

SHATTERED STAR



BESTIARY

THE LAST RAYS OF SUN WERE STREAMING THROUGH THE THICK FOREST CANOPY WHEN WE HEARD THE CREATURE'S PIERCING SHRIEK. A FLOCK OF BIRDS EXPLODED FROM THE TREES IN A CACOPHONOUS RUSTLE OF LEAVES AND FEATHERS JUST AS THE THING CAME INTO VIEW. THOUGH RESIDENTS OF THE REGION HAD DOZENS OF FRIGHTFUL STORIES TO TELL OF THIS STRANGE BEAST, THEIR DESCRIPTIONS DIDN'T PREPARE US FOR WHAT WE SAW. ITS LEATHERY WINGS BEAT THE AIR, STIRRING UP CLOUDS OF DEAD LEAVES AND FOREST DETRITUS AS IT DOVE FOR OUR PARTY. ITS TAPERED BEAK READY TO STAB.

—FROM THE JOURNAL OF MAYTHORN CALVROS, MONSTER HUNTER

Danger comes in all forms and from all places. Whether delving a dungeon or simply walking the avenues of a bustling city, adventurers must always remain alert. The sewers and forgotten places underneath the surface teem with dangerous monsters, but even the seemingly safe streets of civilization carry their own threats.

CHANCE MEETINGS, MALCONTENTS, AND MONSTERS

Urban threats, both those walking the streets and those lurking below them, make up this month's random encounter table. Even while PCs explore the city and dig into forgotten dungeons, threats wait just on the horizon, eager for some adventurer's blood. Here you'll find a random encounter table suitable for the City of Monuments, as well as three encounter hooks to add to your Shattered Star campaign.

Some of the creatures on the table can be encountered on the surface in the vicinity of the dungeon, while others are found in the darkened depths. If the resulting roll is a creature not suitable for the current environment, roll on the table again or simply choose an appropriate encounter. This table and these entries build upon some of the typical encounters found in Magnimar. For an even wider variety of encounters, consult the encounter tables on page 51 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Magnimar, City of Monuments*.

Dodgy Buskers (CR 3): Given Magnimar's few laws and support of free enterprise, playing on its streets can be quite profitable for a good musician. If that musician happens to be a criminal as well, the profits easily increase. Sambin Turshaw (use the stats for a storyteller on page 272 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*) sings songs, tells tales, and plays a lute while his youthful companions Marlan and Shevy Grindsmord (use the stats for a pickpocket on page 264 of the *GameMastery Guide*) lighten the purses of those in the crowd. The trio has been working like this in city streets across Varisia, from Riddleport to Korvosa. They stay in town only long enough to nab some coin, then vanish before trusting citizens or dangerous thieves' guilds catch on to their racket. If discovered, the three hope to make a break for it, but they're not above fighting if cornered.

Murderous Beggars (CR 4): This pair of chokers (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 45*) is infatuated with humanoid life. They recently found some cast-off rags, and began dressing in those clothes and hanging out in alleyways to get closer to civilization. After nightfall, they cavort along streets in the seedy parts of town, pretending to walk as humans, and hoping all the while to not stand out. Their small stature and strange gait reveal their true nature more often than not. The pair can't control

MAGNIMAR ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–4	1d6 fire beetles	1	<i>Bestiary 33</i>
5–8	1 ghoul	1	<i>Bestiary 146</i>
9–12	1d4 giant cockroaches	1	<i>Bestiary 2 58</i>
13–16	1d8 mites	1	<i>Bestiary 207</i>
17–22	1d4 tiefling rogues	1	<i>Bestiary 264</i>
23–25	1 bat swarm	2	<i>Bestiary 30</i>
26–28	1 iron cobra	2	<i>Bestiary 182</i>
29–33	1 poltergeist	2	<i>Bestiary 2 211</i>
34–38	1 quasit	2	<i>Bestiary 66</i>
39–42	1d6 rabid dogs	2	<i>Bestiary 87</i>
43–46	1 vargouille	2	<i>Bestiary 272</i>
47–51	1 doppelganger	3	<i>Bestiary 89</i>
52–55	1 giant black widow	3	<i>Bestiary 2 256</i>
56–59	1 giant rot grub	3	<i>Bestiary 3 215</i>
60–63	1 phantom fungus	3	<i>Bestiary 3 219</i>
64–69	1 shadow	3	<i>Bestiary 245</i>
70–74	1d4 skulks	3	<i>Bestiary 2 248</i>
75–78	1 vampiric mist	3	<i>Bestiary 2 277</i>
79–82	1 attic whisperer	4	<i>Bestiary 2 34</i>
83–86	1 crab swarm	4	<i>Bestiary 50</i>
87–89	1d4 dark creepers	4	<i>Bestiary 53</i>
90–94	1d6 sczarni thugs	4	<i>Magnimar 57</i>
95–96	1 shriezyx	4	<i>Magnimar 60</i>
97–99	1d6 vexgit gremlins	4	<i>Bestiary 2 145</i>
100	1d4 allips	5	<i>Bestiary 3 12</i>

their murderous urges for too long, and at least once a week they kill a beggar and take his rags and few possessions as their own, adding them to their cache of treasured "human things." The two chokers have grown more aggressive in recent weeks, and moved beyond beggars to mug more well-to-do people walking around late at night. Now they add more treasures to their pile nearly every day.

The Spider King (CR 5): Completing the image with a battered costume crown, this sinister ettercap (*Bestiary 129*) holds court in the dank sewers beneath Magnimar. He calls all spiders his subjects, and protects his domain with a host of traps and thick webbing. His most trusted subjects are a group of four giant crab spiders (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3 254*) that he calls his knights. Each of the stout arachnids has a name, a title, and even a parcel of land to protect within the kingdom. In recent weeks, the Spider King has become more paranoid about encroachment into his realm, and began breeding spiders and nurturing spider eggs in order to hatch an army to defend his imaginary kingdom.

SHATTERED STAR

AGATHION BISHOP

Layers of translucent, shimmering fins flow along this fish-man's spindly body. Tentacles curl below its stately mouth, and its humanlike hands and feet end in stubby but sharp claws.

BISHOP AGATHION

CR 4

XP 1,200

NG Medium outsider (aquatic, extraplanar, good)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, *detect evil*; Perception +11

Aura fear (30 ft., DC 16)

DEFENSE

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

hp 38 (7d10)

Fort +2, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8; +4 vs. poison

DR 5/evil or silver; **Immune** electricity, petrification; **Resist** cold 10, sonic 10; **SR** 15

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 60 ft.

Melee 2 claws +10 (1d10+3)

Special Attacks stunning strike

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +3)

Constant—*detect evil*, *speaking with animals*

At will—*create water*, *dancing lights*, *stabilize*

3/day—*bless*, *discern lies*, *remove disease*

1/week—*commune* (6 questions, CL 12th)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 17, **Con** 11, **Int** 14, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 22

Feats Agile Maneuvers, Improved Initiative, Self-Sufficient, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +9, Heal +5, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (nature) +7, Knowledge (planes) +12, Perception +11, Sense Motive +13, Stealth +12, Survival +12, Swim +10

Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal; *speaking with animals*; truespeech

SQ amphibious, lay on hands (3d6, 2/day, as a 7th-level paladin)

ECOLOGY

Environment any waters (Nirvana)

Organization solitary, pair, or contingent (6–8)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Fear Aura (Su) A bishop's eerie, fishlike appearance evokes feelings of unsettling fear in foes within a 30-foot radius. The bishop can use this aura as a free action, and any creature within this area must succeed at a DC 16 Will save or become shaken for 5d6 rounds. A creature that succeeds at its save is immune to the bishop's aura for 24 hours. The save DC is Wisdom-based.

Stunning Strike (Ex) Five times per day, a bishop can stun a creature it hits with a claw attack. The targeted creature must succeed at a DC 13 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1

round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Possessing perhaps one of the strangest appearances of all agathions, bishops look as much like fish as they do humans. On their native plane of Nirvana, bishop agathions act as liaisons between the celestial generals of the lands and seas, though their activity is not restricted to Nirvana alone. Bishop agathions perform their duties anyplace their adaptive bodies are needed, such as on watery planes or worlds that are wholly aquatic. The few mortals who have met these noble creatures report that bishop agathions can traverse even the roughest and driest terrain as easily as they can glide through the deepest, most isolated oceans. It's believed bishop agathions are born from the souls of mortals who led lives of harmonized duality on land and at sea—goodly sailors, ocean-hopping priests, or kindhearted fisherfolk all are said to be candidates for rebirth as these fascinating creatures.

Bishop agathions' striking coloration ranges from glittering silver to sparkling coral to smoky auburn and green. Layers of fine, translucent fins cascade down their bodies, and combine with the strange enzymes in their skin to give them the appearance of being perpetually wet. Bishops' heads are rounded, tentacles grow like beards from their chins, and their eyes—which come in all the colors of the tumultuous waves—look like those of a fish, but with a distinguished glint. Bishops' bodies vaguely resemble those of humans in shape, but webbing in their hands and feet facilitates deep-sea travel. Bishop agathions typically stand about 6 feet tall and weigh anywhere from 140 to 250 pounds.

ECOLOGY

On Nirvana, other agathions respect bishops for their ability to think clearly, logically, and with the best interest of all parties in mind. Because of this, bishop agathions serve as Nirvana's trusted diplomatic liaisons. Bishops also have been known to carry vital messages between celestial beings and mortal heroes, who often see agathions through warped lenses. Far from being ashamed of their strange appearances, bishops consider their bodies to be among the most beautiful and versatile in all the planes—a fitting reward for a life well spent in meditation, martial mastery, and harmony with the seas. Anyone who suggests otherwise can count on incurring a bishop's ill will.

Although primarily used as diplomats, messengers, and celestial ambassadors, bishops also excel in battle. With the power of Nirvana behind them, bishops' claws and nimble fighting style eliminate enemies who stand in the way of their missions. More martially inclined bishops often choose to wield quarterstaves, many of which are

enchanted. Bishop agathions don't go looking for fights, but they intervene when they come across those imposing cruelty or evil on innocents. Bishops particularly abhor piracy and slavery. Legends speak of more than one unlucky pirate slave master who, ostensibly mad, spent his final days blubbering about the tentacle-beards that destroyed his ship and drowned his crew. No one takes these stories seriously except for the few who've become acquainted with bishops' complex ways.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Bishops typically conduct their diplomatic work alone. However, planar experts believe that on Nirvana bishops more commonly work in pairs when dealing with simple matters of diplomacy or while on courier missions. When their missions are especially vital, bishop agathions work in contingents of six to eight, engaging in lengthy discussions and lively debate to find the best solution to their particular problem. These conferences sometimes last a long time, and some of the more hotheaded celestials regard them as a great waste of time. These contingents of bishop agathions can, some experts believe, cross into the mortal realm, and though such sightings have yet to be recorded, philosophical texts from across Golarion seem to reach similar conclusions.

The few reported bishop agathion sightings in the Inner Sea mention only one agathion being seen at a time, and these reports are concentrated along the shores of western Varisia, particularly in the Varisian Gulf near Magnimar. Outside of the Inner Sea region, the majority of reports of bishop agathions come from the other side of the world. Some researchers who study the planes believe that a portal to either Nirvana's oceans or the Plane of Water lies in the southern region of the Embaral Ocean, since both the western coast of Tian Xia and the eastern coast of Casmaron report more instances of bishop agathions than does the Inner Sea region.

Like other outsiders, bishops do not need to eat or sleep while spending time on Golarion. Additionally, bishops do not reproduce among themselves; each individual is formed from the soul of a good mortal. It's believed bishops retain the deep emotions that marked their mortal lives, giving them a propensity to fall in love with creatures living outside their native plane. Ancient stories speak of bishops who traveled to Golarion for missions, only to fall in love with a remarkable member of an aquatic species. Some coastal storytellers even claim that merfolk, with their otherworldly beauty, descended from such a union, and that sahuagin are

their corrupted cousins. Predictably, debates about the veracity of such claims have raged for as long as these tales have been told.

Although few known bishop agathions remain on Golarion for any length of time, some cultures revere their arrival as an omen of fortune and luck. Those seeing a bishop agathion—and being entrusted with its diplomatic knowledge—consider the encounter to be the greatest honor one can receive. Therefore, groups of eager adventurers have set sail from Varisia over the years, hoping to reap the rewards of encountering one of these strange creatures. These seekers are inevitably disappointed. Bishops appear to only those with whom they have business—or whose evil they witness and wish to stop.



SHATTERED STAR

FLESHDREG

Composed of half-formed body parts, this creature stands on two monstrous legs. A mouth full of jagged teeth dominates the creature's bulbous head. Its veins pulse just beneath transparent flesh.

FLESHDREG

CR 1

XP 400

NE Small aberration

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., sin-scent; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size)

hp 13 (2d8+4)

Fort +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3

Immune mind-affecting effects; **SR** 12

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +3 (1d6+1 plus sinful bite)

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 13, **Con** 15, **Int** 6, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 12

Feats Lightning Reflexes

Skills Acrobatics +5, Escape Artist +5, Perception +4, Stealth +9

Languages Aklo

ECOLOGY

Environment any ruins

Organization solitary, pair, or batch (3–8)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Sinful Bite (Su) Each fleshdreg possesses an additional attack depending on its particular sin type. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Envy: An envy fleshdreg's bite attack can temporarily interfere with magic. If an envy fleshdreg deals damage with its bite attack to any creature under a magic effect, the fleshdreg makes a dispel check as if it were caster level 3rd against the spell of the highest caster level. If the dispel check is successful, the effect is suppressed for 1d4 rounds.

Gluttony: A gluttony fleshdreg's bite attack can wither and weaken the body of the creature it attacks. Any creature that takes damage from a gluttony fleshdreg's bite attack must succeed at a DC 12 Fortitude save or become fatigued. Subsequent uses of this ability do not cause a creature to become exhausted.

Greed: A greed fleshdreg's bite can twist and warp the body of a creature it attacks. Any creature that takes damage from a greed fleshdreg's bite attack must succeed at a DC 12 Fortitude save or have its speed reduced by half and take a –2 penalty to Strength and Dexterity for 1d6 rounds.

Lust: A lust fleshdreg's bite can addle the mind of the creature it attacks. Any creature that takes damage from a lust fleshdreg's bite attack must succeed at a DC 12 Will save or become confused for 1 round.

Pride: A pride fleshdreg's bite floods the senses of the creature it attacks. Any creature that takes damage from a pride fleshdreg's bite attack must succeed at a DC 12 Will save or be blinded for 1 round and dazzled for the next 1d4 rounds.

Sloth: A sloth fleshdreg's bite conjures an amber crust that covers the target and restricts the target's movements. Any creature that takes damage from a sloth fleshdreg's bite attack must succeed at a DC 12 Reflex save or take a –2 penalty on attack rolls and Reflex saves for 1d4 rounds.

Wrath: A wrath fleshdreg's bite delivers energy damage to creatures it attacks. Any creature that takes damage from a wrath fleshdreg's bite attack takes an additional 1d4 points of energy damage (fleshdreg's choice).

Sin-Scent (Su) Fleshdregs have scent against creatures whose nature reflects the fleshdreg's related sin. For example, a wrathful fleshdreg can scent creatures using rage effects. The GM should adjudicate what creatures a particular fleshdreg can scent.

Sometimes a runewell becomes erratic after millennia without maintenance and disgorges an incomplete horror. Such misshapen lumps of tissue, appendages, and biting mouths are called fleshdregs. These incomplete sinspawn creep around forgotten ruins of the Thassilonian empire. Some escape the ruins and make their way to the surface to feed upon the sins of humankind.

Fleshdregs vary in appearance from one another depending on various factors, such as the sins that powered their creation and the runewells that spawned them. Wrathful fleshdregs develop with a more predatory form than lustful fleshdregs do, and slothful fleshdregs look like little more than bloated piles of flesh atop stubby legs. Most fleshdregs stand between 3 and 4 feet tall, and weigh little more than 60 pounds. Greed fleshdregs are the tallest of their kind, and sloth fleshdregs the heaviest.

ECOLOGY

Fleshdregs are practically immortal. They require little food to sustain their unnatural physiology, and don't seem to age or mature beyond the moment of creation. Violence or accidents claim the lives of fleshdregs more often than anything else.

Fleshdregs emerge from runewells that have malfunctioned over the ages—no self-respecting follower of Thassilonian magic would want to create such pitiful creatures, after all. Sometimes a runewell absorbs particularly sinful souls through a soul lens without the device being calibrated correctly; other times, a creature is marked with a Sihedron rune to have its soul collected, and the inscriber performs the ritual incorrectly. In either case,

the collected sins cause the runewell to vomit forth these broken, spoiled sinspawn.

HABITAT & SOCIETY




Fleshdregs follow true sinspawn around like pets or curious children. Sinspawn use these weaker creatures as slaves, troops, or hunting companions. Though they're treated horribly, fleshdregs still seek out the company of their larger, more advanced cousins.

Despite their low intelligence, these pitiful creatures recognize the Sihedron rune and its connection to their creation. Many fleshdregs remain in the ruins of their birthplace, surrounded by Sihedron runes, for this very reason, waiting patiently for the return of their runelord masters.

Fleshdregs behave differently according to their associated sins. Sloth fleshdregs rarely hunt for sinful creatures, preferring to keep to their lairs, while wrath fleshdregs are the most likely to wander outside of a Thassilonian ruin as they seek to spread rage.

FLESHDREG SWARM

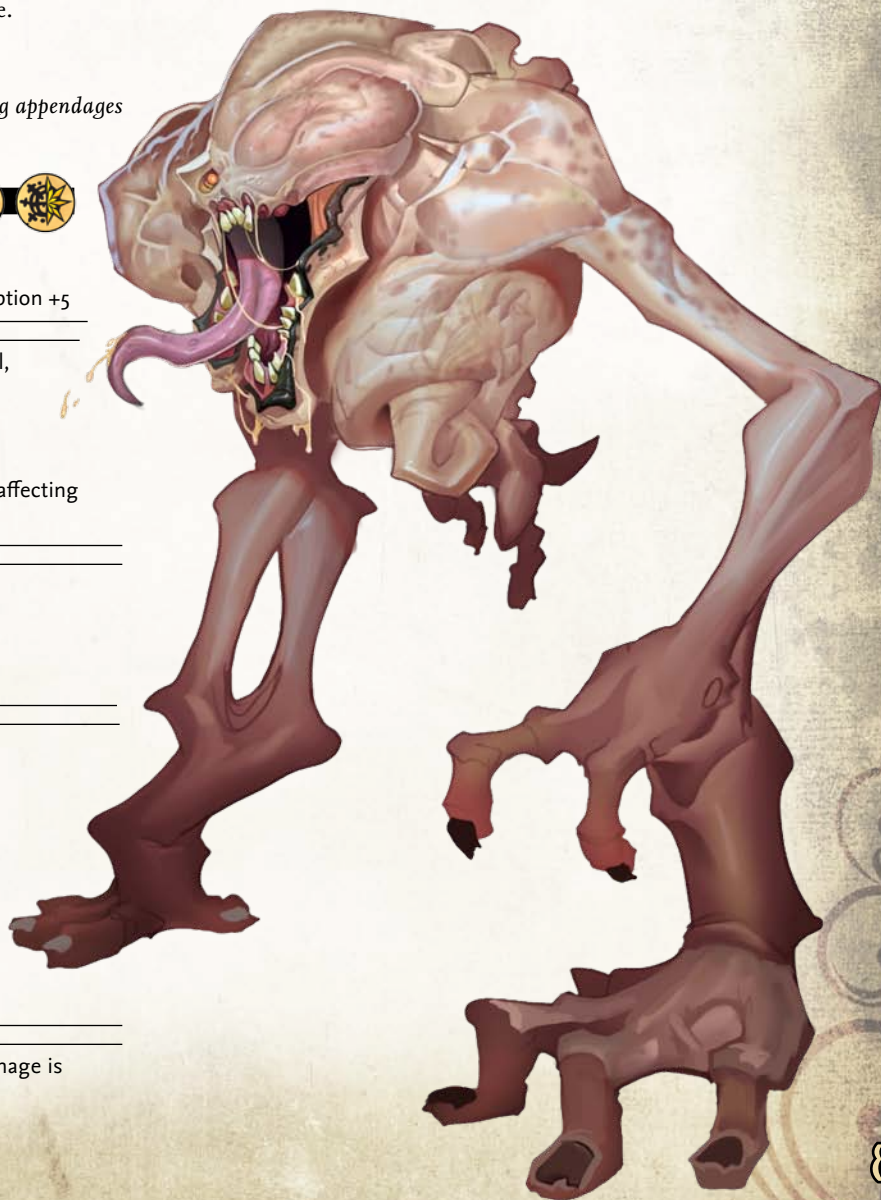
Hundreds of wads of squirming flesh with flailing appendages move together in a cluster of teeth and claws.

FLESHDREG SWARM	CR 2	  
XP 600		
NE Tiny aberration (swarm)		
Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft., sin-scent; Perception +5		
DEFENSE		
AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+1 Dex, +2 natural, +2 size)		
hp 19 (3d8+6)		
Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +3		
Defensive Abilities swarm traits; Immune mind-affecting effects; SR 13		
OFFENSE		
Speed 30 ft., climb 10 ft.		
Melee swarm (1d6 plus distraction)		
Space 10 ft.; Reach 0 ft.		
Special Attacks distraction (DC 13)		
STATISTICS		
Str 2, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 2		
Base Atk +2; CMB —; CMD —		
Feats Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes		
Skills Perception +5, Stealth +13		
SQ arcane bite		
ECOLOGY		
Environment any ruins		
Organization solitary, pair, or infestation (3–5)		
Treasure none		
SPECIAL ABILITIES		
Arcane Bite (Su) A fleshdreg swarm's swarm damage is		

considered magical for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction.

Sin-Scent (Su) Fleshdreg swarms have scent against creatures whose nature reflects the fleshdreg swarm's related sin. For example, a wrathful fleshdreg swarm can scent creatures using rage effects. The GM should adjudicate what creatures a particular fleshdreg swarm can scent.

Fleshdreg swarms form from scraps and leftovers of malformed fleshdregs and incomplete sinspawn. These foul, misshapen creatures pour out of runewells by the hundreds, seeking sinful flesh to destroy. Little more than pests, these swarms attack indiscriminately. Some malfunctioning runewells and other fleshvats produce nothing more these days than swarm upon swarm of these pests.



MELFESH MONSTER

Covered with mossy growths and creeping vines, this towering creature glides effortlessly across the ground. A hood of damp moss and crusty bark conceals the monster's face.

MELFESH MONSTER

CR 6



XP 2,400

NE Medium plant (extraplanar)

Init +6; **Senses** all-around vision, low-light vision, *see invisibility*; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+2 Dex, +9 natural)

hp 67 (9d8+27); regeneration 5 (acid)

Fort +9, **Ref** +7, **Will** +5

Immune plant traits, poison; **Resist** electricity 10, fire 10

OFFENSE

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

Melee 2 slam +10 (1d6+4)

Special Attacks envelop, poison cloud

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +11)

Constant—*see invisibility*

At will—*scare* (DC 15), *scorching ray*

3/day—*blur*, *nondetection*

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** 13, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 17

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 22

Feats Alertness, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Point-Blank Shot

Skills Fly +14, Knowledge (planes) +3, Perception +16, Sense Motive +10, Stealth +14

Languages Infernal, Sylvan; telepathy 100 ft.

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Varisia)

Organization solitary

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Envelop (Ex) The Melfesh Monster can wrap a Medium or smaller creature in its vines as a standard action. The Melfesh Monster attempts a grapple that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and deals 1d4 points of Wisdom damage if the target fails a DC 17 Fortitude save. Attacks that hit the Melfesh Monster while it has a target enveloped deal half their damage to the monster and half to the trapped victim.

Poison Cloud (Ex) The Melfesh Monster can exude a cloud of poisonous gas in a 20-foot radius up to 3 times per day. Creatures in the area must succeed at a DC 17 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1d4 rounds and sickened for 1d4 hours afterward. This is a poison effect, and the save DC is Constitution-based.

The sleepy town of Melfesh has endured threats ranging from a gang of displaced troglodytes causing havoc to the

strained political ramifications of having a drawbridge controlling trade through southeastern Varisia, but none trouble the place like the Melfesh Monster. Miners working the foothills of the Fenwall Mountains and farmers in the countryside surrounding Melfesh speak in hushed tones of a strange and malevolent monster that haunts the area. Those who claim to have encountered the thing return from their encounters pale and ill, speaking of a bizarre plantlike creature with burning red eyes, and twisted limbs that shoot jets of flame. A stench like acrid, burning dung follows the monster. Some who encounter the creature stumble out of the woods addlepat, raving of a hovering creature and its fire and poisonous mist. Adults away from the safety of town aren't the only ones terrorized by the creature, as parents use embellished stories of the Melfesh Monster to frighten children into behaving properly.

ECOLOGY

Very little information is recorded about the Melfesh Monster, since so few have seen the creature. A handful of researchers enamored with studying monsters have written about the creature on their travels through Varisia, though no two accounts agree on its true nature. Some think it to be from another world or dimension, while others believe it is a plant creature of magical sentience, akin to a corrupted treant or some dark, fey-stricken creature. Even the camp claiming otherworldly origin is split on the details. Some say the Melfesh Monster hails from the horrid wastes of Abaddon, and others insist the First World birthed this frightening creature. Both its form and behavior could easily suit either of these theories.

The Melfesh Monster never consumes its kills; it simply leaves charred corpses, twisted by fear, in its wake. Victims of the Melfesh Monster are found curled into a fetal position and burned so thoroughly they are barely recognizable to even their closest friends and relatives. Some speculate the creature feeds on strong feelings of agony, despair, and terror.

Most who encounter the Melfesh Monster are solitary travelers, miners, hunters, or farmers. This suggests the creature prefers to prey upon single targets, but a few stories tell of it attacking a wagon full of farmers returning from a day at the market or a trio of teenage boys playing around in the woods at night. Either way, as of late, most citizens of Melfesh and the surrounding countryside don't go out alone after dark for long.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Officially, the Melfesh Monster exists only in the minds of drunkards and those prone to fanciful daydreams. The sparse evidence of the creature has yet to compel the local

militia (or any of the nearby Hellknights) to mobilize any significant hunting party to eradicate the creature, and authorities who are shown places scorched by the monster's fiery jets write them off as merely small-scale wildfires caused by lightning or out-of-control campfires left by local hunters or miners. When would-be monster hunters show up in Melfesh, the locals have no shortage of stories to tell about the monster—usually heard from a distant cousin or a friend of a friend who claimed to have seen it. Several unscrupulous merchants in the area made a small industry of selling bits of slag supposedly resulting from the monster's fire, or maps to various caves and lairs the monster might inhabit. With little credible information to go on, and the creature's ability to fly making it impossible to track, most of the hunters give up the chase after having their purses lightened at nearby inns and taverns.

To date, no lair thought to belong to the creature has been found, nor have any tracks of the Melfesh Monster been accurately identified (just the scorch marks from its jets of flame). In Melfesh, sketches of the creature hang on the walls in taverns and inns, some drawn by those who encountered the creature and lived, and others sketched by those interested in the monster and the stories about it. All of these depictions are roughly the same, though some contain certain embellishments or exaggerations, such as extra appendages, varying color schemes, or inflated body size. Some inn owners sell these drawings to monster hunters for prices that fluctuate wildly, seemingly set only by how severely the inn owners think they can gouge any particular

buyer. Just last fall, a group hailing from Korvosa bought a skillfully drawn illustration of the Melfesh Monster from a tavern for 10 gold pieces, though it was little help to the group in finding the monster.

Though the monster has become a major nuisance only in the last 30 years, stories with details matching recent accounts of the Melfesh Monster circulated among the Varisian wanderers as long as 600 years ago. These tales, told around campfires as a warning to the traveling people, hint that a creature like the monster—or even the monster itself—has been a threat in the region for a long time. No one knows what made the creature lie dormant for so long, and frankly, the frightened populace is merely waiting until this particular bit of local folklore fades into the past.



SHATTERED STAR

SKVADER

This small creature has the forequarters and hind legs of a hare, and the wings and tail of a wood grouse.

SKVADER

CR 1/2



XP 200

N Tiny magical beast

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 size)

hp 6 (1d10+1)

Fort +3, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 40 ft. (poor)

Melee bite +5 (1d3–1 plus attach)

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

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 15, **Con** 13, **Int** 4, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 10 (14 vs. trip)

Feats Weapon Finesse

Skills Stealth +14

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate forest and hills

Organization solitary, pair, family (3–12), or pack (1 wolpertinger and 3–12 skvaders)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Attach (Ex) When a skvader hits with its bite attack, it automatically grapples its foe, dealing automatic bite damage each round. An attached skvader loses its Dexterity bonus to AC and has an AC of 12.

A combination of hare and grouse, skyvaders boast features and mannerisms of both animals. At first glance, a skvader appears to be a common hare, though its shorter ears distinguish it from the longer-eared rabbits. Its wings, hindquarters, and tail usually have a coloration similar to its fur, and its birdlike features are only easily distinguishable up close. Skvaders are twitchy and nervous, constantly on the lookout for predators. They switch between standing stock still upon sensing danger and quickly bolting to escape. While generally docile, skvaders become dangerous if cornered.

A skvader is about 1-1/2 feet long and weighs around 10 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Skvaders live primarily in temperate forests, though they are also found in hillier regions with enough vegetation to provide them easy sustenance. They're also drawn to open, low-lying areas, particularly farm fields and plains covered in an abundance of tall grasses upon which they can feed.

Their high metabolisms give these herbivores voracious appetites, which force them to consume such large quantities of plants that they pose significant threats to farmers' livelihoods. A family of skvaders infesting a farmer's fields can lay waste to his crops in just a couple of weeks. Once they've destroyed the vegetation in an area, the skyvaders move on to nearby farms and continue feeding.

If cornered, a skvader emits a shrill screech that can be heard as far as a mile away. Other skvaders in the area immediately rush to its aid, causing a confrontation with a lone skvader to quickly escalate into a fight with a ferocious group of the creatures. When in combat, a skvader prefers to single out a threat and attach itself to that target.

Scholars postulate that skvaders are a lesser form of their wolpertinger cousins, a variant that never fully developed into the greater threat the wolpertinger is. Others believe that the skvader is a distant precursor to the owlbear, citing the combination of mammalian and avian features, though on a much smaller scale. These scholars believe skvaders might have been an early experiment to combine two creatures into one, undertaken by the same lunatic wizard who supposedly created the owlbear.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

To protect themselves and secure a safe birthing environment, skyvaders often dig small burrows. A large enough skvader population frightens off other small herbivores, which leave their burrows behind for the skvaders to claim. They sometimes have to spend some time expanding the burrow's size, particularly if one or more wolpertingers are among the pack.

In skvader families, adult females care for the young and the males dig the burrows, patrol for predators, and offer protection when their mates deliver a litter. Skvaders mate for life, though if one of a mated pair dies, the other seeks a new mate after a mourning period. Skvader young often stay with their parents for the first year of life. Multiple skvader families in the same region generally coexist peacefully. If one family grows significantly larger than the others, the smaller family simply moves on to new feeding grounds.

SKVADERS AND WOLPERTINGERS AS FAMILIARS

While most skvaders and wolpertingers prefer the company of their families and packs, occasionally the more adventurous among them come to serve as familiars. Service to a powerful spellcaster brings with it protection and long-term companionship, which these creatures take advantage of. A neutral spellcaster can gain a skvader as a familiar at 3rd level by taking the Improved Familiar feat, and a neutral spellcaster can gain a wolpertinger as a familiar at 5th level by taking the Improved Familiar feat.

BESTIARY

WOLPERTINGER

This creature appears to be a large hare with long fangs, feathered wings, and a set of antlers.

WOLPERTINGER CR 1



XP 400

N Tiny magical beast

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 size)

hp 15 (2d10+4)

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

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 40 ft. (average)

Melee bite +6 (1d3–1 plus bleed 1d4),
gore +6 (1d3–1)

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

Special Attacks bleed (1d4)

STATISTICS

Str 9, **Dex** 14, **Con** 15, **Int** 4, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 11 (15 vs. trip)

Feats Weapon Finesse

Skills Fly +6, Perception +5, Stealth +14

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate forests or hills

Organization solitary, pair, or pack (3–12)

Treasure none

Wolpertingers are a bizarre amalgamation of hare and bird with the antlers of a deer. A wolpertinger's mottled fur ranges from light browns and tans to nearly black. A pair of brown-and-tan feathered wings sprouts from its back. While on the ground, wolpertingers fold these wings tight to their bodies. Fierce predators, wolpertingers hunt in packs using clever tactics. While capable of flight, they find prolonged flight taxing and tend to stay on the ground most of the time.

A wolpertinger has a 4-foot wingspan, is nearly 2 feet long, and weighs around 15 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Wolpertingers are usually encountered in temperate forests and hills, though scarcity of their favored foods can sometimes drive them to warmer or colder climes. Though they are omnivores, wolpertingers prefer fresh meat to grasses and berries. They typically hunt creatures smaller than themselves (favoring rabbits, mice, squirrels, and the like), but often take on larger predatory animals, such as foxes. Given a large enough pack, wolpertingers can even take down a solitary wolf.



Wolpertingers mate only once per year, in the spring. Kits stay with their packs until they are full-grown, but rarely remain with their birth-packs beyond a year, instead setting out to establish their own packs.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Though related to skvaders, wolpertingers are quite different beasts. Unlike their somewhat nomadic cousins, wolpertingers are aggressive and fiercely territorial. Packs stake out territories large enough for their hunting needs, and keep constantly vigilant against invaders. At the first indication of any significant threat, the pack mobilizes and attempts to kill or drive off the intruders. This territoriality extends to different packs of wolpertingers, though multiple packs have been known to coexist peacefully near one another as long as none of them violates another pack's territory.

When on the hunt, wolpertingers vary their approaches, from slinking through the underbrush to flying in from above, as befits the terrain and the capabilities of their prey. When approaching from afar, they charge in quickly to get close enough to deal a forceful attack with their horns. Once in close combat, they gang up on their prey in flanking pairs. The strongest and oldest wolpertingers focus on melee, leaving the younger members of the pack to dart in for quick charges.

Given their antlers, it's difficult for wolpertingers to create burrows like skvaders and normal hares. Instead, they seek shelter in naturally secluded areas as well as in the former dens of larger predators.

SHATTERED STAR

SNALLYGASTER

With a terrible screech, the lean, scaly beast swoops down from the sky on great dark wings. A single eye stares out from its cruel face, and tentacles writhe within its sharp, toothy beak.

SNALLYGASTER

CR 3



XP 800

CE Medium aberration

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 30 (4d8+12)

Fort +4, **Ref** +3, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

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

Melee beak +6 (1d8+3 plus bleed) or

2 claws +6 (1d4+3), tentacles +1 (1d4+1 plus grab)

Special Attacks aerial charge, bleed (1d6), grab, sucking tentacles

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** 5, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +6 (+10 grapple); **CMD** 18 (22 vs. trip)

Feats Flyby Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Fly +10, Perception +7, Stealth +9 (+13 in forests); **Racial**

Modifiers +4 Stealth in forests

Languages Aklo (cannot speak)

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate forests or mountains

Organization solitary, pair

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Aerial Charge (Ex) The snallygaster can hurl itself downward through the air at tremendous speed, using the force to inflict terrible wounds with its lance-like beak. When the snallygaster charges downward at an angle of 45 degrees or more, it deals double damage with its beak attack. If the charging beak attack is a critical hit, it deals triple damage instead. Bleed damage is not multiplied for this attack.

Sucking Tentacles (Ex) A snallygaster uses its retractable tentacles to suck blood from its victim's already open wounds. Any creature affected by the snallygaster's bleed special attack that the snallygaster successfully grapples with its grab ability or maintains a grapple against takes double the amount of bleed damage at the beginning of its next turn. A snallygaster cannot make attacks with its beak in any round that it uses its tentacles in this way.

Strange things lurk in the wild places of the world, hiding in remote forests or isolated mountains, away from prying eyes. The snallygaster, a hideous amalgamation of lizard and bird that preys on unwary travelers, is one such creature. Black stripes run the length of its scaly green hide all the way to the tip of its long, sinuous tail. Muscular, membranous wings sprout from the creature's

back, bearing it through the sky at tremendous speed. Its claws and beak have an almost metallic sheen to them, hinting at their sharpness and strength. The snallygaster's serpentine neck terminates at a small, birdlike head with a single eye set in the center of the forehead. In place of a tongue, its long throat contains a slobbering mass of tentacles that twist and squirm grotesquely whenever the creature extends them.

A typical snallygaster measures 9 feet long from the tip of its tail to the point of its beak. Its wingspan measures over 15 feet, and it weighs approximately 200 pounds.

ECOLOGY

The snallygaster, mainly carnivorous, subsists primarily on deer, sheep, or similar animals, although it prefers to hunt sentient creatures when given the chance. The snallygaster is an ambush predator, attacking its prey from above. Once it spots a potential victim, it soars high into the air before diving sharply down toward its unsuspecting foe, using the fall to build up momentum. At the end of the dive, the snallygaster impales its prey with its 2-foot-long serrated beak, plunging the razor-sharp bill straight into its victim's chest. The snallygaster's thick skull and muscular neck allow it to withstand the sudden impact unharmed, while its target usually suffers several broken bones and internal hemorrhaging. If its victim is stout or lucky enough to survive the initial attack, the snallygaster employs the vicious claws on its forelegs to inflict savage wounds upon its foe.

Once its foe lies dead or unconscious, the snallygaster uses its tonguelike tentacles to slurp up the victim's blood. Some experts theorize the snallygaster thirsts for blood because of its iron content, which might help maintain the semimetallic composition of the beast's beak and claws. Others claim the snallygaster's tentacle-filled throat makes swallowing solid food difficult, an idea supported by the creature's tendency to leave its kills out to rot for several days before consuming them. The truth may be that the snallygaster enjoys drinking the blood of its enemies, deriving a sort of ritualistic satisfaction from gulping down the still-warm life essence of its prey. If the snallygaster feels that it or its kill is being threatened, it uses its surprisingly powerful tentacles to latch on to the body and carry it deep into the forest where it can exsanguinate the corpse in peace.

The only thing a snallygaster craves more than blood is alcohol. Scholars still debate whether this is an instinctive dependency, or whether a snallygaster acquires the addiction later in life. What is known is that snallygasters spend much of each fall scouring their territories for fermenting fruit, which they gorge themselves on until thoroughly inebriated. Snallygasters grow extremely aggressive when intoxicated. When drunk

they rampage across the countryside in a violent stupor, slaughtering anyone and anything that crosses their paths. Snallygasters that range into lands populated by humanoids quickly develop a taste for man-made liquor, especially distilled spirits. Such drinks are far more potent than the snallygaster's natural sources of alcohol, and regularly imbibing them can greatly exacerbate the snallygaster's addiction. Even the most cautious of snallygasters can go mad with desire once it catches the scent of drink. It charges into town, heedless of danger, and smashes its way into a local still or brew-house, leaving a trail of victims in its wake. One survivor's report tells of a snallygaster so entranced by the smell of whiskey mash that it dove headfirst into a brewing vat, where it quickly succumbed to the fumes and drowned.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Snallygasters might inhabit any remote, backwoods area of Avistan, but are most often encountered in the wilds of Varisia. They prefer to nest in wooded, mountainous regions where they can put their camouflage to good use. Snallygasters are primarily active during the day, which they spend searching for food or scaring off rivals. A snallygaster claims a quite large territory, often hundreds of miles wide, though snallygasters rarely keep the same territory for more than a year at a time. Eventually, the snallygaster grows bored with the area—or is overcome by wanderlust—and sets off in search of a more interesting roost. When snallygasters meet, they regard each other coolly, but rarely fight over territory. The conflicts that do arise are almost never lethal, though the presence of a particularly valuable resource in the area, such as easy access to human victims or a reliable supply of alcohol, can turn such a contest into a bloody aerial combat.

Snallygasters assemble during mating season since they have few opportunities to reproduce. Female snallygasters lay only one to two eggs per year, which they consume if the eggs are not quickly fertilized by a male snallygaster. Should a male snallygaster present himself, the female allows him to fertilize the egg, and then immediately retreats with it and hides it somewhere high in the mountains. Occasionally humans run across these melon-sized eggs and attempt to hatch them, usually with disastrous results. Snallygasters cannot be trained, and are lethal predators at the age of 4 weeks.

Snallygasters are not afraid of humans, though they are intelligent enough to refrain from attacking large or well-armed groups of them. A snallygaster whose territory includes a human settlement genuinely enjoys terrorizing the community, often by flying just out of bow

shot and screeching at the residents. It's no surprise then that snallygasters figure strongly in some early Varisian and Shoanti myths. The Shoanti name for the creature is a corruption of the Skald phrase for "swift ghost," chosen because the creature's attacks come suddenly and silently, and also for the way the monster disappears into the forest after claiming a victim's life. When Chelish explorers arrived in Varisia, they further corrupted the name into the creature's modern appellation, "snallygaster."

