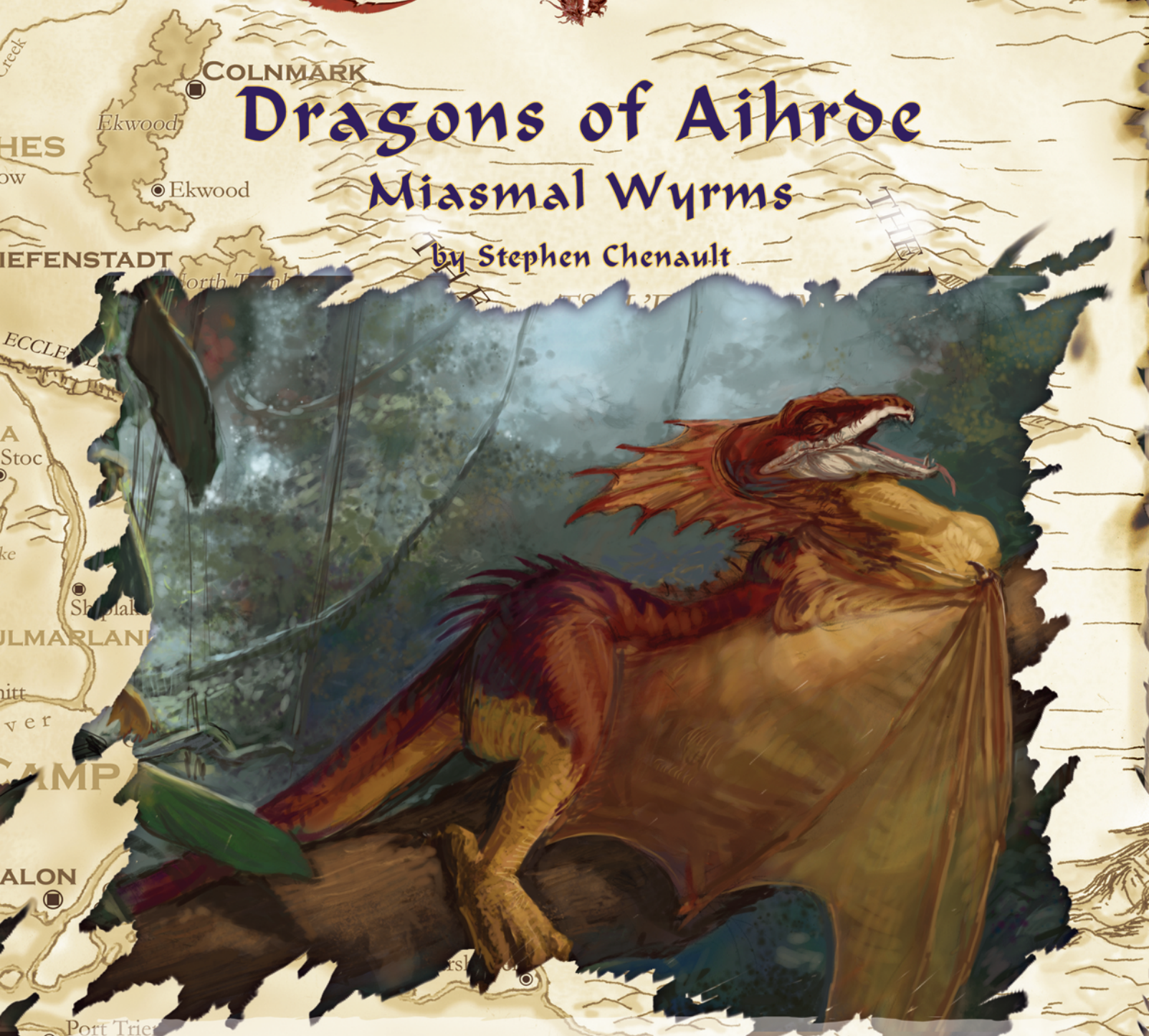




# CASTLES<sup>®</sup> & CRUSADES

## Dragons of Aihirde Miasmal Wyrms

by Stephen Chenault



Beneath the towering trees of ancient wood, beneath branches laden with the tired detritus of old growth live creatures of nightmare. In croaking tongues they call out one to the other, sounding the hunt. By stealth and subterfuge they hunt, stalking the unwary. They are predacious beasts, who care not for treasure or misspent wealth these are the Miasmal Wyrms. New Dragons, along with their Habitats, Ecology and Magic along with new symbiotic creatures. A whole new way to look at Dragons!



# DRAGONS OF AIHRDE: MIASMAL WYRMS

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# MIASMAL WYRMS

For eons, dragons have dwelt in the world. Whether they live in deep caves, dwell at the bottoms of wide lakes or stalk the sandy dunes of the deserts, dragons have been a part of the landscape of men, elf and orc. But dragons are like all other creatures. They suffer as all things suffer, by the whims of the world and the power of nature. Some thrive, powerful beasts unaffected and unchanged by the world, time or happenstance. Others evolve, adapting to an ever changing world while others devolve into myriad forms and creatures; mere shadows of their ancestors. They have forgotten what they knew to become wild and dangerous, as much animal as dragon. Though they are less than their mighty forbearers they are every bit as magical, sometimes intelligent, but above all else they are dragons and dangerous creatures to cross or malign. Indeed, some would account these lesser drakes as far more dangerous, for they are driven by primeval forces, far greater than those conjured by the wise. They are driven by hunger, the need to protect their territory, by instinct and they feed on the fear of men.

Whatever their circumstance, they are dragons still, creatures of myth and legend, dangerous and powerful, revered and feared. These are the lesser dragons of Airhde.

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## INTRODUCTION

These lesser drakes take many shapes and sizes, and they have many abilities, however, they can be classified by their primary method of attack. Herein are the miasmal wyrms, secreting poison through glands in their skin and acids in their breath, their mouths are so infected with bacteria and rot that to suffer a bite from one is to invite a slow and painful, if not maddening, death. Being feared

by all, they are predacious, aggressive hunters and their victims die in agony and sufferance.

## LESSER DRAGONS

Like all dragon kind, lesser dragons are powerful creatures with magical abilities and uncommonly long life spans. These however, are every bit as cunning, but not as intelligent as their more commonly known kin. Their magic is weaker, and in some cases benign. They are smaller as well, few growing to over 20 feet in length. Also, they are more animal in nature and less discerning in their actions. Time is spent hunting or breeding, and they care little for hoarding treasure or unraveling the philosophy of men. They can be good or evil, but many are simply neutral, once again, closer in kind to animals than magical beasts.

Lesser dragons also depart from their cousins in that many of them have no love of treasure, and they do not keep static dens. They hunt in the wilderness, marking out and defending territories against encroachments of any kind. Lesser dragons use their abilities, magical and mundane, to improve their ability to hunt. This makes them far more dangerous than one might suspect, for they possess the natural cunning of all dragons and combine it with their magic and animal instincts.

**AGE:** Lesser dragons do not possess the long life spans of their cousins. They are not immortal. Some may live for a thousand years, but if they do, it is an anomaly and not the norm. Most die in the early mature stage, killed off by one of their own kind. Hatchlings grow quickly, emerging from the egg fully formed, aggressive and able to exist apart from their mother. They eat tremendous amounts of food, mostly rodents and the like. They grow very fast, becoming young adults within a few years of hatching.

**BONUS SAVES:** This is the dragons' bonus to all saving throws. It increases as they age.

CATEGORY	TYPE	AGE	SAVES
1	Hatchling	0-3	+1
2	Young Adult	4-50	+2
3	Adult	51-100	+3
4	Mature	100-200+	+4

**SIZE:** A lesser dragon's age determines its size. Hatchlings are always small. Young adults are always medium size. Lesser dragons of all other age categories are large. A lesser dragon continues to grow as it ages, slowly.

**HIT DICE:** All lesser dragons roll a d10 for their hit points regardless of age or size.

**MOVE:** Dragons in age category 1 move at 1/2 the rate listed, and those in age category 4 move 1/2 more than the listed rate.

**LANGUAGES AND MAGIC:** All dragons can speak their own tongue and the common tongue. All dragons have some spell-like abilities, as detailed below for each dragon type. Some few lesser dragons, upon attaining a higher age category, can make an intelligence

check against a difficulty of 12. If the check is successful, the dragon is able to speak and understand any language, and also possesses dragon magic, as detailed below for each breed. If the roll fails, a new check can be made when the dragon reaches the next age category.

**EXPERIENCE:** The experience point award for dragons varies according to type, age and ability. Castle Keepers should consult the experience point award chart given on page 6 of the Monsters & Treasure book. Dragons should be extremely difficult to slay and should therefore be awarded a generous amount of experience.

## DRAGONS AND COMBAT

Like their larger kin, lesser dragons are ferocious and able to fight with a multitude of weapons. Though they are not as agile as larger dragons, they are able to launch multiple attacks, though usually not against several different opponents.

*Special Rules for Dragon Combat:* Lesser dragons do add their full hit dice when making attack rolls and they do add their full hit dice to saving throw rolls, plus the bonus set forth in the age chart.

**BREATH WEAPONS:** Most lesser dragons have at least one breath weapon. Each breath weapon is different and explanations are given in the monsters descriptive text under the appropriate heading.

**DAMAGE:** Dragons grow at a rapid rate, however smaller dragons are not able to deal the potent damage dealt by older and more experienced dragons. Dragons in age category 1 do 1/2 of the listed damage and those in age category 4 do 1/2 greater than the listed damage.

**BITE:** Bite attacks deal the indicated damage plus the dragon's damage bonus listed in each chart (DB).

**CLAW:** Claw attacks deal the indicated damage plus 1/4 the dragon's damage bonus listed in each chart (DB).

**WING:** Some lesser dragons can slam opponents with its wings, even when flying. Wing attacks deal the indicated damage plus 1/2 the dragon's damage bonus listed in each chart (DB).

**TAIL SLAP:** Some lesser dragons can slap one opponent each round with its tail. A tail slap deals the indicated damage plus the dragon's listed damage bonus (DB).

**TAIL SWEEP:** This special attack allows a dragon of at least large size to sweep with its tail. The sweep affects a half-circle with a radius of 10 feet from the tail's base. Only creatures 1/2 the size of the dragon are affected. A tail sweep automatically deals the indicated damage plus the dragon's damage bonus. Affected creatures can attempt a dexterity save to take half damage.

**GRAPPLING:** Lesser dragons do not favor grapple attacks, though their crush attack uses normal grapple rules. A dragon can always use its breath weapon while grappling, as well as its spells and spell-like abilities.

**WINDBLAST:** While flying, a dragon is able to create a wind blast with its wings that can knock people over and blow small items

away. This is generally used to stir up dust, deflect missile weapons, knock out magic users and the like. Affected creatures of medium size or smaller should make a dexterity check to see if they are knocked prone by the blast. Dwarves and other stout creatures add +4 to their dexterity saves.

**CAMOUFLAGE:** Some dragons have this ability. They use this ability to conceal themselves from others. A successful check means that the dragon is hidden so well as to be almost invisible. All checks are made with a +2 bonus. The dragon can move up to one-half normal speed and remain hidden. Hide checks suffer no penalty in this circumstance. At more than one-half and up to full speed, the dragon suffers a -5 penalty (cumulative with the bonus) to the check to remain hidden. It's practically impossible (-20 penalty) to hide while running or charging.

If the dragon is being observed, even casually, they cannot hide. If observers are momentarily distracted, though, the dragon can attempt to hide. While the observer averts its attention from the character, the dragon can attempt to get to a hiding place. This check, however, is at a -10 penalty because the dragon has to move quickly to the hiding place. A dragon cannot hide if there is nothing to hide behind or conceal oneself with.

This ability allows a dragon to move so silently that others cannot hear the movement. The dragon can use this ability both indoors and outdoors. A dragon can move up to one-half its normal speed at no penalty. At more than one-half and up to the dragon's full speed, the dragon suffers a -5 penalty. It's practically impossible (-20 penalty) to move silently while running or charging.

Dragons can hide and move silently at the same time.

**FRIGHTFUL PRESENCE:** Unless otherwise noted, lesser dragons do not gain frightful presence.

**IMMUNITIES:** All dragons are immune to sleep and paralysis effects.

**SPELL RESISTANCE:** As lesser dragons age, they become more resistant to spells and spell-like abilities, as indicated in the tables below.

**KEEN SENSES:** A dragon sees four times as well as a human in shadowy illumination and twice as well in normal light. They also have *darkvision* out to 80 feet and the *scent* ability. They have superior hearing as well and are able to pinpoint almost any opponent unless the target is magically hidden such as with an *invisibility* spell.

## ECOLOGY

Lesser dragons are found in most climes. As with all dragons they are immune to most temperature variations, though some prefer warm or cold climes. Some are adaptable, but most have already developed specialized traits which limit them to certain types of environment, such as the *nakal*, which finds itself limited to jungle and forest terrain. All of them are meat eaters and either trap their prey or stalk it.

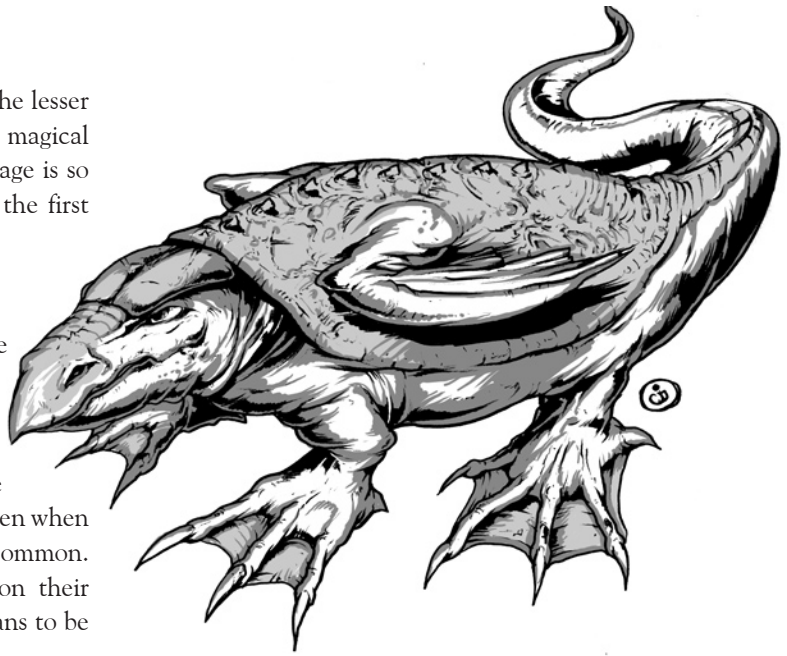


## LESSER DRAGONS AND DRAGONS

Dragons are intelligent beasts and have little to do with the lesser drakes, for they see them as little more than animals or magical beasts, fit perhaps for eating, but nothing else. Their lineage is so corrupted or ancient and they are so far removed from the first hatchlings that dragons abhor their company.

### FAMILIARS & MINIONS

On occasion men or women of valor are able to subdue a dragon and bind it to the master. This is impossible for any adult or mature lesser dragon that does not have some rudimentary intelligence. If it is able to speak one can appeal to its vanity, pride or fears, but otherwise one cannot. Like any animal however, if these creatures are taken when they are hatchlings, training them is possible and not uncommon. Of course like any wild beast, these wyrms can turn on their masters in a moment and the master find out what it means to be a dragon's meal.



## THE WYRMS

### BEAKED DRAGON

**NO. APPEARING:** 1

**SIZE:** Special (see below)

**HD:** Special (see below)

**MOVE:** 20 ft., 60 ft. (swim)

**AC:** Special (see below)

**ATTACKS:** 2 Claw (1d6), Bite (1d8)

**SPECIAL:** Breath Weapon, Camouflage, Improved Grab, Powerful Charge, Spell Resistance, Spell Use

**SAVES:** P

**INT:** Special (see below)

**ALIGNMENT:** Neutral

**TYPE:** Dragon

**TREASURE:** Special (see below)

**XP:** Special, see Appendix

More turtle than lizard, the beaked dragon is a wide bodied creature with thick, round overlapping scales across its back and sides. Its tail is long, thick in its beginning and tapering down to a cone shaped point. Its neck, with multiple folds of skin is wide and long as well and ends only where the armored head begins. A full adult can be up to 30 feet long. Its narrow jaws are capped with fierce beaks on the upper and lower jaw. It is able to open its toothless maw extremely wide. Its head is crowned by two, large dwarf-sized scales. Short legs give way to long, webbed claws. Two small wings adorn its back, and though these are useless for flight, they serve the creature well in the deep sea currents where it is often encountered.

Beaked dragons are very heavy creatures, bearing too much weight for their forms. For this reason they prefer to dwell in watery environs, living in swamps, rivers, lakes and upon the world's seas.

They are not particularly agile swimmers, but are rather fast. They are able to use their bulks to float or settle in the water and spend a great deal of time doing so. They can hold their breath for over an hour and use this ability to wait for prey-animals to walk near. They are old creatures, some of the earliest dragons to walk the earth, appearing throughout the legends of the ancients. They are solitary and are never encountered with other members of their species. Females are born with hundreds of fertile eggs in the womb, which they lay from time to time.

These beasts possess little more than an animal intelligence, are very aggressive and almost always willing to take a meal. They eat until they are gorged and usually rut around in their kill until the scent of it covers their bodies. They dig very deep dens wherever the ground is solid enough to hold up, but even so, their dens are constantly collapsing and the creatures are made to dig their way out again. In these dens they lay their eggs and often drag carcasses back. If there is treasure in them it is usually buried in the mire and filth of the beaked dragons past meals.

**DRAGON MAGIC:** Three times a day the beaked dragon is able to cast *transmute rock to mud*. It uses this ability to escape, dig dens or to lay traps as it is able to lie for up to an hour in the mud holding its breath. They also have a limited spell resistance, a hallmark of the species' longevity. When attacked or frightened, the beaked dragon's scales stiffen, and for a limited 4 melee rounds, act as a *barkskin* spell. All spells and their affects act as if cast by a 5<sup>th</sup> level druid.

**BREATH WEAPON:** The beaked dragon has no breath weapon in the traditional sense. However, when the beaked dragon bites its victim, it is able to cough up its own stomach acids which immediately soak that part of the victim caught in the creature's beak. Along with the damage of the bite, the victim must make a successful constitution save (CL 4) or suffer a further 1d8 points of damage per round they are caught. The dragon is not able to do any other attacks while holding a victim.

**COMBAT:** Beaked dragons generally lie in wait upon the edges of a lake or other body of water. They are hidden beneath the water. Any creature that passes by and the dragon feels it can eat without too much fuss is subject to the beast's sudden charge and a wicked bite. Once the creature bites the prey it drags it back into the water. If it is suddenly attacked by other creatures, it curls up and casts *barkskin* on itself.

**POWERFUL CHARGE:** A beaked dragon leaps from its concealed position, hoping to surprise its prey with its charge and latch on before it has a chance to escape or defend itself. In addition to the normal benefits and hazards of a charge, this allows the beast to make a single bite attack that inflicts 1d8+2 (for the charge) points of damage on the unfortunate recipient. It can only charge upon creature's within 30 feet.

**CAMOUFLAGE:** Beaked dragons are able to remain motionless under water for up to an hour. The large scales look something like bark, thus they appear as a dead tree in the water. See above for full camouflage ability.

**IMPROVED GRAB:** The dragon's beak is very powerful. Any target bit by the creature during a charge attack suffers a further 1d8 points of damage per round it is held and also suffers from the breath weapon affects above. Breaking free of the dragon's grip requires a successful strength check (CL equal to the creature's hit die).

#### AGE CHART

AGE	SIZE	HD	AC	DB	SR	INT	TR
1	5'	2	12	—	—	9	4
2	15'	4	14	1	—	9	6
3	20'	7	18	2	4	9	9
4	30'	11	20	3	4	10	13

#### BEAKED DRAGON IN AIHRDE

Beaked dragons are common throughout Aihilde, but are a particular nuisance in the Great Soup Marsh in southern Ethrum. There they thrived during the long Winter Dark due to that swamp's proximity to the Eldwood and the Great Oak. They are a plague to the lords of Brindisium as they are forever crossing the Bay of Moridain from their marshy homelands. They do however bring the folk of that southern nation a bit of wealth for their eggs are prized by the dwarves of Norgorad-Kam as a delicacy. The eggs bring a hefty 10 golden crown apiece in the open market.

#### CH-CRUP

**NO. APPEARING:** 1

**SIZE:** Special (see below)

**HD:** Special (see below)

**MOVE:** 30 ft., 60 ft (swim)

**AC:** Special (see below)

**ATTACKS:** 4 claw (1d4), 1 bite (1d12), 1 coil

**SPECIAL:** Breath Weapon, Camouflage,

Constriction, Larvae, Spell Use

**SAVES:** P, M

**INT:** Special (see below)

**ALIGNMENT:** Chaotic Evil

**TYPE:** Dragon

**TREASURE:** Special (see below)

**XP:** Special, see Appendix

The ch-crup, or crup for short, is a large dragon, ranging up to 20 feet in length. The crup have long, narrow snouts filled with row upon row of long razor sharp teeth. Their eyes are huge and bulberous and allow it to see in complete darkness. Two thin veils of flesh hang from the middle of their lower jaw and are often brightly colored. The crup are able to draw breath in and fill these sacks with air. The sacks stretch to enormous sizes. Once released, the air passes across through the mouth and around the teeth which have long hollow tubular shapes on them. By opening or closing the mouth, moving the tongue and controlling the exhalation, the crup is able to create an eerie soft musical sound. These sacks also allow the creature to travel great distances under water. The creature's body is long and snake like, its six legs short and clawed and its tail long. The creature's scales are small, hardly discernible, and the crup sports a long spiny ridge of thin, hollow spikes along the length of its back and tail. They are able to make these spikes light up with a faint hollow glow. These dragons are darkly colored in blues and blacks or deep greens.



The crup prefer cooler climates and are never encountered in the tropics. They also prefer mountains or forests, places where they can lay in wait, hiding while they call for their prey. Being solitary hunters they are never encountered in groups. The crup are asexual creatures and born with small polyps on the roof of their mouths. The polyps are actually small larvae that detach themselves from the crup's mouth during combat and attach themselves to the victim. If they successfully attach to the victim they fill their air sacks and begin the sing song charm immediately dissuading the adult crup from attacking. The adult breaks off the attack and flees. The larvae poisons the victim eventually causing a coma (see below) at which time it devours the creature, growing quickly as it eats.

The crup cannot fly at all, but moves more like a snake does, using their legs to pull and push the long, tenuous body along. They are not fast, but are able to coil up onto themselves and spring forth, attacking any aggressor or prey-animal. They are able swimmers, better in the water in fact than on land. Their air sacks allow them to travel deep into rivers, lakes and even oceans and they often take up residence on the edges of such bodies of water to hunt their prey. They usually make their dens not far from where they hunt and drag their prey to the dens to eat.

Crup possess a rudimentary intelligence, almost human (see chart below) and have memories of the dragons they once were. They dig deep dens, sometimes in the banks of rivers, with entrances under water, where they keep the baubles they are able to salvage from their kills.

Crup age poorly and their scales and spines begin to fall off which accounts for their reduced armor class as mature dragons.

**DRAGON MAGIC:** Adult and mature crup are able to cast minor illusionist spells. They can cast *ghost sound* 3/day, limited *light* (½ its normal potency) from their spines 3/day, *blur* 1/day and a *phantasmal killer* 1/day.

**BREATH WEAPON:** Every turn, the crup is able to use its air sacks to create a sing song music that acts as a *charm person* or *charm monster* spell. It cannot do this while in combat, but must be still and concentrating, inhaling air and exhaling slowly. When it is able to do this any creatures within hearing, roughly 100 feet, must make a successful charisma save or come under the creatures spell. It acts in all respects like the spell of the same name. The dragon casts as a wizard equivalent to its hit dice.

**COMBAT:** Crup only hunt at night. They use their limited camouflage ability to hide, and once they feel secure they open their mouths wide and cast out with their breath weapon, trying to entice a prey animal close. They occasionally light up the spines on the back, briefly from bottom to top, to further entice victims. Once a creature comes within a few yards the crup launches out, striking with its large mouth and long teeth, hoping to pin the creature in its grasp. It will coil its body around the victim if need be, drawing it up to its toothy maw.

**CAMOUFLAGE:** Crup are able to blend in with dense foliage or dark crevices and the like. It allows them to hide and move silently. See above for full camouflage ability.

**CONSTRICTION:** A successful coil attack by the crup can lead to a constriction attack. In the round following the successful attack, the victim must make a strength save. If this save fails, the victim is constricted by the snake for either 1d6 or points of damage per round. A victim can make additional strength saves every round to escape constriction, but escape becomes more difficult as the crup tightens its grip. Strength saves to escape therefore suffer a -2 cumulative penalty for each round after the first that the victim is constricted.

**LARVAE:** There is a 1 in 5 chance that, upon a successful bite attack, the crup releases a larva from the roof of its mouth. This larva immediately crawls toward warm flesh, looking for a warm, dark spot, such as the arm pit, leg joint or behind the ear, and lodges itself into the victim. This generally takes 1d4 rounds. These creatures look exactly like the adults but are little more than an eighth of an inch long, about the size of a common tick. The creature bites into the new host, injecting a numbing agent to relieve the victim of pain and the knowledge that something stung it. It clings to the host, emits a tiny sound to warn off the adult's attack and then proceeds to burrow its head into the creature. It remains on the victim, its head literally burrowed into the skin, eating the flesh for sustenance. The creature's bile is highly toxic and victims begin suffering a mild fever within a day (no save). Victims have their movement rates cut in half. This fever is followed by mild seizures on the second day (no save), one every hour or so. These seizures cause loss of movement and ability for 1d6 rounds after each seizure and extreme headaches that make memorizing spells impossible. Within three days the victim suffers violent seizures that can cause brain damage if untreated (no save). The victim is cast to the ground into throes of pain for up to an hour 1d6 times daily. On the fourth day the victim slips into a coma (constitution save every day until fails, CL 8). At this point the baby crup begins to devour the victim. If the larvae is removed, the victim can recover after several weeks but risks suffering major brain damage (constitution save negates, CL 8, roll for each attribute. Failure reduces attribute by half). If at any time before the first two major seizures a *dispel chaos*, *heal*, *holy word*, *neutralize poison* or *remove disease* is cast, the crup larvae is killed and the victim suffers no further penalties.

AGE CHART

AGE	SIZE	HD	AC	DB	SR	INT	TR
1	1 inch	—	12	—	—	6	—
2	5'	3	13	—	—	9	4
3	15'	7	17	4	—	10	8
4	20'	9	13	8	3	12	10



## CRUP IN THE WORLD OF AIHRDE

Crup are found in almost all of the mountains of the northern hemisphere and both the Northern and Southern Ice Shelf. They are very common on the islands of Wodenhole and Gal-land. In the Cradle of the World they are most commonly found in the Salt Flats, the Holmgald, Shadow Mountains and Grundliche Mountains. The dwarves of Grundliche Hohle make a great sport out of hunting the creatures for their spines are easy to shape and very durable.

### FLYING DRAGON

**NO. APPEARING:** 6-18

**SIZE:** Special (see below)

**HD:** Special (see below)

**MOVE:** 20 ft., 80 ft. (fly)

**AC:** Special (see below)

**ATTACKS:** Claws (1d4), Bite (1d6), Tail Slap (1d4)

**SPECIAL:** Breath Weapon, Confusion, Overbear, Poison

**SAVES:** P

**INT:** Special (see below)

**ALIGNMENT:** Chaotic Evil

**TYPE:** Dragon

**TREASURE:** Special (see below)

**XP:** Special, see Appendix

These are small dragons, ranging only a dozen feet in length. They have narrow bodies, two legs and large wings with a span greater than the length of their bodies. Their feet are long and thin as well, capped by toes more like tendrils with razor sharp claws. Their eyes are always green, wide and more like a cat's than anything else. They test the air with forked tongues and use specially adapted senses to feel the tremor of the earth as it vibrates up the tree stems upon which they make their homes. They are adept fliers and can run with some speed. They have rows of small but sharp teeth in their long snout. Two thin, obsidian horns rise from their brow. They are orange-red or red in color.

The flying dragon spends the bulk of its life in the tree tops, coming down only to feed. They nest in small pods along thick branches of deciduous trees, sleeping in crooks of limbs and the like. They lay their eggs in the tree and rear their young there. Their pods rarely number more than a score, but sometimes, if an area offers good hunting, several pods, up to a dozen, can be located in close proximity of each other. Their scales are small but very sensitive and are able to detect the tell tale sounds of creatures approaching along the forest floor up to 500 yards away. They use their wings and agile legs to leap from branch to branch, passing through the trees more like primates than flying creatures.

They are skilled hunters, though one good sized meal keeps the creature at bay for a week or more. They are often spotted watching or following people in the forest, their hollow, vacant stares filled with only a dim glow of intelligence, and only a vague curiosity about a possible future meal. If they are hungry however, they attack almost any target, no matter the size. Once killed the whole pod

settles upon the unfortunate victim and makes a meal out of them. This is the only time a flying dragon comes out of its trees.

The flying dragon is a particularly vicious creature and mean tempered. Their nascent intelligence allows them enough understanding to realize the harm and damage they do and they often revel in dragging out the suffering of a kill, watching it die over time.

**DRAGON MAGIC:** They have little or no magic about them. They are able, however, to make a tremendous amount of noise and confuse their prey-animals by using their deep guttural voices and croaking incessantly. When a pod of 5 or more is encountered the dragons begin croaking and throwing their voices. It quickly begins to sound as if there are scores of the creatures all over the forest and anyone within hearing is subject to *confusion*. Those affected automatically lose initiative for the first round of combat. A successful wisdom save negates the affects of the confusion.

**BREATH WEAPON:** Three times a day flying dragons can breathe a gout of sulfuric ash. The ash scorches any metallic equipment it comes into contact with, singes cloth, rope, leather and similar items and burns flesh. Those so struck take 1d4 points of damage. A successful dexterity save reduces damage by half.

**COMBAT:** The flying dragon is a mean spirited hunter and almost always attacks in groups. When a prey-animal enters their territory they begin croaking to one another in their guttural voices, and continue to do so until the prey begins to look distracted. As soon as the prey becomes vulnerable, or after the duration of the croaking, the flying dragons attack by swooping in and around the prey. One or two of them always go for the legs and rear, pulling at the victim while a third swoops for the head trying to topple the victim over. The whole pod falls upon the victim at that point, initially going for the legs or wings, to stop the creature from escaping.





**OVERBEARING:** When three or more flying dragons attack a single opponent they are able to attempt an overbearing attack. The three dragons get one attack. They add 3 to their attack roll. All standard overbearing rules apply. The defender gets a standard armor class of 15, strength and size difference modifiers apply. For each size difference larger add +2, and for each size difference smaller subtract -2. If a hit is successful, the defender is knocked prone for the remainder of that round. The following round all three dragons attack with a +5 on their to hit rolls. The dragons do suffer a -2 to their armor class while attempting to overbear.

**POISON:** On a successful hit with its bite attack the flying dragon is able to deliver a poisonous bite. Someone so bitten by a flying dragon must make a constitution save. A failed save on the first round causes 1d8 points of damage and the character becomes ill, suffering a -1 to all physical attribute checks and a -1 to hit and damage for ten minutes. A successful save halves the listed damage for first round effects and there are no effects in the following rounds. First round effects always occur immediately.

Ten turns, or 10 minutes after the initial bite, another constitution save must be made to avoid the further effects of the poison. A successful save indicates the poison has been fought off. A failed save causes a further 1d8 points of damage and the victim becomes violently ill, reduced to severe stomach cramps and vomiting. The character must make daily saves thereafter until the poison is successfully fought off or runs its course-or the character dies. The affects of the poison linger for 1d6 days.

A failed save indicates that the effects listed continue for another day, to a maximum of six days. Additionally, the character loses 1 point of constitution per failed save. The same process is followed for each successive day until the character successfully saves and fights off the poison. For every five points of constitution lost, one point is lost permanently. Should a character's constitution ever reach zero, it is dead.

AGE CHART

AGE	SIZE	HD	AC	DB	SR	INT	TR
1	1'	1	12	—	—	6	—
2	5'	4	14	—	—	6	2
3	8'	8	16	2	—	7	9
4	12'	10	18	4	—	8	12

FLYING DRAGONS IN THE WORLD OF AIHRDE

Flying dragons are found throughout the world of Aihilde. They are particularly attracted to regions where faerie dwell, and often develop a symbiotic relationship with the pixies, sprites and the like. They are known to exist in the Voralberg Mountains and the Detmold and together with small hordes of malicious sprites they hound caravans and the like. Sometimes the sprites use the dragons as mounts.

LIAL BEAST (FEATHERED DRAGON)

**NO. APPEARING:** 1-6  
**SIZE:** Special (see below)  
**HD:** Special (see below)  
**MOVE:** 50 ft., 80 ft. (fly)  
**AC:** Special (see below)  
**ATTACKS:** 2 claw, front (1d2), 2 claw, rear (1d4), tail (1d4), wings (1d2), bite (1d8)  
**SPECIAL:** Breath Weapon, Gaze, Rend, Spell Use  
**SAVES:** M  
**INT:** Special (see below)  
**ALIGNMENT:** Chaotic  
**TYPE:** Dragon  
**TREASURE:** Special (see below)  
**XP:** Special, see Appendix

Easily one of the most exotic and beautiful dragons, the lial beast is large with huge wings that have a 30 foot span when fully grown. The creature walks on two or four legs, the front being noticeably shorter than the rear. Its body is squat and short, crowned by a long neck and thin head and snout. The scales on the snout and back of the neck are long-like spears and pointed. The lial beast raises these high when threatened or excited. The creature's eyes are like many faceted jewels and set high and far back on its brow. The lial beast's scales on its body and legs are long and thin, almost feather like. They are colored as well, bright colors with no discernible pattern. The wings consist of similar scales and colors. These make the creature look strange as it sticks out in almost any environment. It has long claws and a wicked toothy snout.

The lial beast is rare, found only in wide open country such as deserts, savannahs or prairie. They are normally solitary hunters but are occasionally encountered in groups of up to 6. If so encountered one or two of them are generally hatchlings. They range over broad territories of hundreds of miles, taking flight and hunting for prey from the air. They do nest, generally returning each year to the same nest. Sometimes they eat their prey where they kill, at others they bring it back to the nest to devour. They instinctively steal shiny objects and are therefore one of the few lesser dragons who actively gather treasure, though this is not hoarded so much as dropped or woven into the nest. On occasion these creatures nest in cities where they have learned to use their abilities to confuse and hypnotize crowds of people, stealing one or two of the crowd for dinner.

They favor herd animals for prey and are often spotted by farmers as they swoop down and single out a lone cow, horse or pig and drive it further from the herd, or scoop it up and carry it off. They are not averse to hunting other prey and have a dragon cunning that allows them to attempt to mesmerize a victim to make it easier to kill.

**DRAGON MAGIC:** The lial beast is magical and possesses several illusionist abilities. Adult and mature lial are able to cast *dancing lights* 3/day, *influence* 3/day, *hypnotism* 2/day, *blur* 1/day, *hypnotic*



*pattern* 1/day and *hallucinatory terrain* 1/day. Their caster level is the same as their hit dice.

**BREATH WEAPON:** The lial beast is able to strike its victims with a cloud of clear gas that adheres to anything that it comes into contact with. The gas immediately liquefies, and appears as a reddish stain on armor, clothes or skin. Within contact the solidified gas begins to burn the skin. In the first melee round the skin becomes red and irritated (no affect to inanimate objects). In the second round the affected skin feels as if it is burning, so much so that the victim becomes distracted, suffering a -1 penalty on all to hit rolls and attribute checks. The third plays witness to tiny black polyps appearing all over the affected area. These are expanding blood vessels. The pain is intense with a further -2 to to hit rolls and attribute checks. All penalties are cumulative. On the fourth round the vessels begin exploding, spraying puss and blood as they do. The damage is immense. Beginning in the 5<sup>th</sup> round victims suffer 1d12 hit points of damage per round that the gas remains up to the 8th round (roll on a d4). A constitution save is allowed for each round the victim suffers the jell; a successful roll halves all affects. Neutralize or delay poison can slow or remove the threat. Water also neutralizes the venom. Leaping into a creek, well, pond or the like would wash the liquid poison off, while pouring a little water on the victim (such as from a flask) will have no affect.

**COMBAT:** The lial beast spends much of its time in the skies, slowly circling, ever searching for prey. It has keen vision and can spot most movement and creatures both great and small. It is however, a rather delicate dragon, for its body, legs and neck is thin so it abhors direct attacks. Rather, it swoops down upon its victim, using its breath weapon to confuse or disorient. It then lands, spreading its multicolored wings and dipping its head low, to beguile those who are watching. It uses this attack to further cripple the prey's ability to defend itself. It pounces upon the prey, rending it and devouring it. If there is more than one, it tries to separate one from the group.

**WING/GAZE:** Any living being that views the lial beast's wings must succeed at a constitution save or be hypnotized as by the spell. Lial beasts are not immune to their own gaze. It can only affect creatures in front of the lial beast and the creature can do no other attacks while its wings are so spread.

#### AGE CHART

AGE	SIZE	HD	AC	DB	SR	INT	TR
1	5'	1	8	–	–	9	–
2	10'	3	10	–	–	10	–
3	20'	6	12	1	–	12	7
4	30'	9	14	2	–	14	10

#### LIAL BEAST IN THE WORLD OF AIHRDE

The lial beast is found throughout the world of Aihrde. It flourished during the Winter Dark and expanded its territory and numbers. They are not uncommon. Their scales, thin and flexible, though strong, are highly sought after and bring a good price from craftsmen. A single scale can bring up to 15gp on the market. They are used for crafting armor and some weapons. Any such weapon or armor gains a +1 to its to hit or AC values.

#### MUSK WYRMS

**NO. APPEARING:** 1-8, spawn

**SIZE:** Special (see below)

**HD:** Special (see below)

**MOVE:** 60 ft., swim 30 ft.

**AC:** Special (see below)

**ATTACKS:** 2 claw (1d4), bite (1d6), tail (1d4), wing (1-2)

**SPECIAL:** Breath Weapon, Camouflage, Poisonous Bite, Spell-like Abilities

**SAVES:** P

**INT:** Special (see below)

**ALIGNMENT:** Chaotic Evil

**TYPE:** Dragon

**TREASURE:** Special (see below)

**XP:** Special, see Appendix

The musk dragon is a long, thin beast, a distant relative of the red dragon. Its snake-like body is matched by a long tail and head, so that in the adults the creature is often 30 feet long. It has a long snout and wide jaws, filled with massive fangs. Thick, syrupy musk constantly streams from the beast's mouth, hanging in rope like tendrils to the ground or splattering against its side. Its legs bend toward its body making for an ungainly look, but allow the creature to attain very rapid speeds and allow it to gain purchase in the tops of trees or upon the sides of cliffs. Its skin is thick and consists of small, indiscernible scales from head to toe. Only around its eyes are the scales a little larger and noticeable. Upon its back are large wings, which fold in upon themselves when the creature is not in flight. The musk wyrm has little intelligence and its eyes reflect this in vacant, hungry stares.



Musk dragons congregate in pods of up to eight. When they breed they spawn, and hundreds of tiny wyrms are forever crawling about until they are devoured by their parents or other predators. Only a few make it to be young adults and these either fight their way into an existing pod or travel off to start their own. They are found in most temperate environments, but prefer hot country, jungles, scrub or even deserts. They are highly territorial, ranging over broad regions, marking trees, rocks and the like with their huge claws. Any trespasser is investigated and often attacked. Only the musk goblins (see below) are able to live in the shadow of these beasts, and often they are devoured, killed or maimed by their protectors.

Musk wyrms always hole up in natural caves where there is a water source. The dens are usually very deep in the ground. They hoard treasure like most larger dragons, picking over the debris of their feeding to pull back anything that interests them, which is most things. They do not pile the treasure in any noticeable fashion, but rather drop it wherever they are in the den. There is almost always a grove of bandy willows (see musk goblin below) around their dens, as the sapling of these peculiar trees can only take root in the droppings of musk dragon. The grove usually hides the den's entrance and serves as a place of refuge for the small breed of symbiotic goblins that dwell with the musk dragons.

They are the most vicious of the miasmal wyrms, filled with an ever driving urge to kill, a remnant or shadow of its larger cousin. They attack in packs or singly, for they are fearless. They fight amongst themselves constantly, the larger or stronger gain the first place at the meal, the warmest place in the sun and so on.

**DRAGON MAGIC:** Musk dragons possess inherent magic abilities. They acquire these abilities as adult dragons. They are as follows: *locate object* 3/day; 4 *hypnotism* 1/day. Their caster level is the same as their hit dice.

**BREATH WEAPON:** Once a day the musk dragon is able to cough up a cloud of thick, flammable gas. Any creature within a 20 foot radius of the dragon's snout suffers 1d4 points of damage per round they are in the cloud. The cloud is subject to wind currents and the like, but will dissipate in 1d6 rounds regardless of the weather. A successful constitution save reduces this damage by half. If there are any open flames in the cloud or any open flames enter the cloud before it disperses the cloud will explode, causing a further 1d10 points of damage to any in the area of affect. A successful constitution save reduces this by half as well.

**COMBAT:** Musk wyrms are vicious creatures and usually begin



their attack by rushing a creature from hiding, biting it with its poisonous maw and retreating back. They often appear as if they are just defending their territory or trying to drive an intruder out, but they are in fact waiting for the poison of their bite to infect the wound of the victim and incapacitate them. If pressed they fight like any cornered animal, using its bite, claws and tail simultaneously. It rarely uses its breath weapon, saving this nasty item if it is forced to flee, hoping the flammable cloud will dissuade any would be pursuers.

**CAMOUFLAGE:** Musk wyrms are able to remain motionless in the scrub, sand or brush for days. See above for full camouflage ability.

**POISONOUS BITE:** A successful attack from a musk wrym bite exposes the victim to a bacteria-based poison. In addition to the bite damage, the victim must make a constitution saving throw or the poison infects the blood stream. The victim becomes septic within an hour and the victim begins to hyperventilate, losing strength, focus and control of his actions. After that, unless cured he suffers 1 point of incurable hit point damage every turn until death. During this time the pain causes the victim to suffer a -2 penalty to all actions and checks. *Delay poison* will delay the poison's effect, while *remove disease*, *neutralize poison*, *cure critical wounds*, or a more powerful curative spell will remove it entirely (though not the damage; a *restoration* spell is required to return a victim to full).

AGE CHART

AGE	SIZE	HD	AC	DB	SR	INT	TR
1	1'-3'	1-3hp	8	—	—	—	—
2	5'	2-4	12	—	—	8	4
3	15'	5-8	14	4	—	10	9
4	30'	8-10	18	8	—	12	10

THE MUSK WRYM IN THE WORLD OF AIHRDE

The musk wyrms are found throughout the world of Aihilde, living in the central temperate belt. They are very common in the Cradle of the World around the Luneberg Plains, The Toten Fields, Punj, Rhuneland, Aufstrag and the Red Hills. They were used as hunting beasts for the lords of the Winter Dark when they ruled the land not so many years past. They were bred and kept as pets and used to hunt elves and other fey. But it was against the halflings that they were most commonly used against. Many of those folk fled to the Grossewald forests and fought a long, bitter war against the Winter Dark. The dragons were used there to hunt them, root them out and kill or maim them with disease. The halflings became skilled at many tasks, not the least of which was dragon slaying and they counted many musk wyrms in their tallies. They developed magical bells (see dragon bells below) to warn them of the approaching wyrms and set ambushes and traps to kill or wound the beast. To this day the wyrms still dwell in those parts. Though the breeder pens are long since fallen into ruin, the dragons themselves thrive in the wild world that is the ruin of the Winter Dark.

NAKAL DRAGON

**NO. APPEARING:** 1, 2-5  
**SIZE:** Special (see below)  
**HD:** Special (see below)  
**MOVE:** 30 ft., 30 ft. (fly), 20 ft. (swim)  
**AC:** Special (see below)  
**ATTACKS:** tail (1d2), bite (1d6)  
**SPECIAL:** Fly, Move Silently, Rake, Scent  
**SAVES:** P  
**INT:** Special (see below)  
**ALIGNMENT:** Neutral  
**TYPE:** Dragon  
**TREASURE:** Special (see below)  
**XP:** Special, see Appendix

The nakal dragons are small creatures, ranging up to 12 feet with the tail. They stand more like a bird than a lizard, moving rapidly through the forest on their two, thick hind legs. They have enormous, clawed feet. Their arms are small and used for little more than balance for the thin, membrane that serve as wings and that stretch between their arms and the creature's body. They range in color from a rusty red to a deep green. Their underbellies are almost always sallow yellow and scaled with tiny small scales that look more like chips of bark than anything else. They have a ridge of spines, each one connected to the one behind with a thin skin laced with thousands of tiny veins. Their snouts are wide and culminate in a beak upon the upper jaw that they use to tear flesh or armor. Their long, narrow tail ends in a bulb upon which rest a host of barbs.



The nakal dragons are only found in heavy forests or jungles in almost any climate. They are very territorial, marking their territory by dragging their sides against large trees. Their territory ranges up to 15 square miles, depending on the size of the dragon.



They only cross out of the territory if food becomes short, or in the case of males, to hunt out an adult female to mate with. Though often encountered alone, nakal dragons occasionally travel in groups of 2-5. If traveling in a group it is usually a family group of one adult female, one or two hatchlings, and one young adult female. On occasion, males are encountered in pairs, a young adult attaching itself to the older mature nakal in order to hone its skills as a hunter. Female young adult nakals do the same with a mature female for hunting and nesting. In both instances the young adult constantly challenges the older until it is able to kill it and take over its territory.

They are able to fly only short distances of 100-120 feet. They use their legs to leap and their wings for lift. They are able to cast *fly* upon themselves three times a day however. They often use this ability if it allows them to get a better vantage on their prey. Their wing span is large, despite their lack of flight ability and allows them to glide great distances if they drop from a precipice or from the tops of tall trees.

The nakal are highly predacious and skilled hunters. They are always on the move, searching for the scent of their prey, generally wild animals, but they are keenly intelligent and inquisitive and will hunt new prey-animals if that prey-animal should wander into its territory. This of course makes humans, demi-humans and humanoids perfect targets. Once they have picked up a scent they track the creature until they find it. They single out what appears to be the weakest and smallest in the herd and attack it.

**DRAGON MAGIC:** Nakal have very limited magical abilities. They are able to cast a *fly* spell upon themselves three times a day. The creature casts as an 8<sup>th</sup> level wizard.

**COMBAT:** Nakal stalk their prey until the creature(s) move into an open area that allows the dragon to use its weak wings. They attack by a sudden rush and leap, using their wings to give lift and balance. If the area allows it they will leap and cast *fly* upon themselves to attack their prey from above, using their weight to drive the victim to the ground. They try to attack from behind or above, leaping onto a creature and biting it in the back or head while raking with their two enormous clawed feet. Once a victim goes down, whether it is dead or alive, the nakal continues to hold on with its beak and rake with its claws, while striking with its barbed tail and lodging small darts in its skin. These secrete a noxious poison that causes massive tissue damage and paralysis. The attack continues until the victim stops moving. They let go only if they are attacked and they viciously defend their prey as long as it seems feasible.

**MOVE SILENTLY (Dexterity):** The nakal is able to move silently while stalking its prey. This ability allows the dragon to move so silently that others cannot hear the movement. The creature can move up to one-half its normal move without penalty. At more than one-half or up to normal speed the creature suffers a -5 penalty. Once it attacks or charges it cannot move silently.

**RAKE:** If a nakal dragon successfully bites, it lodges its beak in the victim. By leaping up and using its wings for balance and lift, the creature is able to make two rake attacks with its hind legs. These attacks have an additional +3 bonus to hit, and inflict 2d4 hit points of damage each.

**SCENT (WISDOM):** Upon a successful check, the creature is able to track its victim. These creatures are natural hunters, and are able to "sniff out" singular scents, even when that odor is overpowered by another. They can follow dry trails up to 24 hours old without penalty. After 24 hours, they suffer a -1 penalty and an additional -1 penalty per day following. Scent functions to a range of 30 feet. Winds, weather conditions, and other situations may render this ability useless or reduce its potency. Other effects are at the Castle Keeper's discretion.

**POISON BARBS:** The nakal's tail ends in a lump of hard flesh covered in thousands of tiny, venom filled barbs. With a successful strike any number of barbs remains stuck in the victim. They immediately inject venom into the skin which paralyzes the tissue around the wound (not more than an inch in diameter). This paralysis numbs the immediate affect of the wound and often convinces prey that they were not struck at all. A successful intelligence check (CL 4) reveals that the skin is numb. The numbness lasts 1 turn. After one full round of being struck, the venom begins acting as a calming agent, suppressing the prey's instincts to flee or fight (save on successful wisdom check). Victims who fail their save immediately cease all actions that would constitute resistance. Four full rounds after being struck, the prey's joints begin stiffening so that by the 5<sup>th</sup> round the victim is paralyzed (save on successful wisdom check, CL 6). The dragon then eats the paralyzed victim. The paralysis lasts for 24 hours. *Delay poison* will delay the poison's effect, while *remove disease*, *neutralize poison*, *cure critical wounds*, or a more powerful curative spell will remove it entirely.

**INFECTION:** Where the barbed tail strikes it leaves poisoned barbs. These barbs have venom on the outside, but the inside is poisonous as well. When pulled from the tail, a small lump of white tissue comes with it. This tissue is full of bacteria (the bacteria thrive on the venom lodged in the barbs, keeping the nakal dragon from poisoning itself). This bacterium infects the wounded area, rotting the tissue from the inside out. It takes many hours for the tissue to actually rot. The victim has a throbbing pain, and he takes 1 point of damage per hour for eight hours, that leads up to the skin suddenly collapsing to reveal a huge, deep, hole several inches wide. It often rots tissue to the bone. Discovery of the wound is possible, though not likely, as it looks like red sore spot until the flesh gives away. *Delay poison* will delay the poison's effect, while *remove disease*, *neutralize poison*, *cure critical wounds*, or a more powerful curative spell will remove it entirely. Victims poisoned by the barbs are usually damaged while still paralyzed and have little knowledge of the bacterial infection devouring their skin. Unless healed the affects of the wound remain for 7-12 days (d6), reducing all physical ability checks by -1.

**BREATH WEAPON:** They have no breath weapon.

#### AGE CHART

AGE	SIZE	HD	AC	DB	SR	INT	TR
1	1'	1	8	—	—	6	—
2	5'	2	10	—	—	6	—
3	10'	3	14	2	—	7	—
4	12'+	4	16	4	2	8	—

### THE NAKAL DRAGON IN THE WORLD OF AIHRDE

The nakal dragon is found in most forested environments throughout Aihilde. They are able to withstand extreme temperatures and can be found in tropical jungles and temperate forests. They prefer old growth forests and are most commonly encountered in Aenochia, Ethrum, Inklus-Naid and Aroyo. In the Cradle of the World they are most commonly found in the Darkenfold, Eldwood and Kellerwald. The nakal are prized for their poisons and the toxins are often found for sale in the sprawling cities of the New Empire or Avignon. They are hunted for sport by the Fontenouq, who at times, capture hatchlings and train them as guardians.

### TAGEAN WYRM (LEAF TAILED DRAGON)

**NO. APPEARING:**

**SIZE:** Special (see below)

**HD:** Special (see below)

**MOVE:** 50 ft., 80 ft. (fly)

**AC:** Special (see below)

**ATTACKS:** 2 claws (1d2), tail (1d4), bite (1d8)

**SPECIAL:** Acid Secretion, Rend, Spell Use

**SAVES:** P

**INT:** Special (see below)

**ALIGNMENT:** Neutral Good

**TYPE:** Dragon

**TREASURE:** Special (see below)

**XP:** Special, see Appendix

The tagean wurm is a long, thin light blue or green dragon. It ranges up to 30 feet including its tail, but this appendage is always half its body length, shaped like a broad leaf. The creature has long legs, clawed and webbed feet, but a short, thick neck. Its head is armored better than its body and its short snout is filled with scores of razor sharp teeth. It has wings, thin and wide that are able to fold in upon the creature's back, blending in with the creature's long thin scales. The tagean wurm spends much of its time in water and suffers predation from giant sharks and other creatures, so it has developed thick, long segmented scales for protection. On the narrow chest area the pattern is broken as one large, almost perfectly round scale exists. In an adult this scale can be three feet in diameter.

This rare creature is found only near warm ocean water where it spends a good deal of its life, hunting and for safety. The creature is largely benign, but can be very dangerous as it will eat anything.



They come onto land frequently both to hunt and nest. When they are on land they secrete a thick residue to coat their scaly hide. It's acidic in nature and at first burns whatever it comes into contact with, and eventually the secretion hardens into a thick, almost unbreakable shell. They are encountered in groups of 1-6 and work in tandem to hunt prey. They do this by dividing, spreading out and driving the prey-animal into the nesting area where they fall upon it and rend it to pieces.

They possess some intelligence, and are able to speak a rudimentary form of the vulgate and use some limited magics. They do not normally attack humans, elves and the like, but will do so to defend themselves. They can be made to offer their assistance if properly induced, i.e. payment in food, etc.

**DRAGON MAGIC:** By concentrating on an object they are laying on or grasping, the tagean wurm can cast *heat metal*. This ability has no set limit. It can also cast *water breathing* on itself 3/day. The wurm acts as a druid of the same level as he has hit dice.

**BREATH WEAPON:** The tagean wurm has a very weak breath weapon. Three times each day it is able to cough up a thick cloud of gaseous material which obscures any but magical vision. It uses the cloud to shield its escape.

**COMBAT:** The tagean wurm is not aggressive and generally only attacks when it is hunting or threatened. It is able to assess most encounters and tries to flee from anything it deems threatening, usually heading for the open water via flight. When cornered or hunting though, the creature attacks with a mad rush, raising up on its hind legs to grasp its victim. Using its broad tail for balance it leaps upon the victim and rends it with its hind legs. It continues pressing down using its ability to secrete acid to wound or kill its enemy.



**ACID SECRETION:** When a tagean wrym is out of the water it secretes a chemical with a substance like tar, with the properties of acid. This acid is extremely hot and burns whatever it comes into contact with, soaking into it and scarring it. Anything so coated suffers 3d6 points of damage so long as the dragon is on them and for 1d4 rounds afterwards. A successful constitution save reduces the damage by half.

**REND:** An opponent held in a tagean wrym's grip is dealt a series of rakes and bites, as the dragon's claws and teeth slash and bite the victim. The unfortunate victim of this rending automatically takes damage from all of the tagean wrym's attacks. No saving throw is allowed to resist the damage, nor is the wrym required to make an attack roll.

AGE CHART

AGE	SIZE	HD	AC	DM	SR	INT	TR
1	4'	1	15	—	—	10	—
2	8'	4	16	—	—	10	—
3	15'	5	18	—	—	11	6
4	30'	6	20	1	2	12	8

THE TAGEAN WRYM IN AIHRDE

This dragon is a very rare creature and found almost exclusively along the coasts of the Straights of Ursal and the Sea of Shenal. They are encountered more often in the Gelderland and the wilds of Aenochain Valley than near any civilized land. The tageans prize the beasts and never kill them for they have learned to harvest the trees that the tagean wrym despoils. For when the beast climbs onto trees, hunting or taking the sun, its secretions burn and harden the trees they use. These husks are greatly valued by the tagean weapon smiths and they are harvested, shaped and honed into battle spears (see below, magic items). Further, the chest scale is sought after by the tageans as well for once retrieved it serves as a lightweight, indestructible shield (see below). The creature is honored in Tagea and the surrounding islands, and temples have been built in its honor. Killing one is tantamount to an act of war from the men of Tagea, so holy has the beast become.

UNK WYRM (HORNED DRAGON)

- NO. APPEARING: 1, 1-12
- SIZE: Special (see below)
- HD: Special (see below)
- MOVE: 20 ft., 10 ft. (swim)
- AC: Special (see below)
- ATTACKS: 2 claw (1d4), bite (1d8)
- SPECIAL: Breath Weapons, Camouflage
- SAVES: P
- INT: Special (see below)
- ALIGNMENT: Neutral Evil
- TYPE: Dragon
- TREASURE: Special (see below)
- XP: Special, see Appendix



Unk wyrms are virtually wingless, long legged dragons with wide torsos, broad mouths and stubby tails. Their scaly skin is thick and hangs from their body in multiple folds. The scales themselves are long and pointed and interrupted by thick black spikes sprinkled across the creatures back and legs. Even its underbelly is covered in these pointed scales. The unk wrym averages about 15 feet in length, including their tail. At their broadest point they are about 4-5 feet wide. Their heads are as large as their torsos, covered in small, bony nobs. However, jutting from the back of their skulls are long, thick, cone-shaped spikes that serve as armor for the soft tissue of their upper backs and neck. Beyond this soft tissue, they range in color from mottled grey to deep green.

Unk wyrms are solitary hunters and are only encountered with other unk dragons when they are breeding. At such times the males' secrete a very powerful musk from glands on the back of the neck. The musk drives both males and females into a frenzy and they will attack almost anything they come across. Females are attracted to the musk and will travel great distances to find its source. In such times it is not uncommon to encounter a dozen or so unk dragons in one area. If encountered during musk (1-20 chance) the dragons gain a +4 to all attacks and saves.

The Unk wyrms are voracious feeders and after they exhaust the food supply in one area they move to another. For this reason they are encountered almost everywhere. Their ability to camouflage themselves allows them to change colors and blend in with the new environment. They are stationary hunters as well. They are not able to move quickly so they hide themselves and wait for a target of opportunity to pass by.

Unk wyrms are found in almost any climate and any terrain. They prefer rocky, scrub, forest or desert terrain where they are able to take greater advantage of the environment and use their camouflage abilities. They are competent, if slow, swimmers and are able to use the thin membrane that stretches between their forelegs and torsos to float or glide at sea. Sailors have reported sighting these strange horned dragons bobbing in the deep oceans.

**DRAGON MAGIC:** Unk wyrms have the ability to cast minor illusionist spells. They can cast once per day the following spells as a 5<sup>th</sup> level illusionist: *ghost sound*, *daze* and *hallucinatory terrain*.

**COMBAT:** The unk wyrm uses its ability to camouflage itself to lie in wait for its prey to pass by. When a prey-animal passes, the unk uses its breath weapon to launch a thick wad of poisonous saliva at the victim. As soon as the victim succumbs to the toxins, the unk wyrm emerges from hiding and devours it. When attacked, it relies on its natural armor, the rolls of skin, pointed scales and spikes to protect it while it drags the prey to a location wherein it can eat.

**CAMOUFLAGE:** Unk wyrms are able to blend in with any environment. They do this by using minor illusion ability to twist the surrounding foliage, rock, etc into shadows and color their spines and scales to resemble the natural area. See above for full camouflage ability with the following adjustments: when concealing themselves, they have a +4 bonus to hide checks and a +4 bonus to surprise rolls. They gain a similar bonus on any move silently checks.

**BREATH WEAPON:** The unk wyrm is forever vomiting up pieces of its most recent kills and rolling them around in its mouth, allowing its acidic saliva to dissolve the material into a thick pasty substance and using its forked tongue to roll the substance into stringy balls of slop. The slop is a horrid concoction of toxic poison. Once per day the unk is able to spit a glob of this poisonous material up to 40 feet in an area of about 5 square feet. Any creature struck is immediately covered in the thick, sticky slime. The vomit smells atrociously and the victim and anyone within 10 feet must make a successful constitution save (CL 4), or suffer nausea for 1d4 rounds and a -1 from all attacks and ability saves for the duration. The victim covered in the spit must make a successful constitution save (CL at the monsters HD) or suffer 1d4 points of damage per for every hit dice the dragon possesses. A successful dexterity save reduces this damage by half.

AGE CHART

AGE	SIZE	HD	AC*	DB	SR	INT	TR
1	2'	1	12	—	—	6	—
2	5'	2	14	—	—	6	2
3	8'	4	18	1	—	6	4
4	15'	8	22	2	1	6	6

\* All unk wyrms have a vulnerable spot behind their head where their musk glands are located. This spot is hard to get at for the protective spikes on the head cover it, but only has an AC of 5.

THE UNK WYRM IN AIHRDE

When Inzae gave the clutch of eggs to the All Father, there were many dragons kept therein, some great, some not so. The unk wyrm was one of those breeds that was runt and garnished little attention from the All Father. Though they are one of the most ancient breeds in Aihrde, they are rarely recognized as true dragons at all. Only the dwarves are schooled in their habits for the eldritch goblins used them from time to time as mounts and were able to take advantage

of their acidic vomit and concoct poisons and other toxins. They also fashioned many shields and armors from their scales and heads. They are found throughout Aihrde except in the Great Northern Shelf and Great Southern Ice Shelf.

SYMBIOTIC CREATURES

There are some creatures that can only live the shadows of others, and these symbiotic creatures are rare and usually wholly unique. Dragons offer all manner of creatures refuge, so long as those creatures can avoid the wrath of the dragons themselves.

DRAGON MEN OF KAATH

NO. APPEARING: 1-4  
SIZE: M  
HD: 5d10  
MOVE: 30 ft., 120 ft. (fly)  
AC: 16  
ATTACKS: 2 claw (1d2), bite (1 point) or by weapon  
SPECIAL: Spell Use, Fly  
SAVES: M  
INT: Supra-Genius  
ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Evil  
TYPE: Magical Beast  
TREASURE: 6  
XP: Special, see Appendix

These depraved creatures were once men, proud and tall. They were members of a race blessed by the gods and fawned over by Athria herself. But they took to sorceries and twisted themselves to look like the dark dragons they worshiped. They are tall, 6 feet and more. Their skin is white and pale, almost translucent. The blue veins trace spider web designs across their emaciated torsos, legs, arms and bald head. Their faces are unnaturally stretched, pulled by machinations of the forge and by dark sorceries, so that their lower jaw extends a half foot from their face and their upper curves over it in a long beak appendage. They have no noses, scalped away and their ears are shaped and pulled like long tendrils of useless flesh. Their eyes are wide and hollow and without lids. Their mouths, small and lipless, are filled with razor sharp teeth. Their thin arms end in wispy, clawed fingers and their legs are the same. They have a tail too; long, bony appendages with a thin veil of skin stretched over them. But they have wings, great leathery things, protruding from their backs, made of hollowed cane and their own abnormally stretched flesh.

The dragonmen are not great in number, but live over the wide world, hidden in towers built in the clouds or on high mountain slopes. Tales say of a great city of the dragonmen, where the greater part of their people lives. Here they breed and grow their race, waiting for a day they can gather all the folk of the Dragon Cult together and master the world. They dress in wildly colored silks, and are always bejeweled, with crowns and the like.



The dragonmen are an evil lot, driven to madness by their own religion. They are devoted to the worship of Lamul, an ancient blue dragon, and to this end they created and still foster the Dragon Cult (see below), whose members they watch through a variety of devices and to whom they answer when called. The dragonmen have come to believe in their own divinity, but they are more sorcerers than gods.

**DRAGON CONTROL:** The dragonmen are not generally powerful enough to control dragons, though the masters of their order probably could, but they are strong enough to subdue many of the lesser breed. Each dragonman encountered is likely to be accompanied or by a nakal wurm, crup or a lial beast.

**SPELL USE:** Each of the dragonmen, great or small, is a wizard. They range in level from 5<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>. The Grand Master of the cult is always a 20<sup>th</sup> level wizard and he is accompanied by four Acolytes to the Dragon, called Keepers of the Sacred Knowledge, each in turn a 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> level wizard. They possess a minimum intelligence of 15. They Dragonmen are able to draw from a wealth of sorcerous power. Dragonmen can draw upon all the wizard spells listed in the Players Handbook. They do not need books or scrolls as the spells are passed down through memories. They are limited by caster level and spells per day. For instance a 5<sup>th</sup> level Dragonman of Kaath with a 15 intelligence can cast five 0 level spells, five 1<sup>st</sup> level spells (one bonus for intelligence), two 2<sup>nd</sup> level spells and 1 3<sup>rd</sup> level spell. They can memorize any of the spells listed for 0-3<sup>rd</sup> level.

**COMBAT:** Dragonmen avoid fighting when they can. They are usually accompanied by acolytes or others and always use their servants to attack any threat or enemy. If forced to fight they employ their wizardry

**FLY:** All dragonmen can fly as the wizard spell of 10<sup>th</sup> level. This affect is permanent, thus they do not have to cast it, nor concentrate. Their wings are not strong enough to propel them or to give them lift, but they do move and appear as if they do and they do help guide them.

### MUSK GOBLIN (ELDRITCH)

**NO. ENCOUNTERED:** 1-6

**SIZE:** Small

**HD:** 2 (d8)

**MOVE:** 20 ft.

**AC:** 17 **XP:** 5+1

**ATTACKS:** By Weapon

**SPECIAL:** Assassin Abilities, Darkvision 60 ft., Greater Scrying, Rogue Abilities, SR 14

**SAVES:** M

**INT:** High

**ALIGNMENT:** Chaotic Evil

**TYPE:** Humanoid

**TREASURE:** 5

Musk goblins are small even for their kind, most not being more than three feet tall. They have thin arms and legs, with skin that seems to stretch over bones too large for it. They range from a mottled brown to gray in color and their skin is covered in small lumps and tumors. Often these are bleeding or secreting some ichorous puss. The musk goblins have wide, yellow eyes that give them keen sight, and elongated ears that allow them to discern noise at a great distance. As with all goblins, their teeth never stop growing, so the musk goblin is able to maintain extraordinarily sharp fangs through constant attention. Their hands and feet are narrow with long, clawed fingers and toes. Though their appearance seems meek, the musk goblin is a dangerous creature to come across.

These creatures are altogether evil, and unlike their kin who are bound by the need for order, musk goblins are not. They are crafty, careful creatures. Their lives are small things, playing out in dark holes in lonely places in the world beneath the shadow of altogether evil and foul dragons. It is with the musk wurm that the musk goblin lives. At some point, lost now in the depths of time, some of the eldritch goblins (see note below) attached themselves, or became attached to the musk wyrms. Perhaps in the Goblin/Dwarf wars some of those ancient creatures used the dragons as mounts or pets and the relationship carried on long after the war. Perhaps, impoverished of power, some of the goblins attached themselves to the dragons. Whatever the case, these goblins cannot live without the protection and the food offered by the musk wurm and the bandy willow.

The musk goblin lives off porridge made from the flower and leaves of the bandy willow (see below). It is the only food it can eat, and





it supplies the goblins with all the nutrients they need. But for this reason the musk goblin and the bandy willow are rare creatures. The bandy willow is a magical tree however, and it imparts tremendous power to the goblins that thrive upon it.

The musk goblin is immortal, being one of the eldritch goblins. They breed only rarely, living in small clans, restricted in both their food source and space. They feed off the bandy willow and live in concourse with the musk wyrms. These small goblins dig tunnels and carve out small homes in the sides of hills, beneath the eaves of the trees and upon the very doorsteps of the dragons. Why the dragons tolerate the creatures is a mystery but they only occasionally harm them, biting them and shaking them violently. Once in awhile a goblin is killed by such attacks, but it does not dissuade them from continuing to dwell in the monster's shadow.

Musk goblins are adept thieves and assassins, able to stretch their fingers around a victim's throat and strangle the life out of them. They have the following rogue abilities: hide, move silently, traps and sneak attack. They always act as a 15<sup>th</sup> level rogue with dexterity as a prime. Further they have the following assassin abilities: case target and death attack. They always act as a 12<sup>th</sup> level assassin.

A lifetime spent eating the magical flowers of the bandy willow have imparted to the musk goblins several magical qualities. They have a natural spell resistance, and are able to regenerate 2 hit points a round. Unlike their kin, who cannot take damage, musk goblins can and they can be killed by normal means.

The flowers have also given the musk goblin the ability to see and hear great distances. For all practical purposes the goblins are continually under the affects of a *greater scrying* spell as cast by a 15<sup>th</sup> level wizard.

**COMBAT:** The musk goblin is not an aggressive creature and will avoid confrontation when it has to. Its primary reason for attacking a creature is if that creature threatens the musk wyrms that give life to the bandy willow groves they live in. If forced to battle, the musk goblin will study its victim from hiding and strike when they feel they can take full advantage of the case target and death attack. The musk goblin rarely uses weapons more sophisticated than the blow gun and knife, occasionally a stone axe or the like.

**TREASURE:** Musk goblins usually have treasure troves that many nobles would envy. An immortal life span spent murdering travelers and the like has given the creatures a world of wealth to store in their treasure troves. They usually have wildly exotic items, but most importantly, the musk goblin keeps a small chest with several magically preserved musk wyrm eggs in it and the seeds of a bandy willow. These it will prize above all things, defend to the death and if forced to flee, always take with it.

## MUSK AND ELDRITCH GOBLINS IN THE WORLD OF AIHRDE

The eldritch goblins were first-born dwarves corrupted by Thorax in ancient times. He twisted them and made them hate their dwarven brethren. He taught them a vile sorcery, and in time, their form became deformed. Too, the eldritch goblins saw into Thorax's memory, and there they found the secret of immortality and other dark powers. Most are evil and vicious, ever seeking to begin again the great wars between dwarf and goblin.

Eldritch goblins live forever. They are magical in nature and can only be slain by one method or the other. One's curse may be drowning, another's beheading. But whatever the case may be, any eldritch goblin slain by other means returns to life after several days. All eldritch goblins have a character class. Each uses only their character levels because they are 1 HD. They may be any character class.

Musk goblins are secretive, rare and never interact with their kin unless they are contacted. They live in hidden groves deep in the wilderness. They are most prevalent in the wilds south of the Bleached Hills and north of the Kingdom of Kayomar. Most of the eldritch goblins are aware of these creatures and use them from time to time, drawing them into affairs of the world at large. The musk goblins do not worship Ogoltay, nor do their offspring come from that fat goddess of the goblin lords, but rather they breed like other creatures, between male and female and lay eggs in the soft soil of their dragon's world.

## Magical Flowers of the Bandy Willow

The bandy willow is a magical tree. To those who consume them, the bandy willow's flowers impart a heightened sense of sight and hearing, allowing the user to see great distances. The vision acts in all respects like a *scrying* spell. The recipient of these abilities casts as a 12<sup>th</sup> level wizard. The flowers can be eaten raw or made into a mash or potion.

Bandy willows are deciduous trees that grow in most temperate climes. They are tall trees, ranging from 60 to 100 feet in height, with wide canopies and a bole 1-2 feet in diameter. The bandy willow's leaves are long and thin and laced with small purple flowers. These flowers bloom all year and the leaves are green all year, falling only in the coldest of weather.

The bandy willow owes its existence to the musk wyrm. Their saplings are small and weak and unable to survive unless they are fed by the saliva of the musk wyrm. That beast is forever drooling, with the potent venom splattering upon the ground, and the seeds

that lie about are able to thrive or indeed they are fertilized by the spit of the beast, only after being soaked. Soon thereafter the bandy willow seeds take root, thriving upon the nutrient rich drool of the musk wyrm. Once the seedling takes root, the sapling requires only small amounts of the musk to thrive. As soon as the sapling is strong enough it grows rapidly, its roots snaking through the soil and rock, eventually intercepting the dens of the musk wyrms. Those creatures are forever chewing the roots, taking whatever nutrients they can from the tree they enabled.

The trees can live without the wyrms, but if the wyrms are killed no new trees in the grove will grow. Normally these groves do not number of a score of trees, but occasionally large colonies of dragons and groves of trees are encountered, up to several hundred of the bandy willows. If the dragons die, the trees will eventually die out, and with them the musk goblins.

## MYTHS & CULTS

### THE DRAGON CULT OF THE KAATH

Of all the tribes of men the Kaath were the most wise. Early in the dawn of the world they paid homage to the god Athria, the Birth Mother, and called upon her for their needs and desires. They built cities upon the banks of the Inner Sea and lived peaceful lives. They were tall and knowledgeable and in those early days Athria walked amongst them and taught them what they could learn. The dedicated temples to her and nominated a high priestess to serve her. But eventually war came to their cities and they despoiled and the Kaath were driven into the wilderness. They traveled for long years, over great distances until at last they crossed the sea and came to an unexplored island in the southern oceans.

Here they built new cities and discovered the Waters of Life. These sacred springs flowed from the high mountains and carried with them water pure and cool. The water was magical, and the priestesses and the priests knew it and they hoarded it from their fellows and built temples over the springs. By drinking the water the Kaath were ingrained with magic so that it became them. In time, they learned that those who drank of the Waters of Life were not subject to aging or death, thus they became immortal. Those who partook of the Waters were called the High Kaath; all those who did not were called the Low Kaath.

Eventually the Kaath dwindled. The High Kaath chose lives of luxury and indolence. They built ever greater towers and their palaces reflected the wealth that only long years can accumulate. Low Kaath were condemned to lives of ever greater servitude. Many of the High Kaath were corrupted by their pleasures and became shades of themselves and they forgot the worship of Athria and fell to worshiping strange gods, half gods and the like. The Dragon Cult of the High Kaath became the wild fancy of many of

the men and women and they fell to worshiping a great blue dragon of the mountains called by the Kaath, Lamul.

Lamul was an evil beast, old as time, and a greater wyrm could hardly be found. He called sacrifices of flesh and he was given them in the guise of Low Kaath men and women. In time the Dragon Cult became wildly powerful and despotic and preyed upon the High Kaath as well until they slew a priestess of Athria and were finally branded as criminals and exiled. They fled the island in the face of a fearful death and migrated to the distant north. Lamul settled into his aged stupor and dreamed of the mortal flesh he had dined on for so long. The Kaath struggled on.

But the Dragon Cult, wild now without their lord, settled in the distant parts and built a city for themselves and named it Alaunot-Kav-Lamul. Long taken by madness they began to use vile sorceries and magics to twist their forms, to shape themselves like the beasts they worshiped. They grew and stretched their skin to encompass their arms, giving themselves wings of sorts. They captured lial beasts from the heavens and plucked their scales and these they grafted into their skin so that in the end, they looked not like dragonmen, but rather as if they were misshapen creatures of nightmare. They were tall, immortal and colored translucent by the Waters of Life and they preyed upon men of all stripes and they sought followers.

So the Dragon Cult spread to many reaches and many kingdoms. It is an evil gathering of men, elves and other sad fools who disdain immortality through their deeds, but seek it in their lives. They are found in most cities of reputable size and gather in towers when the moon is not quite full. They are wealthy for many spoiled, disaffected youth of the noble houses of all the great kingdoms, supposed intellectuals and the like find themselves seeking the “peace” offered by Lamul. The enclaves are usually small but dedicated and can manage all manner of mischief.

### PLAYING THE DRAGON CULT

Cult members worship and sacrifice to Lamul, a deity that never truly answers them, for he dwells in magnificent slumber in the far east, dreaming dreams of his past evil. Instead, the prayers and incantations fall upon the magi of Alanut-Kav-Lamul, who watch their enclaves with care through a variety of magical means. These wizard priests listen to the salutations of their followers and do their best to answer them, for it is through these acts that the acolytes are made strong in the faith of Lamul. The wizard-priests come to them on wings of flesh and grant them wealth and power, slay their enemies and answer other odd prayers that the disaffected cast to the heavens. They arrive in all their horrid forms, and by their sheer visage convince the dithering cultists of the power of Lamul. For these reasons, acolytes of the Dragon Cult are fanatical in their belief and both believe and strive to join the men of Kaath in their high towers of Alanut-Kav-Lamul.

Cult members are tattooed with the dragon mark; a straight line flanked by thin wings. The tattoo is always placed in an

inconspicuous place - under the arm, behind the ear or a similar spot. They are usually half mad with the magic of the cult and any who have seen the Kaath are usually marked with fear and loathing of all things, for the Kaath are foul (see above).

They believe that through the worship of Lamul they will evolve into dragonmen. To achieve this they must each pass through four stages of enlightenment: acolytes, adept, priest and high priest. The vast majority of cult members are acolytes. Every cult is different in size, and each cult consists of at least one adept. Larger cults have many adepts, a few priests and a high priest. Smaller cults may not have priests and high priests. The priests are able to communicate directly with the dragonmen of Kaath, and as noted, many of the prayers of the acolytes are answered.

When designing the dragonmen of Kaath, follow the guidelines set out for multi-class characters as given in Crusader Vol. 2, Issue 4. In short they should be designed like normal non-player characters, with the following guidelines.

**ACOLYTES** (These lawful evil, 0 level clerics' vital stats are HD 1d6, HP varies, AC by armor worn + dexterity. Their primary attributes are wisdom, charisma and intelligence. They wield normal weapons in battle, preferring light crossbows, blow guns and clubs. They are forbidden the use of any hand held cutting weapon at that level. They are only able to wear leather armor. They are able to cast 3 0 level cantrips per day.)

**ADEPT** (These lawful evil, 1-3<sup>rd</sup> lvl clerics' vital stats are HD d6 per level, HP varies, AC by armor worn + dexterity. Their primary attributes are wisdom, charisma and intelligence. They can wield any weapons that an acolyte may with the addition of staff, mace and flail. They can wear chain shirts or leather. They are able to cast spells as a normal cleric.)

**PRIEST** (These lawful evil, 3<sup>rd</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> level clerics and 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> level wizards' vital stats are HD d6, HP varies, AC by armor worn + dexterity. Their primary attributes are wisdom, charisma and intelligence. They can wear leather, ring, scale and chain in battle but suffer penalties when casting spells. They are able to cast the full range of cleric and wizard spells available to their level.)

**HIGH PRIEST** (These lawful evil, 10<sup>th</sup> and above level clerics and 6<sup>th</sup> and above level wizards' vital stats are HD d6, HP varies, AC by armor worn + dexterity. Their primary attributes are wisdom, charisma and intelligence. They can wear any armor in battle but suffer penalties when casting spells. They are able to cast the full range of cleric and wizard spells available to their level.)

## IN THE BAZAAR

**BARBS OF THE NAKAL:** These small darts are designed for blow guns and highly prized by assassins. They are taken from the tails of the Nakal dragons, and with careful management and hard work, a skilled assassin or weapons smith can keep a residue of the creature's venom in each barb. When shot, a successful strike immediately injects the venom into the target's skin. It paralyzes the tissue around the wound (not more than an inch in diameter). This paralysis numbs the immediate affect of the wound so that many

targets don't know they have been hit. A successful intelligence check (CL 2) reveals that the skin is numb. After one full round of being struck, the venom begins acting as a calming agent, suppressing the victim's instincts to flee or fight (save on successful wisdom check, CL 2). Victims who fail their save immediately cease all actions that would constitute resistance. Four full rounds after being struck, the victim's joints begin stiffening so that by the 5<sup>th</sup> round the victim is paralyzed (save on successful wisdom check, CL 3). The assassin is then able to dispatch the intended target. The paralysis lasts for 1d6 hours.

**CRUP PIPES:** These pipes are fashioned from the teeth of the crup dragon (see above). The pipes are short, about 3-4 inches long, and consists of many of the dragon's teeth bound together with thin leather strips of magical iergild metal. They are made by only the most skilled craftsmen and it takes a bard of at least 5<sup>th</sup> level to play them. The bard has to be in possession of the pipes for at least 2 months before he can begin to use the items magical abilities. When expertly played the crup pipes are able to charm listeners within 50 feet. Those who hear the pipes must make a successful charisma save or come under the player's spell. It acts in all respects like the *charm person/monster* spell. The pipes can be used to *charm monsters/monster* as well. The bard casts the spell at ½ the level as he is bard rounded up, i.e. a 9<sup>th</sup> level bard playing the pipes would cast a *charm person* spell as a 5<sup>th</sup> level wizard. These pipes are almost priceless and very rare.

**DRAGON BELLS:** These small bells are crafted by halfling smiths and are designed to ring when a certain type of dragon is approaching. They were designed by the halflings of the Grossewald Forest to guard against the coming of the musk wyrms (see above) who were used by the Lords of Aufstrag in their wild hunts. Each magical bell carries the name and a depiction of the type of wyrm it warns against. A bell may only warn against one dragon type. The dragons may be of any type, lesser or legendary. The bell is hung on any staff, rod, wand, sword pommel, spear etc and it will never make a noise unless a dragon of its particular type approaches. It rings one clear note when the dragon moves within 1 mile of the bell. It rings a second note when the dragon moves within ½ a mile of the bell. When the dragon moves to within 100 yards of the bell, the bell sounds off every few seconds until the dragon is within 10 yards at which points it stops. Dragons cannot hear the bell.

**DRAGON HIDE BOOTS:** Though these possess no magical qualities, they are really rare and expensive boots made from dragon hide. They are indestructible and usually worn by very cool people. Purchasing such a pair of boots would set someone back about 150gp.

**FEATHERED ROPE:** The scales from the lial beast are thin and very long. These are prized by rope smiths the world over for their qualities as rope. By carefully weaving and overlapping the scales a thin, very strong rope is made. These are very difficult to make and the material rare and dangerous to come by so feathered rope is rare and costly. On average a rope is not more than 50 feet, but even that will cost the buyer 75gp. The rope cannot be harmed by fire, short of magical and dragon, or cold, nor can it be cut or



sawed. It has an innate spell resistance of 12. The rope is light weight, with an EV of 1 per 50 feet, and easy to tie or bind.

**GOSSAMER OF THE UNK WYRM:** These creatures have particularly thick folds of skin, consisting of many layers of tissue and scales. By descaling the skin and carefully separating it into its component parts, the craftsmen is able to remove a thin layer of tissue that lies underneath the skin. This tissue is what allows the dragon to regulate its body temperature, existing in the harshest of environments. This is the Gossamer of the Unk Wyrms. It can be cut into any variety of shapes and sizes. Shirts, breeches, cloaks and even gloves can be fashioned from the material, but the material is translucent. Clothes made from this material possess a permanent *endure elements* spell on them. The article of clothing acts as the spell in all respects. It should be noted that small items such as gloves only impart the spell like affects to the hands. The gossamer is very expensive, a human sized cloak generally costing 150gp.



**LIAL ARROWS:** These arrows can only be shot from a long bow or long composite bow. They are specifically designed for dragon hunters. They average 4 feet in length, are balanced and weighted with various metals that are magically crafted together. The points are very thin and capped with a drop of Iergild which is shaped into an extraordinarily sharp point, which in turn is dipped in

the gas glands of a lial beast. Those secretions harden upon the point, which is again sharpened. The point is designed to split the thick hides of dragons and the length is designed to carry the bolt deep into the creature's guts. They work well against most large creatures, gaining a +1 to hit against all normal creatures. Against dragons, dinosaurs and the like they gain a +3 to hit. They do not gain any extra damage.

**TAGEAN SPEAR:** Fashioned from trees killed by the tagean wyrms (see above) these spears are partly magical in nature. They are very difficult to make, only the most skilled craftsmen are able to forge weapons from them. The spear's black haft is unbreakable, soaked through as it is by the acidic secretions of the wyrms. It is topped by a point of bronze, shaped and sharpened with exquisite care. The weapon is usually 8-10 feet long, cannot be broken by normal means and is weightless with an EV of 1. It imparts a +2 to all attack and damage rolls. It cannot strike creatures that need magical weapons to be hit.

## ROGUES, ASSASSINS, DRUIDS AND MIASMAL WYRMS

The Horned God ascended to the throne of Al-Liosh through power, sorcery and deceit. Long wars followed; brutal wars in which the house's of men and elf were washed in the blood of their founders. Kingdoms fell and whole peoples were bound in fetters, slaves to the darkness that commanded from the high towers of Aufstrag. The long nightmare descended upon the whole of the world, and Unklar's will was all-pervasive and the cloak of his power was a shadow of his malice and the Winter Dark the sign of his rule. For a thousand years the Horned God ruled over the world of Aihilde.

His kingdoms were wide and his peoples diverse and carried the memories of their ancestors forever with them. And many of them rebelled and challenged his rule. Even his own servants rose against him so that the Long Centuries, as they are accounted for in the annals of the bards, were filled with strife and war and battles were fought on fields of snow in the open, but also in the secret places where men govern from behind closed doors. Through all this the Horned God ruled, with his power wounded by not broken. But he did not rule by the sword alone, though his power was all consuming. Nor was his rule enforced by the awe and wonderment of his sorcery, though he was accounted the greatest warlock the world had ever seen. Indeed his rule was not kept by swords and sorcery alone, but also by the terror of deceit. And the terror of his deceit was given voice in an army of assassins and rogues that stalked the world like a plague. They lived unknown in the houses of kings and they stalked the streets and alleys of his towns. The Crna Ruk were the dread instruments of death employed by his evil. And they were men and women fearless of death and desirous only to serve that dark design by murder and destruction. These were the terrorists of the Winter Dark and they sought to keep the world bound in the chains of a slave and bent at the knee of a dark master.

Assassins and their ilk are known throughout Aihrde and the remnants of their reign at the feet of the Horned God are apparent in almost all the kingdoms and cities of the world. The tools of their trade are not hard to come by and the apothecaries are common and active. Guilds of rogues thrive in most regions and assassins ply a lucrative trade, employed by the greater houses of Angouleme, Main, Cleves and the like. This trade requires all manner of tools but the miasmal wyrms offer the enterprising assassin a host of different toxins to draw upon to create powerful and deadly poisons.

## POISONS IN AIHRDE

In the world of Aihrde poisons are commonplace. They come in a wide variety of forms from gases to liquids, from powders to paste. They are extracted from plants and animals or concocted in dungeons and apothecaries. Poisons can be something as simple as a powder derived from the dried fungus scraped from a cesspool wall, to the venom pulled from the sacks of a rattlesnake. Poisons come from other natural sources, such as gas in deep caves, to man made mixtures such as opiates. In short, poisons are commonplace.

Poisons can be acquired in most environs, in short, anywhere that herbalists, apothecaries, sages and other such professionals dwell. Any of these people would have knowledge on local fauna and flora that contains toxins, deadly and otherwise. Hiring them or paying for their service is a simple matter of contacting them. Of course poisons are not traded commonly, and all herbalists and the like are not going to be willing to sell them. But there are always those who make their living peddling discomfort and death.

Furthermore, a lifetime, even a short lifetime, spent working with fauna and flora instill in druids, rogues and assassins a deep knowledge of plants and, in the case of druids, animals and their various applications. These classes are able to concoct brews, or at the very minimum find people who can concoct poisonous brews.

## MAKING POISON

Anyone can attempt to make a poison, though very few people are actually trained to do so. To make a poison, first the material must be gathered. The appropriate material is determined by the Castle

Keeper. The cost of the material is 20% of the cost of the poison. To make a poison requires a working lab that costs 100gp times the cost of the poison materials. Once materials and a lab have been procured, an intelligence check is required to make the poison. A successful check indicates the poison has been made. There is the possibility that concoction recipes exist. These highly prized items list the material and processes required for creating poisons. Possession of a recipe gives a +10 bonus to the intelligence check when creating that type of potion.

This intelligence check is modified by one's attribute modifier, but not level, except in the case of an assassin. Further, the check is adjusted by cumulative penalties indicated in the parentheses in the tables below. Success indicates the poison is concocted successfully.

## TYPES OF POISON

- I: Mild poisons that cause skin irritation, drowsiness, nausea and similar affects.
- II: Mind altering concoctions that cause hallucinations, confusion, memory loss and similar affects.
- III: Serious poisons that impair abilities and cause minor damage.
- IV: Severe toxins that can incapacitate, cripple, or cause major damage.
- V: Deadly poisons that cause permanent damage or kill.
- VI: Rare potions or substances that cause massive permanent damage or kill.

## POISON AND THE MIASMAL WYRMS

The miasmal wyrms have earned their name. All of these dragons produce toxins or poisons that incapacitate or kill those infected. The poisonous bi-products of these creatures are highly prized by those who deal in such deadly material, so much so that an entire cottage industry exists wherein dragon hunters are hired to hunt the creatures, capture them or slay them and harvest the miasmal slime they produce. The poisons can be costly, but like the drakes themselves, they can cause massive damage or even death. The following chart maps out the costs and affects of various poisons taken from the miasmal wyrms.

COST AND POISON AFFECTS

NAME	COST*	SUCCESSFUL SAVE**	DURATION	FAILED SAVE	DURATION
I	5gp	no effect	Not applicable	-1 physical attributes, -1 initiative	1-3 days
II	15gp	no effect	Not applicable	-1 mental attributes, -1 initiative	1-3 days
III	45gp	1d4 dmg, -1 all secondary attributes	1-2 days	1d8 dmg, -2 all primary attributes	2-6 days
IV	150gp	1d8 dmg, -1 all attribute checks	2-4 days	2d8 dmg, comatose	3-9 days
V	900gp	1d10 dmg, perm. lose 1 point from class's secondary attribute	1-6 days	Death*** or 2d12 dmg & perm. loose 2 points from class's primary attribute	2 week
VI	1800gp	4d10 dmg, perm. lose 1 point from all primary attributes, 2 points from all secondary attributes	Instant	Death	Permanent

\* Cost per one dose.

\*\* Saves are made against constitution, all attribute and level bonuses are added.

\*\*\*Requires second save against constitution, failure means death, success means damage.

**BEAKED DRAGON:** The acidic vomit of the beaked dragon can be harvested from its mouth or off of its victim. It is very difficult to get a pure sample, so it is very rare. It has no practical purposes for use by assassin and the like, but because the acid keeps its properties so well it is prized by rogues and their ilk as a tool to melt through locks and hinges. Something it can do in 1d4 rounds. The acid costs about 25gp per vial. Generally one can get 4 applications out of a vial. The acid burns through 1/8 inch metal on average per dose.

**CRUP DROPS:** These tiny drops are extracted from the living larvae of a crup wyrm. The drops, when given to someone, react quickly causing within a few minutes a fever and unless some type of *delay/neutralize poison*, *cure disease* or *heal* is applied, the victim begins to have seizures and slips into a coma with 1d4 hours. The coma will last 1-2 days. A successful constitution save negates the poison's affects and the victim experiences slight cramps for a few hours. This comes in small vials of 1d8 drops. Each drops costs 10gp.

**FLYING DRAGON VENOM:** This venom causes 1d4 points of damage per day for 1d2 days, to anyone who drinks it and a -1 to all physical attributes for the toxin's duration. A successful constitution save negates the poison's affects. Generally this poison costs 25gp for a vial of two doses.

**LIAL BEAST:** Bottling the gas is almost impossible and no extract can be gleaned from the spent gas.

**MUSK WYRM:** This poison is usually ingested through food or drink. The bacteria laced saliva gives off an odd taste so that anyone consuming it has a chance to detect. A successful

wisdom save reveals an odd taste. What the victim does with that information is up to them. The victim develops a bacterial infection that rapidly spreads throughout the blood stream. After one day of non-treatment the victim suffers 1 point of permanent hit point loss until cured. A successful constitution save negates the poison's affects. The musk wyrms poison is rare and dangerous to use as it can have the same affect on the user. It costs 30gp for 4 applications.

**NAKAL WYRM:** After one full round of ingesting the poison, the venom begins acting as a calming agent, suppressing the victim's instincts to flee or fight (save on successful wisdom check). Victims who fail their save immediately cease all actions that would constitute resistance. Eight full rounds after being struck, the prey's joints begin stiffening so that by the 10<sup>th</sup> round the victim is paralyzed (save on successful wisdom check, CL 3). The paralysis lasts for 24 hours. The nakal wyrm's poison is common in many circles, costing 15gp per application.

**TAGEAN WYRM:** This acid is very rare as it loses its properties relatively quickly after the dragons spit it out. But those who manage to gather it up and store it properly, in small glass jars, have an acid that can cause terrible scarring as it burns and wrinkles flesh, reducing a victim's charisma by 1/2. It is usually used by rogues or thugs to leave a mark on a victim by scarring. It is uncommon but not costly, averaging 10gp per application.

**UNK WYRM:** The unk wyrm's saliva loses all its properties shortly after the dragon spits it.



## MONSTER CHARACTERISTICS

**NUMBER ENCOUNTERED (No. Encountered)** reflects the average number of creatures encountered. There may be several listings that reflect different encounter areas. For instance, an orc is listed as 2-12, 10-100. These represent a raiding party and the entire tribe or clan, respectively. Some monsters are not assigned exact numbers, such as bison or other herd animals. These herds can range from small groups of 3 to 5 members, to huge herds of 10,000 or more. The Castle Keeper should always manage the number of monsters while considering the plot of the adventure and the relative power of the party.

**SIZE (SIZE)** is the approximate height of a creature. There are three sizes of monster in *Castles & Crusades*: small, medium and large. Small represents any height less than 5 feet, medium is any height between 5 and 7 feet, and large is any height over 7 feet. Castle Keepers should take note that those creatures who have the ability to swallow a victim whole, such as the tyrannosaurus rex and the purple worm, are not going to be able to swallow all creatures. Circumstances must dictate the action and Castle Keepers should use their best judgment.

**HIT DICE (HD)** is a creature's hit dice. The hit dice is the equivalent of the monster's level. The hit dice represents the number (and type) of die rolled for the creature's hit points. For example, a monster with 2 (d8) hit dice has 2d8 hit points. A monster's hit dice is also equivalent to the monster's base attack roll modifier. For example, a 3 hit dice creature receives a base bonus of +3 to all attacks.

**MOVE (MOVE)** represents the monster's base movement rate. A creature's movement rate represents the number of feet an unencumbered and unimpeded monster can move in any given round, at a walking pace.

**ARMOR CLASS (AC)** is a creature's normal armor class. It is an abstract representation of the difficulty of striking a monster in combat and inflicting damage. An attacker's roll must be equal to or greater than a defender's armor class to cause damage. All creatures have an armor class. In most cases, it is determined by the type of armor being worn, but in the case of many monsters it represents their natural hides or skins.

**ATTACKS (ATTACKS)** list the variety of weapons, both natural and manufactured, that monsters may use in battle. All of the monster's physical attack forms are listed here. The number of attacks is listed first. If there is no number, then only one attack per round is assumed. The form of attack is listed next. Damage from each form of attack is included in the adjacent parentheses. An attack listing of 2 Claw (1d6); Bite (1d8) would mean that the creature can attack three times per round: twice with claws, for 1d6 points of damage each, and once with a bite, for 1d8 points of damage.

**SPECIAL (SPECIAL)** refers to all of a creature's special abilities: offensive, defensive, and miscellaneous. Generally, specific descriptions for each monster are provided in the monster's listing. The exceptions to this are as follows:

**Deepvision:** Ages spent beneath the earth, and in the dark and quiet places of the world have imbued certain creatures with the ability to see into darkness that a human would find impenetrable with the naked eye. This vision extends up to 120 feet in even the darkest of nights and deepest of tunnels. Colors tend to erode with deepvision, and objects appear in many shades of gray. It is otherwise like normal sight, and creatures can function well with no light at all. Bright lights, such as from a lantern or other light source, spoil deepvision. A creature requires one turn to adjust his or her eyes when a light source is extinguished before gaining full use of deepvision.

**Darkvision:** In a similar manner to deepvision, some creatures can see in complete darkness for up to 60 feet. Darkvision produces images that are in shades of gray, but it is otherwise like normal sight. These creatures can function well with no light at all. Bright lights, such as from a lantern or other light source, spoil darkvision. A creature requires one turn to adjust his or her eyes when a light source is extinguished before gaining full use of darkvision.

**Duskvision:** Some creatures can see in starlight and moonlight just as others can at dusk. They retain the ability to distinguish color and some detail under these conditions, though everything is cast in shadows. They have

no enhanced vision underground, under torchlight, or in similar conditions of poor illumination.

**Immunity/Resistance** describes any innate immunity that a monster possesses. The type of immunity is listed, followed by a bracketed damage descriptor that indicates the limits of the immunity. For instance, "Immune: Acid (half damage, quarter damage save)" means that the creature always takes half damage from any acid-based attack, but if it makes a successful saving throw, it suffers only one fourth of the normal damage.

**Regeneration:** A creature with this ability is difficult to kill, as the creature automatically heals damage at a fixed rate per round, as given in the entry. The number following the listing in the creature's stat block designates how many hit points that creature can heal in a round. For instance, the troll with a "Regeneration 2", heals 2 hit points per round. Certain attack forms, typically fire and acid, deal lethal damage to the creature, which doesn't go away. The creature's descriptive text describes the details. Regenerating creatures can regrow lost portions of their bodies and can reattach severed limbs or body parts; details are in the creature's descriptive text. Severed parts that are not reattached wither and die normally. Healing starts the round immediately following the round in which damage was taken.

**Scent** allows a creature to identify locations, items, and even people by making a successful check. They gain a +2 bonus when using any tracking ability they may possess. Scent functions to a range of 30 feet. These creatures are natural hunters, and are able to "sniff out" singular scents, even when that odor is overpowered by another. Winds, weather conditions, and other situations may render this ability useless or reduce its potency; multiple strong odors will cause confusion, for example. Other effects are at the Castle Keeper's discretion.

**Spell Resistance** is a special defensive ability. A defender's spell resistance is like an armor class against magical attacks. If a spell is targeted at a creature with spell resistance, the caster of the spell must roll 1d20, unmodified. If the result is equal or greater than the creature's spell resistance rating, than the spell can affect that creature. Otherwise, the creature's spell resistance causes the spell to dissipate harmlessly. Certain spells are not subject to spell resistance, as detailed in their descriptions in the *Castles & Crusades Players Handbook*. A monster's spell resistance is listed in its stat block with the abbreviation SR. For example a Dryad's spell resistance is 10 and it is listed on the Special heading as "SR 10". If a monster does not have a spell resistance no listing is given.

**Twilightvision:** Even under starlight, moonlight or torchlight these creatures have exceedingly good vision. They can distinguish color and detail under these conditions for up to one mile when outside.

**SAVES (SAVES)** represents the saving throws and attribute check categories for monsters. Saving throws are made in the same manner as for characters, but with broader descriptors. Each monster is listed as having either physical (P), mental (M), both (P+M) or none (N) as its saving throw category. The category roughly equates to primary or secondary attributes and thus the base number needed to make a saving throw. Physical attributes are strength, constitution, and dexterity. Mental attributes are intelligence, wisdom, and charisma. A goblin has a physical saving throw category, so it makes all saving throws or checks dealing with strength, dexterity, or constitution with a challenge base of 12, and all saving throws or checks dealing with intelligence, wisdom, or charisma with a challenge base of 18.

**INTELLIGENCE (INT)** reflects a general level of mental aptitude. It represents a monster's ability to learn quickly, and apply that learning effectively, as well as its capacity for logic and deductive reasoning. Monsters possess a much broader range for intelligence than characters.

Intelligence	Mental Strength
1-2	Animal
3-5	Inferior
6-8	Low

9-12	Average
13-15	High
16-17	Superior
18-21	Genius
22-25	Supra-Genius
26+	Deific

**ALIGNMENT (ALIGNMENT)** describes the basic and most essential aspects of a monster's world view and moral outlook. It is the core personality description for every sentient creature. Alignment reflects the creature's disposition toward good, evil, law or chaos. Each alignment type is described in detail in the *Castles & Crusades Players Handbook*.

**TYPE** refers to the classification of the monster. A monster's type can be particularly important where spells and magical summoning are concerned.

**Aberration:** Aberrations have bizarre anatomy, strange abilities, an alien mindset, or any combination of the three.

**Animal:** An animal is a non-humanoid creature with a real-world equivalent.

**Beast:** A beast is a creature with no real-world equivalent. It is a vertebrate creature with a reasonably normal anatomy and no magical or unusual abilities.

**Construct:** A construct is an animated object or artificially constructed creature.

**Dragon:** A dragon is a reptilian creature, usually winged, with magical or unusual abilities.

**Elemental:** An elemental is an entity composed of one of the four classical elements: air, earth, fire, or water.

**Fey:** Fey are creatures with supernatural abilities and connections to natural forces and/or places.

**Giant:** Giants are large-sized humanoid creatures of great strength and bulk.

**Humanoid:** A humanoid is a creature that is anthropomorphic: they have two arms, two legs, one head, and a human-like torso.

**Magical Beast:** Magical beasts are similar to beasts but can have intelligence of inferior or better. Magical beasts typically have supernatural or extraordinary abilities.

**Monstrous Humanoid:** These are humanoid creatures with monstrous or animalistic features, occasionally possessing supernatural abilities.

**Ooze:** An ooze is an amorphous or mutable creature.

**Extraplanar:** An extraplanar creature is a non-elemental that originates from another dimension, reality, or plane.

**Plant:** This type encompasses all plants and plant-like creatures.

**Shapechanger:** This type of creature has a stable body but can assume other forms.

**Vermin:** This type includes insects, arachnids, other arthropods, worms, and similar invertebrates.

**Undead:** Undead are once-living creatures animated by spiritual or supernatural forces. Undead are immune to all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, etc.) and to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, and death effects.

**TREASURE (TREASURE)** designates the appropriate treasure type a creature has in its lair, or if noted for the specific monster on its person. Refer to Part Two of this book for more information on treasure.

## MONSTER EXPERIENCE POINTS

HD	BASE	PER HP	I	II	III
1	5	1	2	4	5
2	10	2	5	7	10
3	20	3	10	15	20
4	40	4	20	30	40
5	80	5	40	60	80
6	120	6	60	90	120
7	180	7	90	135	180
8	250	8	125	200	250
9	400	9	200	300	400
10	600	10	300	450	600
11	750	11	375	550	750
12	950	12	425	650	950
13	1200	13	600	900	1200
14	1500	14	750	1100	1500
15	1900	15	900	1400	1900
16	2100	16	1000	1500	2100
17	2300	17	1200	1800	2300
18	2600	18	1300	2000	2600
19	2900	19	1500	2200	2900
20	3250	20	1700	2500	3500

**EXPERIENCE PER HIT POINT:** A monster's hit point total influences the amount of experience it confers. To calculate this, simply multiply the number of hit points by the hit dice of the creature, and divide by 2. For example, a 5 (d10) HD creature has an average of 25 hit points. The base is 80 experience points plus 5 experience points per hit point. 125 extra experience points would be awarded for this creature, for a total of 205.

**SPECIAL:** There are three categories of special abilities, designated in the chart by the Roman numerals I, II and III. A given monster's total experience value increases by the amount of special abilities it has. Special ability experience is added to the base experience for the monster. For example, Skagg (4HD) has four attacks per round, a category I ability. So its base experience points are increased by 40 points (for a total of 60) plus 4 per hit point.

**SPECIAL I:** This category includes three or more attacks per round, spell use of 1st-3rd level (or equivalent spell-like abilities), and unique abilities such as tracking, hiding, or back attacks.

**SPECIAL II:** This category includes 5 or more attacks per round, damage of 4d6 or more for a single attack, spell use of 4th-7th level or equivalent, and extraordinary powers like invisibility or etherealness.

**SPECIAL III:** This category includes death attacks, petrification attacks, and spell use of 8th level and higher (or equivalent).