



Monster of the Week

The Mucoroth!

A NEW MONSTER FOR USE WITH THE PATHFINDER® ROLEPLAYING GAME

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The Monster of the Week

The Monster of the Week product line takes its inspiration from the television trope of the same name: a convention by which a weekly television production might introduce a new freak, villain, or beastie in every episode, allowing the episode's themes and topics to revolve around the latest "big bad." Monster of the Week aims to arm GMs with creatures and villains perfect for such a role. Whether you're looking to populate a memorable encounter or a villainous story arc, our Monster of the Week is made for maximum creep-factor and memorable "wow" power!

Within this installment's pages you will find the true and terrible description of the mucoroth – an alien visitor possessing a novel (and nauseating!) flavor of immortality. Perfect for horror-themed adventures or encounters, the mucoroth is an alien terror that caaame... from outer spaaace! Bizarre by its behavior and vile by its description, the mucoroth are sure to unsettle your players, who will not soon forget their first foray into a mucoroth colony, only to find themselves... utterly ignored by the indifferent natives? Take a seat by the fire and read on, my friends, and learn why the mysterious, murderous mucoroth have more important things to do than engage your intruding, intrepid band of bumblers...

THE MUCOROTH

This abomination resembles a bark-like stalk formed of stiff, mottled, rose-colored fungus. From its bulbous base, six soggy leg-spindles and two pairs of lanky arms protrude.

MUCOROTH CR 9

XP 6,400; NE Medium aberration

Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 18 (+1 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 insight, +6 natural)

hp 102 (12d8+48); regeneration 2 (fire)

Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +13; +8 vs. mind-affecting

Defensive Abilities *mind blank*; DR 5/slashing; Immune fungal defenses

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee 4 claws +10 (1d4+1 plus 1d6 acid)

Special Attacks caustic claws, mucosporific cloud

STATISTICS

Str 12, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 17, Wis 21, Cha 8

Base Attack +9; CMB +10; CMD 22 (30 vs. trip)

Feats Diehard, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Lightning Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes, Nimble Moves, Toughness

Skills Climb +12, Escape Artist +9, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +9, Perception +16,

Sense Motive +25, Sleight of Hand +9, Stealth +16, Survival +16

Languages Aklo, Common (cannot speak); mucoroth telepathy (1 mile)

SQ death throes

ECOLOGY

Environment any underground

Organization solitary, pair, or colony (4-12)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Caustic Claws (Ex) Each of a mucoroth's four claws secretes a caustic mucosal lining, dealing 1d6 points of acid damage on each successful attack. A mucoroth can suppress or renew this ability as a free action.

Death Throes (Ex) When a mucoroth is slain, its body bursts into a mucosporific cloud, exposing all creatures within a 5-ft. radius to its mucosporific cloud ability (see below).

Fungal Defenses (Ex) A mucoroth is partially composed of fungal plant matter, and possesses immunity to paralysis, poison, polymorph effects, sleep effects, and stun effects. While not completely immune to mind-affecting effects, a mucoroth benefits from a constant *mind blank* effect.

Mucoroth Telepathy (Su) Though a mucoroth cannot speak, it can communicate telepathically with all non-mindless creatures as though it shared a language with all thinking things. In addition, the mucoroth's telepathic senses grant it a +2 insight bonus to Armor Class as well as a +8 insight bonus on Sense Motive skill checks. A mucoroth's telepathy extends out to a range of 1 mile.



Mucosporific Cloud (Ex or Su) A mucoroth can exude a cloud of fine mucosporific particles – tiny, flesh-colored spores – as a 10 ft.-radius burst, centered on itself. Expelling the cloud is a full-round action that provokes an attack of opportunity. Any living creature other than a mucoroth caught within the cloud takes 6d6 points of acid damage and must succeed on a Fortitude saving throw (DC 19) or inhale a part of the stream, contracting a strange and gruesome soporific illness. Creatures that succeed on this saving throw receive only half damage from the attack and are not exposed to the illness. The details of this supernatural disease are described below.

The mucosporific cloud lingers in the area for at least 1 round, though the mucoroth can exert telepathic control over the cloud by concentrating as

a standard action. While concentrating on the cloud, the mucoroth can move it up to 20 ft. per round. Creatures may be affected by the same mucosporific cloud no more than once per round. An uncontrolled spore cloud dissipates on its own after 1 full round. A mucoroth can control only its own cloud in this way; it cannot influence a spore cloud exuded by another member of its species. Though releasing this cloud of spores is an extraordinary ability (Ex), the mucoroth's ability to exert telepathic control over the cloud is a supernatural ability (Su).

THE MUCOSOPORIFIC PLAGUE

The sporific affliction that makes the mucoroth so very dangerous is, in actuality, less a disease than an advanced and terrifyingly aggressive self-preservation mechanism. Over the course of the fast-acting affliction, the sufferer's skin bleeds and cracks as a pale, rippling fungus begins to creep and proliferate outward from the eyes, nose, and mouth, as well as from any open sores or wounds. Creatures immune to bleed damage are immune to the damage dealt by this affliction. Any living creature killed by the disease is rapidly consumed by the fungal growth, and, after 2d12 hours, resembles no more than a heinous fungal cocoon. A Medium-sized or larger corpse in this state becomes a *clone* pod for the mucoroth, provided that the body possesses an intact brain, and that the original creature possessed an Intelligence score of 3 or higher. Should a mucoroth with one or more intact *clone* pods die, its consciousness is immediately transferred to the oldest intact *clone* pod that its own spores created, emerging from the cocoon with a new body, as the *clone* spell. Unlike a true *clone*, a mucoroth's *clone* pod never rots as long as it is stored somewhere damp or verdant.

Any creature that dies from this mucosoporific affliction cannot be raised until the resulting *clone* pod is destroyed. Even then, such a creature cannot be raised without *true resurrection* or greater magic. A Medium-sized clone pod has an AC of 5 and 28 hit points. The save DC for the mucosoporific plague is Constitution-based.

MUCOSOPORIFIC PLAGUE

Type curse, disease (injury); **Save** Fortitude DC 19

Onset 1d4 rounds; **Frequency** 1/round

Effect 2d4 damage and sickened, target is also nauseated instead after failing 2 saves; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves or a *remove curse* spell

Formed by a single, alien spore that fell to the earth in an age long past, the mucoroth took shape in the fetid pools of lightless, overgrown swamps and shallow underground ponds and lakes. What motivates these inscrutable aliens – and whether their arrival was accidental or orchestrated – is difficult to say. The mute mucoroth rarely set out to communicate with other species; a colony might live in relative peace with neighboring tribes or species for centuries or even decades without ever opening communication or acknowledging an ambassador. So willfully ignorant of other species are they, and so

seemingly reluctant to acknowledge even the presence of other creatures, that members of some cultures sharing a habitat with the mucoroth actually come to believe that the alien beings simply cannot perceive other creatures – that they literally cannot see or hear them. Indeed, explorers stumbling into a mucoroth colony might find themselves utterly ignored by the indifferent natives... at least until a member of the colony feels bothered or threatened by a member of their party.

Terribly, many of the mucoroth's geographical neighbors eventually find their strange and silent "alliances" with the mucoroth ended by an unprovoked, full-force attack by the colony after generations of mute peace. Truly, it seems that the mucoroth – despite their telepathic ability to communicate with any sentient creature – are content to ignore the outside world entirely, until some unfathomable need or impulse drives them to wholesale violence or slaughter.

Many scholars believe that the mucoroth's goals are set on territorial domination, and that their seeming patience and indifference is actually only a facet of a years-long preparatory ritual. The truth is not far from this theory: a mucoroth devotes much of its life's work toward the biogenesis of countless fungal cloning pods – plant-like cocoons which house organic clones of each member of the colony, into which a mucoroth's consciousness can be transferred in the event of its demise. A fresh clone possesses a fish-belly white hue, deepening to redder, rosier shades over time. Mucoroth that live long enough grow to take on even darker colorations, turning the tarry color of dried blood. A mucoroth's pods might be hidden or buried in dozens or even hundreds of locations throughout the colony's territory and beyond, effectively ensuring the immortality of the mucoroth. Like their fungal cloning pods, a mucoroth "village" is typically built from fibrous plant matter and sheets of fungal canvas, with tubes, tunnels, and structures scattered across miles of territory, despite the relatively small size of a typical colony. The mucoroth seem to take naturally to repetitive tasks; when not attending their cloning pods or laboring to expand their unusual organic demesnes, a mucoroth might observe the stars for hours on end, tend tediously to slow-growing mold farms, or simply stand in one spot for days, as if listening for some telepathic signal from far above the earth... or perhaps from deep within it.

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