

THE HYDRA

NEW WORLD BESTIARY INFORMATION ON HYDRAS FOR SECOND EDITION WFRP

'The War Hydra is a titanic monster, a creature from the dark caverns below the Blackspine Mountains.'

– Furion of Clar Karond, Highborn Sorcerer and Historian

No scholar knows the true origin of the Hydra, although some theorise they are related to the Cold Ones and Dragons, while other scholars point out that they are clearly a form of stable-mutant that has emerged from the Chaos Wastes. They are a widely distributed creature, dwelling in the Annulii Mountains of Ulthuan, the Iron Mountains and Blackspine Mountains of Naggaroth and throughout the Chaos Wastes. Hydra have even been found as far south as the island chains that rest in the Boiling Sea, although how they came to be there is hotly debated. The Dark Elf Beastmasters make the greatest use of Hydra in war, although other races have also occasionally experimented with using these large reptilian beasts in battle, typically by breeding them from stolen hatchlings or eggs.

Hydra are multiple headed retiles whose serpentine heads can belch out flame in the manor of dragons. Their other weapons are also formidable, allowing them to rend foes in two with their mighty jaws or grabbing and crushing smaller creatures within the coils of their many necks. Their bodies are squat and muscular with four mighty legs, and the entirety of the Hydra is protected by thick scales as tough as iron plate.

Although relatively stable in form, Hydra are malleable by the mutating power of Chaos. In addition, the Druchii have owned Hydra for countless years, creating new subspecies through the arts of crossbreeding and the casting of dark incantations. The Beastmasters cage these fell creatures in lairs below the Blackspine Mountains and Karond Kar, although many have escaped into the wild.

INTRODUCTION

This core of this document contains five sub species of Hydra. Apart from the Veteran Hydra, all are average members of their species that have not progressed through any Careers. Also included in the document is the War Trained Monster career for GMs (or players!) wishing to enhance these Hydra or any other beast of war, along with some special Hydra Features that return options available in the first edition of WFRP and Mordheim. Finally, this document includes profiles for the Carnivorous Snapper and Dark Elf Beastmaster Apprentice, who are commonly encountered alongside these majestic multi-headed beasts, along with a few Magic Items and information on Hekarti, the Dark Elf Goddess of Hydra and Dark Magic.

HYDRA FEATURES

While the profiles here cover a range of possible Hydra, many more subtypes and breeds exist. To this end, a number of 'Hydra Features' are presented in this document, to cover some of the more common examples of Hydra that have existed in the various incarnations of the Warhammer World. By adding these features to any of the Hydra profiles included in this document, or the standard Hydra from Old World Bestiary, a number of different breeds are possible. Note that these features are not mutations and are present on a Hydra at birth, and therefore should not be available through the expenditure of Experience Points.

THE HYDRA'S HEADS

All Hydra's have the ability to grow back heads lost or damaged through combat. For most Hydra this takes days to replace a head that was lost. Should a Hydra either lose a head or have a head critically damaged for whatever reason, it will grow back in 2d10 days, assuming the Hydra is alive.

By Alexander J Bateman

Version 1.1

VETERAN HYDRA THE CLAWS OF KHAINE

War Hydra that survive long enough may be trained by their masters to become truly fierce fighting creatures. Although of animal intelligence, Hydra are smart enough to learn from each battle, and a good Beastmaster can refine the Hydra's behaviour with tasty snacks and applications of the lash. Beastmasters may even make deals with fearsome sorcerers, to cast minor incantations to augment the Hydra's already impressive battlefield prowess.

Veteran Hydra have the battle scars of many skirmishes, and are more massive and cunning than their more common kin. Beastmasters often nail trophies and other adornments into the Hydra's scaly flesh, to better distinguish them on the battlefield. Although trained to work with their handlers, Veteran War Hydra become so accustomed to battle, that they will often continue to rampage and fight even if they manage to escape their trainer. This most often happens upon a Beastmaster's Death, and escaped Hydra can be a problematic issue that lingers years after a Dark Elf defeat.

This example Veteran Hydra has taken 6 advances from the War Trained Monster Career.

HYDRA BLADE

Academic Knowledge: Theology

Powers: Functions as a Hand Weapon; Additionally, at the start of each round the wielder may roll up to three d10, for each of these d10 that come up with a score of 8 or more, the wielder gains +1 to his Attacks Characteristic until the end of the round. However, Hekarti demands blood to power her Dark Magic, and if any 1s are rolled upon these dice, she decides to take the blood of the wielder. This results in the loss of a single Wound per 1 rolled (regardless of Toughness Bonus and any Armour Points worn).

History: Sorceresses of the Six Covenants know rituals that call upon the powers of the dread Goddess Hekarti, the Hydra Queen. One such ritual creates these beautiful but deadly weapons that allow their wielders to strike repeatedly, like the weapon's multi-headed namesake. In the Old World these blades are rare, the only method of typically obtaining one being to prise it out of the hands of a captain of the Elven corsairs that trouble the high seas.

Main Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
47%	0%	52%	61%	35%	14%	24%	15%

Secondary Profile

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
5	50	5	6	6	0	0	0

Skills: Dodge Blow, Perception+20%, Scale Sheer Surface+10%, Search, Swim

Talents: Frenzy, Night Vision, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure

Traits: Keen Senses, Natural Weapons, Terrifying

Special Rules:

Breathe Fire: A Hydra can breathe fire as a full action. Use the Cone Template. Those affected take a Damage 4 hit.

Powerful Bite: A Hydra's natural weapons are so deadly that they count as having the Impact Quality.

Scales: The Hydra has tough scales that protect it like armour. This trait provides the Hydra with 3 Armour Points on all locations.

Speed of Attack: A Hydra has so many heads that it can attack twice with the standard attack action instead of the normal once.

Unstoppable Blows: A Hydra is so large and strong that its attacks are incredibly difficult to parry. Opponents suffer a -30% penalty to parry attempts.

Will of Iron: A Hydra is immune to Fear and Terror, as well as the effects of the Intimidate skill and the Unsettling Talent.

Combat:

Armour (None): Scaly Skin

Armour Points: Head 3, Arms 3, Body 3, Legs 3

Weapons: Teeth (1d10+6, Impact)

Slaughter Margin: Very Hard

ROYAL HYDRA MALEKITH'S CHOSEN

The greatest honour a Dark Elf Beastmaster can obtain is an invite to Lord Malekith's palace. This is a reward for success in war, a stunning victory or simply a great feat of carnage. The Beastmaster and his apprentices indulge in two weeks of feasting, drinking and other decadence, all with the dark blessing of the Witch King himself. On the final night of their revelry, the Beastmaster and his apprentices are led to the royal bestiary, where a Hydra then consumes them in turn.

The dark energies woven into their food and drink by the Witch King take full effect as their corpses are digested by the Hydra, transforming its blood into powerful acid while protective ridges of fused bone burst through its sides. This process is extremely painful, and the echoing howls of pain echo over Naggarond for days upon end. Once the transformation is finally over, the newly crated Royal Hydra joins Malekith's personal stable of war beasts, to serve the Witch King himself in battle or sent as a gift to a favoured general.

Royal Hydra are easily distinguished from their common kin, by their extruding spines and acidic slobber. Fortunately they are rare, and typically only found in the service of the Druchii. Occasionally a Royal Hydra that has been lost through the misfortune of war may be found wandering the wilderness, striking out at anything it comes across in a mixture of pain and bestial malice.

Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
48%	0%	58%	64%	30%	13%	22%	11%
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
5	60	5	6	6	0	0	0

Hydra Feature: **FELL MOUTH**

Some Hydra are blessed with an extra mouth at the base of their necks, far larger and more powerful than the ones in its heads. If a Hydra with this Feature grapples an opponent, it may shove them into this mouth when it attempts to inflict Damage. When it does so it resolves damage at SB+2.

Skills: Perception+20%, Scale Sheer Surface+10%, Search

Talents: Night Vision, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure

Traits: Keen Senses, Natural Weapons, Terrifying

Special Rules:

Bony Hide: The Royal Hydra has tough protrusions of fused bone that protect it like armour. This trait provides the Royal Hydra with 5 Armour Points on all locations.

Powerful Bite: A Royal Hydra's natural weapons are so deadly that they count as having the Impact Quality.

Breathe Acid: A Royal Hydra can breathe acid as a full action. Use the Cone Template. Those affected take a Damage 2 hit that ignores all Armour Points.

Mentally Scarred: Due to the traumatic transformation process a Royal Hydra undergoes, it may never benefit from the Will of Iron Trait.

Speed of Attack: A Royal Hydra has so many heads that it can attack twice with the standard attack action instead of the normal once.

Splashback: A Royal Hydra's volatile blood is highly acidic, spraying over its foes in battle. Whenever the Royal Hydra suffers the loss of a Wound, all creatures engaged in melee with it must pass an Agility Characteristic test or suffer an automatic Damage 2 hit that ignores all Armour Points as its acid blood spills forth.

Unstoppable Blows: A Royal Hydra is so large and strong that its attacks are incredibly difficult to parry. Opponents suffer a -30% penalty to parry attempts.

Combat:

Armour (None): Bone Protrusions

Armour Points: Head 5, Arms 5, Body 5, Legs 5

Weapons: Teeth (1d10+6, Impact)

Slaughter Margin: Very Hard

SPELLTHIRSTER HYDRA RAKARTH'S VENDETTA

'They thirst for spells... They thirst for vengeance!'

– **Sorceress Kelanna Blackheart,**
'Sister' of the Third Coven

Beastmaster Rakarth created this unique breed of Hydra to hunt down and kill the High Elf Magi who so often killed his charges. By forging a pack with Morathi, he convinced her to spin her sorceries over Daerlythe, an ancient Hydra that had already proved resistant to the spells of battle. Morathi's dark magic mutated Daerlythe tremendously. His skin became shrouded in blue-black wytchfire while great rents opened in his flesh where Morathi had ritually carved her dread runes. While these changes drained Daerlythe's raw strength and power, they also granted him an even stronger resistance to Magic.

Having retired Daerlythe from battle, Rakarth has instead successfully had him sire many a clutch of eggs, while around only one in ten of his offspring share his anti-magical abilities. These are only sold to the Sorceress Convents as part of Rakarth's pact with Morathi, and are commonly found driven into battle alongside their Mistresses.

Main Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
42%	0%	42%	56%	30%	14%	24%	15%

Secondary Profile

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
4	50	4	5	6	0	0	0

Hydra Feature: **SERPENT BODY**

While most Hydra have vast four legged bodies, some are limbless, with the many necks emerging from the body of a large sinuous snake. Due to the limitations of this form, a serpent-bodied Hydra's Move Characteristic is halved (typically to 3). However, a serpent-bodied Hydra can lash out with their mighty tail, gaining +1 Attack. Additionally, serpent-bodied Hydra can often squeeze into places their more usual brethren cannot, and gain the Contortionist Talent.

Skills: Perception+20%, Scale Sheer Surface+10%, Search

Talents: Night Vision, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure

Traits: Keen Senses, Natural Weapons, Terrifying

Special Rules:

Breathe Fire: A Spellthirster Hydra can breathe fire as a full action. Use the Cone Template. Those affected take a Damage 4 hit.

Daerlythe's Aura: Any spell-caster attempting to cast a spell that targets a Spellthirster Hydra suffers a -2 penalty to each casting Die rolled. In addition, such was the power of Morathi's incantation that all spell-casters (friend or foe) within 12 yards (6 squares) suffer a -1 penalty to each casting Die rolled on any spell cast. These penalties are not cumulative.

Powerful Bite: A Spellthirster Hydra's natural weapons are so deadly that they count as having the Impact Quality.

Scales: The Spellthirster Hydra has tough scales that protect it like armour. This trait provides the Spellthirster Hydra with 3 Armour Points on all locations.

Speed of Attack: A Spellthirster Hydra has so many heads that it can attack twice with the standard attack action instead of the normal once.

Unstoppable Blows: A Spellthirster Hydra is so large and strong that its attacks are incredibly difficult to parry. Opponents suffer a -30% penalty to parry attempts.

Will of Iron: A Spellthirster Hydra is immune to Fear and Terror, as well as the effects of the Intimidate skill and the Unsettling Talent.

Combat:

Armour (None): Scaly Skin

Armour Points: Head 3, Arms 3, Body 3, Legs 3

Weapons: Teeth (1d10+5, Impact)

Slaughter Margin: Very Hard

CHAMELEON SKINNED HYDRA THE SHADOWS OF ANATH RAEMA

'It came from nowhere, as if the trees themselves had come alive and formed themselves into a mass of great fire breathing beasts. Luther, the ship's cook was swallowed in a single gulp as he attended his business, I simply ran for my life.'

– Hans, ship's mate aboard the Mauerblossen during its exploration of the New World

Those Beastmasters who trade with the feared Dark Elf Sorceresses often purchase potions and talismans to enhance the beasts under their charge. One popular enchantment is a form of magic oil, that while fatal to warm-blooded creatures, when rubbed into the scales of a Hydra's skin, reacts and causes the Hydra's skin to shimmer and blend in with its surroundings.

Chameleon Skinned Hydra are among the most feared of their kind, with their shifting scale-tone allowing them to be concealed in ambush despite their massive size. This same ability allows them to escape their captors more often than their common kin, and more easily elude any attempts to recapture them.

Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
42%	0%	52%	56%	30%	14%	24%	15%
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
5	50	5	5	6	0	0	0

Hydra Feature: **REGENERATION**

While all Hydra have a limited capacity for regeneration, some Hydra can heal with rapid speed, with injuries that would take weeks to heal normally vanishing almost instantly. At the start of its turn each round, a Hydra with this feature regenerates 1d10 wounds, Wounds caused by fire cannot be regenerated. This ability ceases to function if a Hydra dies.

Skills: Concealment, Perception+20%, Scale Sheer Surface+10%, Search

Talents: Night Vision, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure

Traits: Keen Senses, Natural Weapons, Terrifying

Special Rules:

Breathe Fire: A Chameleon Skinned Hydra can breathe fire as a full action. Use the Cone Template. Those affected take a Damage 4 hit.

Camouflage: The Chameleon Skinned Hydra can change colour to match its surroundings, granting it a +20% bonus to Concealment Tests.

Powerful Bite: A Chameleon Skinned Hydra's natural weapons are so deadly that they count as having the Impact Quality.

Scales: The Chameleon Skinned Hydra has tough scales that protect it like armour. This trait provides the Chameleon Skinned Hydra with 3 Armour Points on all locations.

Speed of Attack: A Chameleon Skinned Hydra has so many heads that it can attack twice with the standard attack action instead of the normal once.

Unstoppable Blows: A Chameleon Skinned Hydra is so large and strong that its attacks are incredibly difficult to parry. Opponents suffer a -30% penalty to parry attempts.

Will of Iron: A Chameleon Skinned Hydra is immune to Fear and Terror, as well as the effects of the Intimidate skill and the Unsettling Talent.

Combat:

Armour (None): Scaly Skin

Armour Points: Head 3, Arms 3, Body 3, Legs 3

Weapons: Teeth (1d10+6, Impact)

Slaughter Margin: Very Hard

CHAOS HYDRA

THE MAELSTROMS OF DESTRUCTION

The Hydra of the Chaos Wastes are far more varied than those elsewhere in the world, often mutated beyond easy recognition. Sometimes one will wander further south, either on a whim or goaded by a marauder warband into attacking their foes. These beasts are seldom war trained, for the marauder tribes have little interest in housing the destructive creatures while the Druchii prefer their War Hydra to be relatively untainted by Chaos. Nevertheless, occasionally a Chaos Champion or Sorcerer will take it upon himself to capture such a beast as part of his warband, either as a war beast or his personal steed. Some warband even attach howdahs or fighting platforms to the back of these beasts, although such innovation typically ends in disaster once the Hydra inevitably turns upon its captors.

Main Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
42%	0%	52%	56%	30%	14%	24%	14%

Secondary Profile

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
5	50	5	5	6	0	0	0

THE MENAGERIE OF TZEENTCH

Somewhere in the frozen Chaos Wastes, standing upon the edge of a vast crater, stands the Inevitable City. This is a twisted paradoxical realm woven from the stuff of nightmares by the great Lord of Change, Amon 'Chakai. Within the city are many towers lit by eldritch energy, some floating on vast floating islands of rock, which must be anchored to the ground by massive iron chains. The most feared of these towers is Migliod's Menagerie, a tower owned by a Tzeentch-worshipping Soulflayer named Migliod the Mad. Insane even beyond his peers, Migliod experimented on many beasts, trading lore on mutation with the nearby Skaven of Hell Pit and the Dark Elves of Karond Kar. He filled his Menagerie with mutated Hydra, Trolls, Manticore and Giants, along with rarer beasts such as Rhinoxen and Lammasu bought from the Chaos Dwarfs. While Migliod abandoned the Menagerie long ago, his beasts still are contained there. Occasionally a brave Chaos Champion ventures within its cells to augment their warband with a mighty mutated monstrosity. Most do not return, consumed by the tainted creatures they would control.

Skills: Perception+20%, Scale Sheer Surface+10%, Search

Talents: Night Vision, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure

Traits: Keen Senses, Terrifying

Special Rules:

Chaos Mutations: Multiple Heads. In addition, a Chaos Hydra has a number of extra mutations. Roll 1d10. On a 1-4, 1 mutation; 5-8, 2 mutations; 9-10, 3 mutations. Roll on whichever Mutation table you wish to generate the additional mutations, and then modify the stats as appropriate.

Breathe Fire: A Chaos Hydra can breathe fire as a full action. Use the Cone Template. Those affected take a Damage 4 hit.

Powerful Bite: A Chaos Hydra's natural weapons are so deadly that they have the Impact Quality.

Scales: The Chaos Hydra has tough scales that protect it like armour. This trait provides the Chaos Hydra with 3 Armour Points on all locations.

Speed of Attack: A Chaos Hydra has so many heads that it can attack twice with the standard attack action instead of the normal once.

Unstoppable Blows: A Chaos Hydra is so large and strong that its attacks are incredibly difficult to parry. Opponents suffer a -30% penalty to parry attempts.

Will of Iron: A Chaos Hydra is immune to Fear and Terror, as well as the effects of the Intimidate skill and the Unsettling Talent.

Combat:

Armour (None): Scaly Skin

Armour Points: Head 3, Arms 3, Body 3, Legs 3

Weapons: Teeth (1d10+6, Impact)

Slaughter Margin: Very Hard

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HYDRA HATCHLING

'Those Human wizards at Altdorf pay good coin for live samples of these; no clue why. Course the trick is to distract the mother long enough to knock the wee fella's unconscious.'

– Durgin Doodlebeard, Dwarf Spelunker

While they are nowhere near the power of a fully-grown Hydra, hatchlings are still fearsome beasts in their own right. Typically, these creatures are encountered in large underground Hydra 'nests' of piled rocks and bones, with their mother somewhere nearby. While only Dark Elves regularly steal Hydra Hatchlings away for use in battle, there are many desperate adventurers who believe they can sell off such a valuable creature.

Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
37%	0%	32%	46%	30%	11%	18%	11%
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
3	10	3	4	6	0	0	0

Skills: Perception+10%, Scale Sheer Surface

Talents: Night Vision

Traits: Fearsome, Keen Senses, Natural Weapons

Special Rules:

Breathe Flame: A Hydra Hatchling can breathe flame as a full action. This counts as a Magic Missile with a range of 5 yards and Damage 3.

Scales: The Hydra Hatchling has tough scales that protect it like armour. This trait provides the Hydra Hatchling with 2 Armour Points on all locations.

Speed of Attack: A Hydra Hatchling has so many heads that it can attack twice with the standard attack action instead of the normal once.

Combat:

Armour (None): Scaly Skin

Armour Points: Head 2, Arms 2, Body 2, Legs 2

Weapons: Teeth (1d10+3)

Slaughter Margin: Challenging

CARNIVOROUS SNAPPER

Hydra are not the only beast that Dark Elves take to war, and anyone encountering a War Hydra may well find a few other creatures travelling in its wake.

One of the many species of creature native to the underground caverns of the New World and Lustria is the Carnivorous Snapper, often known as the Cold One Warhound. The Carnivorous Snapper is a bipedal reptile, fast moving and ferocious, although extremely stupid. Around ten-feet in length, most of their weight rests upon the hind legs, and they have a heavy tail to provide balance while running. Their forelimbs are small and virtually useless, with the main means of attacking being their massive alligator-like jaws full of menacing pointed teeth. Their coarse, scaly skins vary in colour, with shades of green, blue or brown the most common.

Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
33%	0%	45%	57%	26%	10%	66%	10%
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	20	4	5	7	0	0	0

Skills: Follow Trail+10%, Perception+10%, Swim

Talents: Night Vision, Strike Mighty Blow

Traits: Keen Senses, Natural Weapons

Special Rules:

Scales: The Carnivorous Snapper has tough scales that protect it like armour. This trait provides the Carnivorous Snapper with 2 Armour Points on all locations.

Stooid: Whenever a Carnivorous Snapper encounters something to distract it (such as a fresh corpse or ripe smell), it must make an Intelligence Test or stop what it was doing to investigate. If it is attacked, it is less likely to be distracted, and the test becomes Easy (+20%).

Combat:

Armour (None): Scaly Skin

Armour Points: Head 2, Arms 2, Body 2, Legs 2

Weapons: Teeth (1d10+5)

Slaughter Margin: Challenging

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DARK ELF BEASTMASTER APPRENTICE

‘Since the distant days of Nagarythe, our folk have been experts at bending beasts and animals to our will’

– **Furion of Clar Karond, Highborn Sorcerer and Historian**

The Druchii often grant these apprentices with the derogatory title of ‘**Whelp Masters**’ as they more often handle Slavehounds and lizards rather than fearsome beasts that are a true Beastmaster’s trade in hand. Even among the Dark Elves they are known for their cruelty, and there is nothing these depraved Druchii like better than the chase, setting their Slavehounds or Carnivorous Snappers on fleeing foes, hunting quarry for the cauldrons.

Beastmaster Apprentices are often tasked with goading the powerful War Hydra into battle, as they are a creature that requires little subtlety or skill in its handling.

HEKARTI - THE HYDRA QUEEN

The Elven Goddess of Dark Magic is Hekarti, the Hydra Queen. She is many headed, better able to perceive the Winds of Dhar that surround her, and so the Elves have come to associate the Hydra with this dread Cytharai Goddess. Hekarti has no shrine or priesthood, although many Dark Elf Magic-users, in particular the ‘**Sisters**’ of the Six Dark Covens of Sorceress, call upon Hekarti in the ancient rituals that allow them to tap directly into the Winds of Magic and unleash their full power. The Dark Covens operate from the citadel of Ghrond, which Morathi established by the Chaos Wastes as a corrupted image of the White Tower of Hoeth. Near the very apex of the tower is a sanctuary chamber, and this small room is the closest Hekarti comes to having any temple.

As well as her many heads, Hekarti also has six limbs to hold her sacred tools of magic. These are a serpent-headed staff, a still beating heart, a deadly scorpion, a broken arrow, a serrated sacrificial dagger and lastly a phial of orphan’s tears. Sorceresses often carry representations of these six items, as they are often called for in Dark Elf Ritual magic. The Sacrificial Dagger is particularly important, as while Hekarti empowers the spells of the Druchii, she does not perform this feat without cost. Hekarti always demands a price in Blood, and she cares not whose. Every sorceress is well aware that should she fail to pay the required blood-tithe by sacrifice or slaughter, then the price Hekarti demands must flow from the sorceress’ own veins.

The citizens of the Old World are only likely to encounter these fell masters of the lash among the raiding parties of the Dark Elf Corsairs. The dreaded Black Arcs often contain all sorts of fell beasts, including Hydra, Helldrakes and Manticores.

Main Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
38%	44%	34%	31%	48%	31%	36%	30%

Secondary Profile

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	11	3	3	6	0	0	0

Skills: Animal Training, Command, Common Knowledge (Elves), Concealment, Dodge Blow, Intimidate, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Scale Sheer Surface, Silent Move, Speak Language (Eltharin), Torture

Talents: Ambidextrous, Coolheaded, Excellent Vision, Fleet Footed, Lightning Reflexes, Night Vision, Specialist Weapon Group (Crossbow, Entangling, Flail)

Special Rules:

Beastmaster’s Scourge: The Beastmasters of Karond Kar use vicious whips to train their charges, specially designed to penetrate the scaly armour of their charges. A Druchii Beastmaster’s Scourge counts as a Morning Star with the Armour Piercing Trait.

Master of the Lash: Beastmasters are experts at controlling trained beasts. When leading a pack of creatures, War Hydra, Manticore and so on, they gain a +20% Bonus to Animal Training and Command tests.

Combat:

Armour (Light): Full Studded Leather Armour

Armour Points: Head 2, Arms 2, Body 2, Legs 2

Weapons: Scourge (1d10+3, Armour Piercing, Impact, Tiring), Goad (Spear; 1d10+3, Fast), Hand Weapon (1d10+3), Whip (Special)

Slaughter Margin: Average

- WAR TRAINED MONSTER (SPECIAL CAREER) -

To represent the improvement a creature can gain from battle experience and training, you may wish to use this special War Trained Monster Career. While this version of the Career is fairly generic, and can probably cover any beast of war, you may wish to add (or subtract) Skills and Talents to represent a more specialised role depending on the creature involved. As an example, the Trained Bear Career in 'Realms of the Ice Queen' represents a variant of this career for creatures specialised in wrestling.

Companion animals typically receive an amount of experience equal to half the value of any experience points earned by their trainers.

Special Requirements: To enter this career you must be a beast or monster, typically with a Base Intelligence Characteristic of 20 or less.

Slow Learner: Most monsters are not easily trained. Whenever a Monster would gain a characteristic advance, skill or talent, its trainer must pass an Animal Training Test. Should the trainer fail the test, the experience points are lost, and the Monster does not gain the desired characteristic, skill or talent.

- War Trained Monster Advance Scheme -

Main Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
+10%	-	+5%	+5%	+5%	+5%	+5%	-

Secondary Profile

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
-	+2	-	-	-	-	-	-

Skills: Dodge Blow, Intimidate, Perception, Search, Swim

Talents: Frenzy, Menacing, Stout-hearted, Strike to Stun

Trappings: None

Career Entries: -

Career Exits: -

Special: Monsters in this career must add the Slow Learner Trait to their statistics.

GIGANTIC

Hydra are gigantic creatures, larger than many buildings. As WFRP lacks any hard and fast rules governing size, this means that the GM should adjudicate according to the rules on page 197 of the Core Rulebook. Trying to pin down a Hydra is simply impossible for any creature that is not at least as large as an Ogre, while the Hydra will find grappling man-sized foes an Easy (+20%) task, and can grapple multiple smaller foes at once. Conversely, the sheer bulk of a Hydra means it will have at least a Very Hard (-30%) time trying to sneak about, even at night with potential cover. Hydra are so huge that they can apply their leverage and bulk to perform feats of strength that smaller beings are simply incapable of. In sieges Hydra are not just used to breathe fire over the walls of the defending fortifications, but to pull those very walls down with their massive necks. Beastmasters use Hydra to drag Cauldrons of Blood and War Machines into position, or even to work in teams to beach the mighty Black Arcs when creating coastal fortifications.

THE TILEAN TALES OF THE SEA HYDRA

In the Tilean city of Miragliano, men talk of the Sea Hydra, an Arabyan beast that occasionally swims in the Tilean Sea. This creature is said to very much resemble a small Hydra, with four heads and two large flippers that can act as wings to push them out of the water like a vast flying fish.

Obviously, the men of Miragliano are renowned as great liars, and sane men pay as much heed to these tales as they do to those of the Miragliano Steam Tanks or great city of evil rat-men. Nevertheless some Wizard's claim that these beasts do exist, and are in actual fact a type of Sea Elemental known as a Hydronome, a shape changing beast related to the Arabyan Djinn. Other scholars laugh at these ideas, claiming that water elementals run counter to the teachings of the Teclis Codex, and that the Winds of Magic are incapable of blowing that far south.

If these creatures did in fact exist, the GM might decide that they were in fact Kracken, Luskas, Daemons or simply Hydra with the Swim Skill and the Wings mutation.

THE HYDRA'S TEETH

Academic Knowledge: Theology

Powers: Counts as a Throwing Knife; additionally if the Hydra's Teeth causes at least one Wound, it is destroyed and replaced by d10 Skeletons that are under the wielder's control. The Ritual cast into the tooth magically forms these skeletons from the bones that the Hydra digested during its life, and so the summoned skeletons require no corpse to be raised from. The Skeletons summoned by this item last for an hour, at which point they crumble into fine dust. The Hydra's Teeth usually come in a set of five knives.

History: Hekarti is the Mistress of all Dark Magic, including the arts of Necromancy. Thus, by calling upon her name in Ritual Magic, the teeth of her favoured beast become powerful talismans of necromantic power. Finely carved into the shape of throwing knives, with handles shaped as skeletal figurines, these weapons provide a fearsome tool to those Druchii who can afford them.

You may wonder why on earth anyone would write a Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay document dedicated to the Hydra, which is as monsters go, one that rarely features in the Old World, where the great majority of WFRP Campaigns are probably played. Part of it is down the much of the material in this document was once part of a larger project upon Elves in general. Another part is that at the time of writing my players are about to fight a Hydra, and so having all my house rules in a neatly printed document all in one place is highly useful.

The connection between lizards, be it Cold Ones, Dragons, Helldrakes or Carnivorous Snappers (which somehow snuck into this document) and the Dark Elves is a long established part of Warhammer Lore. It is not an obvious combination by any means, but clearly one that works. With the introduction of the Goddess Hekarti that connection now runs deeper than ever, making the Hydra one of the cornerstones of Dark Elf culture, adding more layers of rich background and verisimilitude to the game. Although of course, they also should kill those annoying Player Characters stone dead...

- CREDITS -

Writing and Layout: Alexander J Bateman

- BIBLIOGRAPHY -

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