

Exotic Encounters:

Harpies



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Introduction

The *Pathfinder Bestiary*, and the long line of monstrous encyclopedia that came before it, do a great job of attacking the problem of providing game statistics and mechanical information for a very wide variety of creatures. There are a lot of strange creatures from fantasy novels and movies, from ancient mythology, and, as time went on, from the twisted minds of game designers and even GMs, for that matter. Anyone today who tried to go about creating an extensive bestiary of all the different cool and interesting fantasy monsters could fill three or four volumes with three hundred monsters each, and still have a long way left to go, with fans crying out for various “forgotten” monsters to get some attention. That kind of breadth doesn’t leave a whole lot of room for depth, and that’s where *Exotic Encounters* comes in.

There are all kinds of reasons why you might not want to use a monster stat-block straight from the core rules. For one thing, if your players have a habit of browsing through such books, or are long-time veterans who know the basic ins and outs of most fantasy staples, you may need an unusual stat-block just to throw them a curve ball and teach them that they can’t count on their out of character knowledge to take all the mystery out of the game. Alternatively, many GMs can recall a time when they wanted to make use of a certain monster in their game, only to find that it was a few CRs too high or low for what they had in mind.

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This particular installment of *Exotic Encounters* focuses on harpies. These bird-women of greek mythology have long been antagonistic figures, but only gained their association with ugliness after a Roman author confused them with sirens. This book presents three alternative takes on the harpy, the first of which is the **miniature harpy (CR 2)**, which is more bird than woman, and which has a proclivity for stealing small objects. The second is the **hag harpy (CR 7)**, a particularly ugly and vile creature whose very appearance is sickening, and whose voice can leave men deaf and disoriented. Finally, there is the **abyssal harpy (CR 10)**, which takes after the harpies described in greek myth and Dante’s *Inferno*, in that it spends its time torturing the souls of the damned. These creatures have terrible, disemboweling talons and can sing a song that causes even the most callous and cynical to tearfully confess his sins.

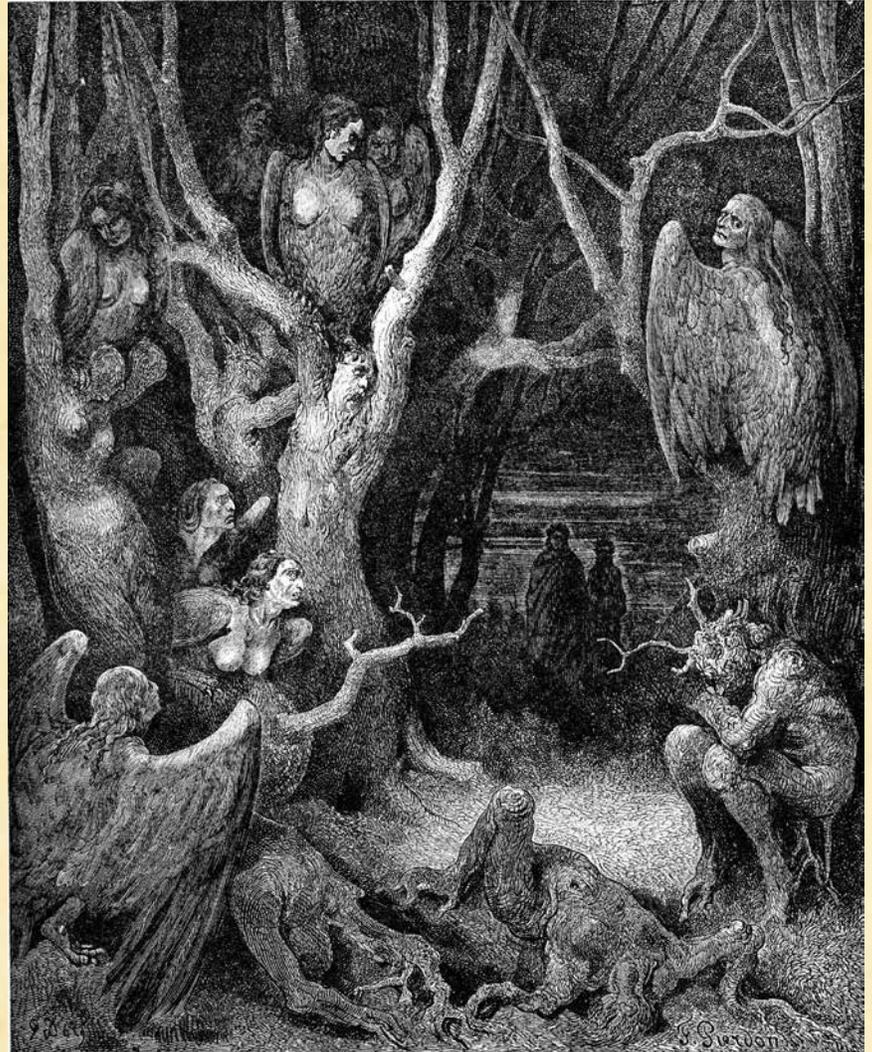


Image Harpies in the Forest of Suicides by Gustav Dore

Miniature Harpy

The creature on the branch before you seems at first glance to be a normal crow or raven, but a second glance reveals that it is something far stranger. Its head is not that of a bird, but instead resembles a human woman's, with pale blue-grey skin and long, tangled black hair. Its irises are an angry red, but more disturbing is its mouth full of needle-sharp teeth, which are also red, stained with the remains of the creature's last meal.

HARPY, MINIATURE

CR 2

XP 600

CE Tiny fey

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +1 natural, +2 size)

hp 14 (4d6)

Fort +1, **Ref** +7, **Will** +5

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee 2 talons +7 (1d2)

Space 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks lulling warble, snatch

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 17, **Con** 10, **Int** 11, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +0 (+4 disarm or steal); **CMD** 14

Feats Flyby Attack, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +9, Fly +19, Perception +8, Perform (song) +9, Sleight of Hand +11, Stealth +19

Languages Common

SQ evasive approach

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate forests or marshes

Organization solitary, pair, or mob (8-24)

Treasure standard

Evasive Approach (Ex): A miniature harpy bobs and weaves naturally while flying, and uses its talons to fend off its attackers. As a result, a miniature harpy does not provoke attacks of opportunity due to entering another creature's square in order to attack it.

Lulling Warble (Su): Miniature harpies are capable of producing a beautiful song that lulls

their victims into a false sense of complacency. When a miniature harpy sings, all creatures aside from other harpies within a 300-foot spread must succeed on a DC 14 Will save or suffer a -2 penalty to AC and CMD. These penalties last for as long as the miniature harpy continues to sing (a standard action), and for 1 round thereafter. A creature that succeeds on its saving throw is immune to the lulling warble of all miniature harpies for 24 hours. Multiple instances of this ability do not stack. This is a mind-affecting charm effect. The saving throw DC is Charisma-based.

Snatch (Ex): Miniature harpies are adept at stealing small trinkets from unsuspecting victims. Whenever a miniature harpy hits a single creature with both of her talon attacks in the same round, she may make a disarm or steal combat maneuver against that creature as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If the attempt is successful, she grabs the disarmed or stolen item in one of her talons, and cannot make attacks with that talon as long as she continues to hold the item. The miniature harpy also gains a +4 racial bonus on combat maneuver checks made to disarm or steal.

Ecology

Though these creatures are called harpies, due to their mix of bird and female anatomy, and the fact that they share the same general disposition as true harpies (greedy, evil, and bloodthirsty, for the most part), they are completely separate creatures, and are, in fact, fey.

Miniature harpies are, above everything else, ruled by greed. The hierarchy of miniature harpy society is based almost entirely on each creature's collection of shiny baubles, and so miniature harpies spend most of their time stealing trinkets from passerby (and each other). It is not unheard of for these creatures to use trinkets to lay traps using their stolen goods as bait, however: in these cases, the miniature harpies steal a valuable item and fly off slowly enough for their victim to follow, then lead the poor fool into a pit trap or a waiting ambush where several of their friends are ready to gnaw his flesh from his bones.

Hag Harpy

The creature before you is one of the vilest sights you have ever seen. It looks like some sort of hideous mockery of a woman, with ash-grey skin and eyes that are completely filled with blackness. Its features are twisted and crooked, with a sharp, protruding nose that resembles a beak more than any human visage, and a mouth full of crooked, stained, and pointed teeth. Its hair is lank, greasy, and matted, and its fingers end in nails so long and sharp that they look like claws. Ironically, its least disturbing features are also its least human ones: it has a pair of large wings, covered in grey-black feathers, where its arms should be, and the lower half of its legs are the talons of some carrion-eating bird.

HARPY, HAG

CR 7

XP 3,200

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 75 (10d10+20)

Fort +5, **Ref** +10, **Will** +8

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 80 ft. (average)

Melee 2 talons +11 (2d6+2)

Special Attacks deafening shriek, vicious counter

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 17, **Con** 15, **Int** 9, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 23

Feats Ability Focus (deafening shriek), Combat Reflexes, Flyby Attack, Improved Natural Attack (talon), Skill Focus (Bluff)

Skills Bluff +8, Fly +16, Intimidate +8, Perception +14, Perform (song) +3

Languages Common

SQ hideous visage

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate or warm forests, hills, marshes, or mountains

Organization solitary, trio, or coven (4-13)

Treasure standard

Deafening Shriek (Su): As a standard action, a hag harpy can emit a shrill, piercing noise which deafens and disorients her victims. All

creatures aside from other harpies within a 300-foot spread must succeed on a DC 18 Fortitude save or be deafened for 1 minute. All creatures aside from other harpies that are within a 60-foot spread must also succeed on a separate DC 18 Fortitude save or be dazed for 1 round. A hag harpy can use this ability up to three times per day, but must wait a full minute after each use before it can use it again. This is a sonic effect. The saving throw DC is Charisma-based.

Hideous Visage (Su): Hag harpies are truly reviling creatures to behold, and any humanoid creature within 60 feet of a hag harpy that looks at it must succeed on a Will save (DC 16) or be sickened for as long as he continues to view the hag harpy, and for 2d4 rounds thereafter. Creatures can avert their eyes from the harpy in order to avoid this effect, as though it were a gaze attack. If a creature spends at least 2 hours each day for a week looking at a hag harpy, he becomes immune to this effect, as long as he continues to spend at least two hours each week looking at a hag harpy.

Vicious Counter (Ex): Petty and vindictive creatures, hag harpies never let an injury go unpunished. The first time that a hag harpy is damaged by a melee attack each round, it may make an attack of opportunity against the creature that damaged it. This does not allow the hag harpy to make more attacks of opportunity in a single round than it would normally be able to.

Ecology

These wretched creatures are often mistaken for some sort of hag, which led to their name. Less subtle than the more common breeds of harpy, hag harpies cannot pass for humanoids nearly as well, and have not adapted themselves to lure potential prey in. Instead, they can produce deafening shrieks that disorient their prey and prevent them from communicating, making it easy to snatch a straggling member of a group and make off with it, while its companions are conveniently unable to hear its screams. Scholars and sages continue to debate why a hag harpy's appearance has such a profound effect, when objectively uglier creatures do not, but the answer remains elusive.

Abyssal Harpy

This creature is some terrible mix of woman and bird. Her torso resembles that of a beautiful woman, but she has wings instead of arms, covered in fine black feathers. Her shapely legs transform into hideous talons below the knee. Her face is like that of a beautiful woman, but twisted into a hard, curved beak.

HARPY, ABYSSAL **CR 10**

XP 9,600

CE Medium outsider

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +18

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 15, flat-footed 21 (+5 armor, +5 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 123 (13d10+52)

Fort +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +10

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 80 ft. (good)

Melee 2 talons +17 (2d6+4 plus 1d6 bleed/19-20 x2)

Special Attacks eviscerating talons, song of interrogation

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 21, **Con** 18, **Int** 15, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 32

Feats Combat Reflexes, Flyby Attack, Improved Critical (talon), Improved Natural Attack (talon), Skill Focus (Intimidate), Weapon Focus (talon), Wingover

Skills Appraise +18, Bluff +23, Fly +25, Intimidate +29, Perception +18, Sense Motive +18, Sleight of Hand +21, Stealth +21

Languages Abyssal, Common, Infernal

SQ sadistic glee

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Abyss)

Organization solitary, pair, or flight (3-12)

Treasure standard (+2 studded leather armor and other treasure)

Eviscerating Talons (Ex): An abyssal harpy's talons are wickedly sharp and cruelly serrated, opening wounds that do not heal easily. Each time the abyssal harpy hits with a talon attack, she inflicts 1d6 points of bleed damage. This bleed damage stacks (so a creature hit twice would suffer 2d6 points of bleed damage each

round). Additionally, whenever an abyssal harpy scores a critical hit with a talon attack, she deals an additional 2d6 points of bleed damage, as she slices open her victim's stomach in a gory display. The target must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 21) or be nauseated for 1d4 rounds. Even if he succeeds on the saving throw, he is sickened, instead. The saving throw DC is Strength-based.

Sadistic Glee (Ex): Abyssal harpies delight in causing pain. Whenever an abyssal harpy successfully damages a creature, she gains a +2 morale bonus on all attack rolls made before the end of her next turn. This bonus does not stack with itself.

Song of Interrogation (Su): As a standard action, an abyssal harpy is capable of producing a supernaturally sweet melody, which causes other creatures to confess their deepest and darkest secrets. When an abyssal harpy sings, all creatures aside from other harpies within a 300-foot spread must succeed on a Will save (DC 21) or be compelled to confess their deepest darkest secrets to anyone who will listen. Affected creatures are able to act normally while confessing in this way, although they suffer a -2 morale penalty to attack rolls and damage rolls while affected, as their guilt stays their hand. Affected creatures continue to confess for as long as the abyssal harpy continues to sing (a standard action), and the morale penalties last for an additional round thereafter. Regardless of whether or not a creature succeeds on its saving throw, any creature exposed to the song is immune to this ability for 24 hours. This is a sonic mind-affecting compulsion effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Ecology

Thought by some to be the origin of harpies on the material plane, abyssal harpies serve as torturers to elite inhabitants of the lower planes. Some scholars believe that they actually feed on suffering, and derive their sustenance from inflicting pain on others, both physical and emotional. Unlike their more common, lesser cousins, the human features of abyssal harpies are actually quite striking, making them both appealing and repulsive at the same time.

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