



Desert Denizens

A Monstrous Compendium of desert creatures
to terrify your players

CHRISTOPHER HAMWELL
and
ERIC VON DARKNOIR

Forward

This tome is far more than a collection of statistic blocks. Each denizen has been thoughtfully envisioned and brought to life, taking into account its specific function and place within the desert's ecosystem, ranging from the towering Desert Worm to the modest Gopher.

Our goal has been to equip the Dungeon Master with tools to facilitate the crafting of encounters that are not only significant but also vibrant with the hues of a desert milieu.

We earnestly hope that this work will bestow upon you the same joy and contentment that we have derived from its creation.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to Angela, our diligent editor, whose countless late-night efforts in editing and structuring this manuscript have been invaluable.

We have intentionally chosen a presentation style for this material that is distinctive from the standard published 5E content.

Best, Eric and Chris

The Oracle of Quoriva

Large elemental, neutral good

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 152 (16d10 + 64)

Speed 30 ft., swim 90 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Int +7, Wis +9, Cha +6

Skills Insight +9, Perception +9

Damage Resistances acid, bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Aquan, Common and Primordial

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Amorphous Form. The Oracle can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing. It can also take any form it desires, resembling any combination of elemental and humanoid shapes as part of its movement with no action required.

ESP. The Oracle can use its action to read the thoughts of any creature within 60 feet of it that it can see. It can choose to also allow the creature to hear its thoughts, facilitating telepathic communication.

Future Sight. The Oracle can cast the *divination* spell without needing material components. Once it uses this feature, it can't use it again until it finishes a long rest.

Detect Alignment. As an action, The Oracle can sense the alignment of any creature it can see within 60 feet. It knows if the creature is good, evil, neutral, or if it lacks an alignment (such as many constructs and undead).

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

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Oracle makes two slam attacks.

Slam. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Water Jet (Recharge 5-6). The Oracle magically propels water in a 60-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 27 (6d8) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Healing Waters (3/Day). The Oracle magically releases healing energy in a 30-foot radius. Each creature of The Oracle's choice in that area regains 13 (2d8 + 4) hit points.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The Oracle 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 Oracle regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

- **Detect.** The Oracle makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.
- **Slam (Costs 2 Actions).** The Oracle makes one slam attack.
- **Whisper of the Future (Costs 2 Actions).** The Oracle uses its ESP.

LEGEND

In the arid expanse of the vast desert, beyond the reach of the most intrepid travelers, lies a hidden subterranean cavern known as the Sanctuary of Quoriva. Within this hallowed chamber, the air shimmers with a cool mist, and the sound of a tranquil pool echoes softly off the ancient stone walls. Here resides The Oracle of Quoriva, a being of profound wisdom and elemental power.

To the common eye, The Oracle often appears as a bearded human, sage-like with eyes that gleam with the depths of the waters it embodies. Yet, those who have visited this sacred place at different times whisper of its other forms: a patient tortoise with a shell etched in ancient runes, or a mighty Terrakin whose scales shimmer with the essence of the deep sea.

The Oracle is an eternal enigma, bound by a cycle as old as the land itself. Every century, as the stars align in a celestial spectacle, The Oracle undergoes a mysterious transformation. It is believed that during this time, The Oracle 'dies' or departs from the cave, leaving behind a legacy of wisdom. In its place, a new creature emerges, one that has undertaken a spiritual pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of Quoriva. Through means unknown to the scholars and mages of the world, this creature assumes the mantle of The Oracle, inheriting the vast knowledge and elemental powers of its predecessor.

Travelers, adventurers, and seekers of truth journey across perilous landscapes to consult The Oracle. The path is fraught with hardship, for the desert does not yield its secrets easily, and the way to the Sanctuary of Quoriva is cloaked in enigma. It is said that those who seek the Oracle with purity of heart are granted insights that can alter destinies, while those harboring malice find their journey cursed, never to return from the desert sands.

Legends tell of empires that have risen and fallen by the words of The Oracle, of heroes forged and villains redeemed. Its prophecies are sought after, yet The Oracle speaks in riddles and truths that are as fluid as the waters it controls. None can predict the nature of the wisdom it imparts; only that it is as inevitable and relentless as the tides.

ROLEPLAYING OPPORTUNITY

Amidst the shifting sands of the desert lies an unexpected burst of life and color: a bustling tent city known as "Quoriva's Threshold." Sprouted at the mouth of the subterranean lair of The Oracle of Quoriva, it is a refuge for the weary and a sanctuary for the hopeful. The city is a vibrant tapestry woven from the many threads of those who come seeking the wisdom of The Oracle.

Tents of every hue stretch across the landscape, flapping in the hot desert wind. They range from the simplest canvas shelters of itinerant pilgrims to the ornate pavilions of affluent seekers and opportunistic merchants. The air is thick with the scent of spices and the smoke from countless fires where exotic foods are cooked. The sizzle of strange meats and the bubbling of stews mingle with the calls of hawkers peddling their wares.

Each stall in the bazaar is a cornucopia of the rare and the mystical. Merchants, their tongues as smooth as the silks they sell, boast of charms, amulets, and tokens said to curry favor with The Oracle. Crystals that glimmer with inner light, scrolls inscribed with prayers, and vials of scented oils line the tables, alongside more practical goods like water skins and sun hats.

The city is a crucible of cultures, where nomads rub shoulders with nobles and scholars debate with soothsayers. The languages of a hundred lands blend into a symphony of human expression, punctuated by the occasional braying of camels and the clatter of carts. Pilgrims share tales of their journeys by the communal fires, each story adding to the mythology of The Oracle.

At night, the city transforms. Lanterns and fires paint the darkness with a warm glow, and the stars overhead seem to dance to the music that fills the air. Musicians with instruments from far-off places play for the gathered crowds, while dancers spin in flowing garments, their movements telling stories of their homelands.

The Oracle of Quoriva



Desert Worm

Gargantuan monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 230 (20d12 + 100)

Speed 40 ft., burrow 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
26 (+8)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Saving Throws Str +13, Con +10, Wis +6

Skills Perception +6

Damage Resistance bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 500 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages —

Challenge 15 (13,000 XP)

Tunneling Beast. The Desert Worm can burrow through solid rock at half its burrow speed and leaves a 10-foot-diameter tunnel in its wake.

Extended Tremorsense. As long as the Desert Worm is in familiar desert terrain, its tremorsense extends to 500 feet.

Sandstorm Cloak. Whenever the Desert Worm burrows or moves on sand, it stirs up a cloud of dust and sand. This cloud spreads in a 30-foot radius from the worm and lasts for 1 minute or until a strong wind disperses it. The area is heavily obscured for the duration.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Desert Worm makes two bite attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 32 (4d10 + 8) piercing damage. If the target is a Medium or Small creature, it is grappled (escape DC 21). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the worm can't bite another target.

Swallow. The Desert Worm makes one bite attack against a Medium or Small 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 worm, and it takes 35 (10d6) acid damage at the start of each of the worm's turns. If the worm takes 30 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the worm must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate the swallowed creature, which falls prone in a space within 10 feet of the worm.

Sand Blast (Recharge 5-6). The Desert Worm exhales a blast of scorching sand in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

ECOLOGY

Environment and Physical Conditions: The Desert Worm dwells deep within arid landscapes, particularly the vast, shifting dunes. It requires extreme heat to maintain its body temperature and has adapted to low moisture levels, drawing any required hydration from its prey.

Diet: Primarily carnivorous, the worm's diet consists of large herbivores, smaller desert fauna, and occasionally, unwary travelers. Its infrequent but substantial meals suggest an ability to sustain itself without food for prolonged periods.

Natural Predators: Given its colossal size and formidable defenses, the Desert Worm has no natural predators. Its plated hide and sheer power have ensured its status as the apex predator of its domain.

Reproduction: Little is known about the Desert Worm's reproductive methods. Tribal legends speak of rare mating dances during moonlit nights when two worms might breach the surface. It is believed that they lay deep subterranean eggs, though these eggs are yet to be seen.

Life cycle: The worm's life cycle remains shrouded in mystery. Tribal folktales allude to various stages, from smaller, more vulnerable juvenile forms growing progressively to their titanic adult sizes. Each stage has its own unique challenges and behaviors.

Seasonal Adaptations: During hotter seasons, the worm dives deeper, accessing cooler layers of sand. During rare cooler periods, it is more frequently seen closer to the surface, possibly in search of warmth from the sun.

Role in the Ecosystem: Beyond its role as a predator, the Desert Worm aerates the soil, facilitating the growth of hardy desert flora. Its excrement, rich in nutrients, rejuvenates the desert soil, leading to bursts of vegetation.

Interactions with Other Species: The Desert Worm mostly interacts with other species as a predator. However, birds and small mammals have been observed using its tracks and burrows for shelter, hinting at a possible commensal relationship.

Migration Patterns: Though not migrating in a traditional sense, the worm moves vast distances beneath the desert, possibly in search of food or suitable breeding grounds. Their movements often correlate with seismic activities, detected by native tribes.

Environmental Impact and Threats: As the worm tunnels through the desert, it shapes the landscape, influencing dune patterns and underground water flow. Conversely, human encroachment and potential over-hunting by treasure seekers, lured by legends of riches within the creature, pose threats to its existence.

Sample file

Desert Worm



Dyad Sagebrute

Huge giant, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 142 (15d10 + 60)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	16 (+3) / 6 (-2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +7 (Sage Head), Con +8

Skills Arcana +7 (Sage Head), Perception +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Giant

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Two Heads. The Dyad Sagebrute has advantage on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, and knocked unconscious.

Wakeful. When one of the Dyad Sagebrute's heads is asleep, its other head is awake.

Dual Intellect. At the start of each of its turns, roll a d20. On an 11 or higher, the Sage Head is in control and the creature can cast spells. On a 10 or lower, the Brute Head is in control and the creature cannot cast spells.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. If the Brute head is in control, the Dyad Sagebrute makes two attacks: one with its club and one with its fist. If the Sage Head is in control, the Dyad Sagebrute makes one melee attack and casts one spell.

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (3d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Spellcasting (Sage Head Only). The Dyad Sagebrute is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It can cast the following spells:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, light, mage hand, prestidigitation*

1st level (4 slots): *shield, magic missile*

2nd level (3 slots): *scorching ray, mirror image*

3rd level (3 slots): *fireball, counterspell*

4th level (3 slots): *stone skin*

5th level (1 slot): *wall of stone*

REACTION

When the Dyad Sagebrute takes damage from a melee attack, it can use its reaction to make one melee attack with its fist against the attacker.

DIALOGUE

The heroes might have a chance to observe the creature bickering with itself. If so, paraphrase the following:

Sage Head: *"Ponder the vast dominion of the intellect. With but a spell, I can decipher the universe's secrets or warp the very fabric of existence to my desire."*

Brute Head: *"Yo, all that jabber ain't worth spit. Gimme somethin' solid to bash, and I'll show ya what's what."*

Sage Head: *"Oh, my simple sibling, your understanding is as shallow as a puddle. It is the mind, not muscle, that truly rules."*

Brute Head: *"Talk fancy all ya want. Ain't nothin' like the feel of somethin' breakin' 'neath your hands."*

Sage Head: *"Your narrow view blinds you. Magic, the artful application of intellect, can turn the fiercest adversary into the meekest creature."*

Brute Head: *"Or I could just smash it real good. Done and dusted, no fancy finger-wavin' needed."*

Sage Head: *"You're overlooking the essence of power. It is wielded through strategy, knowledge, wisdom."*

Brute Head: "And you're overlookin' the buzz of droppin' a foe with one good hit. That's power ya can feel in your bones."

Sage Head: "You epitomize the preference of brawn to brains. But what will you do when brute strength alone is insufficient?"

Brute Head: "Then I'll chuck somethin' at 'em! Muscle always finds a way."

Sage Head: "It seems I cannot sway you. But heed this—when we encounter an enemy that your fists cannot fell, you'll be grateful for the intellect that directs your might."

Sample file

Dyad Sagebrute



Terrakin

Medium humanoid (Terrakin), neutral

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 20 ft., burrow 10 ft., swim 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Terrakin, Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Shell Defense. The Terrakin can withdraw into its shell as a bonus action. While in its shell, it gains a +4 bonus to AC but can't take any actions. It can emerge from its shell as a bonus action on its subsequent turns.

Desert Camouflage. The Terrakin has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made in sandy or desert terrain.

Keen Scent. The Terrakin has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Terrakin makes two melee attacks: one with its bite and one with its quarterstaff.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

LORE and ECOLOGY

Terrakins are a reclusive and ancient race of humanoid turtle-like creatures that have adapted to desert environments. Their shells are their most distinctive feature, which they use not only for protection but also as a symbol of their connection to the earth. They are known for their deep spirituality and their ability to harness the power of the desert to survive and thrive.

The Terrakins now teeter on the brink of extinction. Several factors have contributed to their dwindling numbers:

1. **Habitat Destruction:** Over the centuries, their natural desert habitats have been increasingly encroached upon by expanding civilizations, resource extraction, and urban development. Terrakins have lost access to vital resources and traditional hunting grounds due to these changes.
2. **Poaching:** Terrakin shells and body parts are sought after as valuable curiosities and ingredients in magical concoctions by collectors, alchemists, and dark sorcerers. This has led to the illegal hunting of Terrakins, further reducing their population.
3. **Conflict:** Terrakins have sometimes been caught in conflicts between other races and factions seeking control over desert territories. These conflicts have disrupted their communities and forced them to migrate, often leading to casualties.
4. **Decline in Spiritual Practices:** With the decline in their population, the Terrakins' spiritual traditions and knowledge have also eroded. Many young Terrakins no longer have access to the teachings and ceremonies that once bound their communities together.
5. **Low Reproduction Rates:** Terrakins have relatively low reproduction rates, and their population struggles to recover from losses.

As a result of these pressures, Terrakins have become a rare sight in their native desert regions. Their once-thriving communities have become scattered and isolated, and their numbers have dwindled to the point where they are considered critically endangered.

ADVENTURE HOOK

Adventurers might be sent on a quest to consult with a Terrakin Seer (see below) about a matter of great importance or urgency. This adventure could revolve around finding and seeking guidance from these revered creatures. Here are a few examples of names of individual Seers: Korraath the Wise, Sylvastra of the Sands, and Zephyros the Oracle.

Terrakin



Terrakin Seer

Medium humanoid (Terrakin), neutral

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 85 (10d8 + 40)

Speed 20 ft., burrow 10 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)

Skills Insight +9, Perception +9

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Terrakin, Common

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Shell Defense. The Terrakin Seer can withdraw into its shell as a bonus action. While in its shell, it gains a +4 bonus to AC but can't take any actions. It can emerge from its shell as a bonus action on its subsequent turns.

Desert Camouflage. The Terrakin Seer has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made in sandy or desert terrain.

Keen Scent. The Terrakin Seer has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Curse of Destiny. If a Terrakin Seer is killed, its death invokes a curse of misfortune on those responsible. The curse takes the form of increasingly unfortunate events and circumstances befalling the culprits until they make amends or seek forgiveness from the Terrakin community. It is left to the Dungeon Master to decide the extent and details of the curse, but it should be considerable.

Example of Curse of Destiny:

A creature who kills a Terrakin Seer may experience a string of terrible luck. Every time they roll a natural 1 on a d20 roll (attack, ability check, or saving throw), the curse activates, and they suffer an additional critical failure effect. For example, if they roll a natural 1 on an attack roll, they might drop their weapon, trip, or hit an ally.

Roleplay Opportunity: The cursed creature becomes increasingly paranoid, believing that the curse is affecting their every move. They might become hesitant in battle, fearing the curse's consequences, and seek ways to lift it.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Terrakin Seer makes two melee attacks: one with its bite and one with its quarterstaff.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Fate Foretelling. As an action, the Terrakin Seer can choose a creature it can see within 60 feet and make a Wisdom (Insight) check contested by the target's Charisma (Deception) check. If the Terrakin Seer wins the contest, it gains insight into the target's fate. The Terrakin Seer learns one piece of information about the target's future, such as a significant event, decision, or outcome. The target is unaware that its fate has been revealed.

The Terrakin Seer is a wise and revered member of its kind, with the unique ability to foretell the fate of others. Its death carries a powerful curse, making it a significant figure in the Terrakin community. It uses its abilities to guide its people and protect their traditions.

Terrakin Seer



Sarcophagi Mimic

Large monstrosity (shapechanger), neutral

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 68 (8d10 + 24)

Speed 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	5 (-3)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Stealth +4

Damage Immunities acid

Condition Immunities prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages —

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Shapechanger. The mimic can use its action to polymorph into an object or back into its true, amorphous form. It reverts to its true form if it dies. While in object form, the mimic is indistinguishable from an ordinary sarcophagus.

Adhesive (Object Form Only). The mimic adheres to anything that touches it. A Huge or smaller creature adhered to the mimic is also grappled by it (escape DC 13). Ability checks made to escape this grapple have disadvantage.

False Appearance (Object Form Only). While the mimic remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary object.

Grappler. The mimic has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it has grappled.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The mimic makes two Slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Swallow. The mimic makes one bite attack against a Medium or smaller target it has grappled. 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 mimic, and it takes 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage at the start of each of the mimic's turns.

If the mimic takes 15 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the mimic must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate the swallowed creature, which falls prone in a space within 10 feet of the mimic. If the mimic dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 15 feet of movement, exiting prone.

REACTION

Sticky Defense. When a creature that the mimic can see hits it with a melee attack, the mimic can use its sticky, amorphous body to try to catch the weapon or the attacker. The attacker must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or the weapon becomes stuck to the mimic, or if the attacker used a limb, the attacker becomes grappled by the mimic.

ECOLOGY

Guardians of the Greedy Dead. Sarcophagi Mimics are often found in the burial chambers of those who were as cautious in death as they were in life. These mimics are strategically placed among genuine sarcophagi, indistinguishable from the true resting places of the dead. The unsuspecting thief, lured by the promise of untouched riches, may find themselves grappling with these voracious defenders instead of pilfering precious artifacts.

Treacherous Treasure. Within the belly of these creatures, one might find the partially digested remains of past victims alongside their belongings. Magical items and treasures, resistant to the mimic's corrosive digestive acids, remain within. These items can serve as bait, as the faint glimmer of enchanted objects through cracks or openings may tempt robbers into reaching inside.

Sarcophagus Mimic



Velaminous Smothergrip

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 85 (9d10 + 36)

Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	8 (-1)	18 (+4)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Antimagic Susceptibility. The Velaminous Smothergrip is incapacitated while in the area of an *antimagic field*. If targeted by *dispel magic*, the Velaminous Smothergrip must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against the caster's spell save DC or fall unconscious for 1 minute.

False Appearance. While the Velaminous Smothergrip remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal rug or carpet.

Damage Transfer. While it is grappling a creature, the Velaminous Smothergrip takes only half the damage dealt to it (rounded down), and the creature grappled by the Velaminous Smothergrip takes the other half.

ACTIONS

Smother. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one Medium or smaller creature. Hit: The creature is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, blinded, and at risk of suffocating, and the Velaminous Smothergrip can't smother another target.

Whipping Fringe. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (2d10 + 3) slashing damage.

Shake (Recharge 5–6). The Velaminous Smothergrip violently shakes its body, striking any creatures within 5 feet of it, except for creatures that are restrained by it. Each creature within range that is not restrained must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or take 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage, be pushed 5 feet away from the Velaminous Smothergrip, and be knocked prone.

REACTION

Tighten Grip. When a creature that the Velaminous Smothergrip is grappling attempts to escape, the Velaminous Smothergrip can use its reaction to tighten its grip, adding +2 to its grapple check result.

LEGEND

Prince Amir al-Zephyr, the Dervish of the Dancing Sands, was a figure etched into the lore of the desert. The prince's constant companion was said to be a Velaminous Smothergrip named Zephyra, affectionately known as the "Whispering Wind." Zephyra, with patterns as intricate as the history it bore, was a marvel that bore its master through the skies with silent grace. On the ground, it lay unassumingly at the entrance of Amir's regal tent, a deceptive veil of soft threads. Yet, in the blink of an eye, Zephyra could transform from a serene tapestry into a fierce guardian. To the prince, Zephyra was not just a mode of flight or a shield against harm; it was a trusted ally, the keeper of his tent's threshold, and a cherished symbol of his dominion.

ROLEPLAYING OPPORTUNITY

Whispers among the bazaar's merchants and adventurers suggest that there exists a unique variant of these carpets with the enigmatic ability to establish a telepathic link, forging deep connections with those they deem worthy. It is believed that Prince Amir was in possession of such a remarkable artifact. As a Dungeon Master, you might orchestrate a pivotal moment where, if the Smothergrip faces inevitable destruction, it reaches out to a player character's mind using a form of telepathy. In a bid for survival, the carpet could propose an alliance: to serve the party as a steadfast vessel across the skies and a guardian of their sanctuary.

Velaminous Smothergrip



Luminar

Medium fey, neutral

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 102 (12d8 + 48)

Speed 40 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +8

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Luminar

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Bioluminescence. The Luminar's body emits a soft glow, providing dim light in a 20-foot radius. It can control the intensity of its glow at will, from blinding brightness to complete darkness.

Insectoid Agility. The Luminar has advantage on saving throws against being restrained or grappled, and it can move through the space of any creature that is of a size larger than itself.

ACTIONS

Mind Flare. The Luminar emits a concentrated, invisible pulse of psychic energy at one creature it can see within 60 feet. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw or take 3d8 psychic damage and be stunned until the end of the Luminar's next turn.

Luminous Burst. Once per minute, the Luminar releases a blinding burst of light in a 30-foot cone. All creatures in the area must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or be blinded for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, with a successful save ending the effect.

Prismatic Web (Recharge 4-6). The Luminar fires a web of prismatic strands at a single target within 60 feet. The target must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained by the web, taking 3d6 radiant damage at the start of each of its turns. A creature can use its action to make a DC 16 Strength check, freeing itself on a success. The web disintegrates after 1 minute or if the Luminar uses this ability again.

ECOLOGY

Some believe Luminars to be insectoids, yet they are fey creatures.

Habitat: Luminars often take residence in abandoned caves and burrows left by giant ants or other insects. These locations offer the Luminars ready-made dwellings that they can further sculpt to suit their bioluminescent lifestyles, providing shelter from the scorching sun and predators that roam the desert surface. Their subterranean abodes are adorned with a vivid mosaic of fungi, which the Luminars tenderly cultivate and sculpt into enchanting gardens, serving both as a source of sustenance and aesthetic delight.

Adaptations: In the perpetual gloom of their subterranean homes, the Luminar's radiant glow is an evolutionary marvel, serving multiple purposes. It aids in navigation through the labyrinthine tunnels, attracts mates, and even helps in the cultivation of specialized fungi which are a primary food source. This bioluminescence also deters the few predators that dare to venture into their glowing sanctuaries.

Diet: Within their adopted caverns, Luminars maintain a symbiotic relationship with the remaining fungi and molds that feed on the remnants of the previous insect colonies. Their omnivorous diet is supplemented by occasional ventures to the surface at night to harvest cacti and other hardy desert plants.

Behavior: Despite their formidable appearance and abilities, Luminars are not inherently aggressive. They prefer to avoid conflict, using their luminous displays as a means to communicate and ward off potential threats. They will only resort to their blinding bursts or restraining webs when cornered or when the sanctity of their colonies is at stake.

A Pair of Luminars

