

THE OWLBEAR



Dornan's Ecologies: Volume 1

THE OWLBEAR

ADARIL'S ECOLOGIES: VOLUME 1

Introduction: Chimeras of feathers and fur, owlbears are an iconic threat to low level adventuring parties. While their origins may vary, whether the creations of a mad mage or the natural denizens of the feywilds and forests, the threat they pose is a classic one for any game. Contained within is a detailed exposition on the nature, ecology, hunting behavior, and variants of the Owlbear.

SUMMARY

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THE ECOLOGY OF THE OWLBEAR

Ferocious, ill tempered, and relentless, these iconic beasts are legendary hunters and feared predators throughout the realms. Territorial and aggressive, their presence is often made known by their thundering screeches in the night echoing through forest and glen.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The common owlbear is theorized to have descended from either polar bear or brown bear stock, with males reaching up to 10 feet in length and averaging a thousand pounds in weight, and females reaching 8 feet and five to six hundred on average.

While their physical strength is incredible as you would expect from their stature, their bite is also impressive, easily exceeding 1,200 PSI in pressure. Their skull can exceed 18" to 24", and their sharp beak often reaches almost a foot. Owlbears are known to snap the femurs of cattle and elk to get to the marrow within.

Usually, only the upper half of the owlbear exhibits avian characteristics, gradually lessening moving down the body. Sometimes their forepaws will have talons and scaled feet, other times they will have more ursine claws and paws, but in both cases their claws can exceed 4' to 6' in length and are capable of rending through even plate armor. The lower half of an owlbear is almost exclusively ursine. Their heads usually exhibit striking plumage, but the rest of their coat is often a mottled mix of fur and feather.

Some owlbears have the ability to ruffle their coats so as to mimic wood, bark, dirt, or snow. Others are entirely incapable of this feat. The exact nature of their natural camouflage is

usually dependent on the species of owl they descend from. Unlike rabbits or foxes, their fur coats and plumage do not change color with the seasons. Artic owlbears will usually

have a white coat year round, while more temperate owlbears maintain a brown coat. There also some owlbears descended from panda stock, who will have a white and brown or white and black patterned coat.

DISTRIBUTION AND HABITAT

Wild owlbears are commonly encountered in temperate rainforests, forests, mountains, tundra, and arctic biomes of any type. They are almost never encountered in tropical climates or deserts as their thick coats and dense builds overheat easily. There are also several races that will cultivate or train owlbears as guards, mounts, or companions. Humans, hobgoblins, elves, and dwarves have all been known to do so. Most interesting, there are also numerous variants of owlbear that seem to be native to the Feywild. And owlbears have been sighted in numerous outer planes, including the Beastlands, Arborea, Limbo, and the Outlands.

As apex predators, it is rare for too many owlbears to gather in any one place for long. They are aggressive and territorial, and drive out competition ruthlessly. You may occasionally see mated pairs and a clutch of hatchlings together in one place, but outside of that they tend to live alone.

In places of extreme abundance, such as a salmon run during spawning season, you may find an incredibly high density in their population, with ranges as small as 5 to 10 mi², with multiple ranges overlapping. For more desolate places such as an arctic tundra, a single owlbear may range over 1000 square miles or more. In most forests and hills, ranges extend for a 100 square miles or more. Males will often range twice as far as they seek not just food but mates. While the presence of other predators is tolerated in parts of the range, in such that the owlbear is often content chasing off competition, owlbears tend to have a personal zone within their range near their roosts where trespass always leads to fatal confrontation.

LIFE CYCLE AND REPRODUCTION

Some breeds lay clutches, others have litters of live births. In either case, a mother is unlikely to have more than 2 to 4 cubs at a time, but may occasionally have as many as 6. They are tiny when born, weighing only a pound. Owlbears grow quickly though, remaining with their mother as a cub for 2 to 3 years, and reaching maturity in 4 to 5 years. While mothers are generally successful at seeing their cubs to adolescence, thankfully for the peoples of the realms, few make it on their own from there to adulthood.

Owlbears on the material plane in the wild often live to 30, and in captivity have been known to reach 50. Owlbears on other planes of existence can vary tremendously, as not even the flow of time is guaranteed in such realms. In both cases, old age rarely claims such beasts. Younger rivals, disease, and hunger see to it that few live so long.

Females will bear cubs every 3 or 4 years. Much like bears, owlbears are serially monogamous, not mating for life but only for a season, with males often having to fiercely defend his mate against the interest of other males. Unlike bears, the male will often emulate its owl ancestry and remain after to help rear cubs and hunt for the mother. The male usually leaves after a year or two, with both partners often finding new mates in the following seasons.

Owlbears molt frequently as they grow, shedding their feathers. During these periods, their camouflage is often marred, and their patchy bald spots and mottled appearance will often lead to the mistaken assumption that they are suffering from a disease or affliction.

Like many predators they are prone catching whatever parasites and worms their prey may be infected with. Their stomach acid is incredibly potent, and they will eat most kills entirely bone and all, breaking down most of their kill to regurgitate thicker bone and fur clumps later on as large pellet. But as an apex predator, they are exposed to so many

different pestilences over the course of a life time that they regularly succumb to infection, and as such make incredibly poor eating. Not only must any such meat be cooked to an extremely high temperature to be made safe, but it is extremely gamey and tough to begin with leading most races to avoid such fare except as a last resort. It is theorized that some of the owlbear's iconic rage may be related to the worms and other parasites it carries, the most famous of which is the Drooling Madness. Few actively seek and hunt owlbears for food, as those capable of doing so are usually more discriminating in their palate, such as dragons and knights.

DROOLING MADNESS

A disease that can infect both mammals and avians, this illness targets the nervous system. Transmitted by eating tainted meat or through exposure to saliva through bites, symptoms can take a week to manifest. Any creature exposed must make a DC 14 Constitution save or become infected.

Once symptoms show, the victim starts salivating uncontrollably, begins to twitch and shiver, and has such intense aches and pains it imposes disadvantage on any Wisdom (insight) or Wisdom (perception) checks. It causes such irritability that it must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw anytime exposed to a stressful situation or fly into an uncontrollable rage, attacking the source.

After a long rest, the creature is given a chance to make another DC 14 Constitution save. On a success, the symptoms subside for a day. On three cumulative successes the disease is cured. On three failures, the insanity and rage become permanent and can only be cured magically.





DIET & HIBERNATION

Owlbears are omnivores. They have a stronger carnivorous preference than bears, but retain the ability to eat more nutritious plant matter such as nuts, tubers, and berries. They will almost never eat leaves, grasses, or bark. They also function as scavengers, having no compunctions about eating decaying corpses and stealing kills from other predators. They will eat until gorged, with owlbears sharing the same drive as normal bears to build up as much of a fat reserve as possible before winter sets in. A successful owlbear can gain as much as 400 pounds in weight to prepare for hibernation.

Owlbears tend to hunt and forage most at night, having excellent night vision, hearing, and a strong sense of smell. Mothers with cubs tend to be more active during the dusk and dawn hours as it makes it easier to keep an eye on the little ones. They are often attracted to the scent of livestock and trash that can surround humanoid camps and settlements, but tend to avoid dwellings as they dislike the smell of smoke and fire.

Entirely arctic species forgo hibernation entirely depending on the availability of food during the winter months, such as seals or sea lions. And with far longer days and nights, they do can shift easily back and forth between nocturnal and diurnal. However, they do not share the natural fear of fire of their more temperate cousins. This makes polar owlbears far more dangerous, as they will often enter settlements, especially younger owlbears. The presence of an owlbear in such a region will often require either moving the village or organizing a great hunt.

Owlbears descended from panda bears retain their ability to consume bamboo. They tend to be diurnal, spending their days grazing upon shoots and leaves. But unlike the panda bear, which can survive with bamboo making up as much as 99% of their diet and the remainder mostly being opportunistic scavenging, such owlbears will still aggressively pursue and hunt creatures that enter its territory. Regions with dense growths of bamboo rarely get cold enough that the bears must hibernate, and the rapid growth of bamboo means they have a ready food supply year round.

Hatchlings have diets similar to adult owlbears. Having beaks, they do not nurse. They are omnivorous, and will eat plants, insects, and any small animals they can catch. The mother will often bring back prey for them to devour as well, often bringing it back wounded so that their hatchlings may learn to hunt and kill.

REARING AND TRAINING

Raising an owlbear is a dangerous task even for experienced handlers. Training must start at as young an age as possible to have any hope of sticking. It best done with hatchlings, but with perseverance it can still be done with cubs.

The most reliable methods for rearing them involve positive reinforcement with the owlbear's favorite foods. As omnivorous creatures with surprising variations in personality, it is likely but not guaranteed to be a meat or fish. Neither side of their heritage are pack creatures, so dominance displays and negative reinforcement are extremely dangerous methods to utilize when training.

The DC of the Animal Handling check to train an owlbear is set by the age at which training began. The check is made after 3 months to see if training was effective. Every 3 months thereafter, a new check is made to see if the owlbear continues to be tamed or begins to revert to a more wild nature. This check is made with advantage if there have been no interruptions in the daily training.

Age Training Began	Training DC
Hatchling	12
Cub	15
Young Adult	20

Owlbears are very clever for an animal, but also very headstrong. The training process takes 2-3 months, but must constantly be reinforced or it will quickly revert to its wild nature. Furthermore, the end user must be present for the entire training process. Unlike horses or dogs, they do not take to new masters easily. Even after the training process is complete, it takes the owlbear several years to reach full size, making the feeding, housing, and care of such a creature a very costly process. A trained owlbear can be taught to accept a new master, but it takes at least an uninterrupted month of effort by both the trainer and the new master. All told, the process to rear an owlbear to be usable as a companion or mount takes years start to finish, and the cost represents that.

Keeping an owlbear is also an expensive proposition. They require a substantial enclosure to keep happy, and are incredibly capable climbers, which requires substantial accommodation in construction. They also consume incredible amounts of meat and fish, and are capable of consuming 3-6 cattle per month, several goats per day, or a comparable amount of fish along side whatever roots, berries, and bark they consume. They also require daily interaction with a handler or their master to maintain their training, or they will quickly grow disobedient and willful.

Item Service	Cost
Owbear Egg	250gp
Owbear Cub	500gp
Trained Young Owbear	4000gp
Trained Adult Owbear	8000gp
Monthly Cost to Feed and House	100gp

For breeds that hibernate, the cost to house and feed the owlbear is quartered during the winter months. However, the owlbear will be of no use until spring. If roused before then, not only must an immediate Animal Handling check be made or risk losing the training, but there is risk that the beast starves to death before spring even if it returns to sleep. While no training needs to be done while the beast sleeps, it is still wise for the trainer to be close at hand when spring approaches and the owlbear awakes.

The complications of owning an owlbear do not end there. Trained owlbears are not entirely safe in public. They can snap and bite at people they do not recognize, and can react poorly to unfamiliar smells and beasts. They can maim or kill anyone it does not consider its master quite easily, and can maul even their master by accident. It is recommended that a good amount of space be given to any such creature between it and crowds.

COMBAT TACTICS

Owbears are efficient predators, not tacticians. As such, their behavior in a fight is similar to many other apex predators and beasts.

When hunting, the owlbears approach during night using their superior senses, stealth, speed, and ferocity to strike quickly. They take their prize then return to their den. They are focused on food first and foremost, and will avoid a prolonged fight if it can retreat with a kill.

An owlbear ambushed will lash out violently, standing its ground and fighting to the death.

An owlbear confronted with a challenge to its territory will display signs of aggression and chase off rivals. While it may retreat from a creature that is a larger size category than it, it is unlikely to back down from any threat its own size or smaller, even if there are superior numbers. It will chase offenders for a distance, but ultimately give up chase if not hungry.

LAIRS AND NESTS

Having the conflicting instincts of both an owl and a bear, the owlbear usually seeks to nest during the summer somewhere high where they can survey their domain, but will retreat to a cave to roost and hibernate when the winter comes. The ideal lair for an owlbear, when it can find such a place in its territory, will be a steep cliffside cave with a good view and a nearby sturdy tree growing from the sides of the cliff from which they can perch. They are incredibly adept climbers. The higher, the better.

Identifying the lair of an owlbear is relatively easy, as the base of the cliff will have an abundance of owl pellets and the remains of successful hunts. Accessing the lair is another matter entirely. Any adventuring party seeking to confront the beast at home must prepare for a vertical battle.

Arctic breeds of owlbear will often dig snow caves into the sides of glaciers overlooking seas or lakes to be closer to their primary sources of food. This is far more dangerous than digging into the side of a mountain, and avalanches or cave-ins are as likely an end for arctic owlbears as old age or predation. While this would seem a blessing for travelers in the polar regions, the great abundances of the cold seas often insure that the owlbears raise more than enough cubs to adulthood to make up for any such losses.

TREASURE

Owbears do not purposefully gather or keep treasure. However, the pellets and remains that build up below will often contain the inedible portions of whatever poor humanoids it has consumed over the years. Between digestion and the elements, few trinkets of cloth, leather, or iron will often survive. However, the more durable prizes may pass through in one piece potentially resulting in quite the catch of precious metals and gems.

ALCHEMICAL REAGENTS AND CRAFTING

Owbears have a strong connection to transmutation magics. As such, their organs often have value as components in potions of strength, polymorphing, nightvision, or size alteration. A DC 15 Intelligence (alchemy) or Intelligence (arcana) check can be made to identify the valuable components, and a DC 15 Intelligence (medicine) check to harvest without damaging them. If successful, the organs may be used in the brewing process, reducing the creation cost of any such potions by 2d4 x 100 gp. Especially ancient or powerful owlbears may provide even more benefit. The organs must be used swiftly before they decay, or preserved with magics such as *Gentle Repose* (Player's Handbook).

The hide of the owlbear is particularly well suited for making leather or hide armor and clothing. It is exceedingly warm, and will provide advantage on any checks made against cold weather or exposure in cold environments. However, it is as taxing wear to warm in desert or jungle environments as heavy armor, and may impose disadvantage on checks or saves made against exhaustion or heat exposure.



BESTIARY



OWLBEAR

The most commonly encountered variety of owlbear, it is large enough to tear a man asunder quite easily.

OWLBEAR

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 59 (7d10+21)
Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages --
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Sight, and Smell. The owlbear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

Actions

Multiattack. The owlbear makes two attacks, one with its beak and one with its claws.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage.

WINGED OWLBEAR

Often compared to griffons, winged owlbears are slightly larger and slower than their smaller cousins. While they do not hunt in packs they do prefer to hunt at night, snatching and grabbing isolated targets. Their ability to hear prey at a great distance, even inside buildings or underneath snow, is often given as a reason that dwarves and other mountain races prefer stone or underground homes when possible and avoid thatched roofs at all costs.

WINGED OWLBEAR

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 59 (7d10+21)
Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages --
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Sight and Hearing. The owlbear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or sight.

Snatch. If the owlbear hits a target with more than one attack in a round, it grapples the target.

Actions

Multiattack. The owlbear makes two attacks, one with its beak and one with its claws.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage.



OWLBEAR CUB

There are few things as simultaneously adorable and terrifying as an owlbear cub. They are insatiably curious and playful, utterly without fear, and have no reservations about strolling right into the middle of a farm, pasture, or campsite. About the only thing that does make them nervous is fire or smoke, which they will avoid. And avoiding is what the wise adventurer will do, as the mother is never far behind, whom if she feels her cubs are threatened will stop at nothing to destroy the threat.

Hatchlings and cubs are worth a small fortune to the right trainer. Many races will cultivate owlbears for guard animals, companions, and mounts. Both elves and hobgoblins make extensive use of them, even though rearing such a beast is not without risk.

OWLBEAR CUB

Small monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 13 (3d6+3)

Speed 20 ft., climb 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	3 (-4)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +1

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages --

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP), 1 (200 XP) if encountered with mother

Dangerous Curiosity. The owlbear will only attack creatures its size or smaller. However, it is utterly fearless and incredibly curious, leading it to approach almost any creature and investigate or play.

Keen Sight, and Smell. The owlbear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

Actions

Multiattack. The owlbear makes two attacks, one with its beak and one to grab with its paws.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) piercing damage.

Paw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* Target is grappled.

Cry. The cub cries to its mother for help. The mother owlbear gains resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage and advantage on all attacks until all threats to her cubs are destroyed or driven off.



YOUNG OWLBEAR

Having been recently kicked out of their nest and forced to forage and hunt on their own, these adolescents are still figuring things out. They can alternate between suicidally brash to skittish and panicked in the blink of an eye.

But one should always be wary when seeing a young owlbear. Outside of mating season, or a mother rearing cubs, this is one of the few times owlbears are likely to travel in groups. This statblock is also appropriate for use to represent owlbears crafted from the smaller species of bears, such as pandas or black bears.

YOUNG OWLBEAR

Medium monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 32 (5d8+10)

Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+3)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages --

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Keen Sight, and Smell. The owlbear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

Lack of Confidence. The owlbear will neither attack nor approach Large size creatures, and will always attempt to flee combat if reduced to half health or less.

Actions

Multiattack. The owlbear makes two attacks, one with its beak and one with its claws.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

SKELETAL OWLBEAR

Skeletal owlbears often differ very little in behavior from their living brethren if left uncontrolled. They act as they did during life: nesting during the day, and stalking at night to hunt for prey. They still possess rudimentary hunting skills, and will stalk their prey, seeking to ambush whenever possible.

The only major difference is with no sense of smell, their range is often much smaller, and they don't stray very far from their burrows. An early sign of their presence is that of a mangled corpse that appears to have been gnawed upon and dismembered, but not actually consumed as the skeleton will attempt to eat its kills only to have torn flesh fall upon the ground.

SKELETAL OWLBEAR

Large undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 52 (7d10+14)

Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Skills Perception +1

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages --

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Keen Sight. The skeleton has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The skeleton makes two attacks, one with its beak and one with its claws.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage.

ZOMBIE OWLBEAR

Truly mindless, these beasts are relentless hunters day or night. They retain an excellent senses of sight and smell, easily able to detect the presence of life from miles away. Without a need to rest, they never stop moving.

Even when a hunt is ultimately pointless, they will chase prey no actual predator would. Hunters have reported such abominations spending entire days chasing flocks of sparrows from tree to tree with no actual hope of success, only ceasing when the birds eventually tire of such harassment and migrate for safer ground.

ZOMBIE OWLBEAR

Large undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 10 (natural armor)

Hit Points 59 (7d10+21)

Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	8 (-1)	18 (+4)	2 (-4)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +0

Skills Perception +1

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages --

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Sight, and Smell. The zombie has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

Actions

Multiattack. The zombie makes two attacks, one with its beak and one with its claws.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d10 + 6) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) slashing damage.



ELDER OWLBEAR

Older, more patient, and more explosively brutal, elder owlbears are terrifying opponents for even prepared adventuring parties. And given speed and stealth that belies their size, all too few are prepared.

Their coats can come in a mottled brown or fluffy white depending on if it is an arctic or temperate variant, and they have the ability to ruffle their feathers in such a way as to mask their silhouette to make for surprisingly convincing camouflage, able to mimic tree bark or snow drift almost perfectly. This can make for encountering one during the day a very nasty surprise, as they will often roost in the open having long since outgrown any caves or dens in the area.

A wise adventuring party will see the massive tracks of the beast, the remains of any kills, and give the roost a wide berth. Perhaps never even realizing the beast is present in plain sight the entire time. The unwise on the other hand, find out quite quickly.

Dire Owlbears are even greater titans of their kind: larger, faster, and more terrifying in every respect. They are the kings of their forests, and often protect great stretches of the wilds from all who would threaten their reign. They are often revered as a angry god or forest spirit by local tribes or villages, and is avoided at all costs.



ELDER OWLBEAR

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 85 (9d10+36)

Speed 40 ft., 30 ft. climb

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages --

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

False Appearance. While the owlbear remains motionless, it is almost indistinguishable from a large tree stump (if it has a brown coat), or a snow drift (if it has a white coat).

Keen Hearing, Sight, and Smell. The owlbear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing, sight, or smell.

Pounce. If the owlbear moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw or batter attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the owlbear can make one beak attack against it as a bonus action.

Unnaturally Silent. The owlbear has advantage on any Dexterity (Stealth) if it moves less than half its speed on a turn. Creatures that have Keen Hearing gain no benefit against the owlbear.

Actions

Multiattack. The owlbear makes two attacks, one with its beak and one with its claws.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d10 + 6) piercing damage and the target is grappled (Escape DC 17)

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) slashing damage

Backhand. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., each target in range. *Hit:* 10 (1d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage and each target hit is knocked back 10 feet.

Reactions

Screeching Bellow. When reduced to half health or less, the Owlbear drops anything in its mouth (which lands prone) and lets loose a terrifying screech. All creatures within 120' of the owlbear must make a Wisdom save DC 15, or lose the ability to maintain Concentration and become frightened of the owlbear for 1 minute.

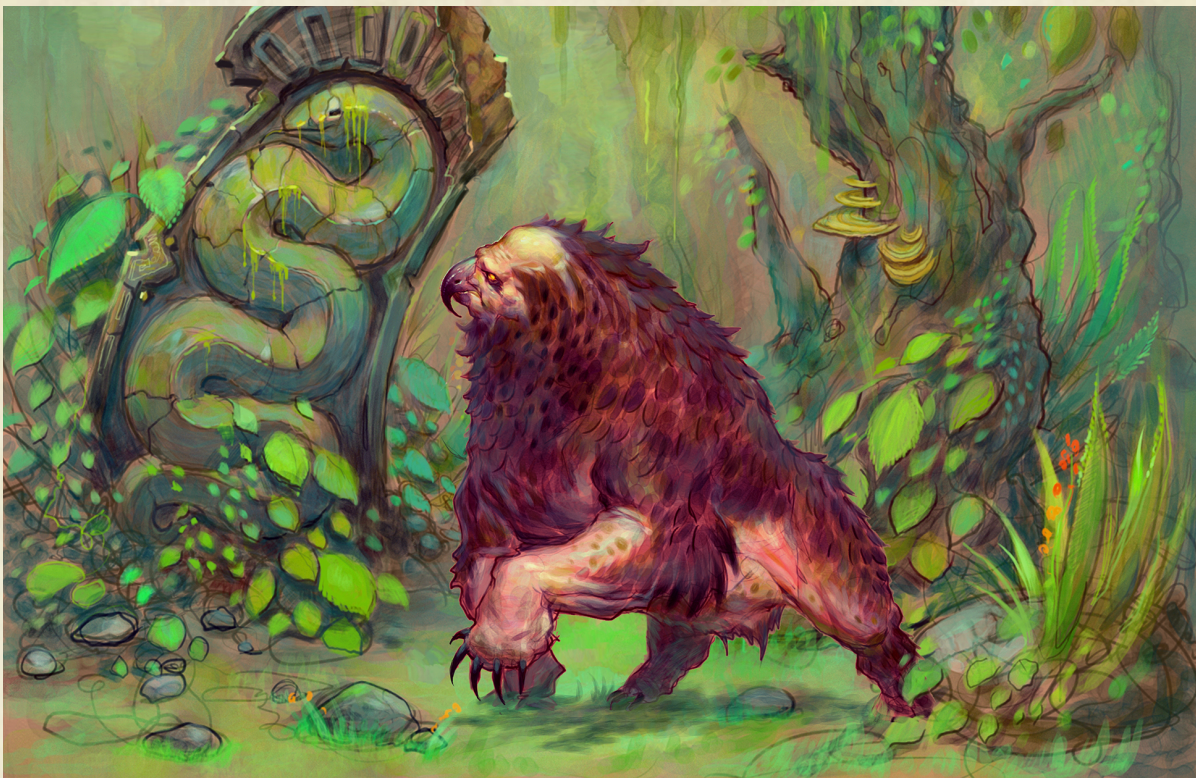
Legendary Actions

The owlbear can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The owlbear regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack. If the owlbear is not grappling a creature, it makes a beak or claw attack.

Drag. If the owlbear is grappling a creature, it may take the Dash action to move half its speed.

Backhand (Costs 2 Actions). The owlbear makes a backhand attack.



DIRE OWLBEAR

Huge monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 184 (16d12+80)

Speed 50 ft., 40 ft. climb

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 20

Languages --

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

False Appearance. While the owlbear remains motionless, it is almost indistinguishable from a dead tree (if it has a brown coat), or a snow drift (if it has a white coat).

Keen Hearing, Sight, and Smell. The owlbear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing, sight, or smell.

Pounce. If the owlbear moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw or batter attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 19 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the owlbear can make one beak attack against it as a bonus action.

Unnaturally Silent. The owlbear has advantage on any Dexterity (Stealth) if it moves less than half its speed on a turn. Creatures that have Keen Hearing gain no benefit against the owlbear.

Actions

Multiattack. The owlbear makes three attacks, one with its beak and two with either a claw or backhand.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d6 + 7) piercing damage and the target is grappled (Escape DC 19).

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d10 + 7) slashing damage.

Backhand. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., each target in range. *Hit:* 12 (1d10 + 7) bludgeoning damage and each target hit is knocked back 15 feet.

Reactions

Screeching Bellow. When reduced to half health or less, the Owlbear drops anything in its mouth (which lands prone) and lets loose a terrifying screech. All creatures within 120' of the owlbear must make a Wisdom save DC 17, or lose the ability to maintain Concentration and become frightened of the owlbear for 1 minute.

Legendary Actions

The owlbear can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The owlbear regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack. If the owlbear is not grappling a creature, it makes a beak or claw attack.

Drag. If the owlbear is grappling a creature, it may take the Dash action to move half its speed.

Backhand (Costs 2 Actions). The owlbear makes a backhand attack.



DEATH'S WARDEN

Often employed as guardians of sacred places by powerful fey lords and ladies or gods of the afterlife, these mysterious watchers can see into the lands of the living and the dead. They observe. And they judge. Their judgment is often dire, as not only can they see into other planes, but they can call back spirits of the departed to seek their vengeance upon their living killers.

Those who commit violence outside of the natural order often find themselves targets of the warden's ire, facing down specters from their past battles. While the warden can choose literally any spirit to bring back, no matter how powerful, to face its killer it does not choose based on power. Rather it chooses the spirit with the most intensity in its hatred and desire for vengeance, especially favoring wild beasts. It will almost never choose to bring back the specter of a creature hunted for sustenance, it is unnatural killings that it judges.

The warden seeks to avoid direct conflict, and while quite capable in close combat, rarely engages in it except when it is hunting for its own dinner. Those who have committed no violence, or only kill to hunt for their sustenance will likely find themselves entirely safe in the Warden's presence. Unless it's hungry.

DEATH'S WARDEN

Large fae, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 102 (12d10+36)

Speed 40 ft., 30 ft. climb

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +7

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 21

Languages Sylvan

Challenge 4 (1,350 XP)

False Appearance. While the owlbear remains motionless, it is almost indistinguishable from a large tree stump (if it has a brown coat), or a snow drift (if it has a white coat).

Mystic Hearing, Sight, and Smell. The owlbear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing, sight, or smell and these senses extend into the Ethereal plane and the Shadowfell.

Pounce. If the owlbear moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw or batter attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the owlbear can make one beak attack against it as a bonus action.

Reliable Judgment. The owlbear has advantage against all Illusion effects, and does not need to interact with an illusion to get a saving throw.

Unnaturally Silent. The owlbear has advantage on any Dexterity (Stealth) if it moves less than half its speed on a turn. Creatures that have Keen Hearing gain no benefit against the owlbear.

Actions

Multiattack. The owlbear makes two attacks, one with its beak and one with its claws.

Beak. Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 11 (1d10 + 6) piercing damage and the target is grappled (Escape DC 17)

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 15 (2d8 + 6) slashing damage

Call the Fallen. The owlbear chooses a target within 120 ft. that it can see and summons the shadowy spirit of any creature that was slain by the target provided it was slain by the target since the beginning of the last spring. It has identical statistics, vulnerability to radiant damage, and may only attack it's killer. The spirit summoned persists until the next dawn or until it or its target is slain. This may not summon the spirit of a creature that was hunted for food.

Any creature targeted by this ability is immune to it until the next time it kills a living creature. Spirits summoned by this ability have their own separate Challenge Rating.

Reactions

Feather Storm When reduced to half health or less, the owlbear casts forth a storm of feathers and snow, obscuring all vision in a 60 ft. radius for 1 minute. It can immediately then move up to 40 ft. and make a Dexterity (Stealth) check. The owlbear can see normally in this effect.

STRIX

Harbingers of war and death, these terrible shadowfell spirits hunt mortals exclusively. Worse, they prefer children and newborns. They will steal them away and consume them, always leaving a straw effigy of the child behind.

They rarely appear in peaceful realms, but take up lands in civil strife and war as their hunting grounds, as there isn't often the manpower available to respond to their predation. They are rumored to be able to predict such violence. Whether this is true or not is unconfirmed, as rumors of disappearances during wartime are hardly reliable evidence. What is known is that such conflicts often cause weak points in the barrier between the shadowfell and the material plane, and these beasts build their nests near such natural portals.

When a response is finally mustered, adventurers must be prepared for an extraplanar excursion. And for the likelihood that they will not face the beast alone. The strix are often theorized as the progenitors of the stirge. True or not, stirges take up residence around their nests in great numbers, seeking to feed upon the remnants of the hunt.



STRIX

Large fae, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 93 (11d10+33)

Speed 40 ft., 30 ft. climb

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +5

Damage Vulnerability radiant

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Common, Sylvan

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Fae Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede the strix's darkvision.

Keen Hearing, Sight, and Smell. The strix has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing, sight, or smell.

Pounce. If the strix moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw or batter attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the strix can make one beak attack against it as a bonus action.

Unnaturally Silent. The strix has advantage on any Dexterity (Stealth) if it moves less than half its speed on a turn. Creatures that have Keen Hearing gain no benefit against the owlbear.

Actions

Multiattack. The strix makes two attacks, one with its beak and one with its claws.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) piercing damage and the target is grappled (Escape DC 16). If the target is carrying any non magical light sources they must make a Dexterity saving throw (DC 16) or it is extinguished. If the target is carrying or maintaining any magical light sources, the target must make a Wisdom saving throw (DC 16) or the magic is suppressed for 1 minute.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage.

Bonus Actions

Shadow Step. When the strix is in dim light or darkness, as a bonus action it can teleport up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see that is also in dim light or darkness. It then has advantage on the first melee attack it makes before the end of its turn.

Legendary Actions

The strix can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The strix regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack. If the strix is not grappling a creature, it makes a beak or claw attack.

Cloak of Shadow. If the strix is in dim light or darkness, it pulls the shadows around itself into a protective cloak of inky feathers. It gains 10 temporary hit points. These hit points are immediately dispelled by any radiant or fire damage.

Into the Dark (Costs 2 Actions). If the strix is in dim light or darkness and is grappling a creature, it may take the **Shadow Step** action to teleport both it and the creature it is grappling.



SPELLWARPED MUTANTS

These hybrid creations are the twisted and scarred byproducts of terrible magical experiments or arcane pollution and waste. A spellwarped mutant is an unpredictable creature that shifts between different manifestations of the magical energy that wrack its body. One moment, it may shimmer with flame and fire. Another it could be consumed by lightning or dripping with necrotic bile.

Such beasts live in constant pain and agony, and lash out at anything in sight. Their presence is heralded by screeches of pain, and brilliant flashes of sorcery. They rarely live long outside of highly magical areas or sources of contamination, as the energies that wrack their body slowly destroy them. While owlbears are the most common such abomination, many other beast hybrids have been rumored to exist such as armadilloboars and giant spidercats.

SPELLWARPED OWLBEAR

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 17 (7d10-21), plus 30 temporary hit points

Speed 40 ft., 30 ft. climb

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	9 (-1)	5 (-3)	3 (-4)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages --

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Chaotic Nature. When the spellwarped creature is first encountered, it rolls randomly on the following table for the magical energies that it is currently aspected to. The spellwarped creature has resistance to that type of damage while aspected, and additional effects when using its **Magical Burst** for each.

Reactive Weakness. The spell warped creature has a weakness to damage types and materials based on its current aspect. If exposed to damage or contact with the substance, after taking damage it immediately loses all remaining temporary hit points.

Actions

Multiattack. The spellwarped creature makes two attacks, one with its beak and one with its claws.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage.

Magical Burst (Recharge 4-6). The spellwarped creature releases a torrent of magical energies. Roll a d4 to determine the area of effect and amount of damage. Saving throw DC is always 16, but save type and damage type are per magical aspect with an additional bonus effect on a failed save.

1 • Spit. *Ranged Attack:* +8 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (8d6 damage). *Miss:* 3 (1d6) splash.

2 • Cone. Deal 14 (4d6) damage in a 30 ft. cone, save for half damage.

3 • Burst. Deal 14 (4d6) damage in a 10 ft. burst centered on a point within 120 ft, save for half damage.

4 • Nova. Deal 21 (6d6) damage to all adjacent creatures, save for half damage.

Reactions

Shifting Nature. (2/short rest) If the spellwarped creature's temporary hit points are reduced to 0 it rolls for a new magical aspect, gains 30 temporary hit points, and immediately recharges and uses its **Magical Burst** putting it on cooldown. Then it is incapacitated until the end of its next turn.

MAGICAL ASPECTS

d10 Aspect	Save	Vulnerabilities	Extra ability
1 Acid	Con	Lightning or alkaline substances	Damage repeats on following round.
2 Cold	Con	Fire or dessication effects	Movement speed is halved for 1d4 rounds.
3 Fire	Dex	Cold or water	Damage is increased by 2d6.
4 Force	Str	Any dispel, counterspell, antimagic field, or shield spell.	Pushes targets back 10 feet
5 Lightning	Dex	Acid or touching conductive grounding (like a lightning rod or metal cage)	Cannot take reactions for 1d4 rounds.
6 Necrotic	Con	Radiant or sunlight and 1st level or higher light spells	The spell warped gains 5 additional temporary hit points per failed save
7 Poison	Con	Antitoxin or any magical ability that removes poisons	Poisoned condition for 1 minute
8 Psychic	Wis	Psychic damage or heavy metals (tin, lead, bismuth, etc)	Confused for 1 round
9 Radiant	Wis	Necrotic damage or darkness spells	As <i>Faerie Fire</i> spell for 1 minute
10 Thunder	Con	Silence spells	Deafened for 1 minute

CREATURES BY CHALLENGE RATING

CHALLENGE 1/8 (25 XP)

Owlbear Cub (without mother).....9

CHALLENGE 1 (200 XP)

Owlbear Cub (with mother).....9

Young Owlbear.....9

CHALLENGE 2 (450 XP)

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Owlbear.....8

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Zombie Owlbear.....10

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Elder Owlbear.....11

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FEATHER FUR FURY

Beneath forests, atop mountains, and across the tundra stalks one of the iconic beasts of fantasy. A chimerical beast of beak and claw, feather and fur; the owlbear has been the end of many an adventurer.

Inside you will find a wealth of information on the habits, diet, history, and ecology of the owlbear as well as 10 new stat blocks for owlbears to threaten both new adventurers and grizzled veterans.

