When a creature's name appears in **bold** type, that's a visual cue pointing you to the *Monster Manual*.

And remember, those who travel to the Nine Hells never return home unchanged... If they return at all.

Tips for the DM

As with any supplement, *Scientific Secrets of Avernus* should be adapted to work for your group. If you don't like the way a monster works, please feel free to change it. Adjust the hit points, damage, abilities, spells, and lore of these creatures to suit your games and your players. For example, if you want to use a monster, but think that its ability to impose certain conditions on the characters won't be fun for your group, instead have it deal extra damage or give it a new trait!

To deliver an optimum experience for your players, it is best to read the stat blocks of the monsters you intend to use in full before attempting to run them. There are spells, attacks, and abilities that you need to understand in advance to run a fun and effective encounter. Have fun using these monsters!

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About the Creators

Anja Svare

Anja Svare is a graphic designer who has played D&D for longer than most of you whippersnappers have been alive, so get off my lawn. After 25 years working in the biotech industry, they finally found enough free time on their hands in retirement to jump into the RPG scene with both feet. Creating new D&D content, designing layout for cool supplements, and generally having a blast working with the awesome people in the DMsGuild community (when they're not building and DMing the homebrew *Chronicles of Arkata* campaign for their incredible players out in the wilderness of NEPA). You can follow them @anjaproductions, or Anja Svare Productions, and see all the cool projects they have either created or collaborated on at DMsGuild. New projects and collaborations are always welcome, subject to how awesome the project is, how awesome you are, and how awesome they feel, which is always.

Chris Parsons

Dr. Chris Parsons has been involved in whale and dolphin research for over two decades and has been involved in projects on every continent. However, he's been playing Dungeons & Dragons for nearly 40 years. He's currently a consultant for a number of environmental groups in Washington DC, consulting on marine wildlife, conservation and science communication and policy issues. He's also the Scientific Content & Creative Director for the leading independent nature podcasting company *Speak Up for Blue* media. He hosts and produces a number of science podcasts including: the *Marine Mammal Science* podcast, the *Environmental Studies & Sciences* podcast and the *Marine Conservation Happy Hour*. He also produces and edits the Dungeons & Dragons & marine science podcast *Dugongs & Seadragons*. Website: https://ecm-parsons.weebly.com/

Christopher Harding

Christopher Harding is a Games Design student at Staffordshire University. He writes adventures and supplements on Dungeon Masters Guild, as well as creating hand-drawn maps both birds-eye and isometric. His focuses in writing have been inclusivity, diversity, and sustainable living, though his love for heavy metal, horror in film and fiction, and the grimdark universe of Warhammer 40,000 have weaved their influences in. He also creates his own herb and spice mixes for cooking, and brews his own mead and gin. Should you wish to get in contact or see his previous works and upcoming projects, check his Twitter, his Dungeon Masters Guild Page.

Dana Braga

Dana Braga is making fantasy worlds come alive with art. She's a freelance digital artist, and she has worked on multiple tabletop projects creating characters, monsters, magic items, and full-illustrations. While she's not drawing, she's probably playing Dungeons & Dragons or talking about it. Check out her portfolio at www.danabraga.com, and say hi on twitter @danaxbraga

Daniel Scheltema

Dr. Daniel Scheltema is a pharmacist, avid runner, and Christian family man. He holds a Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) from Wayne State University. He volunteers weekly at his local church helping with the children's ministry. At home, if he isn't spending time with his family, he can be found on Roll20. He has been playing Dungeons & Dragons and other RPGs for over two decades and enjoys adding his own homebrew elements to enhance modules. New to the publishing scene he has written three sensational adventures for *Tomb of Annihilation* on DMs Guild.

Erin Anderson

Erin is an artist, illustrator, and compulsive tea drinker. After studying marine biology and scientific communication in college, Erin has blended her science know-how with her artistic skills to better her monster creation. In addition to Secrets of Avernus, she was also an illustrator for Scientific Secrets of the Saltmarsh, as well as a contributor to Descent into Midnight. When she isn't working on commissions, writing, or running her own webcomic Erin also plays Dungeons & Dragons on the marine science podcast Dugongs & Seadragons. You can see her work on her twitter at @ErintheZ or on ErinZAndersonIllustration.com.

Gabrielle Bleu

Gabrielle Bleu is a science fiction and fantasy author, swordsperson, and monster enthusiast. Previously, she lifted mammoth tusks, triceratops frills, and whale ribs for a living. Currently she holds a never-ending tide of ravenous silverfish at bay, while moonlighting as a writer. Follow her on twitter @BeteMonstrueuse for birdwatching photos and occasional thoughts on werewolves. More of her writing can be found at gabriellebleu.com.

Sample file

Greg Quinnell

Greg Quinnell has been playing 5th edition for 5-6 years, DMing for 2, and homebrewing pretty much all his life, what with his penchant for making things up. Writing since he was in high school, Greg has a novel series he's been working on - on and off - for 16 years now called the Warthian Chronicles, which he bases everything he does in. This year, he's been making himself known as a homebrew aficionado in the TTRPG community, and has had his first published release on the DM's Guild, Volume 1 of Warthian World Wonders. Follow him on Twitter at @gregzilla01 for more of his craziness, as he's always open to homebrew any requests that come his way.

Iam Pace

Iam is a multiple Emmy-nominated journalist and Reader's Choice Award-winning copywriter and copyeditor who has freelanced for Wizards of the Coast, Cryptozoic Entertainment, and has studied science journalism under Jon Palfreman. You can see his work on the DMsGuild and the Cryptozoic store, and you can find him posting about RPGs on Twitter.

Jacky Leung

Jacky is a writer and game designer who may have found the secrets to lichdom and cloistered himself in his dark tower. He has written for several collaborative projects and publications - a creature of constant machinations. He is the one of the Project Organizers for *Unbreakable*, a pan-Asian D&D adventure anthology featuring Asian writers and artists. He has not apologized for the wererabbits, the three-head Thanksgiving monster, the Potato Incident of 2010, the animated toasters, half a dozen iterations of Santa Claus, and the exuberant sum of puns interjected into everything he creates. You can follow him on Twitter @deathbymage and find all of his attributed works at bit.ly/DBMPort.

Joe Raso

Joe Raso is a is a dad, a husband, and a long suffering DM who's had the pleasure of gaming with the same group since his university days. Some of Joe's recent publications on the Dungeon Master's Guild include: Terror Beneath the Frozen Gate, The Great Dale Campaign Guide, and "The Seer's Ruin" in The Demon Wastes. You can follow him on twitter @_joe_raso and on his blog https://theschemingdm.wordpress.com.

Kai Linder

Kai is a D&D5e editor and writer with an unapologetically chaotic body of DMsGuild work including Goblin Heist and UNBRIDLED. He comes from an international background, has a Master's in Psychological Research, and loves classic pulp action and horror. He's also terrible at writing bios so go find him as @Paradoliak, and as a player on the Dastardly Dungeons podcast (@DastardlyCast).

Leon Barillaro

By day, Leon is a game designer for Future Proof, a transmedia company that specializes in immersive theater. They fancy themself a funny guy, and they hope their work reflects that. When not designing silly events about evil robots and fungal conspiracy theorists, Leon writes and edits content for the DMs Guild. Assuming you picked up this supplement because you like monsters, you can find more information about Leon's own monster, Chance the beagle mix, on their Twitter.

Marco Michelutto

Marco Michelutto is a game designer and product owner with an academic past in the field of History of Science, specializing in primates and evolutionary sciences. Nowadays he works in software, turning customer insight and feedback into cool features, and writes games and D&D modules on the side. Follow him on Twitter @marcomiki and find links to his D&D modules on https://marcomiki.carrd.co.

Maxine Henry

Maxine Henry lives in South Carolina and dreams longingly of winter. She enjoys being on both sides of the DM screen and believes that RPGs can be life-changing for the better. In her spare time, she enjoys fiber and textile arts, and reading about cutting edge technology. Maxine has an adventure in the recently released Uncaged Volume 4, and more of her work can be found on Dungeon Masters Guild.

Sample file

Teos Abadia

Teos Abadía is a Colombian-American freelance author and developer working with Wizards of the Coast, Penny Arcade, Dwarven Forge, and several organized play programs. Teos has a master in environmental management and his first collaborative D&D monster project was the Net Book of Athasian Ecology, because he loves creatures and the environment. Teos maintains a blog at Alphastream.org and is @Alphastream on Twitter. Teos is active on the DMs Guild. His mega-adventure collaborations with Dwarven Forge, Dungeon of Doom and Caverns Deep, are available free at DwarvenForge.com.

Willy Abeel

Willy is a game designer with a penchant for the macabre and strange. It is usually a mistake to allow Willy to exist behind a keyboard. Just... be on the lookout for rogue clowns, werecreatures, and memes with excessive rationalization for appearing normal in gameplay.

Twitter: @theWillyboo Links: https://linktr.ee/Willyboo

Wyatt Trull

Wyatt Trull is a forever-DM that's fleeing his responsibilities at home by teaching English abroad. Currently he is languishing in the South Korean countryside. He is the author of the best-selling Daerdan's Class Feats and the Dungeon of the Mad Mage Companion. You can check out his work and ramblings by following him on Twitter and periodically checking his website, which he insists will one day look professional. In the meantime, new work is regularly posted on DMs Guild.

Zeke Gonzalez

Zeke Gonzalez is queer scientist studying fish vision who loves to infuse science and horror into his fantasy TTRPGs. He writes adventures & bestiaries for the DMs Guild and can be found geeking out over #ScienceDnD and indie horror in equal parts at @FantasyEcology on Twitter. He recently released the Pretty Little Liches trilogy of Tier 4 adventures about unique liches & their lairs featuring new monsters, traps, magic items, and more! Check out the trilogy using this link for a special discount: ???

Agrasi

Author: Jacky Leung

Inspired By: Humans and other mammals use cognitive maps with spatial systems

Citation: Presotto, A., Fayrer-Hosken, R., Curry, C. *et al.* Spatial mapping shows that some African elephants use cognitive maps to navigate the core but not the periphery of their home ranges. *Anim Cogn* 22, 251–263 (2019) doi: 10.1007/s10071-019-01242-9

The agrasi is a devil with a humanoid body, a scaly tail, feathered wings, and the head of a molting hawk. Its body and limbs are covered in wrinkles and molting feathers. Long and dry nails extend from its hands and feet. An agrasi features two large, raptorial eyes and a sharp, pointed beak with a black tongue. These creatures often travel alone or with an entourage of lesser devils and are sought by summoners for their prophetic decrees of rulership.

Light of Knowledge. These devils thrive on knowledge, not to hoard it, but to share it and teach others—for knowledge is power. Sought out by summoners seeking wisdom and knowledge, the agrasi's keen intellect allows it to speak and understand any language at a terrible price. The knowledge gifted by an agrasi will corrupt and burn the victim's psyche. These devils are also sometimes summoned by mage lords who desire nobility and rulership, which the agrasi are able to decree upon any mortal whom they deem as worthy of their blessings.

Harbingers of Calamities. The agrasi are highly sought after by scholars, mages, and tyrannical rulers as kingmakers. These devils have great foresight and can recount prophecies and paths of destiny for mortals. Often, these prophecies spell some calamity that requires a worthy figure to arise and be steadfast against the peril. A mortal granted a noble title by an agrasi is believed to be a marked agent of destiny, a force for change and new beginnings. Whether for a sadistic purpose or curiosity, the devils never reveal their criteria for who or how they deem a mortal worthy of a title.

Prophets of Nisroch. Some of the agrasi are rumored to serve a wandering archdevil named Nisroch, also known as the Eagle. Nisroch is a gifted poisoner of the Nine Hells, often poisoning corpses and feasts. These agrasi scour Avernus to gather new poison recipes for their idol master or to find kingly feasts to spoil in the mortal coil.

Sample file

The agrasi's noble visage conceals its infernal nature. If it speaks, plug your ears. You do not wish to hear the foul knowledge it can bestow.



Agrasi

Medium fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 91 (14d8 + 28)
Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Int +9, Wis +7, Cha +7
Skills Arcana +9, History +9, Insight +7, Perception +7, Persuasion +7
Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities acid, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages all
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Devil's Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede the devil's darkvision.

Innate Spellcasting. The agrasi's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15). The agrasi can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At-will: *augury, ceremony* (XGE), *command, identify, see invisibility*
3/day: *find the path, geas, tongues*
1/day: *earthquake*

Magic Resistance. The agrasi has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magical Weapons. The agrasi's weapon attacks are magical.

Spatial Awareness. The agrasi can perfectly recall any path it has traveled and cannot get lost by physical or magical effects.

Spellcasting. The agrasi is a 13th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). The agrasi has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, chill touch, mage hand, prestidigitation*
1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, earth tremor, ray of sickness, shield*
2nd level (3 slots): *crown of madness, detect thoughts, locate object, phantasmal force*
3rd level (3 slots): *bestow curse, erupting earth* (XGE)
4th level (3 slots): *banishment, blight*
5th level (2 slots): *legend lore, modify memory*
6th level (1 slot): *circle of death*
7th level (1 slot): *plane shift*

Actions

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (2d6 + 1) slashing damage. The target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

Disruption Spatial Schema. The agrasi disrupts the spatial awareness of creatures within a 15-foot radius centered on it. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or become uncoordinated as space feels warped. A target is unaffected if it is immune to being charmed. While the target is under this effect, its speed is reduced to 10 ft. The target also has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws, other than Charisma saving throws. If the target tries to cast a spell, it must first succeed on a Charisma saving throw, or the casting fails and the spell is wasted. Finally, the target can make a Charisma saving throw at the end of each of its turns. On a successful save, the disorientation ends.

Gift of Knowledge (Recharge 6). The agrasi chooses a living humanoid that can see and hear it within 60 feet and endows it with forbidden knowledge. The target must make a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw or suffer the effects of the *confusion* spell for 1 minute. While under this effect, at the start of each of its turns, the creature takes 22 (4d10) psychic damage. The agrasi doesn't need to concentrate on the spell.

d6	Piece of Forbidden Knowledge
1	***Prophecy.*** Something prophetic and ominous about the creature's future
2	***Enlightenment.*** A revelation about the cosmos, the outer planes, or forces of nature
3	***Secret.*** A piece of elusive or secret information the creature desires
4	***Fate.*** A glimpse of the eternal torments deep within the Nine Hells
5	***Mystery.*** A solution to an unsolvable mystery
6	***Discovery.*** A revelation about knowledge believed to be lost or forgotten

Sample file

Cranium Crab

(Carcinoloth)

Author: Chris Parsons

Inspired By: coconut crab (*Birgus latro*)

Citation: Reese, E.S. (1968). Shell use: an adaptation for emigration from the sea by the coconut crab. *Science* 161 (3839): 385-386.



These predatory crabs infest the River Styx. They look like thick-shelled, extremely large hermit crabs. Instead of a shell protecting their soft abdomen, cranium crabs make use of the skull of a previous victim. The cranium crab often shadows other predators in the Styx, such as hadalloths, scavenging the prey of the larger creatures.

An Ignoble End. The most feared ability of the cranium crab is its coup de grâce: snipping the head off of a helpless creature. The crab can then insert its abdomen into the cranium of its decapitated prey. While it transfers exoskeletons, the cranium crab's defenses are temporarily lowered. Once the transfer is complete, the crab consumes the soul of the corpse. It is nearly impossible to bring a creature killed in this way back to life; anything short of a wish spell has proven ineffective.

Cranium Crab (carcinoloth)

Small fiend (yugoloth), neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 20 (3d6+9)
Speed 30ft., swim 10 ft., burrow 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	8 (–1)	14 (+2)	5 (–3)

Saving Throws Con+5, Dex+4, Wis+4
Skills Perception +4 Stealth +4
Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical attacks that aren't cold iron or silvered
Damage Immunities acid, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities blinded, poisoned
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages understands Abyssal and Infernal but can't speak, telepathy 40 ft.
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Amphibious. The cranium crab can breathe air and water.

Magic Resistance. The cranium crab advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Styx Native. The cranium crab is immune to the magical effects of the River Styx.

Actions

Multiattack. The cranium crab makes two claw attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 12). The crab has two claws, each of which can grapple only one target.

Inject venom. If a prey is grappled, the cranium crab injects its prey with a hollow proboscis. This does no damage but the prey must make a Constitution save (DC 13) or become paralysed. The cranium crab can then take a bonus action to Dash.

Coup de Grâce. The cranium crab can decapitate a helpless (unconscious, paralyzed, or restrained) creature, rendering them instantly dead. The target must make a death saving throw. On a failure, it dies instantly, and the crab can take its soul devouring action on its next turn.

Soul Devouring. Until the start of its next turn, the crab attempts to consume the soul of its target. During this time, the crab's AC becomes 13. On its next turn, the soul is consumed, granting the crab 20 temporary hit points and advantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws for 24 hours. A character who has had their soul consumed cannot be raised (except via a *wish* spell).

Sample File



Brood of corruption, spawn of evil, the crokekspawn cause internal upheaval.

Crokekspawn

Author: Zeke Gonzalez

Inspired By: Bone Diet of Bearded Vultures (*Gypaetus barbatus*)

Citation: Marín-Arroyo, A. B., and A. Margalida. 2012. "Distinguishing Bearded Vulture Activities within Archaeological Contexts: Identification Guidelines." *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology* 22(5):563–76.

Artist: Dana Braga

When Yeenoghu's pet Crokek'toeck chased Yael & Lulu across Avernus, it also belched out an army of demons, gnolls, and other monsters that it was carrying within its body to aid in the Blood War. One such creature is the Crokekspawn: a monstrous hyena with glowing green eyes whose skin is split from its bodies, revealing the muscle and bone beneath. These creatures are the transformed result of a dead gnoll or hyena held within Crokek'toeck's body for a considerable time.

Walking Ossuaries. Unlike their carnivorous relatives, the crokekspawn subsist on a diet of bone. They use their powerful teeth to flay meat from a skeleton and throw it aside for gnolls or scavengers while they shatter and swallow shards of bone. As they consume more bone, their bellies can often become visibly distended. When killed, it is not uncommon for one or more gnoll witherlings to burst fully-formed from the corpse of a crokekspawn, as crokekspawn often consume the skeletons of fallen gnolls.

Crokekspawn

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor), 15 (see Bone Overgrowth)
Hit Points 143 (22d8 +44)
Speed 30 ft., 15 ft. (see Bone Overgrowth)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	8 (–1)	11 (+0)	5 (–3)

Saving Throws Con +5
Skills Perception +3, Stealth +5
Damage Resistances poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages understands Abyssal and Gnoll but can't speak
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Warp Skeleton (1/Turn). The crokekspawn forces a creature with a skeleton that it hits with its bite attack to make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature's skeleton mutates as bony protrusions grow across it. While warped, the creature has its speed halved and has disadvantage on ability checks, saving throws, and attacks based on Strength or Dexterity.

The warped creature can repeat the saving throw whenever it finishes a long rest, ending the effect on a success.

Rampage. When the crokekspawn reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, the crokekspawn can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

Actions

Multiattack. The crokekspawn makes one bite attack and one bone missile attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Bone Missile. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (3d10 + 3) piercing damage.

Bone Overgrowth (1/Day). The crokekspawn's hide splits as long, sharp spears of bones grow rapidly from its body in a 10 foot radius. Each creature in that area is pushed to the nearest unoccupied space outside that radius and must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (5d8) piercing damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one. After using this ability, the crokekspawn's size increases to Huge, its AC increases by 2, and its speed is halved until it takes a short or long rest.

Bony Protrusions. Crokekspawn can also put their diet to more combative purposes. By assimilating the bones they consume, crokekspawn can project bony missiles from their mouths, cause spurs of bone to grow from their gore-soaked hide, and even cause the skeletons of those they bite to warp and twist.

Sample file

Daubentonia

Author: Marco Michelutto

Inspired By: *Daubentonia madagascariensis*, or Aye Aye

Citation: Bankoff, R. J., Jerjos, M., Hohman, B., Lauterbur, M. E., Kistler, L., & Perry, G. H. (2016). Do aye-ayes echolocate? Studying convergent genomic evolution in a primate auditory specialist. doi: 10.1101/048165

Artist: Dana Braga

As flames are brighter in Avernus, so are shadows darker. Amongst the darker ones dwells the daubentonia, a solitary demon that preys on the souls of those unfortunate enough to pass by. The first of these fiends was originally born from the darker shadows and of the hunger that the damned feel for the souls of mortals.

Made of Shadows. The Daubentonia is shadow solidified. It lurks in them, waiting for a prey to satiate its hunger for souls. It only wishes to feed, and it is not interested in parley or negotiation, except for very rare situations when it needs something else, such as to kill another demon that is encroaching in its territory, or a particularly tasty soul it has coveted for a long time. Even then, the risk that it will decide to feed after the negotiation is always there.

The Daubentonia's Lair

Once a daubentonia has successfully trapped a soul and starts to devour it, it retreats into its lair made of pure darkness. These pockets of magical darkness are weaved by the daubentonia over the course of centuries from the darker parts of the souls they consume, until they reach a large enough size and split in two. When that happens, a new daubentonia is born from one of the two parts and leaves to start its own lair. The lair of a daubentonia can range in size, with the smallest being just over 60 feet wide and the largest ones getting as wide as 180 feet.

Lair Actions

When fighting inside its lair, the daubentonia can invoke the ambient magic to take lair actions. For the purposes of these effects, only areas of dim light or darkness count as part of the lair, so spells like *daylight* effectively create "safe" areas within their range.

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the daubentonia can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects, but cannot take the same lair action in two consecutive rounds:

- ***Inky Darkness.*** The pure darkness of the daubentonia's lair becomes denser, almost as if the air itself has turned to liquid. All creatures within the lair except for the daubentonia must succeed on a DC 17 Strength check or move at half their speed until the next round.
- ***Chill Presence.*** All creatures within the lair except for the daubentonia must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or take 2d8 necrotic damage and be unable to regain hit points until the next round.
- ***Dispel Light***. If a spell or magical effect is causing darkness within the lair to be dispelled, the Daubentonia attempts to dispel that effect. The creature that cast the spell or activated the magical item that is dispelling the darkness must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the effect is dispelled immediately.

Sample file

Daubentonia are found in the shadows wherever demons darken the shores of this hell. When its mark weighs on your heart, you're already dead.



Sample file

Daubentonia

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (etherealness)
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (–2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	8 (–1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dexterity +6, Constitution +6, Wisdom +6
Skills Stealth +9, Perception +9
Damage Vulnerabilities radiant
Damage Resistances acid, fire, necrotic, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities necrotic
Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, deafened, blinded
Senses passive Perception 19
Languages Abyssal
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Demonic Shadow. The daubentonia darkens the area around its body in a 20 foot radius. Nonmagical light can't illuminate this area of dim light. Because it is made of shadow itself, thedaubentonia has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks, and attacks against it have disadvantage while in darkness or dim light.

Echolocation. The daubentonia is able to see in darkness, magical or otherwise, by using its special echolocation ability. By tapping its long fingers on a solid surface it is able to recreate a visual map of its surroundings within 60 feet, as if it was seeing with its own eyes. Because it does so by feeling the vibrations and ripples in the air around it, the daubentonia cannot be deafened or blinded.

Actions

Shadow Step. The daubentonia can instantly teleport up to 60 feet to an area it can perceive that is in darkness or dim light.

Marked for Death. The daubentonia points its finger towards a creature it can perceive within 30 feet of itself. That creature is now marked for death for as long as the Daubentonia keeps its concentration and is within 120 feet of them. While the creature is suffering the effects of this ability, it takes 3d10 psychic damage at the beginning of each of its turns. If a creature reaches 0 HP while marked, it immediately dies, and its soul is trapped within the daubentonia, who starts slowly devouring it. The creature cannot be resurrected until the soul is freed, which can only be achieved by killing the daubentonia. After one day, the soul is damaged beyond repair and lost forever. The daubentonia can only trap one soul at a time.

Echo

Author: Willy Abeel

Inspired By: Dead Brain Reanimation

Citation: Vrselja, Z., Daniele, S.G., Silbereis, J. *et al.* Restoration of brain circulation and cellular functions hours post-mortem. *Nature* 568, 336–343 (2019). https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-019-1099-1

Artist: Erin Anderson



A living creature has its uses. A dead creature has less uses but is usually easier to control. A creature is seldom caught in between the two on its own. In order to get the most effective use out of a creature, it must either exist between life and death or retain all of its aspects of life while dead.

An echo is an example of the latter: an image of a previously living creature that's full of vitality and easy to manipulate.

Life After Death. When a creature dies, its spirit leaves for the next appropriate plane of existence, and its body remains. It is understood that the creature's mind leaves with its spirit. However, there is a short window of time in which a copy of the creature's knowledge and memories still lingers inside the body. This sense of self is as delicate as a snowflake above a roaring fire and is the first to melt away as the body decomposes.

If a mind can be preserved, then it can be transmuted into a separate physical form as an echo. The echo takes on the appearance of the creature that it remembers being in life. It moves, acts, and breathes as though it were still alive, all while being subservient to powerful necromancy magic.

What makes an echo especially valuable is its malleability. Modifying the memories of an echo can have dramatic effects on its body. An echo can be made to believe that it is under an unbreakable contract and thus never attempt to defect from its creator. Or, if the original creature had a strong imagination, it could believe it is an incredibly powerful creature and change completely to become that creature.

Cruelty is the Point. Normally it's most efficient to collect only the souls to bolster one's army. However, it is a relatively simple process to preserve the mind after death when one knows it's still there, even if very briefly. By bringing living stock into Avernus, one is capable of harvesting the soul, producing an echo, and still having a corpse left over to reanimate as one sees fit. The swift euthanasia and necromancy employed in harvesting the mind, body, and soul effectively triples the amount of soldiers one can convert it into.

Sample file

Zariel constantly searches for ways to bolster her forces... Now echoes float throughout her domain: a soul drained to its last drop of usefulness.

Echo Template

Any creature capable of thinking and dying can have an echo created from its corpse. That said, the time it takes for a creature's mind to degrade after death varies from species to species.

When an echo is created, it retains the statistics of its original creature, except as described below. Echoes of particularly powerful creatures might retain or lose any or all of their legendary and lair actions, or inherit new ones, as the DM sees fit.

Creature Type. The echo is an undead creature. It does not need to eat or sleep.

Dissipation. The longer the echo exists, the more its appearance deteriorates, taking on a chromatic aberration.

Damage Resistances. The echo is resistant to psychic damage.

Pure Memory. The echo can accurately recall anything it has seen or heard within the year leading up to its death.

Glass Psyche. The echo has advantage on Wisdom saving throws. If it fails a Wisdom saving throw while it still has advantage, the echo gains disadvantage on all subsequent Wisdom saving throws for 24 hours.

Malleable. If the echo can be persuaded that it is another creature it knows about, its appearance and stats change into that creature. Apply the Echo Template to the new creature's stat block.

New Action: Aberrate (Recharge 5-6). The echo can distort its image, granting it the effects of the *mirror image* spell for 1 minute.

New Reaction: Rewind (Recharge 5-6). The echo can use its reaction when it takes damage to teleport to any position it had previously occupied within the last 30 seconds. It cannot choose positions that are currently occupied or exist on a separate plane.

Example Stat Block

Cult Fanatic Echo

Medium undead (humanoid), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)
Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills Deception +4, Persuasion +4, Religion +2
Damage Resistances psychic
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages any one language (usually Common)
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Dissipation. The longer the echo exists, the more its appearance deteriorates, taking on a chromatic aberration.

Pure Memory. The echo can accurately recall anything it has seen or heard within the year leading up to its death.

Glass Psyche. The echo has advantage on Wisdom saving throws. If it fails a Wisdom saving throw while it still has advantage, the echo gains disadvantage on all subsequent Wisdom saving throws for 24 hours.

Malleable. If the echo can be persuaded that it is another creature it knows about, its appearance and stats change into that creature. Apply the Echo Template to the new creature's stat block.

Dark Devotion. The echo has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Spellcasting. The echo is a 4th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). The echo has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*
1st level (4 slots): *command, inflict wounds, shield of faith*
2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, spiritual weapon*

Actions

Multiattack. The echo makes two melee attacks.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Aberrate (Recharge 5-6). The echo can distort its image, granting it the effects of the *mirror image* spell for 1 minute.

Reactions

Rewind (Recharge 5-6). The echo can use its reaction when it takes damage to teleport to any position it had previously occupied within the last 30 seconds. It cannot choose positions that are currently occupied or exist on a separate plane.

Sample file

False Cleric Fish

Author: Gabrielle Bleu

Inspired By: Trilobites; the medical uses of horseshoe crab blood.

Citation: Maloney T, Phelan R, Simmons N (2018) Saving the horseshoe crab: A synthetic alternative to horseshoe crab blood for endotoxin detection. PLoS Biol 16(10): e2006607. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.2006607

Speyer, S., & Brett, C. (1986). Trilobite Taphonomy and Middle Devonian Taphofacies. *PALAIOS*, 1(3), 312-327. doi:10.2307/3514694

Artist: Erin Anderson



The false cleric fish is an arthropod dwelling along the bottom of the River Styx. Its body is ovular with a thorax composed of numerous segments, and the head has a shovel or circular shape. The cheeks of the false cleric fish curve outwards and behind it in two genal spines, which it uses to root around in the bed of the Styx for food. The false cleric fish is notable among arthropods for the secondary face located in the center of its head shield. Humanoid in form, this secondary face whispers and gibbers and has been known to occasionally shriek in tongues. The shape and meanings of its mutterings cause any unfortunates within hearing range great harm. While the false face gibbers in Abyssal and Common, the creature does not appear to possess an understanding of the languages it murmurs and howls in.

False in All Ways. The name itself is a misnomer, as the false cleric fish is in no way a fish. The humanoid face near the glabella is also a false face; its real mouth is located on its underside, allowing the false cleric fish to easily feed as it skitters along the bottom of the Styx. This allows a measure of protection for the false cleric fish—even if the false face is injured or silenced, its true mouth remains protected by its carapace. Any who are unlucky enough to encounter the false cleric fish quickly realizes its third falsity. The fish is much like a false prophet in its gibbering preaching and the harm its words cause to those who hear them. The one truth of the false cleric fish is that it does resemble something clerical in action in its ability to heal its own body.

Dwells in Blood. While able to traverse land, false cleric fish are at home in the blood-waters of the river Styx. Their naturally bloody habitat has lent itself to a strengthening of their own physical abilities. Their cobalt blue blood bestows upon them curative abilities, allowing the false cleric fish to regenerate from any injuries it sustains. The cobalt blue blood of the false cleric fish can be distilled into something approximating a healing potion, making the rewards of its blood a calculated risk to collect.

False Cleric Fish

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 60 (8d10 + 16)
Speed 30 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Con +4
Skills Survival +4, Perception +4
Damage Resistances fire, piercing, slashing
Senses darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Common, Abyssal
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Aquatic. The false cleric fish can breathe air and water.

Gibbering. The false cleric fish babbles incoherently while it can see any creature and isn't incapacitated. Each creature that starts its turn within 20 feet of the false cleric fish and can hear the gibbering must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the creature can't take reactions until the start of its next turn and rolls a d8 to determine what it does during its turn. On a 1 to 4, the creature does nothing. On a 5 or 6, the creature takes no action or bonus action and uses all its movement to move in a randomly determined direction. On a 7 or 8, the creature makes a melee attack against a randomly determined creature within its reach or does nothing if it can't make such an attack.

Regeneration. The false cleric fish regains 6 (1d12) hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point.

Actions

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d8 + 3) slashing damage.

Bash (Recharge 6). The false cleric fish swings its head, using its cheek spines to hit anything within a fifteen foot radius. All targets must make a DC 12 Strength saving throw, taking 15 (3d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage on a failed save.

Sample file

Ferroform

Author: Christopher Harding
Inspired By: Ferrofluid
Artist: Dana Braga



These rare and strange oozes thrive in magnetically strong areas, or regions rich in magnetic materials. They tend to inhabit the Underdark, ancient mines, or abandoned forges—if they can make it to them, that is. They slither and slink their way across floors, walls, and ceilings, and they're even able to fit under doorways and through cracks in the architecture. Their glossy blackness makes them incredible ambushers, able to cling to the ceiling undetected and land on their prey, smothering and suffocating them. Their viscous bodies make them difficult for creatures to gain purchase on or trap, as they can simply escape. Ferroforms are different from the usual ooze, however. Their bodies are composed of an oily black solvent that holds the magnetic metal particles in place, allowing them to retain or change their forms at will. Ferroforms are attracted to magic, metal, and magnetism, as it is these three elements that sustain them. Adventurers looking to battle these foes would be better suited to wearing hide or cloth armor, as not to be subject to their pull. Those who would dare fight a ferroform should be made aware of their ability to reshape and change the range of their attacks at will, depending what they need at that time, from blunt hammer-like shapes to great, piercing spears.

Tracking the Trail. Ferroforms are attracted to metals and magical items. While under normal circumstances nobody would want these arcane devourers anywhere near them, many explorers and artifact hunters employ these creatures to track and find items. Their reflective trail makes it easy to follow when a light is being shined on it, so even if the ferroform escapes from sight, it can still be tracked. A peculiar note about ferroforms: they emit a faint aroma of mixed citrus. Quite a strange thing to behold, this pitch black puddle reminds one of lemons.

Fearsome Filings. The ferroform shares some properties with other oozes, namely that after sustaining certain damage types they will split in two as a defense mechanism, able to overwhelm their prey with numbers rather than with brute strength. Ferroforms come in four different sizes: scion, guardian, prime, and elder, with the prime being the largest and most dangerous, and the scion being the least. Elders are slightly different from the rest due to their incredible age, causing their gooey form to recede, leaving them clumpy and unable to cling to surfaces. Their movement is severely hindered, and they don't have the capacity to reach as far as the younger or better-fed ferroforms. Additionally, because they are composed of more metal than fluid, they emit a dull metallic scraping noise when moving, leaving residue and scuff marks wherever they roam.

The Ferroform Prime's Lair

The lair of a ferroform prime can be inside any cool enclosed space, such as a subterranean cave system, a sewer network, or ancient ruins. Within the lair itself, most surfaces have a glossy sheen to them, the floors are littered with pools of oil. Calcified outcrops of expired ferroforms cling to the walls, leaving metallic shavings and metal deposits around the lair. The final resting place for these lesser ferroforms, this graveyard is the perfect trap for rookie spelunkers and prospectors. Due to the composition of the ferroforms, a faint scent of citrus wafts in the air, betraying the lair, yet enticing those unaware of the ooze's nature to their doom.

The ferroform prime has a challenge rating of 9 (5,000 XP) when encountered within its lair.

Lair Actions

When fighting inside its lair, the ferroform prime can invoke the ambient magic to take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the ferroform prime can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects, but cannot take the same lair action in two consecutive rounds:

- The ferroform prime calls telepathically to its underlings to unblock the lair's drainage system. A rush of jet black oil floods into the cavern, filling to a height of 1 foot. The ground becomes difficult terrain, and the ferroform can hide and has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks and saving throws.
- A cluster of five ferroform scions amass on the ceiling, ready to drop at a moment's notice. They each position themselves over a target, and on the ferroform prime's next turn, they fall onto their target. A target must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or become grappled by the ferroform that fell on it.

Sample file

Regional Effects

A region containing the ferroform prime's lair is warped by the creature's overwhelming presence, which creates the following effects:

- Dark trails and puddles of slick liquid are splattered across the floor, walls, and ceiling.
- There is a faint citrus smell drifting on the air, just enough to catch the attention of travelers without being overwhelming.
- If the ferroform prime dies or leaves the area, this effect fades over the course of 6d6 days.

Ferroform Scion

Small ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 33 (6d6 + 12)
Speed 15 ft., climb 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	1 (–5)	6 (–2)	1 (–5)

Saving Throws Dex +3, Con +4
Skills Stealth +3
Damage Vulnerabilities fire, force, lightning
Damage Resistances acid, piercing, slashing
Damage Immunities psychic
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8
Languages –
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Liquid Form. The ferroform scion can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can also move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Spider Climb. The ferroform scion can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

False Appearance. While the ferroform scion remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an oily pool or a wet rock.

Aversion to Elements. If the ferroform scion takes fire, force, or lightning damage, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

Poison Touch. A creature that touches the ferroform, is hit by it, hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it, or crosses over a puddle left by it must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failure the creature takes 8 (2d8) poison damage, or half as much on a success.

Actions

Multiattack. The ferroform scion makes two psuedopod or two swipe attacks.

Psuedopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d6 + 2) piercing, slashing, or bludgeoning damage (at the DM's discretion).

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

Ferroform Guardian

Medium ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	1 (–5)	6 (–2)	1 (–5)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Con +6
Skills Stealth +5
Damage Vulnerabilities fire, force, lightning
Damage Resistances acid, piercing, slashing
Damage Immunities psychic
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8
Languages –
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Liquid Form. The ferroform guardian can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can also move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Spider Climb. The ferroform guardian can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

False Appearance. While the ferroform guardian remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an oily pool or a wet rock unless an observer succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check, or has a passive perception of 14 or higher.

Magnetic Pull. A target wearing or wielding iron armor or weapons who is within 10 feet of the ferroform adult must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be pulled within 5 feet of the ferroform and become grappled until the end of the target's next turn.

Aversion to Elements. If the ferroform guardian takes fire, force, or lightning damage, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

Poison Touch. A creature that touches the ferroform guardian, is hit by it, hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it, or crosses over a puddle left by it must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failure the creature takes 8 (2d8) poison damage, or half as much on a success.

Actions

Multiattack. The ferroform guardian makes three psuedopod or swipe attacks.

Psuedopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (3d4 +4) slashing, or bludgeoning damage (at the DM's discretion).

Swipe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (3d6) slashing damage.

Reactions

Split. When a ferroform guardian is subjected to lightning or force damage, it splits into two new ferrorm scions if it has at least 10 hit points. Roll a d20. If the result is 13 or higher, the ferroform splits. Each new ferroform has hit points equal to half of the original ferroform guardian, rounded down.

Sample file

Ferroforms came to Avernus from far away, called by the fields of rusting metal and the sweet sound of rattling chains.

Ferroform Elder

Large ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	1 (–5)	6 (–2)	1 (–5)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Con +6
Skills Stealth +5
Damage Vulnerabilities fire, force, lightning
Damage Resistances acid, piercing, slashing
Damage Immunities psychic
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8
Languages –
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Liquid Form. The ferroform elder can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can also move through a space as narrow as 5 inches wide without squeezing.

False Appearance. While the ferroform elder remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an oily pool or a wet pile of rocks.

Aversion to Elements. If the ferroform elder takes fire, force, or lightning damage, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

Poison Touch. A creature that touches the ferroform elder, is hit by it, hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it, or crosses over a puddle left by it must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failure the creature takes 6 (2d6) poison damage, or half as much on a success.

Actions

Multiattack. The ferroform elder makes two psuedopod or swipe attacks.

Psuedopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (4d6 + 3) slashing, or bludgeoning damage (at the DM's discretion).

Swipe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (3d6) slashing damage.

Ferroform Prime

Large ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 95 (10d12 + 40)
Speed 25 ft., climb 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	1 (–5)	6 (–2)	1 (–5)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +7
Skills Stealth +6
Damage Vulnerabilities fire, force, lightning
Damage Resistances acid, piercing, slashing
Damage Immunities psychic
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8
Languages –
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Liquid Form. The ferroform prime can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can also move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Spider Climb. The ferroform prime can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

False Appearance. While the ferroform prime remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an oily pool or a wet rock.

Magnetic Pull. A target wearing or wielding iron armor or weapons who is within 10 feet of the ferroform adult must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be pulled within 5 feet of the ferroform and become grappled until the end of the target's next turn.

Aversion to Elements. If the ferroform prime takes fire, force, or lightning damage, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

Poison Touch. A creature that touches the ferroform prime, is hit by it, hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it, or crosses over a puddle left by it must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failure the creature takes 8 (2d8) poison damage, or half as much on a success.

Actions

Multiattack. The ferroform prime makes three psuedopod or swipe attacks.

Psuedopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (3d6 + 3) slashing, or bludgeoning damage (at the DM's discretion).

Swipe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (3d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Reactions

Split. When a ferroform prime is subjected to lightning or force damage, it splits into two new ferroform guardians if it has at least 80 hit points. Roll a d20. If the result is 15 or higher, the ferroform splits. Each new ferroform guardian has hit points equal to half of the original ferroform prime's, rounded down.

Sample file

Flesh Eating Splendor Swarm



Author: Teos Abadia

Inspired By: Screwworm (*Cochliomyia hominivorax*)

Citation: Kaufman, P. E., Wisely, S. M., & Gillett-Kaufman, J. L. (2016, October). Primary Screwworm. Retrieved March 30, 2020, from http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/livestock/primary_screwworm.htm

Art: DMs Guild Creator Resources

There was once an incubus named Splendor. So beautiful was Splendor that anyone would fall under their sway with just a glance. Malcanthet, queen of succubi, realized it was only a matter of time before Splendor would seek to challenge her. Malcanthet struck first. Covering her eyes and ears to protect herself from Splendor's charms, the queen summoned a globe of darkness to even the playing field and defeated the incubus. From Splendor's corpse rose flies: beautiful in appearance, duplicitous in nature, and cursed to consume flesh. Splendor swarms can now be found across the Nine Hells. On rare occasions an infected creature can bring splendor swarms to other planes, though they never survive away from the Nine Hells for long.

Innocuous at First. Seemingly peaceful, these multicolored flies have narrow bodies one to two inches in size, with large resplendent wings rivaling the beauty of butterflies. Splendors approach living creatures slowly, appearing to be curious and non-threatening. A swarm may follow a group of unwounded creatures for days without displaying any aggressive behavior, waiting for a chance to strike

Wound Lust. When creatures in the presence of one or more splendor swarms become wounded, the swarms become aggressive and bite at the wounds. Swarms will also attack creatures in self-defense. The swarm's bites appear to deal only minor damage, but the true threat is the larvae implanted in their host. The larvae feed on the host from within so as to kill their host, pupate, and repeat their deadly lifecycle.

Limited Telepathy. Splendor swarms communicate with one another via a form of telepathy perceptible only to their kind.

Flesh-Eating Splendor Swarm

Medium swarm of tiny fiends, lawful evil

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 49 (9d8 + 9)
Speed 10 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)

Skills Perception +3
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned
Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 13
Languages telepathy 60 ft. (with other splendor swarms only)
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP))

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Inoffensive Appearance. Until the swarm attacks, it is indistinguishable from a group of harmless beautiful insects.

Blood Frenzy. The swarm has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all its hit points.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 0 ft., one creature in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 5 (2d4) piercing damage, or 2 (1d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer. The target must then succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, or become infested with 1d4 splendor larvae. At the start of each of its turns, a creature infested with splendor larvae takes 5 points of damage for each larvae. Larvae can be removed from an infested creature in the following ways:

- A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Medicine) check as a bonus action removes 1 larva.
- A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Medicine) check as an action removes 2 larvae.
- A spell that restores hit points removes 1 larva.
- Every 5 points of fire, acid, or cold damage dealt directly to the wound deals damage to the infected creature and removes 1 larva.
- The spell *lesser restoration* removes 1d4 larvae.
- The spell *greater restoration* or *remove curse* removes all larvae from the creature.
- If a creature is reduced to 0 hit points while infested with larvae, at the start of the infested creature's next turn a new splendor swarm appears above the creature's space and all larvae are removed.

Reactions

Soothing Drone. When the swarm takes damage, it emits a soothing sound. Any creature within 60 feet of the swarm that can hear it must succeed on a DC 14 Charisma saving throw or be charmed by all splendor swarms it can see and hear. A creature affected by the soothing drone may repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. A creature that successfully saves against this ability is immune to the effect from any splendor swarms for five minutes.

Sample file



Fortress Devil

Author: Kai Linder

Inspired By: Glyptodon

Citation: Delsuc, F., Gibb, G. C., Kuch, M., Billet, G., Hautier, L., Southon, J., ... & Poinar, H. N. (2016). The phylogenetic affinities of the extinct glyptodonts. *Current Biology*, 26(4), R155-R156.

Artist: Dana Braga

Fortress devils are titanic devils that roam the wastes of Avernus. With their boney grey hide and great strength they make for formidable foes when confronted with something large enough to draw their attention. Rarely is a fortress devil seen on its own without someone directing it.

Mobile Fortress. Fortress devils are so named because across Avernus they are used as vehicles for small structures and outposts, allowing devil commanders to move about well-defended above the smaller concerns of the wastelands without having to expend soul coins. Already intimidatingly tough creatures, they become even more frightening when adorned with banners and metal plates and mounted with hellish weapons of war.

Pillars of Community. Few in number, fortress devils are born from the souls of mortals who regarded themselves as leaders and pillars of their own communities in life: those who made a deal to be elected or overthrow an unjust ruler, or those who bargained for the betterment of their community. Now they serve as the base for the armies of the Nine Hells. Their drive to support is twisted and strengthened, making them terrified of being alone. Fortress devils actively seek out company, yearning to be of service. Once a structure has been built atop a fortress devil, it will defend that structure to the death and resist any attempt to remove it. Retaining some of their past awareness, these devils are smarter than they look and surprisingly willful, though they are eternally obedient to their masters.

Fortress Devil

Gargantuan fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)
Hit Points 222 (12d20 + 96)
Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	7 (–2)	26 (+8)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +11, Con +12, Cha +6
Skills Perception +6
Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning, poison; bludgeoning and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities piercing
Damage Vulnerabilities acid
Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages understands Infernal and Abyssal but can't speak
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Bone Carapace. The fortress devil has a damage threshold of 15 (see Chapter 8 of the Dungeon Master's Guide for more information on damage thresholds).

Legendary Resistance (1/Day). If the fortress devil fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Magic Resistance. The fortress devil has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Actions

Multiattack. The fiend makes one gore attack and two claw attacks.

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 33 (4d12 + 7) piercing damage.

Tail Smash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 46 (6d12 + 7) bludgeoning damage. This attack deals double damage to objects, structures, and vehicles.

Stomp. The fortress devil stomps, causing the ground to shudder in a 60 foot radius. All other creatures in the area must succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone and take 26 (4d12) bludgeoning damage. On a success they take half damage and do not fall prone.

Sample file

Vehicle

Use the statblock below to represent a fortress devil with a full structure or outpost on its back.

> Foolish optimists in death as in life, fortress devils make convenient transportation for cruel and vicious warlords.

Fortress Devil

Gargantuan vehicle (150 ft. by 50 ft.)

Creature Capacity 20 crew, 80 passengers
Cargo Capacity 150 tons
Travel Pace 5 miles per hour (120 miles per day)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	7 (–2)	26 (+8)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning, poison; bludgeoning and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities piercing, psychic
Damage Vulnerabilities acid
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, exhaustion, poisoned

Magic Resistance. The fortress devil has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

War Drums. While at least two crew members are playing these massive drums, all devils within 120 feet of the fortress devil are immune to the frightened condition and reroll 1s on any damage dice.

Actions

On its turn, the fortress devil can take 3 actions, choosing from the options below. It can take only 2 actions if it has fewer than ten crew and only 1 action if it has fewer than five. It can't take these actions if it has fewer than one crew.

Fire Ballistas. The fortress devil can fire its ballistas (DMG, ch. 8).
Fire Flamethrowers. The fortress devil can fire its flamethrowers (BG: DiA, Appendix B).
Infernal Screamer. The fortress devil can use its infernal screamers (BG: DiA, Appendix B).
Move. The galley can use its helm to move with its oars or sails. As part of this move, it can use its naval ram.

Hull

Armor Class 20
Hit Points 500 (damage threshold 20)

Control: Chain Reins

Armor Class 16
Hit Points 50

Move up to the speed of one of the fortress devil's movement components, with one 90-degree turn. If the chain reins are destroyed, the fortress demon moves on its own, prioritising the safety of the structures on its back.

Movement: Legs

Armor Class 18
Hit Points 160; –10 ft. speed per 40 damage taken
Speed 40 ft.

Weapons: Ballistas (4)

Armor Class 15
Hit Points 50 each

Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 120/480 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d10) piercing damage.

Weapons: Flamethrowers (4)

Armor Class 15
Hit Points 50 each

Fire shoots out of the weapon's nozzle in a 60-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in the line must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The fire ignites any flammable objects in the area that aren't being carried or worn.

Weapon: Infernal Screamers (2)

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 25 each

The screamer's operator targets one creature it can see within 120 feet of the screamer. The target must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw, taking 26 (4d12) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Weapon: Tusks

Armor Class 19
Hit Points 80 (damage threshold 10)

The fortress devil has advantage on all saving throws relating to crashing when it crashes into a creature or an object. Any damage it takes from the crash is applied to the tusks rather than to the fortress devil. These benefits don't apply if another vessel crashes into the fortress devil.

Sample file

Gatebinder Ooze



Gatebinder Ooze

Large ooze, neutral evil

Armor Class 8 (natural armor)
Hit Points 119 (14d10+42)
Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	5 (–3)	16 (+3)	8 (–1)	10 (+0)	6 (–2)

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities acid, force, poison
Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, exhaustion, poisoned, prone
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10
Languages –
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Amorphous. The ooze can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Dimensional Lock. Other creatures can't teleport to or from a space within 60 feet of the ooze. Any attempt to do so is wasted.

False Appearance. While the gatebinder ooze remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a pool of demon ichor.

Force Absorption. Whenever the ooze is subjected to force damage, it takes no damage and regains a number of hit points equal to the force damage dealt.

Magic Resistance. The ooze has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Spider Climb. The ooze can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Actions

Multiattack. The ooze makes three attacks: two with its pseudopod and one with its engulf or three with its pseudopod.

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 +4) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) force damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained.

Engulf. The ooze engulfs a Medium or smaller creature grappled by it and inflicts 10 (3d6) force damage. The engulfed target is blinded, restrained, unable to breathe, and takes 21 (6d6) force damage at the start of each of the ooze's turns. When the ooze moves, the engulfed creature moves with it. The ooze can have only one creature engulfed at a time.

Sample file

Author: Joe Raso

Inspired By: Macrophage

Citation: Cruse, J., Lewis, R.E., & Wang, H. (2004). Microbial Immunity-Macrophages. Immunology Guidebook (pp 413-442). Academic Press.

Artist: Dana Braga

A Gatebinder ooze is a strange amalgam of fiendish remains and planar magic. When undisturbed, these creatures are indistinguishable from pools of demonic ichor. When awoken, the gatebinder ooze pulses with greenish eldritch light as it surges towards whatever has disturbed it.

Atypical Ooze. Gatebinder oozes possess a malevolent intelligence not generally attributed to other ooze creatures. Their diet of planar energy provides them with unusual resilience, though their modest intellect also makes them susceptible to charm and fear abilities.

Extra-Planar Attraction. Gatebinder oozes are attracted to teleportation circles and planar gates. They appear to receive sustenance from the magical energies radiating from these locations. Powerful mages have been known to acquire specimens to protect their lairs because of the creature's innate ability to prevent interdimensional travel.

Lower Planar Origins. The source of these creatures is unclear. Their physiology suggests a strong association with the abyssal Slime Pits of Jubilex. One rumor proposes these creatures are the result of an enterprising yugoloth fulfilling a contract with an unnamed archdevil to protect an area from teleportation. Others have postulated this form of ooze may be the manifestation of a plane protecting itself from planar incursions.

Hadalloth



Author: Chris Parsons

Inspired By: Gulper eel, Vampire squid & Deep sea angler fish

Citation: Nielsen, J.G., Bertelsen, E. and Jespersen, Å (1989). The Biology of *Eurypharynx pelecanoides* (Pisces, Eurypharyngidae). *Acta Zoologica* 70(3): 187-197.

Artist: Erin Anderson

Found in the depths of the oceans, from the courts of krakens to the shallower waters of the River Styx, this aquatic yugoloth is feared for its intelligence and ruthlessness. It likes to entice unwary prey with the magical abilities of its lure. Failing that, the hadalloth can capture or debilitate prey with its extendable mouth filled with venomous teeth, extendable stomach, or tentacles. The hadalloth looks like an unholy combination of a deep sea anglerfish, a gulper eel, and a vampire squid. Their skins are thickly scaled and colored a deep purple-black.

Lure. The hadalloth has a magical glowing lure that can enthrall and entrance prey. Using this lure, which acts as an arcane focus, the hadalloth can cast a number of innate spells to distract or incapacitate prey.

Extendable Jaw. The hadalloth has an extendable jaw that allows it to bite and consume prey as large as itself. The yugoloth's long, sabre-like teeth are also venomous and can paralyze potential prey.

Extendable Stomach. The stomach of a hadalloth is extendable and can consume creatures even as large as itself. Creatures swallowed by the hadalloth are subject to its fiercely acidic stomach juices, which can even dissolve souls.

Hadalloth

Large fiend (yugoloth), neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 120 (16d10+32)
Speed 20 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Con+6, Dex+6, Wis+7
Skills Athletics +7, Perception +7, Stealth +6, Deception +7
Damage Resistances fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical attacks that aren't cold iron or silvered
Damage Immunities cold, acid, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Common, Abyssal, Deep Speech, Infernal, telepathy 100 ft.
Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Magic Resistance. The hadalloth has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Camouflage. The hadalloth has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

Soul consumption. A soul consumed by a hadalloth grants 10 temporary hit points per level or challenge rating of the creature consumed. A creature whose soul has been consumed cannot be raised by any means other than a wish spell.

Styx Native. The hadalloth is immune to the magical effects of the River Styx.

Deep Sea Habitat. The hadalloth is immune to the effects of the deep ocean environment.

Innate Spellcasting. The hadalloth's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18). The hadalloth can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights, enthrall, darkness, invisibility (self only), faerie fire, color spray*
3/day: *dominate monster*
1/day: *mass suggestion*

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (5d6+4) piercing damage plus venom. Those bitten must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed.

Tentacles. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it is grappled (escape DC 18). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the hadalloth can't use its tentacles on another target. A grappled target is susceptible to the hadalloth's swallow whole attack.

Necrotic Ink Cloud (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). A 30-foot-radius cloud of ink extends all around the hadalloth if it is underwater. Any creature within the ink cloud takes 12 (2d12) necrotic damage for each round it is in the cloud and must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or be blinded for one hour . The area where the ink was released retains this effect for 1 minute, unless there are strong currents. After the ink is released the hadalloth can use the Dash action as a bonus action to move elsewhere.

Swallow Whole. The hadalloth makes a bite attack with its extendable jaw against a Large or smaller creature that it has grappled, paralyzed or dominated. If the attack hits, the creature is swallowed. The target is blinded and restrained and is swallowed for up to 12 rounds before it is released. The target has cover from attacks occurring outside of the hadalloth. The target suffers 7d6 acid damage per round. Any creature dying in the hadalloth's stomach also has its soul consumed and cannot be raised by any means other than a wish spell. If the hadalloth dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 10 feet of movement, exiting prone. One Large creature, two Medium creatures, four Small creatures, or a combination thereof, can be swallowed at one time.

Sample file

Kathar's Bird

Author: Maxine Henry

Inspired By: Turkey vultures and their smell-detection prowess

Citations: Grigg, N. P., Krilow, J. M., Gutierrez-Ibanex, C., Wylie, D. R., Graves G. R., and Iwaniuk, A. N. (2017). Anatomical evidence for scent guided foraging in the turkey vulture. Scientific Reports, 7: 17408. Retrieved from https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-017-17794-0.

Artist: Dana Braga



Kathar's birds are winged scavengers that soar across the tortured sky of Avernus. Rumors abound on their origin, and the most prominent one is also the oldest. Kathar is said to have been a high-ranking advisor to a past archduchess of Avernus who tasked them with molding these scavengers as a way to have eyes on friend and foe alike. Among other traits, Kathar designed their birds to spy on targets, transport messages, and assess weaknesses of all kinds. Efficient dispatch, whether of a damaged asset or of those who fell from favor, was an additional skill set. Though Kathar's existence is shrouded in the mists of history, the presence of Kathar's birds is clearly felt today.

Even without a commander, they fulfil their directive of removing weakness by sniffing out and pursuing damage of any kind, including physical damage, psychic damage, and damage to weapons, war machines, armor, or flesh. Kathar's birds prefer to attack the most damaged creature first, in hopes of an easy meal. An efficient predator, Kathar's birds consume their entire prey item, flesh, armor, gear and all. This efficiency gives credence to the rumor that Kathar also used these birds to cleanly get rid of contrary evidence. It's possible that Kathar's birds don't realize that metallic objects don't make good eating. It's also possible that Kathar's birds get some nourishment out of metal bits, or that they serve as grinding materials in the birds' gastrointestinal tract.

While Kathar's birds have sharp talons and beaks, they are distinguished from other aerial predators by the very large bulges on either side of the beak, just behind the nares. These bulges hold most of the extensive scenting equipment that allows a Kathar's bird to sniff out potential prey from miles away. An extra tough covering of skin over the bulges keeps the important olfactory organs safe. Kathar's birds are also covered with fire-resistant feathers and hellmites. The hellmites are infernal, tiny arthropods that have a double duty of defense and offense. In their defensive capacity, they add an extra bit of protection against the elements and prevent more harmful parasites from settling on the bird. In their offensive capacity, and due to their intrinsic fiery nature, they cause extra collateral damage to any creature successfully attacked by Kathar's birds.

Tactics. Kathar's birds are not interested in initiating combat, and so they circle battlefields or areas where there is combat, waiting until the main combat is over. Once combat has ended and participants are licking their wounds, that is when Kathar's birds prefer to begin their attacks. Kathar's birds use their flyby ability liberally, diving in to grab a bite and then swooping away to safety. If an attack is successful, Kathar's birds shed hellmites all over the target. These flaming bits of living cinder are distracting and mildly painful.

Sample file

Kathar's Bird's Lair

The lair of a Kathar's bird consists of its nest, close-by debris or refuse heaps, and a space for landings and take-offs. Kathar's birds use their nests year-round for rest as well as storage for the remains of their prey. These extensive nests are constructed out of rocks, bones, feathers, and other non-flammable items. The longer a nest has been present, the more debris heaps are around the nest. Kathar's birds prefer to nest in high locations that are difficult to access, and love to build their nests on long-abandoned after effects of war machine battles.

A Kathar's bird has a challenge rating of 3 (750 XP) when encountered within its lair.

Lair Actions

When fighting inside its lair, a Kathar's bird can invoke the ambient magic to take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), a Kathar's bird can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects, but cannot take the same lair action in two consecutive rounds:

- ***Trash Fire.*** Fire explodes from the refuse pile. Each creature within 10 feet of the pile must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 7 (2d6) fire damage. Embers and debris from the fire obscure the area and makes it difficult terrain. Kathar's birds are not affected by this action.
- ***Gust of Wind.*** The Kathar's bird flaps its wings. Each creature within 10 feet of the bird must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or be blown off the edge of the lair area, falling an appropriate distance to the ground below. The creature takes damage corresponding to the Falling section in chapter 8 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Regional Effects

A region containing a Kathar's bird's lair is warped by the creature's overwhelming presence, which creates the following effects:

- ***Easier to See You.*** Any creature who has less than their maximum amount of hit points gains a level of exhaustion, making it easier to prey on. If the creature regains hit points to their maximum, this level of exhaustion goes away.
- ***The Floor is Lava.*** 2d4 fires burst into being, dealing 5 points of fire damage to creatures within 5 feet of the fire. A creature may use their action to put out the fire.

If the Kathar's bird dies or leaves the area, these effects fade over the course of 2d10 days.

These filthy scavengers soar across burning, bloody skies. No prayers will conceal you from their hungry eyes.

Kathar's Bird

Medium monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 59 (9d8+18)
Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	8 (–1)	15 (+2)	6 (–2)

Saving Throws Str +5
Skills Perception +4
Damage Resistances fire, necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages –
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Eyes and Nose for Prey. The Kathar's bird has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

Flyby. The Kathar's bird doesn't provoke an opportunity attack when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Dive Attack. If the Kathar's bird is flying and dives at least 30 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a melee weapon attack, the attack deals an extra 9 (2d8) piercing damage to the target.

Shake It Off. After a successful attack, a Kathar's bird may shed hellmites over the creature as a bonus action. The hellmites deal 2 points of fire damage each round on the Kathar's bird's turn. A creature can use its action to shake off the hellmites.

Actions

Multiattack. The Kathar's bird makes two melee attacks.

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

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

Sample file

Magnetaur

Author: Greg Quinnell

Inspired By: Magnetar Neutron Stars

Citation: Sutter, P. August 14, 2015. "Why Magnetars Should Freak You Out." https://www.space.com/30263-paul-sutter-on-why-magnetars-are-scary.html

Artist: Dana Braga



The eager adventurers had entered the labyrinth in search of treasure and glory. Little did they know their own doom also approached, one hoof step at a time. Soon, bodies were sent flying as gravity swelled and the group faced a monstrosity unlike any other...

Not Your Average Minotaur. To the casual observer these creatures resemble a standard minotaur, albeit with bands of almost adamantine-like metal covered in various runes around their necks, wrists, and ankles. Don't let this lure you into a false sense of security as you take in their bull head, horns and hooves and completely ignore the way the rest of their body–their chest, arms, and legs–beats and shifts almost imperceptibly, straining against the bands like they are the only thing keeping its form stable. Foolish it would be to watch the creature lift its greataxe up over its shoulders and ignore the faint thrum of the metal on your person as it nears—or the shift of your leg as it slowly moves its free hand upwards.

Building A Monster. Magnetaurs are not born but created, typically by powerful demons or devils looking for something both traditional and different to guard their labyrinthine treasure hoards. Some do it themselves while others outsource the work to those more capable, but the complicated process is always the same. The damned soul of a minotaur is fused with a neutronic core that acts as the magnetaur's heart and is installed into a flesh cage shaped like a minotaur. The bands are installed in strategic locations and infused with abjuration magic to keep the intense gravity of the neutron core in check so that the body is not always in flux and constantly spinning. This also enables the magnetaur when conscious to tap into it and use it to its advantage. Apply a thorough amount of kinetic lightning energy into the body once all other steps have been taken care of, and *voila*: a magnetaur is born.

Defying Gravity. To those who give new life to the damned soul that resides inside, the magnetaur is intensely loyal, following its orders to the letter. To those who invade its new labyrinth home, seeking to ransack and steal its new master's most prized possessions, it holds no quarter, hunting trespassers down one by one. The good news is you'll never find more than one magnetaur in a labyrinth; their internal gravity fields are too dangerous for that. The bad news is one magnetaur is usually more than enough for even an experienced adventuring party to handle. Any who face off against a magnetaur must worry about the creature's strength, intelligence, and ability to control not just its own gravity but that of any creatures or objects around it. They must also worry about the labyrinth it calls home, of getting lost and turned around and around within its twisting, endless, and shifting corridors. The magnetaur enjoys stalking its prey slowly and methodically, unless it senses someone getting close to any treasure it's guarding, in which case it will move with haste to intercept them.

The Magnetaur's Lair

It is incredibly rare to find a magnetaur outside—and without—a labyrinth lair, as the two are typically built at the same time in order for them to become completely in sync with each other. This enables the magnetaur to sense the number and location of any trespassers in its lair at any time. And that is even with the massive size of the structure which stands at forty feet high with a closed roof, and its outside walls stretching a mile across on each side. The walls of the labyrinth themselves are made of solid brimstone, placed next to each other with nearly imperceptible gaps made every 10 feet for ease of pushing or pulling with the magnetaur's gravity powers. The magnetaur has a challenge rating of 14 (11,500 XP) when encountered within its lair.

Lair Actions

When fighting inside its lair, the magnetaur can invoke the ambient magic to take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the magnetaur can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects, but cannot take the same lair action in two consecutive rounds:

- ***Rotate.*** A 15-by-15-foot corridor where one or more opposing creatures are standing starts to rotate faster and faster, much akin to a washer or dryer. All creatures in that area can choose to either run or jump as a reaction. If they choose to run, they must succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw or take 4d8 bludgeoning damage and gain one level of exhaustion. If they choose to jump, they must make a DC 16 Dexterity (Acrobatics check), taking 4d8 bludgeoning damage on a failure or half as much on a success.

Sample file

- ***Wall Smash.*** A wall starts to shift and shake before slamming up against an opposite wall. All creatures in its way must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure they are smushed up against the wall as well and take 4d10 bludgeoning damage, and become restrained. On a success, the creature takes half damage.
- ***Gravity Well.*** A well of gravity opens up, creating a 20-foot cube that attempts to reverse gravity. All creatures in the cube must succeed on a DC 18 Strength saving throw to resist the effects and stay grounded. On a failure, a creature is slammed up into the ceiling and takes 2d12 bludgeoning damage. When the well goes away at the end of the round, all creatures on the ceiling fall to the ground. A falling creature must succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to land safely, otherwise it takes 2d12 bludgeoning damage.

Magnetaur

Large Monstrosity, lawful evil

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 161 (14d10 + 84)
Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	14 (+2)	22 (+6)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Str + 11, Con + 11, Int + 9
Skills Intimidation (uses Strength) + 11, Investigation + 8, Athletics + 11
Damage Vulnerabilities piercing
Damage Resistances force; bludgeoning and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities paralyzed, stunned, restrained, grappled
Senses darkvision 60 ft.
Languages Abyssal, Giant
Challenge 14 (11,500 XP)

Lair Sense. The magnetaur can sense any creature moving within its lair.

Control Bands. The bands adorning the magnetaur help it keep its neutronic core under control, but the more it gets hurt, the harder it becomes to control. For every 50 total damage it loses, a band breaks and the magnetaur is stunned for a round. A magnetaur's band can be the target of an attack at disadvantage. The bands have an AC of 16 and are vulnerable to magical bludgeoning and piercing damage.

Magnetic Aura. Due to its neutronic core, the magnetaur is surrounded by a strong aura of magnetism, which it can control. This allows it to walk on any surface of its labyrinth normally, be it floor, wall, or ceiling. At the start of its turn, the magnetaur can choose to either attract or repel creatures with its aura. Any creature that gets within 10 feet of the magnetaur while it is using its magnetic aura must make a DC 18 Strength saving throw. On a failure, the creature is pulled 10 feet towards or pushed 10 feet away from the magnetaur, depending on the aura. Saving throws made against this aura of magnetism are made at disadvantage if the targets are wearing or holding anything metallic. For every band that is broken on the Magnetaur, the aura's save DC increases by 2, the radius of effect by 10, and the push and pull distance by 10.

Kostchtchie's prison often drifts to the center of the magnetaur's maze... Much to Zariel's approval and amusement.

Regional Effects

A region containing the magnetaur's lair is warped by the creature's overwhelming presence, which creates the following effects:

- ***Aura Of Misdirection.*** Any creature that steps within 60 feet of the magnetaur's lair and sets its sights on it must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or have its sense of direction completely skewed. For the next 8 hours, no matter what direction it tries to turn in, the creature always ends up facing the magnetaur's lair. After 8 hours, this effect fades and that creature is immune to it for the next 24 hours.
- ***Gravity Field.*** All gravity within a mile of the magnetaur's lair is shifting constantly. At the top of every hour, roll a d20. On an even number, the gravity decreases, and all vertical jumps can be made at triple their normal distance. On an odd number, the gravity increases, and all vertical jumps are made at half their normal distance.

If the magnetaur dies, these effects fade over the course of five days, as the lair begins to crumble and fall apart.

Neutronic Shift. As a bonus action, the magnetaur reaches a hand towards a target within 20 feet causing them to make a DC 18 Strength saving throw. On a failure, the target is either pushed back 10 feet or pulled 10 feet towards the magnetaur (magnetaur's choice). The target must make the save with disadvantage if they are wearing or holding anything made of metal. If pushed back into a wall, the target takes 1d8 bludgeoning damage for each 5 feet they are pushed. The magnetaur can choose to target an item a creature is holding or has visibly on their person instead. For every band on the magnetaur that has been broken, the save DC increases by 2 and the range increases by 5 feet.

Actions

Multiattack. The magnetaur makes three attacks with its gravity axe.

Gravity Axe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10ft. (+5ft. for every band broken), one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d12 + 6) slashing damage.

Gravity Gore. The magnetaur bends forward and raises both hands towards a target within 20 feet, blasting a beam of gravity energy towards it. The target must succeed on a DC 18 Strength saving throw or be pulled violently towards the magnetaur's horns and be impaled, taking 26 (4d12) piercing damage and becoming grappled. On a success, the target is still pulled, just not as strongly, and takes half damage. A target has disadvantage on this save if it is wearing or holding anything made of metal. For each band on the magnetaur that has been broken, the save DC increases by 2, and the action's range increases by 10.

Sample file



Malebranch

Author: Jacky Leung

Inspired By: Canine lie detection

Citation: Takaoka, A., Maeda, T., Hori, Y. et al. Do dogs follow behavioral cues from an unreliable human?. Anim Cogn 18, 475–483 (2015) doi: 10.1007/s10071-014-0816-2

Artist: Dana Braga

A malebranch is a devil with a humanoid body, bat-like wings, sharp claws, and a canine head. It is commonly seen wielding chains with grappling hooks on the ends, which it employs to ensnare sinful souls and beings to bring back to its home of Maladomini, the seventh layer. A malebranch has upward and pointed ears and black orbs for eyes. It features an enlarged black snout. These creatures can be seen prowling through Avernus or the other layers of the Nine Hells in search of new souls to drag back to Maladomini for their eternal damnation.

Chains for Sin. Certain souls attract certain types of devils as they enter Avernus. These souls are distributed to the different layers of the Nine Hells, often trapped within gems, coins, or other receptacles. Malebranches prefer to drag the spirits of the condemned across the Nine Hells in chains and grappling hooks. Their chains are rumored to be made from forged infernal iron that was cooled in the waters of the River Styx in the planar realm of Hades.

Lie-Detecting Fiends. Malebranches have an uncanny sense of detecting lies and truthiness in other beings. It is believed that their enlarged snout lets them smell lies. This particular quality often makes them optimal arbiters for infernal pacts. This extraordinary sense can serve as a means of using the truth as a form of extortion—a common tactic.

Punishers of Liars. Malebranches often seek extortionists, blackmailers, counterfeiters, seducers, and the otherwise corrupt as their prey when summoned or while in their search for souls across the Nine Hells. It is widely believed that these devils take pleasure in implementing their weaponized truth against their victims.

Malebranch

Large fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)
Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +6, Wis +5
Skills Athletics +6, Insight +5, Perception +5
Damage Resistances acid, cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities fire, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Common, Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Devil's Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede the devil's darkvision.

Keen Smell. The malebranch has advantage on Wisdom (Perception), Wisdom (Survival), and Intelligence (Investigation) checks that rely on smell.

Magic Resistance. The malebranch has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The malebranch's weapon attacks are magical.

Aura of Truth. When any other creature starts its turn within 30 feet of the malebranch, that creature must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, a creature can't speak a deliberate lie while in the aura. The malebranch knows whether each creature succeeds or fails on its saving throw. In addition, the malebranch has advantage on Wisdom ability checks to detect lies and see past deceptions

Actions

Multiattack. The malebranch can use its Extort Truth. It then makes two attacks with its hooked chains.

Hooked Chains. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage. The target is grappled (escape DC 15) if the malebranch isn't already grappling a creature. Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and takes 7 (2d6) piercing damage at the start of each of its turns. A creature that failed its saving throw against the Aura of Truth has disadvantage on its checks to escape the chains.

Extort Truth. The malebranch forces creatures within its Aura of Truth to betray their darkest secrets. Each creature in the area of the aura must succeed a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. A creature that failed its saving throw against the Aura of Truth has disadvantage on its saving throw against this effect. A target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. While a creature is frightened in this way, it is incapacitated. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to the malebranch's Extort Truth for the next 24 hours.

Sample file

Mindkiller Nettle

Author: Wyatt Trull

Inspired By: Dendrocnide moroides

Citation: Hyland, B. P. M.; Whiffin, T.; Zich, F. A.; et al. (Dec 2010). "Factsheet – Dendrocnide moroides". *Australian Tropical Rainforest Plants* (6.1, online version RFK 6.1 ed.). Cairns, Australia: Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research

Artist: Erin Anderson

A chlorofiend native to the briarwoods and cinder wastes of Avernus, the mindkiller nettle's sole purpose seems to be tormenting those unfortunate enough to cross it. Its leafy body is coated in stingers so miniscule they cannot even be seen by the naked eye. The chlorofiend itself is of little danger, but the unfortunate soul that comes into physical contact with the creature is haunted for weeks, months, and sometimes even *years* after that dreadful episode.

Neurotoxins. The stingers that coat the mindkiller deliver a toxin that strikes not at the blood vessels, nor at the heart, but at the nervous system itself. Survivors have described it as living in sheer, unending agony that robs them of sleep and work. Often, the pain only dulls after a fortnight. For months after, cold water or even a slight breeze can agitate the stingers into a great conflagration of pain that wreaks untold havoc on the psyche. A patient hand armed with tweezers and a magnifying glass can painstakingly remove the majority of stingers, but rarely do they scour away every last one—and a few are all it takes to make life hell. Even most magic fails to cure this debilitating ailment. It's when a victim realizes how little hope they have at a life free from this agony they turn to entities otherworldly and nefarious to ease their pain. Levistus in particular, the lord of frozen Stygia, often offers respite to these victims—but his price is mighty indeed. These individuals rarely present themselves to the frozen archduke, but they find his offer between bouts of agony, much like a whisper on the wind, or a bauble found in the tall grass. His deal is brutally simple: a soul for freedom from this wretched agony.

Sadistic Voyeur? Prolonged study has confirmed that the mindkiller feeds on neither flesh nor blood, leaving scholars to assume its pursuit is solely sadistic in nature. It is, of course, possible that the fiend is magically sustained by the agony it inflicts. Until better protection is developed against the nettle's insidious stingers, continued observation will be difficult.



Mindkiller Nettle

Medium plant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 51 (6d8+24)
Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	4 (–4)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Con +6, Wis +3
Skills Perception +3, Stealth +5
Damage Resistances fire
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, poisoned, prone
Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages understands Infernal but cannot speak
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Ambusher. On the first round of each combat, the mindkiller has advantage on attack rolls against a creature that hasn't taken a turn yet.

False Appearance. While the mindkiller remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a mass of briars.

Nettles. A creature that touches the mindkiller, is grappled by it, or is hit by its Brush attack, is stung with its neurotoxic nettles. The creature must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 1d6 poison damage on a failure, or half as much on a success. Additionally, if the creature fails its saving throw, the nettles bury into its flesh.

Removing these minute stingers requires a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Medicine) check using a healer's kit made over the course of 1 hour. Until the creature's nettles are removed, its hit point maximum is reduced by 1 every 24 hours, and whenever it attempts to rest, it must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the creature gains no benefits from its rest. A spell of *lesser restoration* or similar magic can remove the nettles.

Actions

Brush. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) bludgeoning damage plus 2d4 psychic damage. Additionally, the creature is subjected to the mindkiller's Nettles ability.

Reactions

Feed on Suffering. Whenever a creature within 60 feet of the mindkiller fails its Constitution saving throw against the mindkiller's Nettles ability, the mindkiller gains 2d6 temporary hit points, which last up to one minute.

In the meantime, researchers are eager for specimens to study, far, far from the cinder wastes of Avernus.

Patient Ambusher. The mindkiller shambles across Avernus, basking in the searing heat of that infernal realm. It only halts its slow, onerous march when it finds a path, cave, or ruins to haunt. Often, it stages an ambush, clinging to overhangs or boughs, and remains there for days on end. Clearly, it can be disappointed, for it abandons sites in which it has yet to catch prey after a handful of days. These ambushes are the most remarkable demonstration of the nettle's cunning. Scholars have yet to conclude if this cunning is inherent to all fiendish creatures or if the mindkiller has anything special in its mind—or if it even has a mind at all.

Sample file

Myrmexleon

Author: Daniel Scheltema

Inspired By: Antlion (*Myrmeleontidae*)

Citation: Hollis, K., Cogswell, H., Snyder, K., et al (2011). Specialized Learning in Antlions (Neuroptera: Myrmeleontidae), Pit-Digging Predators, Shortens Vulnerable Larval Stage. *PLoS One*, 6(3). https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3066215/

Artist: Erin Anderson

The myrmexleon is a fiend that is often mistaken for a large insect monstrosity. It has a thick, stonelike hide, two large scything talons, and four imposing mandibles. Normally patient solitary hunters, they have also been observed to serve powerful evil creatures who use them as guard animals and siege weapons.

Patient Ambush Predator. The myrmexleon burrows through the earth so gracefully it nearly glides. It patiently waits for prey to stumble by, completely undetectable in the ground. It can go years without eating, so it finds little reason to move once it decides on a location. It first casts *confusion* on its prey before lunging from the earth. Once it swallows its prey it earth glides away as quickly as it came, leaving no trace that it was ever there.

Siege Weapon. Powerful evil creatures have used myrmexleons to decimate cities, utilizing their innate ability to cast *earthquake*.

Myrmexleon

Large fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 126 (12d10 + 60)
Speed 30 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	6 (–2)	14 (+2)	6 (–2)

Skills Perception +8, Stealth +8
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities acid
Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 18
Languages understands Infernal but can't speak
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Earth Glide. The myrmexleon can burrow through nonmagical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, the myrmexleon doesn't disturb the material it moves through.

Innate Spellcasting. The myrmexleon's innate spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

1/day each: *confusion, earthquake*

Siege Monster. The myrmexleon deals double damage to objects and structures.

Actions

Multiattack. The myrmexleon makes two talon attacks and one bite attack. It can replace its bite attack with one use of swallow.

Talon. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) acid damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 16). Until this grapple ends, the creature is restrained and takes 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) acid damage at the start of each of its turns, and the myrmexleon can't bite another target.

Swallow. The myrmexleon makes one bite attack against a Medium or smaller target it is grappling. If the attack hits, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends. The swallowed target is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the myrmexleon, and it takes 30 (9d6) acid damage at the start of each of the myrmexleon's turns. The myrmexleon can have only one target swallowed at a time.

If the myrmexleon dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 feet of movement, exiting prone.



Sample file

Screaming Ash Elemental

Author: Iam Pace

Inspired By: Pollution as a catalyst for mutagenesis

Citation: Christopher M. Somers, Carole L. Yauk, Paul A. White, Craig L. J. Parfett, and James S. Quinn. "Air pollution induces heritable DNA mutations". PNAS December 10, 2002 99 (25) 15904-15907; https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.252499499

Artist: Dana Braga

From a distance, these twisted elementals appear as seething columns of inky smoke. But viewing one closer reveals a churning mass of ash filled with faces that tremble and scream. They languidly shift across the cinder wastes of the upper Hells, drawn to sounds like a vulture to carrion. They occasionally haunt the soot-filled factories manufacturing war machines or smoldering battlefields of the Blood War.

Pollution of the Lower Planes. The essence of the Lower Planes affects life in a most subtle and insidious manner. This is certainly true of the chaotic protean of the Abyss, that endless realm of abhorrent possibilities where the very substance of the plane seeks disordered and deranged mutation in all things. And like the Abyss, the Hells themselves are said to be alive, coursing with pernicious energies directed by an enigmatic will. Exposure can have profound and lasting physical and mental changes, reshaping the body to both subvert the will and enslave the soul to a rigid hierarchy of fiends.

While the alterations are most pronounced with mortals, other entities are not spared this warping change, for the soil and water, the very air of the Hells, carries infernal taint. Elementals, beings of wrought of the primal essence of creation, are not immune to the pervering influence of the lower planes. Nothing in the multiverse has proven so blessed. But those elementals summoned or trapped within the dark realms undergo a slow and terrifying transformation.

Collector of Screams. These polluted, mutated elementals are filled with ash and screams, which they hunt and collect. They try to inflict as much pain on a creature as possible, hoping to wring every shriek from its throat. Those who succumb have their voice torn from them and added to the collection of wailing within the swirling ash. The more voices these elementals collect, the larger and more fearsome they become.

A Screaming Ash Elemental's Lair

Elementals that have scoured the voices from hundreds and grown bloated on their screams exert an influence over a region. The lairs of these elementals are ashen wastelands, volcanic calderas, battlefields littered with smoldering vehicles, and massive infernal factories.

Regional Effects

A region containing a particularly huge and terrifying screaming ash elemental (CR 16+) is warped by the creature's overwhelming presence, which creates the following effects:

- The winds carry a frightening cacophony of wails. Creatures within 1 mile of the lair have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.
- The air is choked with ash, and ash falls from the sky. Everything within 3 miles of the elemental is lightly obscured.
- Blackened tornados of cinder form without warning and tear across the region before vanishing just as quickly (use stats for the elemental's Whirlwind attack action below).

If the screaming ash elemental dies or leaves the area, this effect fades over the course of 4 (2d4) days.

> Whistling wing and swirling fire; screaming faces light your pyre.

Sample file

Screaming Ash Elemental, Lesser

Large elemental, lawful evil

Armor Class 15
Hit Points 90 (12d10 + 24)
Speed 0 ft., fly 80 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	6 (–2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +8
Damage Resistances lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons
Damage Immunities poison, thunder
Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Auran, Infernal
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Air Form. The elemental can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Drawn to Sound. The elemental is drawn to sound like a shark to blood. The elemental gains advantage on attack rolls against creatures within reach who have cast a spell with a verbal component, activated a magic item with a command word, or spoken aloud.

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

Irritating Ash. Each creature that needs to breathe who is in the elemental's space or within its Screaming Wind area of effect begins to choke on the ash and must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or suffer disadvantage on attack rolls and skill checks. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on it on a success. The *lesser restoration* spell can also end the effect on a creature.

Screaming Wind. When the element is reduced to below half its maximum hit points, it begins to churn, forming a swirling storm of screaming wind 20 (1d4 x 10) feet in diameter. Creatures ending their turn within the wind take 7 (2d6) thunder damage from the intense howling and are deafened until they leave. Creatures within 20 feet of the whirlwind have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing. In addition, creatures within the roiling ash are heavily obscured. This does not impair the elemental itself. The winds also impose disadvantage on ranged attack rolls and extinguish open flames and disperse fog.

Steal Voice. Creatures within 30 feet of the elemental who cast a spell with a verbal component, activate a magic item with a command word, or otherwise make a verbal noise must succeed on a DC 13 Charisma saving throw or have their voice torn away to join the cacophony of screams within the twisted elemental. The creature cannot speak, use items activated by command words, or cast spells with somatic components. Creatures can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of their turns to end this effect. If the elemental is defeated, the creature's voice automatically returns.



Actions

Multiattack. The elemental makes two attacks with its screaming slam.

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

Whirlwind (Recharge 4-6). Each creature in the elemental's space or in its Screaming Wind area of effect must make a DC 13 Strength saving throw. On a failure, a target takes 15 (3d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage and is flung up to 20 feet away from the elemental in a random direction and knocked prone. If a thrown target strikes an object, such as a wall or floor, the target takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it was thrown. If the target is thrown at another creature, that creature must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take the same damage and be knocked prone. If the saving throw is successful, the target takes half the bludgeoning damage and isn't flung away or knocked prone.

Reactions

Voice Hunter. When a creature within the elemental's reach casts a spell with a verbal component or activates a magic item with a command word, the elemental can make a slam attack.

Sample file

Screaming Ash Elemental, Greater

Huge elemental, lawful evil

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 147 (14d12 + 56)
Speed 0 ft., fly 80 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	19 (+4)	18 (+4)	8 (–1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +8
Damage Resistances lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons
Damage Immunities poison, thunder
Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Auran, Infernal
Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Air Form. The elemental can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Choking Ash. Each creature that needs to breathe who is in the elemental's space or within its Screaming Wind area of effect must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or become unable to breathe. A creature affected in this way is incapacitated and suffocating. As long as it is conscious, a creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on it on a success. The *lesser restoration* spell can also end the effect on a creature.

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

Drawn to Sound. The elemental is drawn to sound like a shark to blood. The elemental gains advantage on attack rolls against creatures within reach who have cast a spell with a verbal component, activated a magic item with a command word, or spoken aloud.

Screaming Wind. When the element is reduced to below half its maximum hit points, it begins to churn, forming a swirling storm of screaming wind 40 (2d4 x 10) feet in diameter. Creatures ending their turn within the wind take 7 (2d6) thunder damage from the intense howling and are deafened until they leave. Creatures within 20 feet of the whirlwind have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing. In addition, creatures within the roiling ash are heavily obscured. This does not impair the elemental itself. The winds impose disadvantage on ranged attack rolls and extinguish open flames and disperse fog.

Steal Voice. Creatures within 30 feet of the elemental who cast a spell with a verbal component, activate a magic item with a command word, or otherwise make a verbal noise must succeed on a DC 13 Charisma saving throw or have their voice torn away to join the cacophony of screams within the twisted elemental. The creature cannot speak, use items activated by command words, or cast spells with verbal components. Creatures can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of their turns to end this effect. If the elemental is defeated, the creature's voice automatically returns.

Actions

Multiattack. The elemental makes two attacks with its slam.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Whirlwind (Recharge 4-6). Each creature in the elemental's space or in its Screaming Wind area of effect must make a DC 16 Strength saving throw. On a failure, a target takes 22 (4d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage and is flung up 20 feet away from the elemental in a random direction and knocked prone. If a thrown target strikes an object, such as a wall or floor, the target takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it was thrown. If the target is thrown at another creature, that creature must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or take the same damage and be knocked prone. If the saving throw is successful, the target takes half the bludgeoning damage and isn't flung away or knocked prone.

Howling Gale (Recharge 6). The elemental releases a thunderous scream in a line that is 500 feet long and 10 feet wide. Objects in that area take 16 (3d10) thunder damage. Each creature there must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 16 (3d10) thunder damage and be flung up to 20 feet in a direction away from the line. If a thrown target collides with an immovable object, such as a wall or floor, the target takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it was thrown before impact. If the target would collide with another creature instead, that other creature must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take the same damage and be knocked prone.

Reactions

Voice Hunter. When a creature within the elemental's reach casts a spell with a verbal component or activates a magic item with a command word, the elemental can make a slam attack on that creature.

Screaming clouds of pain and suffering are an appropriate end for those foolish enough to travel the blasting wastelands on foot.

Sample file

Screaming Ash Elemental, Legendary

Huge elemental, lawful evil

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 225 (18d12 + 108)
Speed 0 ft., fly 120 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	18 (+4)	22 (+6)	8 (–1)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +9
Damage Resistances lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons
Damage Immunities poison, thunder
Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Auran, Infernal
Challenge 16 (15, 000 XP)

Air Form. The elemental can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Choking Ash. Each creature that needs to breathe who is in the elemental's space or within its Screaming Wind area of effect must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become unable to breathe. A creature affected in this way is incapacitated and suffocating. As long as it is conscious, a creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on it on a success. The *lesser restoration* spell can also end the effect on a creature.

Drawn to Sound. The elemental is drawn to sound like a shark to blood. The elemental gains advantage on attack rolls against creatures within reach who have cast a spell with a verbal component, activated a magic item with a command word, or spoken aloud.

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

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

Screaming Wind. When the element is reduced to below half its maximum hit points, it begins to churn, forming a swirling storm of screaming wind 70 (2d6 x 10) feet in diameter. Creatures ending their turn within the wind take 7 (2d6) thunder damage from the intense howling and are deafened until they leave. Creatures within 20 feet of the whirlwind have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing. In addition, creatures within the roiling ash are heavily obscured. This does not impair the elemental itself. The winds impose disadvantage on ranged attack rolls and extinguish open flames and disperse fog.

Steal Voice. Creatures within 30 feet of the elemental who cast a spell with a verbal component, activate a magic item with a command word, or otherwise make a verbal noise must make a DC 13 Charisma saving throw or have their voice torn away to join the cacophony of screams within the twisted elemental. The creature cannot speak, use items activated by command words, or cast spells with verbal components. Creatures can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of their turns to end this effect. If the elemental is defeated, the creature's voice automatically returns.

Actions

Multiattack. The elemental makes three attacks with its slam.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (3d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Whirlwind (Recharge 4-6). Each creature in the elemental's space or in its Screaming Wind area of effect must make a DC 19 Strength saving throw. On a failure, a target takes 24 (4d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage and is flung up 20 feet away from the elemental in a random direction and knocked prone. If a thrown target strikes an object, such as a wall or floor, the target takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it was thrown. If the target is thrown at another creature, that creature must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw or take the same damage and be knocked prone. If the saving throw is successful, the target takes half the bludgeoning damage and isn't flung away or knocked prone.

Howling Gale (Recharge 5-6). The elemental releases a thunderous scream in a line that is 500 feet long and 10 feet wide. Objects in that area take 16 (3d10) thunder damage. Each creature there must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 16 (3d10) thunder damage and be flung up to 20 feet in a direction away from the line. If a thrown target collides with an immovable object, such as a wall or floor, the target takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it was thrown before impact. If the target would collide with another creature instead, that other creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take the same damage and be knocked prone.

Reactions

Voice Hunter. When a creature within the elemental's reach casts a spell with a verbal component or activates a magic item with a command word, the elemental can make a slam attack against that creature.

Legendary Actions

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

Devour Voice (Costs 1 Action). If the elemental has a captured voice, it regains 26 (4d8+8) hit points.

Slam (Costs 1 Action). The elemental makes a slam attack.

Ash Cloud (Costs 2 Actions). The elemental picks a spot within 120 feet and creates a 20-foot-radius sphere of choking ash centered on a point within range. The sphere spreads around corners, and its area is heavily obscured. It lasts for the duration. Each creature that needs to breathe who is in the area of effect must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become unable to breathe. A creature affected in this way is incapacitated and suffocating. As long as it is conscious, a creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on it on a success. The *lesser restoration* spell can also end the effect on a creature.

Sample file

Styx River Dolphin



Styx River Dolphin

Medium fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 39 (6d8+12)
Speed 0 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	7 (–2)

Saving Throws Con +5, Dex +6, Wis +4
Skills Athletics +6 Perception +4 Stealth +6
Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical attacks that aren't cold iron or silvered
Damage Immunities acid, necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities blinded, poisoned
Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Common, Abyssal, Deep Speech, Infernal, telepathy 100 ft.
Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Magic Resistance. The Styx river dolphin has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Charge. If the Styx river dolphin moves at least 30 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a slam attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 6 (1d6+3) bludgeoning damage.

Styx Native. The Styx river dolphin is immune to the magical effects of the River Styx.

Hold Breath. The Styx river dolphin can hold its breath for 20 minutes.

Echolocation. the Styx river dolphin relies upon its biosonar for perceiving its environment. It cannot be blinded and is immune to spells and effects that are dependent upon vision. If deafened, the Styx is effectively "blinded."

Actions

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

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 13 Strength saving throw. On a failure, the target takes 2d8 poison damage, and their Strength score is reduced by 1d4. On a success, the target takes half damage, and their Strength score is reduced by 1. The target dies if this reduces its Strength to 0. Otherwise, the reduction lasts until the target finishes a Long Rest.

Grab Attack. The dolphin tries to grab a Medium or smaller creature. It rolls a Strength (Athletics) contested against a Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Strength (Athletics) check. If successful it uses its movement to pull its prey into the river a distance of 5 feet each round.

Author: Chris Parsons

Inspired By: Indus & Ganges river dolphins

Citation: Sinha, R.K & Kannan, K. (2014). Ganges River Dolphin: An Overview of Biology, Ecology, and Conservation Status in India. *Ambio* 43: 1029-1046.

Artist: Erin Anderson

One of the most feared creatures in the River Styx is its river dolphin. These vicious creatures delight in attacking prey on the banks of the Styx or in small boats travelling down the river. From a distance, the sight of the curved dolphin fin might resemble that of an oceanic dolphin, but closer inspection reveals the differences. The Styx river dolphin sports pale grey skin the color and texture of a waterlogged corpse, tiny, vestigial eyes, and a long snout or rostrum with long, sharp, needle-like teeth dripping venom at the tip.

Preying on the Weak. These intelligent creatures specifically target prey that seem either smallest or easiest to attack, often targeting gnomes, halflings, and unarmored spellcasters. Their favorite tactic is to bite potential prey with their long, sharp teeth, weakening them with their venom and then dragging their target into the river. The prey not only suffers the magical effects of the River Styx, but it may be at risk of drowning if the slams, bites, and venom of the dolphins do not kill it first.

(Anti-) Social Animals. Although Styx River dolphins can be found alone, they often cooperate in groups (which they like to refer to as "death squads") of six to twenty in order to take down prey.

Dolphins Are Dicks. It is rumored that some species of dolphin actually revere these legendary dolphins and try to emulate their vicious antics.

Sample file

Styxglider

Author: Zeke Gonzalez

Inspired By: Stomach Oils of the Petrols (*Order Procellariiformes*)

Citation: Warham, John, Rodney Watts, and R. J. Dainty. "The Composition, Energy Content and Function of the Stomach Oils of Petrels (Order, Procellariiformes)." *Journal of Experimental Marine Biology and Ecology* 23, no. 1 (July 1, 1976): 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-0981(76)90081-2.

Artist: Erin Anderson



The Styxglider gets its name from where it is most often found: lazily traversing above the River Styx, supported on updrafts by its enormous wings. These insidious fiends are tall and muscular, and their bodies are coated in a thick rime of ice from close proximity to the freezing river. The Styxglider's hind legs are stubby, causing the it to hop awkwardly while on the ground. However, its ice-encrusted claws and frozen horns make for fearsome weapons whether in flight or on the ground.

Vile Spit. Styxgliders are vicious, solitary predators of the River Styx. Their preferred prey are abyssal chickens, lemures, and imps, although a hungry styxglider may even attack merronoloths or travelers aboard barges. Styxgliders possess a special pouch in their throat that stores a combination of acids and fats, which the creatures vomit onto their prey in order to injure them and make them easier to swallow. This thick spit even gets matted in the wings of flying creatures and causes them to fall from the sky, making them easy prey for the styxglider.

Hunting Fiends. Although these creatures are incredibly dangerous, some powerful demons and devils who often travel the River Styx have captured and trained styxgliders. These monsters are often chained to the barges of their masters and used to fend off would-be airborne attackers. Styxgliders also have the ability to sense magic and can be trained to track or hunt down a particular magical signature.

You think the Styxglider is bad? Wait until you see who carries its lead.

Styxglider

Large fiend, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 187 (25d10 + 50)
Speed 25 ft., 40 ft. (fly), 20 ft. (swim)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	9 (–1)

Saving Throws Str +7, Dex +7, Con +6
Skills Perception +6, Stealth +7
Damage Resistances cold, fire; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered
Damage Immunities acid, poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages understands Infernal and Abyssal but can't speak
Challenge 11 (72,000 XP)

Dive Attack. If the fiend is flying and dives at least 30 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a melee weapon attack, the attack deals an extra 11 (2d10) damage to the target.

Frozen Body. A creature that touches the fiend or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 10 (3d6) cold damage.

Sense Magic. The fiend senses magic within 120 feet of it at will. This trait otherwise works like the *detect magic* trait but isn't itself magical.

Actions

Multiattack. The fiend makes one gore attack and two claw attacks.

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d10 + 3) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) cold damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) cold damage.

Acid Vomit (Recharge 5-6). The fiend exhales acid in a 30-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If a creature with a fly speed fails this saving throw, its fly speed is reduced to 0 until the start of its next turn

Reactions

Instinctive Spit. When the fiend becomes frightened or is reduced to fewer than half its hit points, the fiend can recharge and use its Acid Vomit.

Sample file

Terminator Pig

Author: Kai Linder

Inspired By: *Daeodon shoshonensis*, aka hell pigs or terminator pigs

Citation: Lucas, S. G., Emry, R. J., & Foss, S. E. (1998). Taxonomy and distribution of Daeodon, an Oligocene-Miocene entelodont (Mammalia: Artiodactyla) from North America. *PROCEEDINGS-BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON*, 111, 425-435.

Artist: Dana Braga



Terminator pigs are hellish scavengers resembling something between an aurochs and a pig. Their thick hide and layers of fat protect them from the elements and, combined with their heavy metal-like bones and incredible stubbornness, make them incredibly resilient. The pig's long head with huge crushing jaws and massive tusks and horns are perfectly suited for its omnivorous diet. Able to open their mouths up to 150 degrees, they eat virtually anything that fits in their mouth, be it bones, rocks, adventurers, or fiends. This means that many flourish throughout both the Abyss and the Nine Hells, with neither demons nor devils bothering to stop what often proves to be a useful cleanup service.

Novelty Seekers. Though omnivores, terminator pigs quickly grow bored with the same meals and often seek out new things to devour. This often makes adventurers a particularly desirable meal, especially to younger pigs. Older terminator pigs have had much more opportunity for variety and often settle into tearing apart dead or inanimate food.

Tireless Pursuers. Terminator pigs are ponderous and slow, rarely opting to charge after prey. Instead, they track and pursue their prey at a steady pace over long distances, following until the prey tires of the chase and becomes an easy meal. They might pursue a particularly tasty-looking creature for weeks, stopping them from resting and forcing them to fight or die.

Terminator Pig

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 126 (12d10 + 60)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	8 (–1)	20 (+5)	2 (–4)	12 (+1)	5 (–3)

Saving Throws Str +7, Con +8
Skills Survival +4
Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Senses Darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages –
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Relentless Pursuer. The terminator pig is immune to exhaustion and effects that would reduce its speed.

Actions

Multiattack. The terminator pig makes two attacks: one chomp attack and one stomp attack.

Chomp. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Stomp. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (1d12 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Toss. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the creature is Large or smaller, the terminator pig lifts and tosses it with its horns. The creature lands in an unoccupied space within 30 feet of the terminator pig.

Uncanny Pursuit (1/Day). The terminator pig locks its senses onto a single creature or object it can see within 60 feet. For the next 12 hours it has advantage on any Wisdom (Perception) or Wisdom (Survival) checks made to find the target.

Sample File

Terryesil

Author: Maxine Henry

Inspired By: Shipworms

Citation: Shipway, J. R., Altamia, M. A., Rosenberg, G., Concepcion, G. P., Haygood, M. G., & Distel, D. L. (2019). A rock-boring and rock-ingesting freshwater bivalve (shipworm) from the Philippines. *Proc. R. Soc. B.*, 286: 20190434. http://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2019.0434

Art: DMs Guild Creator Resources

Solitary predators, terryesils ('terr-yes-ills) haunt the obscured areas and shadowed corners of Avernus. Their vaguely humanoid form is riddled with holes that go completely through their body, giving terryesils the ability to avoid easy recognition by their prey. Their body surface also reflects and distorts ambient light, allowing them to drift like smoke across a landscape. Under direct light, terryesils resemble a collection of fractured mirrors joined together and moving with a singular purpose. Unlike many other predators, terryesils consume metal, not flesh.

Terryesils secrete a substance that coats their bodies. This substance eats metal, breaking molecular bonds and pulling the metallic elements into the terryesil's body to be used for repair or growth processes. These predators are sensitive to the presence of metal being worn or carried by another creature and have been known to track heavy armor for days before striking. Once a target is acquired, the terryesil slowly gets closer until it spots an opportune moment to strike. It is not unusual for a terryesil to attack when their metal-bearing target is making or breaking camp, resting, or sleeping. If the metal that draws the terryesil is unattended, so much the better; the terryesil will take it and fade back into the darkness without an overt attack.

While in Combat. If a terryesil makes a successful melee attack, the target may feel like it's been slapped by a wet or sticky towel. That sensation indicates that the terryesil has fed. During these attacks, any bludgeoning damage to the target itself is incidental to the damage done to the metal armor. While terryesils aren't immune to physical damage, they have acquired skills to make the most of receiving a metal weapon attack, feeding on the weapon even while being hit.

Once it successfully makes an attack, a terryesil develops a taste for the metal and pursues it, making further attacks when the target is distracted. If the metal that the terryesil is eating is completely consumed, then the predator moves on to another target. When attacked, a terryesil's first defense is retreat; however, if cornered, it defends itself until an escape option opens up.



sample file

The terryesil's blows seem to have no effect... Until you stand naked before it.

The Terrysil's Lair

Some terryesils lair in underground caverns, where cracks in the earth allow molten rock and harsh smoke to seep out. In these lairs, disordered rough piles of cooled lava make the area difficult terrain, and the intermittent acidic smoke lowers visibility.

The terryesil has a challenge rating of 4 (1,110 XP) when encountered within its lair.

Lair Actions

When fighting inside its lair, terryesils can invoke the ambient magic to take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), terryesils can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects, but cannot take the same lair action in two consecutive rounds:

- ***Darkness Falls.*** All of the available light winks out, and magical darkness radiates from the terryesil in a 30-foot radius. This effect lasts one round.
- ***Uncanny Valley.*** Wisps of smoke change into humanoid shapes. Creatures must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for one round.
- ***Blinded by the Light.*** Brilliant light erupts all around. Creatures must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become blinded for one round.

Regional Effects

A region containing the terryesil's lair is warped by the creature's overwhelming presence, which creates the following effect:

- ***Illusion of Safety.*** Creatures passing through the area near to a terryesil's lair feel as if this area is a safe space in which to take a long rest. The longer a terryesil stays in the area, the more powerful the effect becomes.

If the terryesil dies or leaves the area, this effect fades over the course of 2d10 days.

Terryesil

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 78 (12d10 + 12)
Speed 30 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	6 (–2)	10 (+0)	6 (–2)

Saving Throws Con +3
Skills Stealth +4
Damage Resistances fire; slashing and piercing from nonmagical weapons
Damage Immunities acid
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12, tremorsense 60 ft.
Languages –
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Friend of Shadows. When in dim light or darkness, the terryesil can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

Earth Glide. The terryesil can burrow through nonmagical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, the terryesil doesn't disturb the material it moves through.

Digestive Nature. The metal weapon used to hit the terryesil takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If the penalty accumulates to -5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal that hits the terryesil is destroyed after dealing damage.

Stomach Knowledge. The terryesil knows the distance to and direction of any metal that it has previously tasted, whether or not it is being worn or carried by a creature, even if the metal and the terryesil are on different planes of existence. This gives the terryesil advantage on Wisdom (Survival) checks to track the metal.

Actions

Multiattack. A terryesil makes two Eat Metal attacks.

Eat Metal. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. In addition, nonmagical metallic armor worn by the target is partly digested and takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to the AC it offers. The armor is destroyed if the penalty reduces its AC to 10.

Sample file

Volcanitherium

Author: Gabrielle Bleu

Inspired By: Volaticotherium antiquum

Citation: Meng, J., Hu, Y., Wang, Y. et al. A Mesozoic gliding mammal from northeastern China. *Nature* 444, 889–893 (2006). https://doi.org/10.1038/nature05234

Artist: Erin Anderson



The volcanitherium is a canid with two heads and gliding membranes, which make it a formidable hunter. While a small-sized fiend, the volcanitherium is a pack hunter that uses sheer numbers and silent flight to surprise and overwhelm prey. A lone volcanitherium is still a formidable foe and a pack on its own, due to its double-headed nature.

Membranous Gliding. Volcanitheria use the many volcanic vents found in Avernus to stalk their prey. As long as volcanic vents are present, volcanitheria can traverse great distances. The membranes stretching between a volcanitherium's front and hind legs allow it to glide on the hot air expelled by the volcanic vents, descending silently on its quarry from above. The action of gliding on existing drafts also allows the fiends to store up their energy for an ambush. Volcanitheria ambushes are hard to avoid not just due to their silent approach, but also due to the grey of their underbellies. The coloroation allows them to blend into the smoky skies of Avernus, keeping all but the keenest eye from spotting them from below.

Burning Core. Due to its use of volcanic vents, the volcanitherium developed a natural immunity to not only high degrees of heat, but to flame itself. The heat from the vents in Avernus causes no harm to the volcanitherium's body, while also superheating its insides. This evolutionary tactic makes a volcanitherium's bite quite deadly, as it expels steam and burns its victims during the hunt.

Volcanitherium

Small fiend (demon), unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 22 (4d6 + 8)
Speed 25 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	7 (–2)

Saving Throws Con +4, Wis +4
Skills Stealth +3, Perception +4
Damage Immunities fire
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages –
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Two Heads. The volcanitherium has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, and knocked unconscious. The volcanitherium's two heads also grant it the pack tactics trait at all times, even when fighting alone.

Pack Tactics. The volcanitherium has advantage on an attack role against a creature if at least one of the volcanitherium's allies (including its own second head) is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Surprise Attack. If the volcanitherium surprises a creature and hits it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes an extra 4 (1d8) damage from the attack.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage. The target must also succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or take an extra 3 (1d6) fire damage.

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

Sample file

Appendix A: Monsters by CR

Challenge Rating 1

Volcanitherium

Challenge Rating 2

Cult Fanatic Echo
Ferroform Scion
Kathar's Bird

Challenge Rating 3

Cranium Crab (Carcinoloth)
Kathar's Bird (in lair)
Terryesil

Challenge Rating 4

Mindkiller Nettle
Terryesil (in lair)

Challenge Rating 5

Crokekspawn
Ferroform Guardian
Flesh-Eating Splendor Swarm
Terminator Pig

Challenge Rating 6

Ferroform Elder
Myrmexleon

Challenge Rating 7

Malebranch
Lesser Screaming Ash Elemental

Challenge Rating 8

Daubentonia
Ferroform Prime
Gatebinder Ooze

Challenge Rating 9

Ferroform Prime (in lair)
Styx River Dolphin

Challenge Rating 11

Greater Screaming Ash Elemental
Hadalloth
Styxglider

Challenge Rating 12

Agrasi
Fortress Devil

Challenge 14

Magnetaur
Magnetaur (in lair)

Challenge 16

Legendary Screaming Ash Elemental

Sample file