



BESTIARY

EVEN CRUDE BEASTS AND PARASITES TAKE ON MONSTROUS SHAPES IN THE SWAMPY RIVERS AND BOGGY FORESTS OF THE VARISIAN FRONTIER—IF “FRONTIER” AND “CIVILIZATION” CAN TRULY BE DISTINGUISHED IN SUCH A CRUDE LAND. IN MY FIRST WEEK UPON THE YONDABAKARI I SAW FIVE OF MY PORTERS CONSUMED. BUT NOT BY FIREPELT, OR GIANT LIZARD, OR TITANIC SERPENT—NO, THEIR DEATHS WEREN’T MEANT FOR SUCH CREATURES OF PASSABLE DIGNITY. THOSE MEN LOST THEIR LIVES TO WATER BUGS. I CAN IMAGINE FEW MORE PATHETIC DEATHS, YET DAILY THIS ACCURSED LAND CONFOUNDS ME WITH WHOLE DIMENSIONS OF INDIGNITIES NO GENTLEMAN HAS EVER SUNK SO LOW AS TO IMAGINE.

—DARVAYNE GIOS AMPREI, *MERCILESS: ABENDEGO, BELKZEN, VARISIA, AND OTHER HELLS*

Dangers from the Varisian wilds fill out this month's entry into the Pathfinder Bestiary, along with the fiendish masters of storms and scavengers. Cued to the themes and settings of this month's adventure, "The Brinewall Legacy," any of these creatures would make fine optional encounters as the characters journey across some of Varisia's most dangerous hinterlands.

CARAVAN ENCOUNTERS

In this month's adventure the player characters have the opportunity to join and customize their own caravan, launching into a journey across Varisia. But their trek is far from safe. Dangerous weather, unscrupulous criminals, and savage monsters all conspire to put an end to the PCs' fledgling adventuring career. As the caravan travels north, there's a 10% chance of an encounter each day. Encounters indicated with an asterisk have a 50% chance of occurring at night while the caravan is camped. All other encounters occur while the caravan is on the move. Encounters don't occur if the caravan camps at a settlement. If an encounter occurs, roll on the following table to see what the PCs have encountered. Note that all of the following encounters are caravan encounters and use the caravan combat rules found online in the free *Jade Regent Player's Guide*.

Bad Weather: Fog, rain, high winds, or some other form of bad weather slows the caravan, reducing its overall speed by half for the day unless the caravan makes a DC 12 Security check.

Bandit Ambush (CR 2): The caravan must make a DC 15 Security check to notice this ambush in time to react; if this check fails, the caravan takes a -2 penalty to its Armor Class and on attack rolls for the first round of combat. The ambushers could be a group of bandits, a gang of highwaymen, or even a small tribe of Nolander barbarians. Regardless of their makeup, the ambushers' stats and aggression are identical (AC 14; hp 20; Attack +4; Damage 2d6+3). They fight to the death. If defeated, 1 cargo unit of treasure worth 250 gp can be recovered.

Goblin Raiders (CR 1/2): A shrieking band of goblins wielding dogslicers and broken branches attacks the caravan (AC 11; hp 10; Attack +1; Damage 1d8). If the PCs have a horse train, the goblins are more timid than normal and take a -2 penalty on attack rolls. If defeated, a search of the goblins reveals a single cargo unit of treasure worth 125 gp.

Ogre Assault (CR 3): A small band of ogres lumbers out of the surrounding foliage to attack the caravan (AC 15; hp 30; Attack +6; Damage 3d4+6). The ogres flee if reduced below 10 hit points. If they're slain, looting produces 2 cargo units of treasure worth 400 gp each.

Treacherous Road: The road conditions become hazardous. They might be muddy, partially flooded, or

CREATING ADDITIONAL CARAVAN ENCOUNTERS

You can use the caravan encounters presented here as guides for creating additional encounters of your own design. Use the following guidelines.

Combat Encounter: Designing stats for a combat encounter is relatively easy—simply pick a CR, then use Table 1-1 from page 291 of the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* to set the encounter's AC and hit points. Its attack should equal the high attack roll, while its average damage should equal that CR's high average damage (you can assign different dice and different modifiers as needed to hit the total). Some more dangerous combat encounters might utilize special attacks, but you should avoid this additional level of complexity for now. See the third adventure in this campaign, "The Hungry Storm," for advice on how to build combat encounters that utilize special attacks.

Non-Combat Encounter: Non-combat encounters can grant temporary bonuses or penalties to caravan rolls or speed, can grant or take away supplies, and can even give the caravan a chance to hire new travelers. If you wish to assign a Stability or a Resolve check to an encounter, a DC equal to 10 + the caravan's level is considered an average challenge. Add or subtract from this DC to make the roll as simple or tough as you wish.

VARISIA CARAVAN ENCOUNTERS

d% Roll	Encounter
01-15	Bad Weather
16-30	Bandit Ambush
31-50	Goblin Raiders
51-55	Ogre Assault
56-65	Treacherous Road
66-100	Varisian Caravan

even blocked by a fallen tree. The caravan must make a DC 14 Security check or lose 2d6 miles of progress for the day as the situation is dealt with.




Varisian Caravan: The PCs encounter another Varisian caravan heading in the opposite direction. With a DC 12 Resolve check, the PCs can befriend the other caravan. If this encounter occurs during the day, the caravan can give the PCs advice as to what lies ahead, reducing the chance of an encounter to 5% per day for the next 1d6 days. If the encounter occurs during the evening, the caravan agrees to share their camp, allowing the PCs to trade with them. The caravan can purchase up to 2,000 gp in objects, and can offer anything worth 600 gp or less for sale.

AQUATIC INSECTS

In swift-flowing rivers and mysterious lakes dwell the immature forms of many strange insects, numbering in the hundreds in a mere 1-square-foot area. Normally, aquatic insects are tiny, measuring in fractions of an inch, but in some areas of Golarion, monstrous versions of terrifying sizes roam free and seek livelier meals than mere algae.

BELOSTOMATID

Six powerful legs, each ending in a hooked claw, jut from the shieldlike body of this massive insect.

BELOSTOMATID	CR 3	  
XP 800		
N Large vermin		
Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +0		
Aura stench (DC 15, 3 rounds)		
DEFENSE		
AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 17 (+1 Dex, +8 natural. –1 size)		
hp 30 (4d8+12)		
Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +1		
Immune mind-affecting effects		
OFFENSE		
Speed 20 ft., fly 20 ft. (poor), swim 40 ft.		
Melee 2 claws +6 (1d4+3 plus grab), bite +6 (1d8+4 plus digestive enzymes)		
Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.		
Special Attacks digestive enzyme		
STATISTICS		
Str 19 Dex 13, Con 16, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 2		
Base Atk +3; CMB +8 (+12 grapple); CMD 19 (27 vs. trip)		
Skills Fly +1, Stealth +0 (+8 in water), Swim +14; Racial Modifiers +8 on Stealth in water		
SQ hold breath		
ECOLOGY		
Environment temperate lakes, rivers, or swamps		
Organization solitary		
Treasure none		
SPECIAL ABILITIES		

Digestive Enzymes (Ex) A belostomatid injects a corrosive enzyme into its prey that both paralyzes and liquefies flesh. A creature struck by the belostomatid's piercing bite must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d4 rounds. For every round the creature is paralyzed it takes 1d2 points of Constitution damage.

Hold Breath (Ex) A belostomatid can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to 4 times its Constitution score before it risks drowning.




The belostomatid is the monstrous form of its diminutive counterpart, a 5-inch-long “giant” water bug commonly known as a “toe-biter.” A monstrous belostomatid has a

flattened, oval-shaped body measuring 12 feet long, and four rear, oarlike legs, which it uses to thrust through the water. The belostomatid's front two legs are thick and end in sharp, single-tipped claws, which it uses to slay its prey. Two large black eyes are mounted on each side of the creature's rostrum, and it uses its 2-foot-long, beaklike proboscis to inject its deadly acidic enzymes into its victims.

Belostomatids are ambush predators. They hide amid floating snags and piles of debris in still and slow-moving waters, seamlessly blending in with their surroundings despite their size. With a powerful surge forward, a belostomatid grabs its prey, thrusts its rostrum deep into the prey's body, and begins pumping a paralyzing digestive enzyme into its prey, dissolving it from the inside out.

WATER STRIDER SWARM

Countless thousands of long-legged water bugs glide soundlessly over the surface of the water, skimming over it in a wave of twitching bodies.

WATER STRIDER SWARM	CR 1	  
XP 400		
N Diminutive vermin (swarm)		
Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft.; Perception +6		
DEFENSE		
AC 18, touch 18, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +4 size)		
hp 9 (2d8)		
Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +0		
Defensive Abilities swarm traits; Immune mind-affecting effects, weapon damage		
Weaknesses swarm traits		
OFFENSE		
Speed 10 ft., swim 20 ft., water walk 30 ft.		
Melee swarm (1d6 plus blood drain and distraction)		
Space 10 ft.; Reach 0 ft.		
Special Attacks blood drain (1d2 Constitution), distraction (DC 11)		
STATISTICS		
Str 1 Dex 18, Con 10, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2		
Base Atk +1; CMB —; CMD —		
Skills Acrobatics +6 (+12 jump), Perception +6, Swim +3; Racial Modifiers Acrobatics (+6 jump), +4 Perception		
SQ water walking		
ECOLOGY		
Environment temperate lakes, rivers, or swamps		
Organization solitary or pair		
Treasure none		
SPECIAL ABILITIES		

Water Walking (Ex) Water striders are covered with water-repellent hairs that prevent them from sinking beneath the water's surface. The swarm's movement speed across water is 30 feet.

Water striders are aquatic insects that skate across the surface of still water. Their bodies are long and narrow, with an individual measuring less than 1 inch in length. The body and legs of a water strider are covered with a layer of water-repelling hairs, making it possible for the strider to resist the surface tension of the water. The insect stands on its front and rear legs, and pushes against the water surface with its middle legs to propel itself forward. Water striders are also excellent jumpers, launching themselves distances of up to 5 feet. Any movement on land is limited to jumping. Swarms of particularly vicious water striders commonly gather at the edges of bodies of water, attacking anything that disturbs the surface of their pools.

GIANT HELLGRAMMITE

More than a dozen segmented black legs propel this giant, caterpillar-like insect, its thick head dominated by a pair of powerful, gnashing pincers.

GIANT HELLGRAMMITE

CR 5



XP 1,600

N Large vermin (aquatic)

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft., Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 9, flat-footed 16 (+7 natural, -1 size)

hp 52 (7d8+21)

Fort +8, Ref +2, Will +1

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee bite +8 (2d8+4 plus grab), tail slap +3 (1d8+2)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks death grip, constrict (2d8+4)

STATISTICS

Str 19 Dex 11, Con 16, Int —, Wis 9, Cha 2

Base Atk +5; CMB +10 (+14 grapple); CMD 20 (28 vs. trip)

Skills Climb +8, Perception +5 (+9 in water), Stealth +1 (+9 in water), Swim +7; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception (+8 in water), +8 Stealth in water

SQ amphibious

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate rivers or streams

Organization solitary or pair

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Death Grip (Ex) Upon its death, a

hellgrammite's massive jaws close tightly and lock. Any creature or object that is grappled at the time of the hellgrammite's death takes an additional 1d8+2 points of damage per round unless it makes a DC 22 Escape Artist check, makes a DC 20 Strength check, or deals an additional 10 points of damage to the hellgrammite's corpse to escape.

Giant hellgrammites are the fierce and predacious larvae of dobsonflies of terrifying size. While their diminutive brethren measure several inches long, the monstrous variety measure 10 feet long and weigh up to 800 pounds. The body of the giant hellgrammite is long and flattened, and generally ranges from dark brown to reddish in color. The front third of its body consists of a well-armored head and thoracic segments, with stout, segmented legs. The head possesses a fearsome set of jaws, small antennae, and a set of clustered eye spots on either side. The posterior two-thirds of the hellgrammite consist of nine densely haired abdominal segments, each with a pair of lateral filaments and gill tufts underneath for underwater breathing. The hellgrammite's abdomen ends in pair of terminal prolegs, each with a pair of hooks, which aid the creature in climbing or anchoring itself in fast-moving currents, and can be used in a tail slap to slash at its enemies.

The giant hellgrammite is a simple but ferocious predator. It latches onto its prey with its deadly jaws and proceeds to crush the life from it, feeding on the body after its victim can no longer struggle. The hellgrammite often attempts to drag the prey back to a protected area between or behind stream boulders, or down to the bottom of a deep side-pool. The strength of a hellgrammite's jaws is so great that, even in death, they clench tightly and do not relinquish their grip.



DEMON, HALA

Skin the color of thunderheads and wings made for soaring through the most violent winds mark this lean, cyclopic being as a master of terrible storms. The sound of shrieking wind emanates from its mouth full of needle-sharp teeth.

HALA

CR 4

XP 1,200

CE Medium outsider (air, chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8

Aura stormwind aura



DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 37 (5d10+10)

Fort +6, **Ref** +8, **Will** +1

Defensive Abilities vengeful wind

DR 10/cold iron or good; **Immune** electricity, poison

Resist acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 15

Weaknesses enemy of dragons and eagles

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (perfect)

Melee 2 claws +9 (1d4+3), bite +9 (1d6+3)

Special Attacks hailstorm

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +7)

At will—*alter winds* (DC 13)

3/day—*gust of wind* (DC 14), *river of wind** (DC 16)

1/day—*control winds* (DC 17), *summon* (level 3, 1 hala 40%)

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 19, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 22

Feats Flyby Attack, Hover, Weapon Finesse^B, Wingover

Skills Acrobatics +12, Escape Artist +12, Fly +20,

Intimidate +10, Knowledge (planes) +9, Perception

+8, Stealth +12

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic, telepathy 100 ft.

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Abyss)

Organization solitary

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Enemy of Dragons and Eagles (Ex) Halas are hated enemies of dragons and eagles. Those creatures gain a +2 bonus on attack and damage rolls against hala demons.

Hailstorm (Su) A hala can call down hailstones from surrounding clouds once every 1d4 rounds as a standard action. These hailstones deal 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage and 1d6 points of cold damage to all creatures within a 20-foot radius that have no overhead cover. A DC 14 Reflex save halves this damage. The save DC is Constitution-based. To use this ability, the hala must be outside and there must be clouds in the sky.

Stormwind Aura (Su) Halas surround themselves with a buffeting shroud of supernatural, windstorm-force winds. These winds shield a hala from any other wind effects and form a shell of breathable air around it, allowing the hala to breathe underwater. Ranged weapons and gases directed toward a hala are affected as the spell *wind wall*.

Vengeful Wind (Su) Anytime a hala takes damage from a critical hit, a powerful blast of wind explodes forth in the direction of the attacker. This blast takes the form of a 60-foot-long gale, treated as a *gust of wind* spell,

directed from the hala toward the opponent that scored the critical hit against it (if that creature is more than 60 feet away, the wind is aimed in its direction but doesn't come close enough to affect it). This wind is also charged with electricity. Any creature in or that enters the area of effect must make a DC 14 Reflex save or take 3d6 points of electricity damage. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Hala demons are commonly known as storm demons. Bound to service by Pazuzu, these demons ride the winds across the Abyssal skies, lurk within dark and turbulent clouds, and act as his scouts and spies. Halas have a single, blood-red eye, an enormous mouth lined with razor-sharp teeth, and lengthy horns growing from their heads.

A typical hala stands 7 feet tall, weighs 200 pounds, and possesses large wings that span 20 feet across.

ECOLOGY

Hala demons form from covetous souls, those who desired the possessions of others so much so that they indulged in such acts as murder, theft, or blackmail. The more persons harmed by these desires, the more likely the soul is to become a hala in the Abyss.

Halas are masters of the winds, harnessing the power of storms, redirecting and amplifying that energy to cause the most damage and chaos possible. They relish the destructive forces of their storms, and can manipulate a storm's energy to rain down hailstones to pelt the area. Their command of the winds also aids them in flight. They are never impeded by storm winds, but instead ride them, often achieving top speeds by accelerating the wind currents around them.

Due to the nature of their origin, halas are highly possessive. A hala will often refer to the storm clouds they marshal as "my storm." A hala is predisposed to grab any item it finds particularly desirable, and will actively pillage regions that its storm passes over. The desire to take from others remains so prevalent in the hala's nature that it often carries large sacks in which to place all the items it takes during its flights. *Bags of holding* or *handy haversacks* are highly prized possessions to a hala, as it allows it to pillage even more items. Halas are voracious, with large mouths that open nearly ear-to-ear. Edible items they find in their pillaging are often consumed immediately. This includes a particular appetite for children and other Small humanoids.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Halas can be seen throughout the Abyss, roaming the skies in servitude to Pazuzu as his dedicated scout force. Their heaviest concentration, however, exists in High M'Vania, as all hala demons are required to return to Pazuzu's realm once a century to report all that they have observed. Despite

HALAS IN MYTHOLOGY

The "hala" or "ala" is a creature exclusive to the folklore of Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Serbia. Halas are considered the demons of bad weather, leading severe thunderstorms and hail over fields, vineyards, and orchards with the sole purpose of destroying the crops or pillaging them. It was believed that halas would "drink the crops," or steal the crops and give them to another village, thus explaining why some villages were more prosperous than others. Another common belief was that the voracity of halas was so extreme that they often tried to eat the sun or the moon, causing eclipses.

The hala's general appearance in folklore is quite diverse, and ranges from a large, indistinct form of black winds and clouds to a serpentine demon with huge wings and a sword-like tail. Tales also credit halas with a range of abilities, such as causing those who see them to go mad, blind, deaf, or lame. A hala could also possess humans, overwhelming them with insatiable hunger.

The Serbians believed that dragons and eagles were the chief enemies of the hala. Dragons were seen as the guardians of the fields and harvest, who wielded lightning against the hala; hence, lightning and thunder represented a fight in the clouds between dragons and halas.

the duty to return to High M'Vania, halas are solitary demons, distrusting all others, especially other hala demons, fearing that they will attempt to take their pillaged possessions. Therefore, most halas live in isolated, remote areas where they maintain their hoards of ill-gotten gains.

Pazuzu values his hala minions not only for the intelligence they gather on the activities of his enemies in the Abyss, but also for the chaos and destruction they bring on the winds. He is especially fond of sending halas to the Material Plane to ravage the countryside with storms and hail. As in the Abyss, halas on the Material Plane prefer to reside in remote areas. The lair of a hala is often located in a hidden cave in an isolated mountain range, or in the hollow of a giant, ancient tree deep in a forest or swamp.

While hala demons have a general dislike for or distrust of nearly all creatures, they have an especially strong fear and hatred of two creatures: eagles and dragons. Eagles have an innate response to attack and drive a hala from the skies, possibly due to the threat the hala represents to the eagle's territory and offspring. Dragons—of any breed—largely view the storm demons as a danger to their own hoards of treasure, for if a hala discovers the dragon's lair, it will stop at nothing to possess all that lies within it.

RATLING

This ratlike creature has tiny human hands in place of its front paws, and an unnerving human face with a toothy mouth.

RATLING

CR 2



XP 600

CE Tiny magical beast

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural, +2 size)

hp 19 (3d10+3)

Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

Defensive Abilities evasion; **Immune** disease, poison

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee bite +3 (1d3–2 plus bleed)

Special Attacks bleed (1), sneak attack +1d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +7)

Constant—*detect magic*, *read magic*, *speak with animals* (rodents only), *spider climb*, *tongues*

3/day—*cause fear* (DC 12), *dimension door*, *invisibility* (self only)

1/day—*summon swarm* (rat swarm only)

1/week—*commune* (only when serving as a familiar; 6 questions, CL 12th)

STATISTICS

Str 6, **Dex** 15, **Con** 13, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 12 (16 vs. trip)

Feats Dodge, Mobility

Skills Climb +6, Knowledge (planes) +4, Perception +6, Stealth +16, Swim +6

Languages Aklo; *tongues*

SQ scroll use

ECOLOGY

Environment any urban

Organization solitary or conclave (2–20 ratlings with 2–12 dire rats and 1–4 rat swarms)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Scroll Use (Ex) A ratling can cast spells from any magic scroll as if it possessed the spell on its spell list.

The rats that dwell in the walls of old edifices or amid the dripping tunnels of crumbling sewers are not always simple animals. At times, the hidden scurrying of tiny paws comes from sources altogether more sinister and vile. The ratling is a hideous amalgamation of rat and human: a long-haired rodent with front paws that are more accurately called hands, and a face reminiscent of a leering old man. Within the ratling's humanoid mouth can be found long, yellow incisors more akin to those one might find in the jaws of a rat. These teeth are remarkably sharp, and when combined with the blood-thinning

qualities in the ratling's saliva, are capable of inflicting particularly dangerous, bleeding wounds.

A ratling is just over 2 feet long (although half that length is its long, ratty tail) and weighs 10 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Ratlings are carnivores. While they can subsist on prey less able to defend itself, such as grubs, other rodents, and carrion, they much prefer the warm flesh of living food. Children are their preferred meals, not only because such targets are easier to catch and generally safe to chase, but also because the sadistic ratling enjoys the purer sense of fear a screaming child might offer as dinnertime entertainment. The elderly and infirm are also common targets, both because of their lessened ability to defend themselves and simply because older victims are often in high supply in the places ratlings prefer to dwell.

A ratling can (and often does) mate with normal rats. If the ratling parent is male, the products of such disturbing unions are large and particularly aggressive rats (often with vestigial humanlike features or other sickening deformities). If the ratling parent is female, she will spawn a litter of a dozen or so young, including one infant ratling, with the remainder being horribly deformed rats. The stronger and deadlier infant ratling generally feeds upon its brothers and sisters. At the very least, it dismembers them and arranges the torn limbs and entrails in strange patterns, as its not-yet-fully-developed sense of the occult and more heinous magical traditions compels it to enact proto-rituals out of necromantic curiosity.

Ratlings understand that most larger creatures present a significant danger. In combat, they generally do not remain around long enough for most fights to last more than a round or two. A ratling's preferred tactic is to become invisible, scuttle out to bite a target to gain the advantage of its sneak attack, then scurry away to a safe vantage point so it can, hopefully, watch its bitten victim bleed to death from its wounds.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Ratlings are far smarter than typical rats. On average, their intellect exceeds that of a typical human. As such, ratlings prefer to dwell in areas where their constant thirst for knowledge and boundless curiosity can continuously be quenched. Universities, wizards' guilds, libraries, and the like are the favorite haunts of ratlings. Old manors of families with long traditions of scholastic pursuit are even greater catches, for here, ratlings do not have to contest with increased levels of traffic or interruption. They often pilfer scrolls and books to quench their thirst for knowledge, just as they chase children to quench their thirst for blood.

A ratling generally enjoys the company of normal rats. In most cases, the creature is a loner among its own kind, but ratling conclaves are well-documented in the basements and attics of certain particularly old and large repositories of knowledge. These gatherings of ratlings often ape the structure of a typical university, with a group led by the most knowledgeable among the conclave, who serves to direct the “studies” of the younger members of the group. These elder ratlings often demand forays into the structure itself, scavenging missions to gather up books and scrolls for further study, but the conclaves are always careful to limit these stolen texts to ones that they observe as having been forgotten or generally unused. Ratlings know that humanoids are dangerous foes, and the longer a ratling conclave can hide its presence in an active building, the better.

Ratling elders often advance as clerics, oracles, witches, or wizards; they rarely gain levels as non-spellcasting classes (although some have been known to take on rogue levels—particularly those who dwell alongside thieves’ guilds or among wererats). Ratlings who take witch or wizard levels and have a familiar most often choose rats—an association that often brings with it more than mere supernatural companionship. Although ratlings are capable of gaining improved familiars, they can never select another ratling as a familiar.

RATLINGS AS FAMILIARS

While many creatures might balk at the concept of becoming a familiar, ratlings quite enjoy the role. Not only does being a spellcaster’s familiar give a ratling the security of having a powerful guardian who seeks to keep it safe, but also the ratling familiar has all but guaranteed access to texts and scrolls to read and study. Most spellcasters who take on ratlings as familiars also allow the ratlings to sup on their blood, giving their familiars an even greater reason to remain loyal and devoted to their masters or mistresses. A ratling who serves as a familiar gains the ability to use *commune* once per week as a spell-like ability.

A ratling can serve a spellcaster as a familiar if the spellcaster has the Improved Familiar feat. In order to gain a ratling familiar, the spellcaster must be chaotic evil and at least 7th level. A spellcaster with a ratling familiar typically carries numerous scrolls on his person for the ratling to access during combat.

BROWN JENKIN

The ratling is inspired by a character from H. P. Lovecraft’s story “Dreams in the Witch House.” In this story, an eerie witch named Keziah Mason has a singularly disturbing familiar—a ratlike thing named Brown Jenkin. As described in the story:

“Witnesses said it had long hair and the shape of a rat, but that its sharp-toothed, bearded face was evilly human while its paws were like tiny human hands. It took messages betwixt old Keziah and the devil, and was nursed on the witch’s blood—which it sucked like a vampire. Its voice was a kind of loathsome titter, and it could speak all languages...”

In designing the ratling for use as a monster in the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game, Brown Jenkin served as both an inspiration and a model. The end result isn’t quite identical to the creature that serves Keziah Mason in the story, but it’s close enough that players familiar with this classic story will certainly get a kick out of encountering ratlings in your game!



ONI, YAMABUSHI TENGU

This humanoid creature has a fearsome mien, with a cruel red face, glaring yellow eyes, a prodigious nose, and large ravenlike wings.

YAMABUSHI TENGU

CR 5



XP 1,600

LE Medium outsider (native, oni, shapechanger, tengu)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, *see invisibility*; **Perception** +15

DEFENSE

AC 18, **touch** 14, **flat-footed** 14 (+2 armor, +4 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 57 (6d10+24); **regeneration** 2 (fire or acid)

Fort +9, **Ref** +9, **Will** +4; -2 vs. illusion (pattern) spells



SR 16

Weaknesses susceptible to patterns

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (average)

Melee +1 *kusarigama* +10/+5 (1d6+4/x3), bite +3 (1d4+1)

Ranged composite longbow +10/+5 (1d8+2/x3)

Special Attacks steal voice

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +8)

Constant—*see invisibility*, *ventriloquism* (DC 14)

3/day—*dimension door*, *hideous laughter* (DC 15), *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 14), *scorching ray*

1/day—*blur*, *glitterdust* (DC 15)

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 19, **Con** 18, **Int** 12, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 22

Feats Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative

Skills Acrobatics +13, Bluff +12, Disguise +12, Fly +13,

Knowledge (planes) +10, Perception +15, Stealth +13; **Racial**

Modifiers +4 Perception

Languages Common, Tengu, Tien

SQ change shape (Medium humanoid, *alter self*), yamabushi weapons

Gear leather armor

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate mountains

Organization solitary, pair, or patrol (1–2 plus 3–8 tengus or dire corbies)

Treasure double (leather armor, +1 *kusarigama*, composite longbow [+2 Str] with 20 arrows, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Yamabushi Weapons (Ex) A yamabushi tengu is proficient with all monk weapons and all swordlike weapons (including katanas and wakizashi), and gains a +1 bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls with such weapons. Yamabushi tengus who do not use swords favor the *kusarigama*.

Steal Voice (Su) Up to three times per day, but no more than once per target, a yamabushi tengu can attempt to steal a victim's voice as part of its bite attack. When it does so, the creature bitten must make a DC 16 Will save or lose the ability to speak aloud. This prevents the use of any spell with verbal components and the use of command-word-activated magic items, among other difficulties. The yamabushi tengu's voice changes to match the one stolen. The victim's voice remains stolen until the oni steals another voice, until the oni agrees to give the stolen voice back (a standard action requiring the oni to touch the victim), or until the next sunrise. Any effect that removes curses (such as *remove curse* or *break enchantment*) can restore a stolen voice (DC for success equals the save DC of the steal voice ability—DC 16 for most yamabushi tengu), as does the death of the oni who stole the voice in the first place. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Susceptible to Patterns (Ex) A yamabushi tengu takes a –2 penalty on all saving throws against illusion spells of the pattern subschool. For 1 round after a yamabushi tengu either makes a successful save against a pattern or recovers from the effects of a pattern, it is dazzled.

Yamabushi tengus are oni with a predilection toward thievery and trickery, wearing the flesh of wicked, fiendish tengus. When a yamabushi tengu first appears, its first course of action is invariably to seek out a well-hidden nest or other nook to serve as a lair. Despite their ability to fly, most yamabushi tengus are nervous in open areas, since it's easy to be seen in such environs. A yamabushi tengu is more at home indoors or at night, where it can skulk in the shadows when it's unsure of its surroundings.

A yamabushi tengu is 5 feet tall and weighs 120 pounds.

ECOLOGY

While most yamabushi tengu look like normal tengus, they can actually manifest in a number of humanoid bird shapes. Ravens and crows are the most common model which these creatures take their appearance from, yet tales exist of yamabushi tengus with features more akin to cranes, eagles, peacocks, gulls, vultures, and even pelicans. Only the features of ducks and other billed avians (like geese) are notably absent from yamabushi tengus. In fact, yamabushi tengus have a strange loathing for ducks—they find these birds to be a mix of comic tragedy and pitiful hideousness, from the blunt shape of their bills to their distinctive gait and their warbling quacks. The presence of a duck can often provoke even the most restrained and crafty yamabushi tengu into making poor choices: faced with choosing between attacking a truly dangerous foe or using their weapons and magic against a nearby duck, most yamabushi tengus make the choice to kill the duck, even if such an act might compromise their position to their actual enemy.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Yamabushi tengus are driven by greed, particularly for shiny treasures like coins, jewels, gems, and polished weapons. Many extend this obsession to clothing (favoring brightly colored silks) and armor (preferring light armor over medium or heavy armor). Most of what a yamabushi tengu plots or plans can be traced to a desire to gather as much shiny treasure as possible, but they are also especially entranced and intrigued by avian humanoids—particularly tengus, dire corbies (see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Misfit Monsters Redeemed*) and garudas (see *Pathfinder Module: Cult of the Ebon Destroyers*). Yamabushi tengus share the most in common with tengus, of course, for it is from these creatures that the oni take their forms. Dire corbies and garudas, being non-humanoid monsters (monstrous humanoids and outsiders respectively) are in strange ways

TENGUS AND YAMABUSHI TENGUS

In presenting the yamabushi tengu, we have an unusual situation. In traditional Japanese folklore, these oni are much more akin to the mythological creatures known as tengus. In the Pathfinder RPG, though, tengus are a specific race of birdlike humanoids who have very little to do with the supernatural or spiritual world.

As a result, we've created the yamabushi tengu as a replacement of sorts for the traditional tengu. If you prefer to have tengus in your campaign that cleave more closely to real-world mythology, you should instead call these creatures tengus and then find an alternative name for the humanoids of the same name detailed in the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*.

both similar and quite different from tengus, and as such yamabushi tengu find them endlessly fascinating. In the case of dire corbies, the creatures' feral natures, xenophobic personalities, and overall lack of civilization make them ideal groups for a yamabushi tengu to infiltrate and take control of—although in most cases, a yamabushi tengu who infiltrates a dire corby flock eventually grows tired of the crude creatures and moves on. Garudas are more difficult for yamabushi tengu to interact with, for these outsiders are generally good. Encounters between garudas and yamabushi tengu almost always end in combat, typically with the more powerful garuda the victor. As a result, when confronted by a garuda, most yamabushi tengu choose subtlety over direct confrontation. In a best-case scenario, a yamabushi tengu's minions or allies capture and restrain the garuda, giving the yamabushi tengu ample opportunity to interrogate or even vivisect the garuda prisoner.

Most yamabushi tengus, though, find greatest comfort dwelling among thieves' guilds—particularly among those populated by tengus, in which case a yamabushi tengu appears in its natural form, using its wings as an obvious badge of superiority over its flightless tengu kin. Among thieves of other races (such as humans), a yamabushi tengu prefers to stay in its humanoid form. However, when a yamabushi tengu assumes the form of anything other than a tengu, its true nature is difficult for it to hide, for invariably the shapechanged oni's nose remains quite prodigious, usually to an almost comical degree. Strangely enough, however, yamabushi tengu generally don't think of their unusual noses as flaws in their magical disguises. A yamabushi tengu can also retain its wings when using its change shape ability, and these pinions, as well as its beaklike nose, are a sure way to tell a disguised yamabushi tengu apart from others.