



Noisome Beasts

Monstrous Pages for Shadow of the Demon Lord

There are monsters everywhere. From the hideous lash crawlers creeping in the darkest places deep beneath the earth to the rampaging boggarts, driven by insatiable hunger and lust to terrorize the lands around them, there seems to be no end to the variation in form and intent when it comes to monstrous creatures. While most monsters tend to be unique beings, spawned from pools of stagnant magic or demonic influence, a few have emerged as true species, able to reproduce despite their unnatural origins.

Noisome Beasts explores some of the more famous breeds of monster to infest the world, specifically those that are noxious and toxic to creatures around them. In the following pages, you'll find lore and customization options for the amphisbaena, basilisk, catoblepas, cockatrice, and the dreaded manticore.

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AMPHISBAENA

Eyes of gleaming emerald shine out of the darkness, inexorably drawing the gaze of anyone nearby, holding their attention long enough for the monster to strike. These eyes belong to the amphisbaena, a bizarre, serpent-like creature sporting a head at either end of its body, its transfixing gaze keeping its intended victims within reach of both. If there's a place in which these strange serpents cannot adapt, none have yet found it as amphisbaenas have been encountered everywhere from the blasted lands of the Desolation to the icy fields of the frozen wastes.

Born from Blood: As with many terrible things stalking the lands of Rûl, the amphisbaenas first appeared in the world during the dark tyranny of Gog, not long after the Witch-King transformed his wives into hideous gorgons to prevent his rivals from using them against him. The Witch-King had many sons, and though many were loyal, their loyalty stemmed from fear of earning their sire's wrath and suffering his cruel attentions. One son, Astrophon the Blind, who had had his eyes burned from his head by his father, recoiled at the horrors his father let loose and sought to put an end to his father's tyranny.

Astrophon conjured a demon steed and rode the hateful beast north into the shattered lands of the Desolation where the Witch-King had imprisoned his most beautiful bride, the gorgon sorceress Halicale. Within a vast and terrible black palace, the gorgon raged at her captivity, tormenting the blinded sycophants cursed to wait on her. Astrophon descended from the skies, drew his keen blade, which helped him sense his foes, and hunted Halicale, killing her many servants and guardians until the palace halls ran red with blood. When he finally found her, the two battled for days, the dark magic of their combat warping the very fabric of the world, releasing innumerable demons and other untold horrors. In the end, Astrophon was victorious, taking off her head with a masterful stroke of his blade.

The young hero sought to use the gorgon's head to petrify his father, so he scooped it up, mounted the demon steed, and flew south to confront the Witch-King. The blood weeping from the severed head fell to the ground, and wherever a droplet landed sprang forth an amphisbaena. Over the many leagues of his flight, amphisbaenas were created on the lands below, and each quickly adapted to the different environments in which they landed.

As the Witch-King's reign lasted many years after Astrophon's betrayal, it is clear the young hero's quest ended in failure. Legend holds that the Witch-King was so impressed by his son's daring that he rewarded him by sealing him alive inside Halicale's black palace, where it's said his screams can still be heard to this day.

Great Variety: Extremely adaptable, amphisbaenas thrive in almost any land, even ones normally too cold for serpents to live. Wherever they live, their bodies adapt to their surrounding environments in order to help them hide in the terrain. Thus amphisbaenas living in the frozen wastes have white, gray, and blue scales, while those living among the Burning Vaults of the salamanders have black and orange scales. Despite the variation in appearance, all amphisbaenas share one physical trait: their eyes shine with emerald light.

Deadly Hunters: Although they have two heads, amphisbaenas are of one mind when it comes to hunting. The heads display a great deal of cooperation, readily ceding control of the body to the other as the situation demands. One head might pin a creature with its gaze while the other darts forward to deliver its deadly bite. Whether springing out from the shadows to take their victim unawares or darting around their prey to close off avenues of retreat, amphisbaenas prove the truth in the old adage "two heads are always better than one."

Magical Properties: Alchemists claim body parts from amphisbaenas have magical properties and thus fetch high prices on the black market. The most common substance harvested from these creatures is their venom (see *Do We Not Die?* for details on harvesting poison). Eating amphisbaena flesh is believed to attract lovers of the opposite sex, while wearing clothing made from amphisbaena skin is said to cure aches in bones.

AMPHISBAENA

DIFFICULTY 25

Size 2 monster

Perception 14 (+4); darksight

Defense 16; **Health** 20

Strength 13 (+3), **Agility** 15 (+5), **Intellect** 8 (-2),

Will 11 (+1)

Speed 12

Immune damage from cold; gaining Insanity; dazed, impaired, stunned

Two Heads An amphisbaena can take both a fast turn and a slow turn and can use two triggered actions each round.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Fangs (melee) +5 (Agility) (1d6 + 1 plus Poison)

Poison The target must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane or take 1d6 damage and become poisoned for 1 minute. If the target is already poisoned, it takes 1d6 damage.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Pinning Gaze The amphisbaena uses an action, or a triggered action on its turn, to fix its gaze on one target creature within medium range. The target must get a success on a Will challenge roll or become immobilized until it uses an action to remove the affliction. A success on the roll renders the target immune to this amphisbaena's use of Pinning Gaze until the target completes a rest.

CUSTOMIZING AMPHISBAENAS

Amphisbaenas tend to dwell in lands steeped in magic, places warped by destructive spells or touched by the Demon Lord's shadow. These environments often cause weird mutations in their bodies.

MADDENING GAZE

Magic powers the amphisbaena's gaze, giving these monsters the ability to freeze their victims in place. In some monsters, the power runs stronger, causing frozen creatures to experience nightmarish thoughts and visions that induce madness. You can grant this ability to an amphisbaena by removing its Pinning Gaze special attack and applying all of the following changes.

INCREASE BY 1 DIFFICULTY STEP

Health +10

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Maddening Gaze The amphisbaena uses an action or a triggered action on its turn to fix its gaze on one target creature within medium range. The target must get a success on a Will challenge roll or become immobilized until the amphisbaena becomes incapacitated. At the end of each round a creature remains immobilized this way, it must get a success on a Will challenge roll or gain 1 Insanity. An affected creature can use an action to make a Will challenge roll with 1 bane. On a success, the creature removes the immobilized affliction.

VENOM-SPITTER

Some amphisbaenas develop the ability to spit venom to strike distant enemies. When used in this way, the venom burns the flesh and can cause temporary blindness.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Spit Venom The amphisbaena spits venom at one creature within short range. The amphisbaena makes an Agility attack roll against the target's Agility. On a success, the venom hits, causing the target to take 1d6 damage and become poisoned for 1 minute. While poisoned in this way, the target is also blinded. Once the amphisbaena uses this attack, it must wait 1 minute before it can use it again. While it waits, any creature making a Strength challenge roll to resist its poison makes the roll with 1 boon.

HUMAN-HEADED

In the most remote corners of the Desolation there dwells a rare strain of amphisbaena, one that has human heads instead of those of a serpent. Legend holds these abominations descend from the first amphisbaenas created by Astrophon. The faces are always female and contorted with madness, but they are far more intelligent than other amphisbaenas and are capable of using magic.

INCREASE BY 1 DIFFICULTY STEP

Gain horrifying trait

Intellect +3

ATTACK OPTIONS

Fangs (melee) +5 (Agility) (1d3)

MAGIC

Power 3

Telepathy[†] share thoughts (4), mental static (2), mind stab (2), repulsion (1), erase presence (1)

[†]See *Demon Lord's Companion*

VOID-TOUCHED

Amphisbaenas living in lands touched by the Void tend to be wilder and less predictable, almost as if possessed by demons.

INCREASE BY 1 DIFFICULTY STEP

Gains horrifying trait

Gain truesight

Speed +2

Demonic Shadows Lit areas out to 3 yards from the amphisbaena become shadows.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Corrupting Poison The target must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane or take 1d6 damage and become poisoned for 1 minute. If the total of the target's roll is 0 or less, the target also gains 1 Corruption. If the target is already poisoned, it takes 1d6 damage.

END OF THE ROUND

Erratic Roll a d6. On a 1, the amphisbaena attacks itself if it can use actions. On a 2-5, nothing happens. On a 6, the amphisbaena can use an additional action during the next round.

CRUSHING COILS

Larger breeds of amphisbaenas can coil their bodies around their victims, tightening until they crush the life out of them.

INCREASE BY 2 DIFFICULTY STEPS

Size +1 and gains frightening trait

Health +20

Strength +2

ATTACK OPTIONS

Fangs (melee) +5 (Agility) (2d6 + 1 plus Poison)

Poison The target must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane or take 2d6 damage and become poisoned for 1 minute. If the target is already poisoned, it takes 1d6 damage.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Crushing Grab The amphisbaena makes a Strength attack roll against the Agility of one creature within its reach that is of a Size smaller than itself. On a success, the target takes 1d6 damage and is grabbed until the end of the next round. If the target was already grabbed by the amphisbaena, the amphisbaena gets an automatic success and the target takes 2d6 extra damage. Targets grabbed by the amphisbaena make attack rolls to escape with 2 banes.

BASILISK

Among the most feared and reviled of monsters, basilisks are the embodiment of all things venomous. Able to kill with a glance, potent venom sluicing from their fangs, their mere presence enough to stain the lands in which they live, basilisks are true monsters. Most basilisks dwell in deep caves, hunting other denizens of the depths, but a few find a place in the service of dark wizards, charged with protecting their fabulous treasures, which they do in exchange for a steady supply of sacrifices.

Legendary Origins: Folklore claims basilisks originated from the eggs of serpents or toads hatched by cockerels in the darkness of a new moon. Others believe them to have been created by the race of serpent people from which lizardmen descend, terrible guardians of forbidden lore. Others still claim they were spawned in Hell and released into the world to spread fear and misery. Whatever their origins, no one can recall a time when the basilisks did not haunt the wild places. They have always been there, hunting and killing, polluting the lands with their foul presence.

BASILISK

DIFFICULTY 250

Size 3 monster

Perception 12 (+2); **darksight**

Defense 18; **Health** 150

Strength 17 (+7), **Agility** 11 (+1),

Intellect 8 (-2), **Will** 11 (+1)

Speed 12

Captivating Appearance When a creature must make a Will challenge roll with 3 banes. On a failure, the creature gains 1 Insanity and cannot avert its eyes from the basilisk for 1 round. Whether it gets a success or failure on the roll, the creature becomes immune to that basilisk's Captivating Appearance until the creature completes a rest.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Fangs (melee) +7 (Strength) with 3 boons (4d6 plus Poison)

Poison The target creature must make a Strength challenge roll with 3 banes. A target takes 4d6 damage and becomes poisoned for 1 minute on a failure, or just takes half the damage on a success. If the target is already poisoned, it takes 2d6 damage and becomes dazed for 1 round.

END OF THE ROUND

Killing Gaze Each creature within medium range of the basilisk that can see it must either use a triggered action to avert its eyes from the basilisk's gaze or make a Strength challenge roll with 2 banes.

For 1 round, a creature that averted its eyes makes attack rolls with 2 banes and other creature make attack rolls against it with 2 boons.

A creature that makes the challenge roll and gets a failure takes 3d6 damage. If the damage would incapacitate the creature, it dies.

Magnificent Monstrosity: Basilisks resemble serpents, measure up to 30 feet long, and weigh several hundred pounds. They have glossy black scales over their bodies, from the snouts of their flat, wide heads to the tips of their tapering tails. Basilisks have four fangs in their mouths, each dripping potent venom that burns whatever it touches. About one in twelve have a crown-like crest or a patch of white scales on the tops of their heads.

Deadly Venom: Considered the kings of serpents for their toxic nature, basilisks can kill with a glance, and the venom dripping from their four fangs can stop a creature's heart almost at once. The acidic venom dribbles and drips, spilling onto the ground and destroying just about anything it touches. For this reason, the area around a basilisk's lair tends to be barren, the plants withered and blackened, the ground littered with the bones of dead animals.

Fear of Weasels: Basilisks despise weasels and recoil in fear in their presence despite their small size. The basilisk is, of course, more than a match for an ordinary weasel, so once the monster finds its courage, the weasel is almost certainly doomed.



Basilisk hunters find keeping a weasel or two on hand can buy them the time they need to attack the beast and bring it down.

When a basilisk sees a weasel, it must get a success on a Will challenge roll or become frightened for 1 round. While frightened in this way, it cannot use its Killing Gaze.

Alchemical Ingredients: Basilisk body parts command a high price in black markets all across the civilized world, which explains why individuals dare to hunt these terrifying beasts. A vial of venom, a dram of basilisk blood, or an intact eye can bring a fortune, up to 20 gc from an interested buyer.

Basilisk venom can be harvested using the rules described in *Do We Not Die?* A basilisk eye can be safely removed from the carcass by spending 1 minute of work with a tool kit and getting a success on an Intellect challenge roll. The basilisk eye retains potency for 1d6 days, after which time it rots away. A creature can make the eye its implement, which grants the creature 1 boon on attack rolls made using Death spells and imposes 1 bane on challenge rolls made to resist Death spells the creature casts.

Other body parts are said to have alchemical properties, though none are proven. Alchemists, however, use basilisk blood in the casting of the *copper to gold* spell.

COPPER TO GOLD

ALCHEMY UTILITY 6

Requirements You must have an alchemist's kit, powdered basilisk's blood, powdered human blood, and vinegar distilled from rare wine (at least 10 gc)

Target Up to 100 cp you can reach

Duration Permanent

Upon casting this spell, you must use your alchemist's kit and other ingredient to work for 1 hour, during which time you must concentrate. If you work the full hour, you transform the target to gold. The coins have a weird reddish color but have the same value as regular gold crowns.

Then, make a Strength challenge roll. On a failure, you permanently reduce your Health by 1d6 from working with the basilisk's blood.

CUSTOMIZING BASILISKS

Some basilisks have capabilities beyond those of the normal members of their kind.

POISONOUS BLOOD

The venom of any basilisk is quite dangerous, but in certain breeds, everything about the creature is extremely toxic. Spilling the blood of such a creature causes the blood to run up the weapon that broke its hide and attack the wielder directly.

INCREASE BY 1 DIFFICULTY STEP

Health +25

Immune damage from poison; poisoned

Poisonous Blood When a creature deals damage to this basilisk with a melee weapon, blood flows across the weapon to touch the weapon's wielder making it subject to the basilisk's Poison.

ERODING BREATH

Basilisks have foul breath to be sure, but those with eroding breath issue exhalations of such vileness that they kill plants and shatter stones. Basilisks with this trait tend to be found in the Desolation.

INCREASE BY 1 DIFFICULTY STEP

Health +25

Immune damage from poison; poisoned

END OF THE ROUND

Eroding Breath The ground within 2 yards of the basilisk becomes difficult terrain. Each object made from earth or stone within this area also takes damage equal to its Health. Finally, each living and breathing creature in the area must get a success on a Strength challenge roll or take 2d6 damage and become poisoned for 1 minute. A creature already poisoned takes 2d6 extra damage.

TOXIC SCALES

The glistening scales covering basilisks' bodies are quite striking, as bright as polished obsidian. Some basilisks, though, have dull, matte scales, made so by the creature's foul excretions. Physical contact with the monster's body exposes the creature to the poisonous substance, which causes pain so intense it can stop the heart.

INCREASE BY 1 DIFFICULTY STEP

Health +25

Immune damage from poison; poisoned

Toxic Scales Plants touching this basilisk take damage equal to their Health. Any living creature that touches the basilisk takes 1d6 damage and must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 4 banes or take 4d6 damage and become poisoned for 1 minute. A creature already poisoned takes 4d6 extra damage.

CATOBLEPAS

Not all monsters are inimical to people. Some even avoid other creatures. Such is the case of the catoblepas, a queer mid-sized beast found roaming the dunes and badlands of the Desolation. The catoblepas roots through the rubble for the scant, tough foliage growing there and the infrequent pools of water yet to be stolen by the high heat of the landscape. An inoffensive brute, the catoblepas keeps its distance from other creatures, but if one draws too close, it readily employs its potent breath to keep predators at bay.

Cattle of the Wastes: A catoblepas has the body shape of a bison, and thick, black armored plates cover its back in the manner of an armadillo. It has an overlarge, shaggy head from which sprout a pair of twisting horns. Its thick legs end in hoofs divided into three toes. Although shaggy and armored, the catoblepas has no trouble with extreme heat or deprivation.

Morose Beasts: The catoblepas takes its name from a High Archaic word that means “to look down,” because these beasts keep their heads pointed at the ground, almost as if they were too heavy to lift. Add to this posture their red-rimmed eyes and mournful lowing, and one can understand their reputations for being melancholy creatures.

Uncertain Origins: The best theory about the origin of these creatures is that they were herd animals in the wastes altered by the destructive magic used by the trolls and their faeries in their ancient wars. Their natural hardiness allowed them to adapt to their ruined environment. However, they still need to eat and food is scarce in their territory, thus they are few in number, rarely encountered in groups larger than three.



CATOBLEPAS

DIFFICULTY 100

Size 2 monster

Perception 11 (+1)
Defense 18; **Health** 80
Strength 15 (+5), **Agility** 10 (+0), **Intellect** 6 (-4),
Will 9 (-1)
Speed 8

ATTACK OPTIONS

Horns (melee) +5 (Strength) with 1 boon (2d6)

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Poisonous Cloud The catoblepas exhales a toxic cloud to spread across a 6-yard cone originating from a point it can reach. The cloud partially obscures its area and remains for 1 round or until dispersed by wind.

The poisonous cloud deals 6d6 damage to each living creature in the area that is not a catoblepas. A creature that gets a success on a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane takes half the damage. Any creature incapacitated by this damage turns into a stone statue and dies.

A catoblepas must wait 1 round before it can use Poisonous Cloud again.

Rancid Odor: The catoblepas gives off the foul odor of spoiled milk, a stench wafting out of their mouths. The reason for this unwholesome smell is that it has a special organ in its gullet, used to help break down rocks and other inorganic materials it eats. When threatened, the catoblepas belches up gasses from this organ that billow out from its mouth in a toxic cloud of lethal potency.

CUSTOMIZING THE CATOBLEPAS

The catoblepas has a great deal of variety in its form. Some specimens have the heads of hogs, while others have long, flexible necks. Some have thick black bristles sprouting out from between their armored plates, and some have thick manes. Nearly all share the same capabilities, however, with a few that are the exception to the rule.

LETHAL STARE

That the catoblepas is said to have a gaze that can kill is most likely apocryphal, but some travelers swear the beasts can kill with a glance.

INCREASE BY 1 DIFFICULTY STEP

Health +10

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Lethal Stare The catoblepas raises its head to peer at one creature within short range. If the creature can see, it must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 1 boon or take damage equal to its Health. A creature with Health 50 or more makes the challenge roll with 3 boons.

COCKATRICE

Many monsters are hybrids, possessing the features and traits of other creatures. The cockatrice is a classic example, combining the forms of a dragon and rooster. This would normally be strange enough, but the cockatrice has another power that makes it one of the most dangerous monsters: with a touch of its beak, it can turn flesh to stone.

Man-Sized Monster: A cockatrice has the body of a scaled reptile with a bulging belly and bat-like wings in place of forelimbs. It has the feathered head and legs of a rooster, and its eyes glow with a reddish light. Most cockatrices stand about 6 feet tall and weigh 200 pounds.

Common Origins: Myths about the cockatrice originate from the same stories about basilisks, legend holding that cockatrices hatch from chicken eggs incubated by toads or serpents. The similarities to the basilisk's origins hints that these creatures appeared at the same time or, possibly, spawned from the same source. Just as basilisks are believed to have been created by a race of primeval serpent

people, so too is it believed cockatrices were products of the same experimentations and have since reproduced in numbers enough to become a full species.

Turn to Stone: What makes cockatrices such worrisome monsters is their ability to turn flesh to stone with a touch of their beaks. This magical ability is key to how the monster both hunts prey and protects itself from other predators. Cockatrices are neither strong nor fast, which makes them easy pickings for bigger, hungrier creatures. But the ability to petrify living creatures gives the cockatrice a decisive advantage. Those touched by its beak feel their bodies grow heavy and leaden, as if weighted down. Repeated pecks cause the flesh to calcify until it turns to stone, killing the victim instantly.

Cockatrices can eat just about anything. They eat small stones to help digest food. Their beaks are quite strong and can break apart petrified bodies so they can get to the threads of soft tissue trapped in the rock. Since cockatrices are not voracious eaters, one can usually find an assortment of petrified creatures around the caves in they make their lairs.

COCKATRICE

DIFFICULTY 25

Size 1 monster

Perception 11 (+1)

Defense 14; **Health** 20

Strength 12 (+2), **Agility** 12 (+2), **Intellect** 6 (-4),

Will 10 (+0)

Speed 6; flier

ATTACK OPTIONS

Beak (melee) +2 (Strength) with 1 boon (4d6 plus Petrify on a 20+ against a living target)

Petrify The target becomes slowed for 1 minute as its body grows heavy. If the target is already slowed this way, it instead takes 4d6 extra damage. A target incapacitated by this damage turns into a stone statue and dies.

CUSTOMIZING COCKATRICES

Variations among cockatrices tend to be cosmetic, but there is at least one significant exception.

TWO-HEADED

The two-headed cockatrices is quite rare and greatly feared. A vicious and aggressive monster, its two heads constantly snap at each other whenever the beast is not on the hunt. As a result, each head sports stony patches from being nicked by the other's beak.

INCREASE BY 2 DIFFICULTY STEPS

Defense +2; **Health** +20

Two Heads A cockatrice can take both a fast turn and a slow turn and can use two triggered actions each round.



MANTICORE

Manticores terrorize the lands they inhabit. These man-eaters appear in local legends all across Rûl and are known by many different names. The centaurs of the Endless Steppe know them as “lampagos,” while the people of Tear refer to them as “man-tigers.” Throughout the Nine Cities, where manticores cause endless trouble for merchant caravans, they are known as “satyrals.” Regardless of what they are called, people all over fear manticores for their viciousness and cruelty, for they are relentless killers that seem to delight in the suffering of their victims.

Hybrid Forms: Manticores combine the forms of a few different creatures. They have the bodies of lions or tigers, the fur covering their forelimbs giving way to scaly flesh and sharp talons. From their backs sprout enormous black bat wings, with tails like those of enormous scorpions, black chitinous protrusions ending in barbed spikes dripping with venom. The most horrific aspect to their appearance, though, is their human visages. Rather than lion heads, they have the snarling, bestial faces of people, warped almost beyond recognition.

Troll Creations: In the hateful wars between trolls and faeries, the trolls used dark power to create soldiers to fight for them. Manticores were made from captured faeries fused to ordinary beasts so that other faeries would be demoralized by seeing familiar faces attached to the bodies of abominations. Although these ancient wars have long since ended, manticores survived, passing down their accursed existence to countless offspring, each generation worse than the last.

Cruel Hunters: A deadly predator, the manticore claims large swathes of land, soaring above at night in search of flesh on which it might feed its prodigious appetite. Manticores typically survive on herd animals but prefer human or faerie flesh. They never pass up the chance to make a meal on some shepherd or a lost child. The perverse delight the manticore takes in the act of killing makes it viciously cruel, and unless starving, it draws out the hunt, taking its time to slowly circle around the victim, swooping in to slash its flesh into ribbons and then up into the air again, all the while laughing at their victims’ cries.

Vicious Mockery: Manticores have the ability to make sounds akin to speech, but most just echo what they hear without showing any understanding of what they say. They enjoy reproducing their victims’ cries and pleading, parroting the sounds they make as if mocking them. While most manticores lack the ability to comprehend what they say, some do have the capacity for speech and when they do, it is always Dark Speech.

MANTICORE

DIFFICULTY 250

Size 2 horrifying monster

Perception 15 (+5); darksight
Defense 16; **Health** 150
Strength 16 (+6), **Agility** 11 (+1), **Intellect** 7 (-3),
Will 14 (+4)
Speed 12; flier
Immune gaining Insanity

ATTACK OPTIONS

Claw (melee) +6 (Strength) with 2 boons (2d6)
Teeth (melee) +6 (Strength) with 2 boons (2d6 + 1)
Stinger (melee) +6 (Strength) with 2 boons (1d6 plus Poison)
Poison A living target must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 3 banes or take 5d6 damage and become poisoned for 1 minute. If the target is already poisoned, it instead takes 3d6 extra damage.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Rend The manticore attacks twice with its claw and once with its teeth.
Swift Sting At any point during the round, the manticore can use a triggered action to attack with its stinger.

CUSTOMIZING MANTICORES

Variations among the manticores normally involve facial features with many having the faces of baboons, human women, or monstrous, tusked visages. Color variations are also common, often showing up as stripes or spots, or fur that is black, white, or yellow.

MAGIC-USING

Not all manticores let themselves be ruled by their appetites. Some have greater ambitions. Magic-using manticores are cunning creatures, their minds awakened to even greater evil. Such creatures, sometimes called sphinxes, position themselves at the center of large humanoid settlements, making slaves of their prey to use them to advance their agendas.

To create a magic-using manticore, increase its Intellect to 14 and give it traditions and spells for its Difficulty as described in the main rulebook (*Shadow*, page 263).

SPIKED TAIL

Many manticores have spiked tails from which drip venom, and they can flick their tails to hurl a spike at their prey. Such manticores have 1d3 + 3 spikes at the ends of their tails. The manticore regrows missing spikes after 1d6 days.

Replace the manticore’s stinger with the following attack option.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Tail Spike (medium range) +1 (Agility) with 2 boons (1d3 plus Poison)
Poison A living target must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 3 banes or fall prone and become immobilized. While immobilized, the target is defenseless.