

Mini Bestiary

Creatures From Myth, Fantasy, & The Recesses of My Mind



Follow Me, And Die!
Larry Hamilton
MB-001

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Here are a few creatures with game stats, but more are ideas for adding creatures to your games. Concepts for you to add and hone for your own use.

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BOND BREAKER

The creature appears as a cute and fluffy, big-eyed ball of cuteness like a puppy or kitten. A magic user will be reminded of a childhood pet, or will have false memories of a childhood pet.

The Bond Breaker will attempt to eat the bond or break the spell of “helper” spells like unseen servant, aerial servant, floating disc, etc. Summoned and charmed creatures such as monsters, elementals, demons, etc. will avoid the creature and will not attack it unless the wizard and the summoned or charmed creature makes a saving throw. If the bond of the summoned/charmed creature is broken, it will immediately attack the wizard. If the charm or summons expires before the Bond Breaker can consume the bond, it will start shrieking loudly and attract the attention of any creatures within 100 feet, or further in a cave or canyon with an echo. This shrieking will continue as long as the party remains within sight of the creature. Such shrieking prevents spell casters from casting spells from memory.

If there are no wizards in a group the Bond Breaker will hide and avoid the group. If there is a wizard in a group or by himself and the wizard has no summoned/charmed creatures or helper spells in effect, the Bond Breaker will avoid contact. It will follow in shadows and move silently as a 6th level thief and if a helper spell is cast or a creature charmed or summoned, it will allow itself to be found. The Bond Breaker can sense if an encountered wizard has the ability at the time of first encounter to cast a helper spell or charm or summon monsters. If there are no such capabilities, the Bond Breaker will avoid as if there was no wizard. **NOTE:** If the wizard or a member of the party has an item that can charm or summon monsters, whether the party knows they have it or not, the Bond Breaker will follow the person(s) with such a device until they use it.

These rare creatures have been known in ancient lore to wreak havoc in schools of magic and even in remote towers of lone wizards with a single apprentice.

If encountered in its lair, usually a cave or abandoned building, dungeon, or ruin, it will have the treasure of charmed and summoned creatures that were defeated by the wizard whose controlling spell was consumed, or the treasure of wizards defeated by their charmed or summoned creatures. The GM will determine if it has affected multiple wizards or not. 50% chance the creature beat the wizard, roll for treasure if the creature is not interested in the wizard’s belongings. 50% chance the wizard beat the creature. Determine if the environment, i.e. neighboring monsters killed the

wizard and if they were interested in his possessions or not.

Treasure Table

d8	Defeated Monsters:
1-2	Charmed monster determine type of creature by the type of creatures that can be charmed. This would usually be fairly low level wizards.
3-4	summoned monster. determine what level of monster summoning was used and roll for the monster. This can be wizards of a variety of levels.
5-6	Summoned elementals. Determine the type of elemental 1d4 1= air, 2= water, 3= earth, 4= fire. This would be wizards of at least high enough level to summon an elemental.
7-8	Summoned demon or extra planar creature.

Defeated Wizards:

Determine the number and levels of wizards defeated. The treasure would include the wizard’s spell book(s), scrolls, potions, rings, wands, staves, etc. Make the amount of treasure and magic fit your style of campaign to avoid overbalancing the players.

You could roll 1d6, 1d8, 1d10, or 1d20 for a random level of wizard and determine the stuff left behind.

Of course, if a player wizard is defeated, all their stuff would be there if he or she were alone or their accompanying party fled or was defeated.

These creatures have a strange affinity for the Wizard Lock spell. There is something about this permanent spell that allows the creature to feed and ignore feeding on the bonds of charmed or summoned creatures. If a creature encounters anyone with a Wizard Locked item, they will make themselves the best friend of the person with that item and will perch on the item or stay within 50 feet of it. Since a wizard lock requires something that can be locked, like a door, chest, or lock, one cannot just cast Wizard Lock to sate this pernicious beast.

There is a 30% chance that when a **Wizard’s Bookstand** is encountered there will be Bond Breaker in or on it, or in close proximity. The creature will make friends and cozy up to the wizard who claims a found bookstand. Because the magics of Wizard Locks and Wizard’s Bookstands can sate the Unfamiliar, there is a 30% chance that an unfriendly person or creature can open the wizard Locked item

or remove a book from the bookstand as if it were not locked or secured by magic. Casting multiple Wizard Locks on the same item will not alter this chance.

In addition, there is a 10% chance that a Bond Breaker in the presence of a book stand with a spell book on it, will not have fed recently because it grew careless on the abundance of sustaining magics, and will protest attempts to remove the spell book, unless it is shown that there is another to take its place. This occurs even if there is a Wizard Locked item nearby. Even if there is another book to take the place of the book to be removed, there is a 5% chance that the Bond Breaker will be petulant and refuse to cooperate for 1d8 hours. Attempts to remove the book in spite of the protest of the bond breaker in the absence of a book to take the place of the desired book will result in 1d8 hours of shrieking that prevents re-learning of spells for all types of spell casters, magic users, clerics, druids, shaman, witch doctors, etc. in a 100 foot radius of the creature. The distraught creature will stay within close proximity of the one who removed the spell book during this time to show its displeasure.

Should one attempt to move the Bond Breaker from the 50 foot radius of the Wizard Lock or Wizard's Bookstand, it will whimper and cry loudly to the point that any guards, even if sleeping or slept, stunned, held or charmed will come to investigate.

Some theorize that the creature's affinity for wizard locks indicates its true origins as a wizard going after a rival, and in the absence of wizard locks to sate its appetite, the creature looks for other magical bonds upon which to feed. As this is an ancient magical creature known in the oldest manuscripts, its true origins are lost to the mists of time.

Bond Breaker:

Frequency: RARE

Size: Small

AC: 5[14]

HD: 4 HP

ATTACKS: Shrieking prevents re-learning and casting of memorized spells and attracts other creatures, and counters sleep, hold person/monster within 100 feet. See Special.

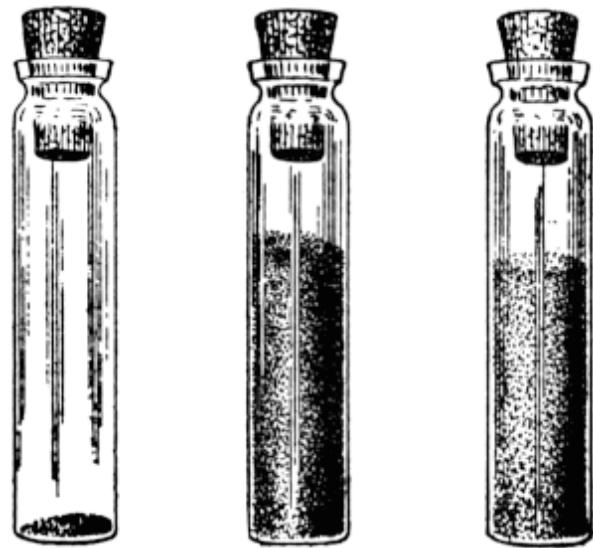
ST: 13

Special: Consumes bonds of charmed and summoned creatures or helper spells.

Move: 12

BEAKER BEASTS

Beaker beasts are any of the magical creatures wizards can make. These can be simple creatures for simple tasks, like keeping the float of the lab clean. Such creatures are the origins of things like gelatinous cubes. There is a chance any wizard's lab has a beaker or vat of some creature in the works. Perhaps it watches the unwary characters and reads their minds, reporting back to its master.



STYMPHALIAN BIRDS:

THE ORNITHES STYMPHALIDES (or Stymphalian Birds) were a flock of man-eating birds which haunted Lake Stymphalis in Arkadia. Herakles' destroyed them as his sixth labour, employing first a rattle to rouse them from the thick vegetation of the lake, then shooting them down one by one with bow and arrow or a sling.

If you search for Symphalian birds, you will find pictures of ancient Greek pottery, Roman mosaics, and lots of modern interpretations. Deviant Art has quite a few examples.

One artist describes the birds as having poisonous dung. Knowing the way that much ancient mythology was cleaned up for presentation in the Victorian Era, I can believe this. However, I have not yet found a source to back this idea.

Stats for OSRIC:.

NAME: Stymphalian Birds

FREQUENCY: Rare to Very Rare

NO. APPEARING: 3-30

ARMOR CLASS: 6

MOVE: 3"/18"

HIT DICE: 1

% IN LAIR: 60%

TREASURE TYPE: D

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-4/1-6

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Launch feathers as arrows

SPECIAL DEFENSES: Metallic Feathers

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard

INTELLIGENCE: Low

ALIGNMENT: N

SIZE: S

PSIONIC ABILITY: N/A

Attack/Defense Modes: N/A

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: They nest in trees surrounded by swamps and marshes.

Stats for Swords & Wizardry:

Hit Dice: 1

Armor Class: 6/[13]

Attacks: 2

Saving Throw: 16

Special: Launch bronze feathers as arrows.

Move: 3/18 (when flying)

Alignment: Neutrality

Challenge Level/XP: 2/30

SCIENCE FICTION ZOMBIES

I'm sure that I'm not the first one to suggest zombies in a science fiction, post apocalypse, or Metamorphosis Alpha (MA) setting.

Here is an idea for one level of a ship to have some sort of zombie plague, whether by disease, radiation, or the effects of some plant or animal poison. Would it only affect humans, or mutated humans, or any animal forms. What about intelligent plants?

I don't have any specific game mechanics in mind, but there are certain questions to be resolved.

What are the zombies after?

- Do they want brains, entrails, or just to kill the living?
- Are the zombies mindless killing machines, or do they have some level of intelligence.

Is this form of zombieism contagious?

- Does being killed by a zombie make you a zombie?
- If it is caused by radiation, does any dead body left near the radiation become a zombie, or only those killed by the radiation?
- If caused by a plant or animal poison, what are the limitations and possible antidotes to that poison?
- If caused by a virus or microbe, is there a cure or inoculation?

Do you have to destroy the brain to kill them, or just do enough damage?

- If the brain, then does it require a called shot, or some special mechanic?
- I vote for just enough damage to keep combat moving.

Will there be warning signs on doors?

- If so, will the characters be able to read or understand them?

What happens when the doors are opened?

- Are their hoards of zombies on the other side, or a single one to give the players a chance.

How long will the zombies last?

- If you have an ongoing campaign, will the zombies reach a point where they cease to be and there are no more new ones?
- Who am I kidding? These suckers are going to happen whenever the players stumble upon them!
- If the zombie's quarantine/containment is breached, how far will it spread beyond the containment point?
- Is the nature of the substance that makes a zombie able to spread throughout the ship?

Fast zombies or slow zombies?

- They move at 75% or so of their living speed, unless they are fresh.
- Fresh zombies do surprise and initiative standard.
- Really old zombies that are becoming skeletal would be the slow kind.
- Not so fresh zombies only get initiative on an exceptional roll, and surprise is by chance when players stumble on one and are surprised.

Window Dressing:

- They could have tatters of colonists' clothing, or crew uniforms.
- Have a valued arm band on one of them in the midst of the swarm
- Perhaps one of the captain's rings could be here. (How bad do you want that ring, and will the player's even know it is there?)

Can the computer or medibots be of any use?

- If the computer is cut off from this area of the ship, it may not be able to update the programs of the medibots.
- There could be one or two medibots with helpful answers, including inoculations, or some sort of spray or foam that stops the zombies.
- It depends on how detailed you want to be, and if you want to be this "nice" to the players.

Campaign Considerations:

If the players let it loose on the whole ship, are you ok with the rest of your campaign being about pockets of survivors who have zones where the zombies can't or don't enter?

If you are the referee, then you can control this however you like, just think it through to the logical conclusion. If you want a game like this, then you are OK with it being like that. If this is too much change to your vision for the campaign, you can make it work however you want; it is your campaign.

FELT GOLEM

Such a golem would be susceptible to fire, but would otherwise have the characteristics of the animal from which it is made. If made from the hair of multiple animals/sources, it would have multiple characteristics.

For example, plant fiber fabric, such as cotton, or linen, also can be felted. Bits of fabric separate when washing. How about a dryer lint golem? It would be made of cotton, and artificial fibers.

If the hair of a dog, a felt golem of larger than normal size could be constructed. Add hit dice and damage capabilities based on your rule set of choice.

Gather the hides from slain animals with fur to make any manner of felt golem.

They move silently, being made of a soft fabric.

If combined with amber for the eyes, they could have an additional attack similar to shocking grasp, once per turn.

Can you imagine a woolly mammoth golem with a trampling and goring attack, plus a shock attack?

If attacked with electrical attacks, it would allow them to be re-charged and make an extra shock attack.

That cute life size grizzly teddy bear will rip your arms off!

How about a room full of the things?

Lions, tigers, and bears! Oh yeah!!

How about a hell hound felt golem! The possibilities are endless!

WOLFEN

Humanoid wolf people. They are not lycanthropes and are shunned by humans and werewolves alike. They are carnivores, but abhor the flesh of intelligent creatures, which they can smell, and thus never eat in error.

Their favorite food is sheep. They often herd great flocks of sheep. They market the wool and hides beyond their own use to merchants. Larger communities may have mills for spinning the wool into thread and weaving it into cloth. As well, great tanneries will work the skin. Even more industrious villages might have a smaller version of this.

They tend to live in small villages near trade routes but off the beaten path. They are misunderstood and often shunned by the ignorant who claim they are werewolves or the like. Wolfen, werewolves, wolfweres, and jackalweres can all detect the others. However, unlike the others, the wolfen only has one form. Unfortunately, this form is similar to the bipedal form the others can take.

The most knowledgeable werewolf hunters will contract with a wolfen to scent out a werewolf, wolfwere, or jackalwere while in human form. This is a risky proposition, as the creature to be scented will know of the approach of a wolfwere if care is not taken to approach from downwind.

Unlink the sheep of other shepherds, wolves will not touch the sheep of a wolfen as their scent repels true wolves, even wargs, and dire wolves. This effect also translates to dogs. Guard dogs will wimper and require a save to stand their post. War dogs will not initiate attacks against them.

Because of this, goblin wolf riders know to steer clear of wolfen settlements. Often other nearby settlements unknowingly benefit from the proximity of wolfen. Should the wolfen be driven off for some reason, goblin warbands may soon make a move. This has lead to folk wisdom that driving off wolfen makes them curse a place to be invaded by goblins. So for the fear of this “curse” most wolfen are left to their own devices.

The truly ignorant may endeavor to “cure” a wolfen of their “affliction.” Both wolvesbane and any ritual to cure lycanthrope are not only insulting, but cause great tormenting physical pain. Wolvesbane is deadly poison to wolfen, and they steer well clear of areas where it grows, as they can easily detect it’s scent.

Wolfen are very rarely adventurers as they have strong loyalty to their family and clan.

The origins of wolfen are debated among the learned, but their own myths and legends describe them as being created by their god(s) in the same way that the god(s) of other intelligent creatures created them.

More isolated communities will have witchdoctors and shamen. While the more “advanced” groups will have clerics, druids, and magic-users. Illusions that do not have an olfactory component rarely fool them, +4 to saves. As illusion magic works poorly with them, they are unable to be illusionists.

Choose base stats to make wolfen fit your campaign. The stats for orcs, hobgoblins, or gnolls for HD, AC, and attacks works well.

TOME DRAGON

This dragon values books, scrolls, and other types of documents the way other dragons value gold. For details, please see: [Library Generation Tables](#).

INSPIRED BY CICADAS

What if there were forms of various burrowing monsters, Ankheg, land sharks, etc. that had a cycle like the 17-year cicada. There are not just one group of cicadas, but multiples, and not just 17 years. There are also 13 year cicadas. There are both Periodical, every 13 or 17 years, and Annual Cicadas, which have a life cycle of 2-4 years.

Their base stats would be the same as in their source book. Each monster type would just need to kill a certain number of HD of “food” in a set period before burrowing for the next sleep cycle. Say 2-3 weeks, each HD of creature needs to “eat” 2-3 HD for every HD it posses.

Solitary creatures would emerge to eat and mate. Eggs would hatch for laying species, making voracious babies needing several times their HD in food for the rapid growth that occurs before they burrow to hibernate.

Placement & Cycle

To place the groups lay out your campaign map and drop a die indicating how many are in that location. the number could represent either groups or individuals. Roll a d12+6 to see how many years in the cycle for each group.

Of course, there is nothing to say that the cycle is in years, that would put them in living memory. What adventurers wouldn’t want to go out and find the fresh burrows/dens to slay monsters, find treasure, and collect parts for wizards? Better yet, have the cycle in decades or centuries, depending on which race’s living memory will lose track of them. That way, they emerge suddenly and unexpectedly. Only some dusty old tomes might mention it.

By being outside of living memory, it would make even more sense for the crazy weird creatures to emerge when and where they do.

Duration of Last Cycle

To determine how long since the last emergence, either roll those same dice, or 2d6, if using years. For decades or centuries, use what suits your campaign. For worlds that evolve over many campaigns, this would be another aspect to help it come alive. Alternatively, assign a percentage chance that this year is the end of their cycle, or that they emerge early, as some 17-year cicadas emerged 4 years early this year.

Encounters

For sandbox games a burrow of say, hibernating land sharks, could be placed on the map and set to emerge when the party reaches that hex. Or you could have a random encounter prepared to come up when the party is travelling. Here, the term burrow or den is used loosely. Some monsters are not found in groups, if you want to go by the book, so a den or burrow would be a generalization for an area where the creatures congregated before burrowing. For bulettes and other very large creatures, they might be spread over many square miles of territory.

If you have a creature you really want to show up in your game, use this to make it happen.

Ecology

Players that encounter such a variation on the usual type of monster might get the bright idea to go dig up these slumbering creatures for “easy” XP. That is easily solved when these creatures curl up and secrete a substance that encases them in a hard shell that disguises their identity and also protects them from scrying. This will make it impossible to determine what kind of creature is in the “shell” if it is found, and reduce the ability to find it.

The secretions will reduce the ability to find it via scrying by 5% per day for the first week. 5% per week for the next month, and 1% per each subsequent month. So 35% after 1st week, and 55% at the end of the month after that, and 67% the year after that. If one sticks with an additional 1% per month, after an additional two years and seven months it would hit 100%. I would say it shouldn’t be 100% effective. Based on how your preferred rules handle scrying, there should at least be a chance. Rolling 01 on a d100 should find it, unless other modifiers make it impossible.

Earthquakes, floods, new construction, wizard battles, wars, and battling titanic monsters, like dragons, are some of the things that interrupt the normal cycles. When character want to build a stronghold, assign a chance that they happen to pick a site near or over a “burrow”. For example, 10% chance to be near (1d6 miles, hexes, etc.) from a burrow, and 1% chance to be over one. The GM can roll for it, or make the player do it.

Change It Up

To make them different from the book descriptions, make them a different color, smell, size, or flavor of meat (if the party eats its kills).

Where's the Table?

See the following table with an example of how this may be done.

Keep going with each burrowing monster, or monster you re-skin as a burrowing monster.

Make a new table for each genre you run. Of course, some creatures could easily be used across genres.

Vary the cycle units (years, decades, centuries) and number and type of dice used to set the base cycle and time since last cycle.

For placement set one color of dice for each creature and roll all at once. Vary the number of dice used based on the size of your campaign map. If you have a world map, use more dice than a map that is only a portion of a continent.

Make a spreadsheet to keep track of all this, especially the location. Once you know a location, how can you make it interesting? If a location is a far off place, be sure to have the party encounter that cluster of creatures, especially if you haven’t used this variation yet.

If the location is within a dungeon, perhaps the builders of the dungeon avoided waking the creature(s) through blind luck, or build around it on purpose. Another way for creatures to get into a dungeon when “it doesn’t make sense.”

Cicada Type Lifecycles for Existing Creatures

CREATURE	BASE CYCLE (Years, Decades, Centuries)	TIME SINCE END OF LAST CYCLE	PLACEMENT	NOTES (Map Location, Treasure, etc.)
Ankheg	d6+d12	2d6	Grab some d6's and drop on the map. Numbers indicate number of groups/dens.	Under farmer Bob's barn
Land Shark	d6+d12	2d6	Grab some d6's and drop on the map. Numbers indicate number of groups/dens.	Under, within, or next to the dungeon

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