TRENCH CRAWLER

This piscine creature clings to the rocky wall of the abyss by burying two serrated, hook-tipped appendages deep in crevices, while two more snap out to impale nearby prey.

Trench Crawler CR 2

XP 600

N Medium animal (aquatic)

Init +6; Senses blindsight 60ft; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex,

+2 natural)

hp 22 (4d8+4)

Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +1

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft., swim 20 ft., climb 10ft.

Melee bite +3 (1d6+1), 2 claws +5 (1d8+2, plus grab)

Special Attacks trench hook

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 2,

Wis 10, Cha 6

Base Atk +3; CMB +5 (+9 grapple); CMD 17

Feats Multiattack, Improved

Initiative

Skills Climb +10, Perception +4, Stealth +6 (+10 in rocky terrain),

Swim +14

Racial Modifiers +8 Swim, +4 Stealth (in rocky terrain),

+4 Climb

ECOLOGY

Environment Ocean trenches

Organization solitary, or family (3-5)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Burst of Speed (Ex) Trench crawlers can swim at 5 times its normal swim speed (100 ft) for 10 rounds per day. These rounds need not be consecutive.

Trench Hook (Ex) The trench crawler's hooks give it a +4 bonus to grapple checks. This bonus increases to +8 if more than one claw attack is successful against the target in a single turn or if one or more claws hit with a critical. If the target of a critical hit frees itself from the grapple, it takes an additional 1d6+2 damage.

(AETALTIS)

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Trench walls, whether deep water or coastal, provide homes to thousands of marine species. In these aquatic settings, where danger may come at you from any direction, the advantage of having a wall at your back is even more significant than on land. In a trench crawler's territory, however, this safety is an illusion.

APPEARANCE

Trench crawlers resemble 5 ft. long primitive fish with placoid scales. Its colors vary widely from brick red, for those living in deep sea trenches, to bright reds, yellows, and golds in coral communities. When camouflaged in its natural habitat, it's dorsal and posterior fin-spins lie flat against its skin.

The creature's arms end in serrated hooks that can pierce a turtle-shell. Sages recently discovered that the crawler's hooks, teeth, scales, and

rasping tongue are laced with iron. It is believed that eggs are laid near hydrothermal vents, allowing the young to fix iron disgorged into the sea.

ORIGINS

Contrary to rumor and myth, the trench crawler is a naturally occurring creature. Its ability to fix iron from the surrounding water is the result of a rare organ also found in some sea snails. Trench crawlers exposed to magical or alchemical elements from vents which tap into other planes or pockets

of stagnant magic may possess hooks infused with other elements (silver or adamantine for instance).

ENCOUNTERING TRENCH CRAWLERS

Trench crawlers' main mode of movement is to crawl along reefs and outcroppings with its hooks, but they can swim at high speeds in short bursts. They secure their hooks in small crevices and lay flat against the trench wall to ambush prey. Its vision is poor, but a form of electroreception allows it to detect its victims. Its primary food sources are fish and sea turtles, but its jaw can unhinge to consume larger prey.

Highly territorial, a trench crawler will tolerate other crawlers only if prey is plentiful. Other predators are not tolerated at all. When a trench crawler attacks, it lashes out with one or more hooks, keeping at least one buried deep in the rock wall. It is extremely difficult for an impaled victim to pull away from a trench crawler, which often waits for its prey to exhaust itself or die from blood loss.

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AETALTIS



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