Mythic Mastery Mythic Greatures of the Nile Alex Riggs, Joshua Zaback



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# Introduction

This book presents mythic versions of four iconic animals of the Nile, a river steeped in both cultural and mythological significance. These creatures have been advanced in a variety of ways, including being made mythic with the rules presented in *Mythic Adventures*, and each such creature has been given one or more unique special abilities, not found elsewhere. They also each feature an ecology section, with information on the origins of these mythic versions of animals, and how their behavior differs from that of their more mundane cousins.

If a feat has a superscript "M" after its name, that indicates that the creature has the mythic version of that feat, as well as the normal version. Several of the creatures in this book have universal mythic abilities, which are not explained in full in this book. For more information on the mythic versions of feats and universal mythic abilities, see Mythic Adventures.

# Nile Crocodile

Before you is a mighty crocodile the size of an elephant, with musculature to make a demigod envious. Its scales gleam gold in the hot sun and its eyes gleam with hunger and bloodlust. It opens its jaws, revealing rows of razor teeth and emitting a mighty bellow which causes your bones to ache.

NILE CROCODILE CR 7/M
XP 3,200
N Huge animal
Init +o; Senses low-light vision; Perception +8
DEFENSE
AC 22, touch 8, flat-footed 22 (+14 natural, -2 size)
hp 81 (6d8+54)
Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +3
DR 5/epic
OFFENSE
Speed 30 ft., swim 60 ft.; sprint
Melee bite +12 (2d6+10 plus grab) and tail slap +7 (2d8+15
Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.
Special Attacks mythic death roll (2d6+20), mythic powe
3/day, surge 1d6+1), smother
STATISTICS
Str 30, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2
Base Atk +4; CMB +16 (+20 grapple); CMD 26
Feats Lucky Surge, Potent Surge, Skill Focus (Perception,
S <mark>tealth, Swim) Stealth, Swim</mark>
Skills Perception +8, Stealth +4 (+12 in water), Swim +21;
Racial Modifiers +8 Stealth in water
<b>5Q</b> hold breath, invisible in water, powerful blow (tail slap
ECOLOGY
Environment warm rivers and marshes
Organization solitary
<b>Freasure</b> none
SPECIAL ABILITIES
Hold Breath (Fx): A Nile crocodile can hold

Hold Breath (Ex): A Nile crocodile can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to 4 times its Constitution score before it risks drowning. **Invisible in Water (Sp):** A Nile crocodile can become invisible at will as the spell *invisibility*, as long as it remains in contact with water. Activating this ability requires a standard action.

**Mythic Death Roll (Ex):** When grappling a foe of its size or smaller, a Nile crocodile can perform a death roll upon making a successful grapple check. As it clings to its foe, it tucks in its legs and rolls rapidly, twisting and wrenching its victim. The Nile crocodile inflicts 2d6+20 points of damage, and knocks the creature prone. This does not end the grapple. Additionally, when the Nile crocodile uses this ability, it may expend one use of mythic power in order to add its mythic rank as a bonus on its grapple check. Finally, if the result of the Nile crocodile's grapple check exceeds the target's CMD by 5 or more, the target becomes pinned at the end of the attack.

**Powerful Blow** (Ex): A Nile crocodile adds 1.5 times its Strength modifier to damage rolls for its tail slap attack.

**Sprint (Ex):** Once per minute, a crocodile may sprint, increasing its land speed to 60 feet for 1 round.

### Ecology

These terrible monsters come into being a number of different ways. They may have been the personal guardians or servants of powerful (and often malicious) gods of animals, or of the mighty river itself. They might instead have been normal crocodiles that were blessed by similar entities or exposed to incredible magical energy. A few are even rumored to have been created by the union of giant or dire crocodiles and dragons. Whatever the case, these terrible predators can be found inhabiting the greatest rivers throughout the world and are true monsters which cause more problems than even the most magical of beasts.

Completely invisible in the water, these giant carnivores strike suddenly and without warning. They can destroy ships outfitted with hundreds of soldiers in the blink of an eye, before they even realize that they are under attack, and Nile crocodiles have turned the tide of many naval battles by their mere presence. In addition to their natural invisibility, the Nile crocodile is a fearsome fighter, and more dangerous than some dragons. Its hide is harder than iron, and its powerful jaws can quickly kill all but the most skilled of knights.

As ambush predators, Nile crocodiles prefer to conduct their combat in the river itself or near its banks, appearing suddenly and then attacking its prey without remorse. Fiercely territorial and almost supernaturally aggressive, Nile crocodiles fight to the death and never back down from a challenge even if their lives are threatened.

Very rarely, these creatures are blessed with a gift of intellect, becoming far more dangerous. Usually Nile crocodiles come by this measure of intellect as a result of the dark and divine wrath of evil gods, such as Set or Anubis, which have power over animals. In this case, these creatures are almost always malevolent and have been tasked or compelled to protect treasure or passage down the river itself. More rarely, a druid of significant power will awaken these beasts using magic. In such cases their actions are difficult to predict.

# Nile Hawk

This immense hawk's feathers seem to shimmer in the sunlight, shifting from gleaming gold to the red of a setting sun, and all the colors in between. Its wingspan is nearly twenty feet, and the shadow that it casts on the ground below is almost supernaturally dark.

#### NILE HAWK

**CR 3/MR 1** 

#### XP 800

N Large animal Init +3; Senses low-light vision; Perception +15 DEFENSE AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+3 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size) hp 30 (4d8+12) Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +3 DR 5/epic OFFENSE Speed 10 ft., fly 80 ft. (good) Melee 2 claws +7 (1d8+5), bite +7 (1d6+5) Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft. Special Attacks eagle eye, mythic power (1/day, surge 1d6), shadow of the Nile STATISTICS Str 20, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 16 Base Atk +3; CMB +9 CMD 22 Feats Alertness<sup>M</sup>, Flyby Attack Skills Fly +6, Perception +15, Spellcraft +9; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception, +12 Spellcraft Languages Common (cannot speak) ECOLOGY **Environment** warm deserts and plains **Organization** solitary

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Eagle Eye (Sp):** A Nile hawk has exceptional powers of observation and can recall what it sees and hears perfectly. In addition to giving the Nile hawk near perfect recall, it can use this ability to cast spells in a limited fashion. Whenever a creature that the Nile hawk can both see and hear casts a spell, the Nile hawk may make a Spellcraft check (DC 10 + the spell's level). If it succeeds on this check, it may expend one use of mythic power. If it does, it gains the ability to cast that spell as a spell-like ability for 1 minute. The caster level of the spell is based on the caster level of the spell's original caster. Any saving throws for the spell are based on the Nile hawk's Charisma modifier.

**Shadow of the Nile (Su):** A Nile hawk can cast its shadow in order to create a small plane of supernatural darkness. As long as it is at least 30 feet above the ground, a Nile hawk can expend one use of mythic power in order to project a sphere of darkness 10 feet in diameter 30 feet directly below it. The sphere moves with the Nile hawk, and functions as the spell *deeper darkness*.

#### Ecology

Mythic Nile hawks are said to dwell atop pyramids in times of darkness, sleeping and cloaked with invisibility until called by otherworldly forces into service. Rarely is a Nile hawk driven from its sacred perch, where occult priests leave it offerings of food, and only the bidding of great powers or the portent of terrible times are typically sufficient to do so.

The Nile hawks are said to be the descendants of a bird-headed god (there is much debate over exactly which one) and a mortal handmaiden, who tricked the god into her affections. The handmaiden died in childbirth as penance for tricking the god, and her children were bound to serve his kingdom for all time.

Because Nile hawks are not powerful combatants, many fools choose not to fear them as much as they would other creatures of the Nile. This is much to their folly, however, as while they are less impressive individually, Nile hawks are among the river's most deadly denizens. They serve as near perfect scouts for those who can command them, reporting on the activities of their enemies, who can do nothing about it. When the time comes for battle, Nile hawks often assist other agents of these dark powers, providing powerful aerial support to more battle-ready combatants on the ground.

# Nile Hippopotamus

Fifteen feet high at the shoulder, and twenty feet long, the gigantic hippopotamus before you is assuredly one of the most terrible creatures of the natural world. Covered in a cloak of vile red sweat brimming with disease, the black-skinned monster has a mouth full of tusks as big as spears, and a thrashing tongue powerful enough to throw a man whole into its stomach.

#### NILE HIPPOPOTAMUS

CR 11/MR 4

XP 12,800 N Huge animal

Init +3; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 7, flat-footed 22 (-1 Dex, +15 natural, -2 size) hp 178 (12d8+124) fast healing 5 Fort +13, Ref +7, Will +6 Defensive Abilities Nile sweat DR 10/epic; Immune disease

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +20 (3d8+18 plus grab)

Space 15 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

**Special Attacks** capsize, swallow, mythic power (4/day, surge 1d8), swallow whole (6d8 bludgeoning damage, AC 17, hp 15, DR 10/epic), trample (2d6+12, DC 28)

**STATISTICS** 

Str 34, Dex 8, Con 20, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 5 Base Atk +9; CMB +23 (+27 grapple); CMD 32 (36 vs. trip) Feats Endurance, Improved Initiative, Power Attack<sup>M</sup>, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness<sup>M</sup>, Weapon Focus (bite). Skills Perception +9, Stealth +1 (+11 underwater), Swim +19; Racial Modifiers +10 Stealth underwater

SQ hold breath	and the second second
ECOLOGY	
Environment warm rivers	
<b>Organization</b> solitary	
Treasure none	
SPECIAL ABILITIES	

**Capsize** (Ex): A Nile hippopotamus can attempt to overturn a boat of that is no more than two size categories larger than itself by ramming the boat as a charge attack and making a CMB check. The DC for this check is 25 or the result of the boat captain's Profession (sailor) check, whichever is higher.

**Fast Swallow (Ex):** If a Nile hippopotamus begins its turn grappling a creature, it may expend one use of mythic power as a free action in order to attempt to swallow him. It must then succeed on a grapple check (it gains a bonus on this check equal to its mythic rank). If the grapple is successful, the creature is swallowed.

**Nile Sweat (Ex):** A Nile hippopotamus's reddish sweat protects it from nonlethal damage from hot environments, and grants it immunity to non-magical diseases. Additionally, any creature who comes into to contact with the Nile hippopotamus's sweat, either by striking it with an unarmed strike or by being trampled by the Nile hippopotamus (creatures who succeed their saving throw are not exposed to Nile sweat), must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 21) or contract the Nile hippopotamus's dreaded disease, Nile sweats. Nile sweats cannot be cured naturally, though in rare cases the disease can be survived as it runs its course very quickly. During this time, it may only be removed by a mythic *cure disease* spell. The saving throw DC is Constitution-based.

**Nile Sweats:** Contact—injury; *save* Fort DC 21; *onset* immediate; *frequency* 1/6 hours for 24 hours; *effect* 1d4 Str damage and 1d4 Con damage; *cure* none. The save DC is Constitution-based.

## Ecology

These horrifying monsters are blessedly found only in the upper Nile. They typically appear only every 100 years on the anniversary of a blasphemous act performed by a long-forgotten pharaoh, for which the gods themselves were made to pay. The Nile hippopotamus hates all living things, and strikes with incredible rage against the human race specifically, such that the wise know to flee its wrath. The monsters have a wide range, however, and quickly destroy those who do not flee the area that they consider their territory. Left unchecked, they spread diseases and mayhem throughout their domains.

Nearly impossible to kill, these beasts are terrible monsters which, according to legend, will continue to plague the land until the people repent for their forgotten pharaoh's sins. The Nile sweats, which these deadly creatures spread, is itself a curse from a divinity long since unknown in the lands of the Nile, meant to punish the people for their lack of compassion. Nearly incurable, the days of the Nile hippopotamus bring ruin in short order. Full of wrath and rage, these unstoppable terrors actively seek out civilizations along the river to kill and maim with an instinctual purpose. Strangely, left alone and in absence of people, these terrible monsters are placid and peaceful creatures, though highly territorial ones. When observed from afar, they seem to have only caring for one another and spend their days lazily, only venturing from their territories to hunt for food.

Whenever the Nile hippopotamuses come forth, there is always one which is imbued with intelligence and wisdom uncommon even in mankind, and it can converse with other intelligent creatures to teach the story of the curse which brought the Nile hippopotamuses. It is said that the key to sending the Nile hippopotamuses away from the mortal realms early can be heard in this creature's stories, though stories from those few who claim to have met the Nile hippopotamuses make it clear that once the creature's tale is done, it will relentlessly attack any nearby, making listening to the story a dangerous proposition.

# Nile Serpent

A snake 15 feet or more in length emerges from the sand, lashing out with great speed with razor fangs the size of daggers which drip with a black venom. A wild frill like some titanic cobra unfolds around its head, while its powerful python-like body wraps itself around its victim, crushing it to death.

NILE SERPENT CR 5/MR 2
XP 1,600
N Large animal
Init +3; Senses scent; Perception +12
DEFENSE
AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +7 natural, -1 size)
hp 63 (5d8+41)
Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +2
DR 5/epic
OFFENSE
<b>Speed</b> 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; sand glide
Melee bite +5 (1d6+9 plus grab and poison)
<b>Space</b> 10 ft.; <b>Reach</b> 10 ft.
<b>Special Attacks:</b> constrict (1d6+9), mythic power (2/day,
surge 1d6)
STATISTICS
Str 23, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2
Base Atk +3; CMB +10 (+14 grapple); CMD 23 (can't be
tripped)
Feats Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness, Weapon Focus
(bite) <sup>M</sup>
Skills Acrobatics +15, Climb +14, Perception +12, Stealth +9,
Swim +11; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception, +4 Stealth, +8
Acrobatics
SQ water form
ECOLOGY
Environment warm forests, swamps, and fresh water
Organization solitary
Treasure none
SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Poison (Ex):** Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 16; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d6 Con; *cure* 1 save. The saving throw DC is Constitution-based. **Water Form (Su):** As an immediate action, a Nile serpent can transform its body into living water. In this state, it loses all of its modes of movement except for its swim speed, and gains the aquatic subtype. Additionally, its damage reduction increases to 20/epic, and it can squeeze through even tiny holes or cracks. While in this state, it cannot attack or use combat maneuvers. It is nearly invisible in water while using this ability, and gains a +20 bonus on all Stealth checks in water. While outside of water in this form, the Nile serpent suffers 1d10 points of damage each round. It can exit this form as another immediate action.

## Ecology

Unlike the Nile crocodile, the Nile serpent is rarely created by a deity as a means to guard treasure or punish mortals, and instead usually comes into being through other means. Some scholars even contend that the Nile serpent is a perfectly natural (if rare) mutation of more mundane serpents, though most scholars have never seen the serpent's terrible powers to travel through sand as though it were water, or to completely liquefy its body. Some have concluded that such serpents are the children of the most reviled and dangerous creatures from myth. As the leviathan is for the oceans, so is the Nile serpent for the great rivers—an unthinkable terror all sailors dread.

When Nile serpents do choose to make their homes on well-traveled waterways, they quickly become the bane of trade and travel in the region. Their innate ability to transform into living water allows them to flee any fight that turns against them, though only the most elite mercenary guards are capable of driving off an attack from a Nile serpent. Though such creatures have only limited intellect, they have long memories and will attack weakened ships days later, after their venom has worked its magic on their victims.

Mercifully, Nile serpents are rejected by the gods and are almost never imbued by them with additional intellect or powers, though they are occasionally born with additional heads, possibly through an unholy union with fiendish hydras, and such creatures are far more deadly and aggressive than their single-headed kin.



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# Animals of Myth and Legend!

Animals serve an important role in legends and folklore, and in few places is this more true than in the ancient lands of the Nile, home to such exotic and wondrous creatures as crocodiles, hippopotamuses, hawks, and serpents, to name a few. But while these creatures may be objects of importance in adventures set in the Nile (or other rich oases like it), they tend not to be very interesting at the game table. Animals rarely get special or unique abilities in their stat=blocks, meaning that they tend to make for rather dull or forgettable encounters, and their combat abilities are easily divorced from their in=game identity.

While this may be fine for average animals, and even their dire cousins, mythic animals demand something more. All four animals provided in this book have unique and exciting special abilities that truly make them mythic. Watch your players quake as a Nile hawk's shadow passes over them, or surprise them with Nile crocodiles that, among other powers, are completely invisible when in water. The deadly Nile serpent, with its ability to transmute itself into water, can slip through nearly any barricade to get at potential prey in the night, and the fearsome Nile hippopotamus can swallow victims whole in a single, sudden gulp, and subject any survivors to the deadly Nile sweats disease, which is all but impossible to remove, and must be endured for its (mercifully short) duration.

The Mythic Mastery series of products builds and expands on the rules for mythic characters introduced in Mythic Adventures. Each Mythic Mastery provides new content and rules for mythic games, with a focus on a single theme or area of play. While some of the content provided in Mythic Mastery products requires the use of mythic characters and a mythic adventure, others, such as those focused on exploring mythic monsters, can be used in games of every sort.

